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[David Burke](#) The Quad-City Times
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This month marks the 50th anniversary of Buddy Holly's concert at the Capitol Theatre in Davenport, part of a tour which ended tragically with the deaths of the rock 'n' roll pioneer, as well as Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper, in a plane crash after a show in Clear Lake, Iowa.

The milestone will be marked locally with a tribute concert — featuring singers impersonating the three stars — at the Capitol, as well as Canadian filmmakers making a documentary about the original final tour.

“We're finally good to go for the film,” said Sevan Garabedian, a first-time filmmaker based in Montreal.

Garabedian and a crew will be in Davenport on Feb. 20 to conduct interviews about the Capitol concert, which took place on Jan. 29, 1959. He has a few subjects already lined up, including the daughter of Fred Epstein, owner of KSTT, the Davenport radio station which sponsored the concert.

But Garabedian still is looking for photos from the Davenport show, one of the few pieces he lacks in making what he believes is a complete picture of the tour.

He's even offering a reward for those with photos from the Capitol concert.

“If we find a few, we're definitely willing to make a deal,” he said.

The Capitol was the only stop on the 10-city tour that was a theater instead of a ballroom.

“Because it was in a theater, maybe not as many people took pictures,” Garabedian said. “But some kids must have brought a camera.”

Those who have photos or were at the concert can contact him at (514) 931-6959 or by e-mailing sevan1@sympatico.ca.

In a 2008 interview with the Quad-City Times, Connie Gibbons — former executive director of Davenport's River Music Experience and the Buddy Holly Center in Lubbock, Texas — said she had heard of no Davenport photos from the show.

“A lot of times, people have those things in their family photo box and they don't realize they've got them,” she said.

“Sometimes people hold onto them out of a sense of sentiment and don't want to share them.”

Garabedian and his crew will also be at a Jan. 24 stop of “The Last Tour,” a five-city outing that includes impersonators as well as Tommy Allsup, now 77, a guitarist who played with Holly on the tour.

The documentary will do extensive shooting at the Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake, which will host a six-day series of events leading up to the Feb. 2 anniversary of the final concert and plane crash. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame-sponsored event is to include Tommy Allsup, Big Bopper Jr., Carl Bunch, Cousin Brucie, The Crickets, Bob Hale, Maria Elena Holly, Chris Montez, Johnny Preston and Bobby Vee. The Cleveland-based Hall of Fame also will declare the Surf as a rock 'n' roll historic landmark. The concert will be recorded and shown by PBS television stations later this year.

“Some of them have not seen each other in 50 years. That'll be special footage when we get them,” Garabedian said.

Garabedian said singer Dion DeMucci, lead singer of Dion and the Belmonts, is undecided about appearing at the concerts or the documentary. The group, which found greater fame in the 1960s, was also a part of the Winter Dance Party lineup.

“Dion is on the fence, but they're hoping to get Dion as well,” Garabedian said. “Artists are coming from all over the place for that show. It's a big deal, getting national attention.”

A 33-year-old luxury watch salesman, Garabedian said the fatal plane crash was a turning point for the youthful fans of the singers.

“These were teenagers probably dealing with death for the first time ever,” he said. “They literally saw their heroes on stage and days later had to deal with the fact that they were gone.”

David Burke can be contacted at (563) 383-2400 or dburke@qctimes.com.

IF YOU GO

What: “The Last Tour,” featuring Buddy Holly impersonator Johnny Rogers, as well as Holly guitarist Tommy Allsup, Richie Lee and the Shackshakers

When: 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 24

Where: The Capitol Theatre, 326 W. 3rd St., Davenport

How much: \$26.50 and \$19.50

Information: (563) 326-8820 or TheCapDavenport.com