

THE PLAIN DEALER

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Alan Freed's ashes moved to rock hall

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Plain Dealer Pop Music Critic

The late Alan Freed is back in Cleveland.

Really.

A brass urn containing the ashes of the legendary disc jockey was delivered to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum Wednesday by Judith Fisher Freed, the estranged wife of Alan's son Lance.

Freed's remains were brought

to Cleveland from the Ferncliff Memorial Mausoleum in Hartsdale, N.Y., where they had been interred since his death in 1965. The move was approved by Freed's four children — Alana, Lance, Sieglinde and Alan Jr. — and Freed's third wife, Inga.

Freed popularized the phrase "rock 'n' roll" in the early '50s, when he hosted a radio program on WJW. On March 21, 1952, he emceed the Moondog Coronation Ball at the old Cleveland

Arena, an event widely regarded as the first rock concert. Freed was part of the first class of rock hall inductees in 1986.

Rock hall President and CEO Terry Stewart said Freed had come "home."

"I'm sure some people will find it unusual and others might find it morbid," said Stewart. "It's certainly appropriate in a rock 'n' roll sense to have his final resting place here."

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Lance Freed agreed, saying that the rock hall is a fitting place for such a personal memorial to his father.

"My father was very much a public figure. He said, 'Look, if something happens to me, just two things: I want to be near the music and I want to be near the public.' He lived for . . . the music."

Stewart joined several other museum staffers and Judith Fisher Freed for a brief religious service in honor of the DJ yesterday afternoon at the museum. Rabbi Franklin Muller of Youngstown's Congregation Rodef Sholom, where Alan Freed's father worshipped, presided over the ceremony, which coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Moondog Ball.

The marble plaque that marked his grave at Ferncliff Memorial Mausoleum was hung in the rock hall's lower lobby. It reads: F R E E D — A L A N

1921-1965.

The urn itself was sealed in a wall inside the rock hall. The exact spot has not been disclosed, in keeping with the wishes of the Freed family.

Freed was born near Johnstown, Pa., and raised in Salem, Ohio. He was hired by WJW in 1951, following stints at radio stations in Youngstown and Akron.

Freed left Cleveland in 1954 to broadcast "The Alan Freed Rock 'n' Roll Show" from New York City. He went on to appear in several films, including "Rock Around the Clock."

A payola scandal ended his career. Freed pleaded guilty to two counts of commercial bribery in 1962. Three years later, he died of uremic poisoning. He was 43.

Cleveland staked its claim to the rock hall — where a Freed exhibit is in the works — on his legacy.

"My dream is to have the urn on display as part of the exhibit," said Judith Fisher Freed, who has gathered photographs, records and other Freed memorabilia for the museum.

Suzanne Faske, a New Yorker who visited the rock hall yesterday, failed to comprehend the



MADISON GEDDES

The remains of disc jockey Alan Freed have been interred at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum.

fuss over the deceased DJ's new digs.

"I'm not into graves," Faske said. "I don't think it matters."

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