

Hot Time in Hot Springs

by Ann Smith (Texas Coord.)

Call me a Four Freshmen fanatic - I certainly qualify. After the convention festivities concluded with the Saturday night concert, I got up at 3:00 am (after two hours sleep) and flew back to Dallas. From there I drove 5 hours to Hot Springs, Arkansas to see - who else: The Four Freshmen. The first FFS convention I attended was three years ago in Colorado Springs. There, we got the bonus of a third Freshmen concert on Sunday night, when they performed at the Pikes Peak Jazz Festival. This is partly what inspired me to do all the extra traveling to see the Freshmen three nights in a row.

The Hot Springs (Arkansas) concert was held in a 647 seat auditorium that was filled to capacity. Since this was held at a retirement village, I expected the audience to be full of Freshmen fans - since the age group corresponds. Through the first few songs the audience responded with polite applause - which surprised me. Can you image polite applause for the Freshmen! Before long the Freshmen had won the crowd over, and the wildly enthusiastic response was much more typical of the Freshmen's adoring fans. It was fascinating to watch this transformation take place.

After the concert of 27 or so songs, plus encore, the Freshmen made themselves available to autograph their CD's and meet the attendees. Curtis stated that he would love to see the group do such a long concert for their fans at the Saturday night performance of the convention - to give more to the fans. We'd love to see that happen, too. "Always leave them wanting more" does not apply at the Four Freshmen conventions. We want all we can get. And when that's not enough, a bunch of us get off in a room and sing Freshmen songs around the piano. I can't wait until next year.

Greg Stegeman's New CD

by Ann Smith (Texas Coord.)

Greg's new CD premiered at the convention this year and is just sheer listening pleasure. For starters, the song selections are simply wonderful, including the beautiful *Yellow Days*, *The Shining Sea* and *Away, Away, Away*. It's totally fascinating to listen to Greg sing all four parts - in traditional Four Freshmen harmony. The vocal range required for this is most impressive. Not only does Greg sing all four voices, he also performs on trumpet, keyboard and percussion.

It's part of the Four Freshmen history that Greg introduced himself to the group backstage by playing a recording he had made of himself performing all four voices on some Freshmen songs. This was some time ago - many years before Greg finally achieved his lifelong dream of becoming a Freshmen. It's so interesting to finally get to hear how that sounds - after all this time. It is genius on Greg's part to put together a CD like this. As listed on the CD, Greg does: (1) all vocals, (2) horns, (3) keyboards, and (4) arrangements.

The current Four Freshmen were very active in the production of this CD. Bob Ferreira performs his breathtaking *More Love* on one cut, and on another the full Four Freshmen Group #22 sings *Walking My Baby Back Home*. Brian engineered the CD and also gets credit for (1) acoustic guitars, (2) bass, (3) and percussion on some of the songs as well for piano and guitar. Curtis is listed in the credits for trumpets and Vince for bass. As if all of that isn't enough, it was produced by none other than us - The Four Freshmen Society. So it sounds like a labor of love that we all got to contribute to in some way. Be sure to get your copy - I promise you'll love it. To quote Ross Barbour from this year's Fresh Talk "The Four Freshmen are the top group in the world....and Greg is second."

FRESHMEN ON THE NET - Art Graham (Indiana)

Fresh Fans:

For those of us with broadband connections, there are precious few FREE music sources nowadays. That's why I was delighted to stumble on a site which offers fascinating lengthy air checks from a syndicated radio program called **Fred Hall's Swing Thing**. From circa 1986, Fred features Bob Flanigan in a two-part show dedicated to talking about Freshmen history with many tasty examples of the Freshmen book.

To give it a try, go to:

<http://swing-thing.com/shop/index.php?page=16&cPath=6&sort=2a> Then click on "*Four Freshman: Pt. 1*" (sic)

If you have a problem with the above link, start at the home page: <http://swing-thing.com/shop/index.php> Then search on *freshmen* (be sure to check the box labeled *expand search...*) to find the two-part show + 41 other shows which include Freshmen tunes.

Note that **all** shows listed on this site may be purchased on CDs.

Tech Tip - you'll need the QuickTime media player to listen to the shows; if you don't have it, you'll be prompted to download & install it on your 1st attempt listen online.

If you enjoy the sheer breadth of choices of our kind of music on this site as much as I do, let them know...