

**#08: DONNA  
(Ritchie Valens)  
1960**



This is another of the six good quality audio recordings recently discovered in the collection of an English fan. Until now only a very bad quality recording had existed of this cover of Ritchie Valens 1958 hit, but now it can be heard with some clarity for the first time.

Cliff's velvet vocals blend successfully with some mellifluous Shadows' guitar work on this track – which was one of the earliest songs they recorded for the Luxembourg series during the summer of 1960. Cliff had featured this song on his debut live album *Cliff* in February 1959 – as a tribute to Valens who had died a few days earlier in a plane crash along with Buddy Holly and the Big Bopper – but sadly he was suffering from laryngitis at the time and this version contains some duff notes.

*Donna* was also a hit for Marty Wilde in late 1958, and when agent Larry Parnes pulled Marty out of the ground-breaking pop TV show 'Oh Boy!' during October 1958, it was left to co-star and fellow stable-mate Cliff to cover a few of Marty's hits. It was one of the numbers Cliff covered in the series at the close of 1958, but no telerecordings survive (probably they were never even made) to substantiate this claim.

MC: yes, nice to hear Hank's twiddly boredom-banishing embellishments (especially just over the one and a half minute mark) reproduced with unaccustomed clarity. This would have made a nice studio track with which to say goodbye to the 50s.