

Thank You Again - Brian, Curtis, Vince & Bob! by Yas, FFS Japan Rep



My Best Birthday in 67 Years by Jim Healey (CA)

I'm the guy whose baseball card you may have seen in the Nov.-Dec. 2002 issue of "Fresh News," right across from a picture of Mrs. Gene Autry. In that story, it said that I had played for the San Francisco Giants. As kids like to say these day, "Not really." I wrote the editor letting him know I was a Giants' Fantasy Camp pitcher in 1989. I guess the baseball card looked so real, he thought I was for real.

On the back of the card it said my life's ambition was to sing with the Four Freshmen. Well, that hasn't happened yet, but something just as good happened to me on the Jazz Cruise last November. My wife, Elaine, and I were sitting in the Pinnacle Dining Room with Bob and Karen Cary, ready to celebrate my birthday. Bob and Karen are A & W restaurant operators in Visalia, CA, so I thought they might have smuggled aboard some of that great root beer so we could make floats for dessert. They didn't. But, the waiter did bring in a bottle of Mum's champagne, a gift from Elaine's wonderful girls, Lisa and Lynette.

While we were toasting my natal day, guess who strolled up to our table? The guys! Standing next to us were Brian, Bob, Vince and Curt asking (as if they didn't know) if someone was having a birthday. "It's me," I said ungrammatically. "Then, we'd like to sing you the Happy Birthday song," was the reply. In perfect unison, in their unique harmonic style, they launched into the tune, and it was dynamite! When they told me they had rehearsed quite awhile because it was the first time they'd ever sung this together, my feelings of self-importance reached a new high.

Was it as good as pitching for Fantasy Camp Giants? It was better than that. I'm the only one who scored this time. I have a photo of me with the guys and it's on my wall as I speak, and my sneaky friend, Bob Cary, secretly taped the event so now I can have the Four Freshmen sing to me every year on Nov. 5th. Thanks fellows, and thanks to Bob, Karen & Elaine for my best birthday in 67 years!

Our loving jazz vocal & instrumental group came over to Japan for the last 3 consecutive years. Aren't we lucky? FF 2003 Japan Tour started first performance at Jazz Club B-Flat in Tokyo on 21st of November. They continued the tour to Kanazawa, Hiroshima and back again to Tokyo, totally 7 venues at 5 different spots.

I had chances to go to 4 venues (6 shows) in Tokyo. They sang the following 38 different songs with different combinations. As you see, they sing and play not only Freshmen classics, but also new songs, including new classics for the current group.

After You've Gone - And So It's Over
Angel Eyes - Around The World - Day By Day
Day In Day Out - Early Autumn
Ev'rytime We Say Goodbye
Fools Rush In - Graduation Day
How Do You Keep The Music Playing
I Concentrate On You - I Remember You
If I Only Had A Brain - I'm Gonna Go Fishin'
In This Whole Wide World - Indian Summer
Invitation - It Could Happen To You
It's A Blue World - Mamselle
My One And Only Love - Poinciana - Rain
Route 66 - September Song - Skylark
Somebody Loves Me - Somethings Gotta Give
That Old Feeling - Their Hearts Were Full of Spring
There Will Never Be Another You
Walkin' My Baby Back Home
You Call It Madness, I Call It Love
You Came A Long Way From St. Louis
You Stepped Out Of A Dream
Young & Foolish - You've Got Me Crying Again

There are 74 households, 116 individuals of FFS members in Japan. Many of us went to the venues and enjoyed the great sound by the four young, talented, positive and friendly musicians. They were also generous enough to attend the FFS Japan party and we intended to welcome the guys, but they welcomed us more by jam sessions.

Among FFS members in Japan we are discussing how the current Four Freshmen can be more widely promoted to those who love high quality music in our country, because their music and performances are too good for only limited numbers of people.

On behalf of all Japanese FFS members, I want to wish the Four Freshmen soon to be more major in the music business.