

THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED

The lives, music and tragic deaths (in a 1959 plane crash) of Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper.

An illustrated lecture presented by Dulais Rhys, Ph.D

‘The Day the Music Died’ is a line from Don McLean’s well-known 1971 song ‘American Pie’, though the rambling lyrics never mention by name the three young musicians who lost their lives in this tragic accident. (Plane crashes also killed Patsy Cline, John Denver and The Bar-Kays)

In the early hours of February 3, 1959, a small plane took off from Clear Lake, Iowa, heading for Fargo, North Dakota. On board was the pilot and three young pop musicians: Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper. A few minutes after take-off, the plane inexplicably crashed, killing all on board.

Buddy Holly – arguably the most famous of the three musicians – was at the peak of his pop career, who, along with his Crickets, had multiple hits, such as ‘Peggy Sue’ and ‘Wishing’.

Ritchie Valens – the youngest to lose his life – was a rising star of American-Hispanic pop music. Though his musical career was short, his songs such as ‘La Bamba’ and ‘Donna’ became pop classics.

The Big Bopper (born J. P. Richardson) was arguably the least well known but the most musically gifted of the three stars. Though his novelty singles ‘Chantilly Lace’ and ‘The Big Bopper’s Wedding’ remain popular, Big Bopper was also an established radio broadcaster, experienced disc jockey, exuberant stage performer and talented composer of Rhythm & Blues and early Rock & Roll songs, such as ‘White Lightning’ and ‘Running Bear’.

Less familiar but great songs such as these will feature alongside the more familiar hits of Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper. Singing along is encouraged ☺

DURATION: c1 hour

FEE: \$250

EXPENSES: a contribution toward travel costs is appreciated.

Thank you for considering my proposal and please contact me for more information.

Sincerely,

Dulais Rhys, Ph.D

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REFERENCES, RECOMMENDATIONS & REVIEWS

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