

## JAZZ CRUISE 2003

by Jack Morrison

What a wonderful way to spend a week, cruising the Caribbean and having over 80 Jazz Musicians entertain you. The best part of all was listening to The Four Freshmen perform for 8 full hours.

The Freshmen at times were challenged fighting colds and not always having the best of conditions. For example, due to high seas the ship had to change course and abort our stop in Nassau. During one performance the ship was rocking pretty heavily. Curtis said he sometimes gets light headed hitting the high notes on his trumpet and combined with the ships rocking do not be surprised if he lands headfirst on the floor. Even with these distractions the Group was nothing short of fantastic.

They sang 53 different songs. It is amazing how fast they are adding new material. I also like how they are continually tweaking existing arrangements, putting their own personal stamp on many of the traditional numbers. This group 22 is working hard, growing and maturing, trying new things and exploring different ways. ***There is an evolution happening right before our eyes*** as this group 22 is distancing itself away from being another nostalgic 50's group. As Four Freshmen fans, we are so fortunate to be experiencing this.

Perhaps the highlight of their performances came on the last set of the last day of the cruise. During the break, a gentleman sitting in the first row by the name of Ray Evans asked Bob if he could buy a Four Freshmen CD. He told Bob that he wrote the song *How Can I Tell Her*. After the break, Bob acknowledged the fact to the audience and the guys sang the song for him. Everyone in the room caught the excitement of the moment. Needless to say, Bob gave him a CD, but Ray said "Let me buy a second copy, as I would like two."

Ray Evans, 88, is a lyricist and along with his partner, the late Jay Livingston, penned many catchy tunes such as *Tammy* and *Silver Bells*. They also won Oscars for *Buttons & Bows*, *Mona Lisa*, *Que Sera Sera*. He was very humble and was most pleased to pose for pictures with the guys after the set was over.

Anita Berry, from St. Louis, is the person that makes the Jazz Cruise possible each year. She charts the whole ship and then takes the financial risk upon herself to see that it comes about with great jazz musicians. Brian sang *You Came A Long Way From St. Louie* just for her. She was all smiles and obviously enjoyed it very much.

Finally, I would like to thank Jeri Ann Kelly for doing such a nice job of coordinating the trip for close to 100 Freshmen fans. She provided us with Blue FF Golf shirts and arranged a group picture with the Freshmen. She was always there looking out for our best interest - a job well done, Jeri!

## Vince Johnson - Incognito for Halloween (w/Mel Meyers)



Ray Evans w/FF



**Editor's Note:** Mel Meyers reports that Ray Evans wrote the big Freshmen hit "How Can I Tell Her" and three other award winning songs including the Nat King Cole blockbuster "Mona Lisa."

**Pictures: Thank you! Dan de la Torre**