



THE CRICKETS

The Crickets met The Standard Of Admission for The West Texas Music Hall Of Fame by having 4 top 40 songs released under their group name (all Brunswick Records were released under the Crickets and all Coral under Buddy Holly) The Crickets were formed by Jerry Allison (drums) and Buddy Holly (vocal/guitar) in



1957. Jerry and Buddy first met in junior high school around 1949. Jerry began playing drums at a very early age then becoming a member of the local music scene. Jerry's big break came when he and Holly wrote a song around a phrase "That'll Be The Day" actor John Wayne used in a movie. The first recording was in Nashville for Decca Records who insisted on keeping the song "country". Owen Bradley, Nashville legendary country music producer, made a fool out of himself by cutting the song down as "the worst song he had ever heard". After being kicked around and insulted by the producers and executives Buddy Holly & The Three Tunes (Jerry Allison, Don Guess and Sonny Curtis) cut-out heading back to West Texas. Decca did honor Buddy's

contract inviting him back to record once again. This time around Jerry and Sonny, because they weren't getting paid, did not make the trip. In later years Owen Bradley said that he was "Instructed by the front office to keep Buddy country". After Nashville let one of rock's greatest performers slip through their hands Buddy Holly ended up doing business with Norman Petty. Although Holly had been warned many times of Petty's reputation of "cutting himself in on song credits" it had fallen on deaf ears. After assembling the band, Jerry (drums), Larry Welborn (bass), Niki Sullivan (rhythm/back-up vocals), Buddy (vocal/lead guitar), Gary & Ramona Tollett (backing vocals) cranked out an exciting 78 demo. Norman Petty then lived up to his prior reputation by giving Holly & Allison an ultimatum either pay \$500 up-front or assign him the publishing rights plus one half of the songwriting credits. In return he would offer to find them a record label. Holly sends the demo to Roulette Records where they wanted to give the song to Buddy Knox to record. At the end of his rope Holly takes the demo to New York, City where major labels Columbia, RCA and Atlantic pass on it. Decca's "trash basket" label Brunswick finally took it. Petty insisted on re-recording the demo but Bob Thiele, Brunswick, said it was "perfect". The rest of the record executives continued to call "That'll Be The Day" b/w "I'm Looking For Someone To Love" "junk". Nashville record executives turned red faced as they watched "That'll Be the Day", with Holly's innovative guitar work, zoom straight to the top of the pop charts in 1957 selling a million copies. The Crickets very first tour was an all-black package that played theaters that included the Appolo in New York, City. From there The Crickets would travel the world. After splitting with Holly in 1958 The Crickets would continue to perform. Buddy got married moving to New York, City in 1959. Buddy Holly then assembled his last "Crickets" group (Waylon Jennings, Tommy Allsup & Carl Bunch) for the ill-fated tour in 1959. In 1960 Jerry Naylor Jackson is invited by Jerry Allison to join the Crickets (Sonny Curtis, Glen Hardin & Allison). Jerry had been a DJ at KPEP Radio while attending Lakeview High School in San Angelo. Jerry had organized his own country bands as a teenager singing/playing steel guitar and in 1957 becoming a member of The Cavaliers. Glen Hardin became the piano player/arranger for Elvis during the Las Vegas years. The Crickets, including some of the original members, continue to perform.

photo: Jerry Allison, Buddy Holly and Joe Mauldin.courtesy of Steve Bonner