

The Rock 'N' Roll Preservation Society is dedicated to preserving the sights and sounds of Fairmont's legendary Interlaken Ballroom. The "GREAT SOUNDS OF INTERLAKEN" exhibit features a rare collection of rock 'n' roll, swing band, and ballroom dancing photographs, including live recordings, all of which shaped Interlaken Ballroom's rich musical history from 1916 to 1972.

In the end fire destroyed Interlaken Ballroom, but its heritage lives on, even if only in memory. This exhibit is a tribute to that era and the many musical groups who made significant contributions to Minnesota's cultural history through their recordings and live performances.

The Marvelous Marauders Experience

Ever since Edison invented a method of recording sounds it's been the dream of musicians to compose a tune and have it preserved for prosperity. And so it was with The Marvelous Marauders, a group whose beginnings in 1962 as a small garage band in Marshall Central Catholic High evolved into an 8 piece R&B band whose rise to stardom launched them into ballrooms all across Minnesota, including Fairmont's own Interlaken Ballroom.

As all bands that dream the same dream, the Marauders members, Dick Shrier, Barry Ufkin, Steve Livingston, Jerry Cadwell, and Jim Ekse, (Ekse, now a retired dentist in Blue Earth, MN), did what they do best. They practiced and practiced until their music evolved and was ready for prime time! One of their top hits, "*She Threw My Love Away*" written by singer and guitar player Dick Shrier (which can be heard at the Martin County Historical Society exhibit), was inspired by his girlfriend's decision to search for greener pastures. As he played and sang his song, everyone was sure it could make it to the top of national charts.

The Marauders decided to purchase a \$400 package offered by Soma Records, a recording studio in Minneapolis. The package included an afternoon of studio time with recording engineers and the result was a wide distribution of their songs to music stores and radio stations in the Twin Cities area and surrounding markets. After several recording hours in the studio and anxious attempts at a perfect record, to The Marauders excitement and amazement they began hearing their songs played on major rock stations all over the Midwest!

While the members of the Marvelous Marauders were figuring out how to manage their newfound fame, phone calls from KDWB and WDGY, two major rock stations in the Twin Cities left this message: stores had sold all of The Marauders records and if they couldn't get more, radio stations would have to quit playing their songs.

The Marauders took immediate action. They contacted SOMA records, at which time they were informed that the owner of SOMA, Amos Heilicher, had directed all of his resources and attention toward a song written by The Castaways, the soon to become national hit, "*Liar, Liar.*" To their shock and extreme disappointment, SOMA records had cast The Marauders aside.

The Castaways new hit proved to be the death knell for The Marauders with their one hit record. Over the years, Marauder members Schrier and Ekse would still

occasionally receive small royalty checks. Ekse states: "I think my last check from them was \$1.45. I cashed it."

The Marvelous Marauders were considered trend setters in big band rock n' roll, utilizing horns, a Hammond organ and stage shows with multi-colored lights and dance steps. They were the first MN rock group to advance to prominent performances at the St. Paul Winter Carnival, the MN State Fair and the Minneapolis Auditorium. By the late 1960's the group was opening for international acts like The Animals, Hermin's Hermits, The Turtles and Kenny Rogers. In 2005, they were honored in the Minnesota Rock and Country Hall of Fame, a yearly event that honors music groups who have had great impact on the Midwestern music scene.