

Buddy Holly, Roy Orbison tribute show set Thursday

By: Paulette Tobin, Grand Forks Herald
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- Richie Lee as Buddy Holly
- Wayne Luchau as Roy Orbison
- Kathy McDaniel will pay tribute to Patsy Cline
- The Shadows

In February 1959, a Fargo rock band called the Shadows received a last minute call to join the Winter Party Dance Party Tour show at the Moorhead Armory.

Despite a tragic Iowa plane crash that had killed Buddy Holly and two other tour stars, promoters decided to go ahead with the Moorhead show.

That's how the Shadows ended up playing that night in Moorhead, backing up the soon-to-be-star Bobby Vee.

Dick Dunkirk played with the Shadows back in '59, and continues with the band today. The band's history and ties to Buddy Holly's tragic death have led to a musical tribute show that draws bigger crowds each year, and this year has expanded to four shows, including one at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 4 in Detroit Lakes' Historic Holmes Theatre.

The show, called "I Remember Buddy Holly & Roy Orbison," is timed to coincide with Feb. 3, which this year is the 51st anniversary of the day Holly, Ritchie Valens

and the Big Bopper died in a plane crash near Clear Lake, Iowa, on their way to Fargo.

Buddy Holly was a rock pioneer whose hits included "Peggy Sue," "Not Fade Away" and "That'll Be the Day." Orbison, who died in 1988, was another rocker with Texas rockabilly roots whose recorded hits such as "Only the Lonely," "Crying" and the iconic "Pretty Woman."

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Shadows toured throughout the Midwest. Dunkirk played electric bass. The band scored a regional hit, "Susie Baby," which went to No. 1 on the charts in Minneapolis.

In 2007, shortly after being inducted into the Mid-America Music Hall of Fame, The Shadows began doing a Buddy Holly tribute show at the Fargo Theater. It sold out each year, and this year, the Fargo show has been moved to NDSU Festival Concert Hall at 7:30 p.m. tonight (Wednesday).

Tuesday's show in Grand Forks, as well as an upcoming show on Friday in Fergus Falls, have both sold out, Dunkirk said.

"We did a show in Mankato (Minn.) last year with an amazing 19-year-old from Des Moines, Iowa, named Richie Lee," Dunkirk said. Lee has been performing as Buddy Holly since he was 8.

"He does the best tribute to Buddy Holly that I have ever seen, and so we decided to put him in the show this year," Dunkirk said.

The show's Roy Orbison tribute is by Ada, Minn., native Wayne Luchau, a performer from Minneapolis with an incredible vocal range, Dunkirk said. He performs his tribute with the four-piece Shadows band, plus three violinists from the Fargo-Moorhead Symphony.

The show has also added a tribute to Patsy Cline and other female singers from the '50s and '60s by Kathy McDaniels of Minneapolis. Tickets for Thursday's show are still available for \$19 at the Holmes Theatre box office, online at www.dlccc.org or by calling 218-844-SHOW (7469). The cost is \$23 at the door.