

Fresh News

Volume 27, No. 2

APRIL, MAY, JUNE 2013

The Four Freshmen Receive a ST★R

by Bob Ferreira

The Four Freshmen have garnered a lot of acclaim over its 65 years in the music business and for good reason. Any performing act that can withstand the constant ebb and flow of the music industry and still find a way to stay true to its original sound says a lot about the passion of both artist and fan. Although this writer firmly believes that it is not an artist's accolades but the body of work that should define one's success. It is always nice to be acknowledged for one's accomplishments - something that has not always come the way of the Four Freshmen.

On January 20, 2013 the Four Freshmen had the prestigious honor of being presented a star on the Palm Springs Walk of Stars for their contribution to the world of music and its deep cultural connection to Palm Springs. The emotions felt in receiving this award were palpable as we accepted on behalf of all the amazing musicians that have helped sustain the sound over the years. We were accepting this honor for all those shining personalities who, sadly, are not around anymore to see the continued fruits of their labor and passion. But most importantly, we accepted the star for all of the fans and friends who have supported the group over the years and gave the Four Freshmen a reason to continue on. We thank you for continuing to believe in us.

A special note of thanks needs to be said for the man who was responsible for making this honor happen, our star sponsor H. William Brown PHD. Dr. Brown has lobbied and labored for over two years to make that special occasion possible and he did it all out of pure love for the sound and a personal desire to honor the legacy of the Four Freshmen. There are no words to express our immense gratitude to Dr. Brown for his efforts.

So, if one day you are in Palm Springs and you walk past 139 North Palm Canyon Drive be sure to look down. When you see a star with that familiar vocal group name just know that it is your star too.

**The Four Freshmen and
Dr Brown pose with their star.**



Our New President, **Neil Lantz**

FOUR FRESHMEN LEGACY HONORED IN PALM SPRINGS, CA

On January 20, 2013, I was privileged to represent the Four Freshmen Society Board of Directors as the City of Palm Springs, CA proclaimed the day to be The Four Freshmen Day and unveiled a star in the Palm Springs Walk of Stars in honor of the Four Freshmen, past and present. Along with the installation of the Golden Palm Star on the Walk of Stars, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors also presented a proclamation honoring the history of the group and its current members.

The star and the impressive ceremony were sponsored by Dr. H. William Brown, a long-time fan and recent new member of the

Society. The Four Freshmen star was the 350th to be placed since the Walk of Stars was founded in 1992 on the sidewalks of Palm Canyon Drive. Honorees include Medal of Honor recipients, former United States Presidents, show business personalities, literary figures, pioneers, civic leaders, and humanitarians. The first group of inductees in 1992 included William Powell, Ruby Keeler, and Ralph Bellamy. The following twenty years have seen the dedication of Golden Palm Stars to nearly 200 show business honorees including superstars Marlene Dietrich, Bob Hope, Al Jolson, Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, Elizabeth Taylor, and on and on.

During the ceremony, major emphasis was placed on the 65-year legacy of the Four Freshmen. Guest speakers at the event included Sue Barbour, Bob Flanigan's son Steve, and Donna Barbour Donaldson, Don Barbour's daughter. Ken Albers' widow, Nancy, was also in attendance. Tributes were offered by Jim Pike, founding member of the Lettermen, and Tim Hauser, founder and current member of the Manhattan Transfer.

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FOUR FRESHMEN MAKE STAR GRADE

by Dr. William Brown, FFS Palm Beach, FLA

The dedication of the 350th star for the Palm Springs Walk of Stars brought out a crowd of over 250 consisting of mainly devoted fans, local celebrities, and several media and music industry professionals.

The star and the event were sponsored and co-organized by H. William Brown, Ph.D., a member of the Society. He also served as co-master of ceremonies for the event along with Robert Alexander, President of the Palm Springs Walk of Stars. The dedication ceremony began with President Alexander presenting each of the Four Freshmen with a replica of the star and a proclamation from the mayor of Palm Springs declaring Sunday, January 20, 2013, The Four Freshmen Day. President Alexander then turned the microphone over to H. William Brown.

As a young lad, William Brown would visit Capitol Records recording studios with his uncle, a former sideman with the big bands. It was there that William first encountered the founders (Group 1) and has been an ardent fan since.

The founders were well represented by guest speakers at the dedication and after-party in the presence of Sue Barbour (Ross Barbour's widow), Donna Barbour Donaldson (Ross's daughter) and Stephen Flanigan (son of Bob Flanigan and Mary Flanigan). Unfortunately, Bob's widow Mary was unable to make the trip from Las Vegas.

They all expressed how thankful and appreciative they were of the honor of a star for their respective kin and all the groups that followed.

Also in attendance were Nancy Albers, widow of Kenny Albers (Group 3), who was with the Freshmen at the time of some of the most memorable recordings and a large contingent of the extended Barbour family.

Three famous close harmony groups have openly attributed their vocal styling as being influence by the Four Freshmen. Two of these groups were represented in person by their founders.

Jim Pike of The Lettermen recalled how he first heard the Four Freshmen on campus and it changed his life.

Tim Hauser, founder and active member of The Manhattan Transfer, stated that in 1979 when he first formed the group he was profoundly influenced by the Four Freshmen and is a close friend of members of the current Group 22.

Don Shelton, an accomplished clarinetist, vocalist and former member of the famous Hi-Lo's, had the following to say in a letter addressed to the dedication,

"I would like to say that the Four Freshmen were the first vocal group that captured my attention back in the 50's when I first heard them live at Texas Tech. Gene Puerling, founder of the Hi-Lo's, always gave much credit to the Freshmen for laying down the standard for a male vocal group."

All in all, these peers praised the groups from 2 to 22 for carrying on the legacy of the Four Freshman by staying true to their original unique sound.

The Four Freshmen, the guest speakers, special invited guests and the Board of Directors of the Palm Springs Walk of Stars were guests at an after-party hosted by H. William Brown.



FOUR FRESHMEN LEGACY HONORED

(continued from page 2)

Also attending was Frank Busseri, founding member of the Four Lads; and a letter was read from Don Shelton of the Hi-Lo's. I found it significant that a representative of each of those great singing groups saluted the Four Freshmen, although none of them has yet to be installed on the Walk of Stars.

Bob, Brian, Vince, and Curtis accepted the honor on behalf of themselves, the original four and all members who came in between. As the senior member, Bob spoke humbly and eloquently about the history of the Four Freshmen and offered a thoughtful recognition of the families of the founders.

Several FFS members from California and Arizona made it to the ceremony as well as the reception that followed, along with Dina Roth and Dale and Joan Sheets representing IVI. The Sunday festivities followed two Four Freshmen concerts the day before in nearby Sun City where the guy's full house performances were, as usual, top notch. FFS members Jim and Anita Bennie organized and manned the CD/membership table at the concerts and did a tremendous job on behalf of the Four Freshmen and the Society.

Indeed, it was a memorable weekend and appreciation goes out to the City of Palm Springs, the County of Riverside, and especially to FFS member Dr. William Brown for his efforts in supporting the newest star on the Walk of Stars.

Fresh News is published quarterly © 2013, all rights reserved, celebrating THE FOUR FRESHMEN, the best vocal/instrumental quartet in the world. Publication does not imply approval of FFS corporate directors or trustees. Each author is responsible for his/her article.

Deadlines for consideration of articles:

1. Jan/Feb/March - Dec 15
2. Apr/May/June - March 15
3. July/Aug/Sept - June 15
4. Oct/Nov/Dec - Sept 15

Submit manuscripts to the Editors:

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Donna Gallaway, donnagal@fairpoint.net

The Four Freshmen...On the Road!

Check the Website: fourfreshmensociety.com or fourfreshmen.com for updates

For bookings: International Ventures Incorporated

Dale Sheets & Dina Sheets-Roth

25115 Avenue Stanford, Suite A-102, Valencia, CA 91355

Phone: 661-259-4500 FAX: 661-259-1310

Email: info@ivimanagement.com

Please note: Dates subject to change without notice.

April 12, 2013

Hastings, MI

Thornapple Jazz Festival 10th Anniversary, 509 S. Broadway

Showtime: 8:00pm, Tickets: 269-945-2002

April 13, 2013

Monroe, MI

River Raisin Centre for the Arts, 114 S Monroe St.

Showtime: 7:30pm, Tickets: 734-242-7722

April 14, 2013

Cincinnati, OH

Xavier University, Gallagher Student Center Theatre, 3800 Victory Pkwy

Showtime: 3:00pm, Tickets: 513-745-3161

April 16-17, 2013

Cleveland Heights, OH

Night Town, 12387 Cedar Rd.

Showtimes: 7:00pm, Box Office: 216-795-0550

April 19, 2013

Newton, NJ

The Newton Theatre, 234 Spring St.

Showtime: 8:00pm, Tickets: 973-383-3700

April 20, 2013

Scranton, PA

The Mellow Theater, Lackawanna College, 501 Vine St.

Showtime: 8:00pm, Tickets: 570-955-1455

April 21, 2013

Bayside, NY

Queensborough Performing Arts Center, 222-05 56th Ave.

Showtime: 3:00pm,

Tickets: 718-631-6311 (M-F 10am-4pm) 212-352-3101 (weekends)

May 3, 2013

Kansas City, MO

Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, The Four Freshmen

& the Kansas City Jazz Orchestra, Helzberg Hall, 1601 Broadway

Showtime: 8:00pm, Tickets: 816-994-7200

May 5, 2013

Keyser, WV

Highlands Arts Unlimited, Church-McKee Arts Center,

Potomac State College of WVU, 101 Fort Ave.

Showtime: 3:00pm, Tickets: 304-788-3066

May 10, 2013

Johnstown, PA

University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Pasquerilla Performing

Arts Center (w/big band), 450 Schoolhouse Rd

Showtime: 7:30pm, Tickets: 814-269-7200 or 1-800-846-2787

May 11, 2013

Parkerburg, WV

Smoot Theatre, 213 5th St.

Showtime: 8:00pm, Tickets: 304-422-7529

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FFS New Member/or Renewal Form

Name _____

Spouse _____

Address _____

(9 digit zip please)

Telephone # _____

Fax # _____

E-mail _____

New Member Fee: \$32.00

Single or Couple (worldwide)

All Renewals: One Year \$22.00

Two or more years \$17.00 each year

FFS dues are not tax deductible.

Please mail form and correct fee to:

Chaz Cone
FFS Membership Dept.
6900 Hunters Knoll NE
ATLANTA GA 30328-1763

Or renew online at
www.fourfreshmensociety.com/dues

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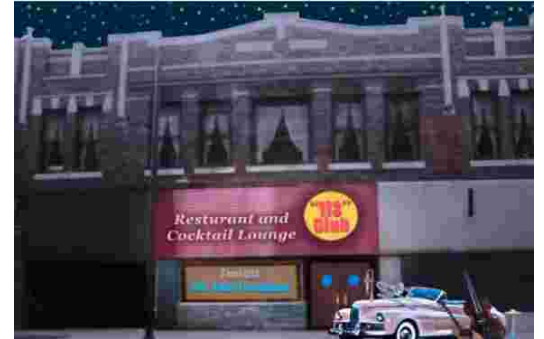


FOUR FRESHMEN SOCIETY 2013 CONVENTION

SEPTEMBER 5 - 7, 2013, FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

If you attended one or all twenty-five of the Four Freshmen Society's conventions, then you already know what a great time we have meeting and renewing friendships and hearing the fabulous Four Freshmen live in concert. We will not only celebrate the **twenty-sixth year of The Four Freshmen Society's Annual International Convention**, but also the **65th Anniversary of The Four Freshmen uninterrupted**. We will go "**Back To The 113 Club**," at the Grand Wayne Convention Center located on the very site where four young men, The Four Freshmen, made their first one week long professional appearance at the club. Now, 65 years later, we will have an opportunity to join with the current fabulous Four Freshmen in celebration of this memorable anniversary and of their legacy. Don't miss this great celebration!

The Hilton Hotel has graciously extended their low room rates 3 days before and 3 days after the convention date. A free shuttle is available from the airport to the hotel. You may call the Hilton Hotel 260/422-4002 and advise them of the arrival time of your flight in order to allow a shorter wait time for the shuttle. Parking in the city parking garage is free; however the Hilton confirmation system will always show a \$7.00 parking fee on your hotel bill. When you check in be sure to ask the desk clerk to remove this fee.



Dan de la Torre has designed a great logo for the **65th Anniversary Commemorative shirt**. The shirt is a collared shirt in Mediterranean Blue and available in both Ladies and Men's sizes.

"**Fresh Memories**" was a winner last year and once again we will meet to share and enjoy memories of the past. Neil Lantz will be our host with former Four Freshmen members Bill Comstock, Rod Henley, Greg Stegman, Kirk Marcy and others, along with Betty Kratzsch and Sue Barbour sharing their memories from 1948 and beyond.

Plan to arrive on Thursday. Meet & greet Candy and Jim Bell, Indiana state representatives in the **113 Club/Hospitality/Music Mart/Silent Auction Area**. The **Wannabees** will meet on Thursday, Friday and Saturday afternoon led by Bill Martin, Yas Ichiura and others. We will be singing those great tunes that have been sung and performed by the Four Freshmen for the past 65 years.

Silent Auction - Whether or not you are able to come to the Convention, we need your help.

One of the traditions of the conventions is a **Silent Auction** of Four Freshmen and similar memorabilia i.e. music and non-musical items, art work, jewelry, photos, etc. If you have anything to donate please email or call Jim Owen at 260-471-1752 or jimandsue3@comcast.net



Thursday evening is the traditional Jam Session anchored by The Jim Steele Quartet – where Fresh Fans and FF alumni can sit in with their instruments or voices. This is a great evening of fun and always with some surprises. This year we will enjoy a surprise from Bill Comstock and family.

Friday night will be a very special celebration, taking us back to memories and memorabilia of the 113 Club, Fort Wayne, Indiana. The theme "Back To the 113 Club" will open with dinner music by Jim Steele, jazz pianist and Brad Kuhns,

string bass, followed by The New Millennium Jazz Orchestra performing a tribute to Stan Kenton. The fabulous Four Freshmen will close out the evening's celebration.

Saturday night we will enjoy dinner music by Eric Clancy, jazz pianist and Kevin Pierkarski, string bass. Following dinner we will have the pleasure hearing a concert by The Four Freshmen backed by members of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic string orchestra under the direction of former Four Freshmen member Dr. Rod Henley of Las Vegas, Nevada.



PROGRAM SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2013

- 9:00a-4:00p Registration – Anthony Wayne Ballroom Prefunction Area
- 9:00a-4:00p 113 Club Hospitality Room – Jefferson A Room
- 2:00p-4:00p Wannabees – Jefferson B & C Room
- 3:30p-5:00p Board of Directors/ Advisory Council Meeting - Farnsworth Room / Hotel
- DINNER ON YOUR OWN**
- 7:30p-10:30p Jam Session - cash bar available – Anthony Wayne Ballroom

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2013

- 9:00a-4:00p Registration – Anthony Wayne Prefunction Area
- 9:00a-4:00p 113 Club Hospitality Room – Jefferson A Room
- 9:30a-1:00p Tour Embassy Theatre, Botanical Conservatory w/ Box Lunch Meet in the Theatre. Doors open at 9:10a
- 1:00p-2:30p Free Time
- 2:30p-4:30p Wannabees – Jefferson B & C Room
- 5:30p-6:30p Meet and Greet – cash bar available - Anthony Wayne Prefunction Area
- 6:30p-7:30p Dinner – Anthony Wayne Ballroom
- 7:30p-8:10p New Millennium Jazz Orchestra – A Tribute to Stan Kenton
- 8:10p-8:45p Break - cash bar available
- 8:45p- The Four Freshmen Concert – Anthony Wayne Ballroom
- Afterglow Hotel Atrium Following Concert - Meet the Four Freshmen

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2013

- 9:00a-12:00p Registration – Anthony Wayne Prefunction Area
- 9:00a-4:00p 113 Club Hospitality Room – Jefferson A Room
- 9:00a-10:00a State Representatives Meeting – Jefferson B & C Room
- 10:00a-11:30a General Meeting - Jefferson B & C Room
- 10:30a Silent Auctions Ends (results will be announced at General Meeting)
- 11:30p-1:00p Free Time
- 1:00p-2:30p Fresh Memories with Former FF, Sue Barbour & Betty Kratzsch Hosted by President Neil Lantz – Jefferson B & C Room
- 2:30p-4:00p Wannabees – Jefferson B & C Room
- 3:30p-4:30p Pick up and pay for Silent Auction items
- 5:30p-6:30p Meet and greet – cash bar available - Anthony Wayne Prefunction Area
- 6:30p-7:30p Dinner – Anthony Wayne Ballroom
- 7:30p-8:00p Break - cash bar available
- 8:05p The Four Freshmen in Concert with Strings – Anthony Wayne Ballroom

The Friday guided tour through the **Historical Embassy Theatre** featuring a short organ concert, box lunch and tour of the **Botanical Gardens** on your own, is filling up fast. We have been given permission to perform a Four Freshmen tune on the stage of the Embassy Theatre. Rehearsal will take place during Thursday's Wannabee's session.

There is much to do in and around the city of Fort Wayne. Some of the highlights of our beautiful downtown are the **Allen County Library** with the second largest genealogy center in the U. S., the beautiful **Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception**, the **Tin Caps Minor League Baseball Field**, the **Fort Wayne**

Art Museum and the **Allen County Courthouse** with its magnificent mural paintings, **Freimann Square** with its beautiful fountain and flowers, and **Headwaters Park**. The **Fort Wayne Children's Zoo** is one of the ten best in the U.S. If you like to shop, it is only a 15 minute ride to beautiful **Jefferson Pointe** outdoor shopping mall, A 28 minute drive from the hotel will take you to Auburn, Indiana where you can visit the **Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum**, a National Historic Landmark Exhibit of 120 cars on 3 floors. If you wish to arrive early over Labor Day weekend you can attend the huge Auburn Cord Duesenberg Festival and Car Auction which brings thousands from all over the world into area every year. For more information, go to their web site.

www.automobilemuseum.org

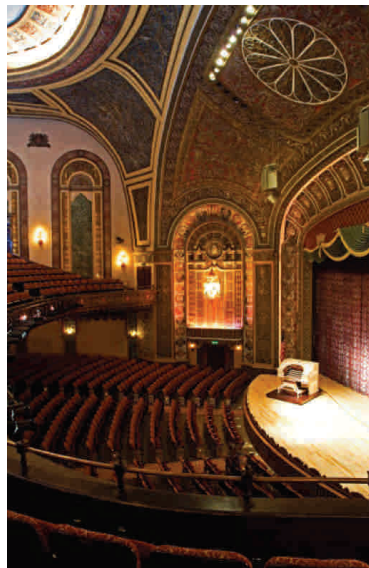
What do you do now?

Please fill out the registration form, make reservations at the Hilton Hotel (using the code TFF) and plan to join us as we look forward to hosting the 65th Anniversary of The Four Freshmen “Back To The 113 Club” in Fort Wayne, Indiana, September 5 – 7, 2013.

Marlene Lobsiger and Dave Blackwell

Co-Chairpersons

2013 FFS Convention



2013 FOUR FRESHMEN SOCIETY CONVENTION

Fort Wayne, IN September 5-7, 2013

Send form to: **Marlene Lobsiger**
8625 Creekside Place
Fort Wayne, IN 46804
Questions: Call (260) 432-6330

REGISTRATION: Read registration Information details in *Fresh News* issue before filling out this form.

Name(s) _____
(First Name) (Last Name) (First Name) (Last Name)

Address _____

Address 2: _____ Telephone # (_____) _____

City, State, Zip _____ E-mail _____

COMMEMORATIVE SHIRT: order \$33 each: (enter NUMBER of shirts wanted by size and gender)

Men's Sizes: (___small) (___med) (___large) (___XL) (___XXL) (___XXXL) (Add \$3.00 each for XXL and XXXL)

Women's Sizes: (___small) (___med) (___large) (___XL) (___XXL) (___XXXL) (Add \$3.00 each for XXL and XXXL)

JAM SESSION: Plan to perform at Thursday's Jam Session? ___ Yes ___ No

Since the *Jam Session* time is limited, we will need your song, key and instrument so we can be ready for you.

Song: _____ Key: _____ Instrument: _____

MENU SELECTIONS: Do you need **vegetarian meals**? How many? Friday _____ Saturday _____

HOTEL INFORMATION: Have you made your **Fort Wayne Hilton** Reservation? ___ Yes ___ No

REGISTRATION FEE:

\$185 per person if registration is postmarked **ON or BEFORE** June 1, 2013. \$205 per person if registration is postmarked **AFTER** June 1, 2013. You may cancel your registration & receive a full refund if you do so **BEFORE** July 1, 2013.

Cancellations **BETWEEN** July 1 and July 31 are subject to a \$25.00 per person processing fee. **NO REFUNDS AFTER JULY 31.**

TABLE SEATING: Tables of 10. List names of those you want at your table. **SEATING IS ARRANGED BY REGISTRATION POSTMARKED DATE.** Be sure your entire group mails in on the same day.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____
6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____

TOUR: Embassy Theatre/Botanical Gardens \$30 including a box lunch.

PAYMENT SUMMARY:

REGISTRATION: (\$185 OR \$205 **after** June 1) _____ people @ \$ _____ each = \$ _____

COMMEMORATIVE SHIRTS: _____ shirts @ \$33 or \$36 each = \$ _____

TOUR: Embassy Theatre/Botanical Gardens _____ tours @ \$30 each = \$ _____

NEW MEMBERS ONLY: FOUR FRESHMEN SOCIETY Membership Fee \$10 = \$ _____
(\$10 fee applies to couple OR single)

____ Couple ____ Single Name(s) if different from above _____

Total = \$ _____

PAYMENT BY CHECK IS ENCOURAGED: Please make checks payable to **FFS Convention 2013**. Check No. _____

Or pay by Credit Card: Visa or Mastercard may be used. CHARGE _____ VISA _____ MASTERCARD _____

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____ 3 digit CVCC no. on back of card _____

Signature _____ Print Name as on Card _____

Card Holder's Address (include ZIP Code) _____

REMEMBER: You are always welcome to REGISTER ON LINE. Please go to our website: www.ffa2013.com

2013 FOUR FRESHMEN SOCIETY CONVENTION REGISTRATION INFORMATION

(These details give further information in regard to the Registration Form)

REGISTRATION INFORMATION: You may register on line at www.ffs2013.com or register by mail and pay by check or credit card using the form on the next page. Please provide all requested information, including first **and** last names.

TABLE ASSIGNMENTS: Dinner seating will be at tables of ten. To ensure that you will receive assigned seating with others you want at your table, please provide **all** names. Encourage your preferred tablemates to mail in their registrations early and on the **same day as seating will be arranged by post mark date or on-line registration date.**

HOTEL INFORMATION: We recommend that you make your hotel reservations early. Rooms at the Hilton Fort Wayne@ Convention Center will be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. Rates for the convention are guaranteed at \$109 plus tax per night for 2 double beds or a king, double occupancy. These rates will also be available for three days before and three days after the official convention dates of September 5-7 - subject to availability.

TO RESERVE YOUR ROOM: CALL Hilton at (800) 445-8667 and ask for Reservations. Be sure to use the group code TFF (THE FOUR FRESHMEN) or go to www.hilton.com/Fort_Wayne. If you are planning to arrive earlier than September 3 you will need to register by phone, not-online. **Ask for convention rates when calling either of these numbers - (260) 420-1100 or (800) 445-8667.** **The rates are available even if the web site does not list those dates.**

SHIRTS: The shirts are Mediterranean Blue with the convention logo. Shirts are silk-touch 65%polyester, 35%cotton polo-style with collars. There will only be a few shirts available at the convention. If you want a shirt, it's best to order it with your registration.

JAM SESSION: Thursday night's open jam session promises to be a great evening of jazz, and Society members are encouraged to participate. While a talented local jazz combo will anchor the evening's festivities, past and current Freshmen and convention attendees are most welcome (and encouraged) to join in. **Please indicate your song, key and instrument on the registration form so our combo will be prepared to back up your song.**

TOURS: Tour the Embassy Theatre and Botanical Conservatory. A box lunch is included. The Historic Embassy Theatre is across the street from the Grand Wayne Center with the Botanical Conservatory next door to the theatre. The tour includes the beautiful historical theatre built in 1928 and a short concert on the spectacular Grande Page Theatre Organ, one of three of its size and one of two still in its original home since 1928. Following lunch, served at the Botanical Conservatory, you will be free to explore the beautiful Conservatory and surround yourself with nature and its lush displays in the Showcase, the Tropical and the Desert Gardens. The cost for both tours and the box lunch is \$30.00.

MENU SELECTION: Please specify if you require vegetarian meals.

REGISTRATION FEES: Early registration (Prior to June 1) is encouraged and must be accompanied by payment. **Every effort will be made to accommodate late registrations but priority dinner seating cannot be guaranteed.**

PAYMENT SUMMARY: Please complete all information on the Registration Form and forward your payment as appropriate. While checks are preferred, you may charge your fees using Visa or MasterCard only. The 3-digit CVCC security number on the back of the card must be included. ONLY members of the Four Freshmen Society may attend this convention. Non-members will be allowed to join for a special fee of only \$10 (single or couple - please indicate) if submitted with a convention registration. Feel free to duplicate the registration form for your non-member friends who may be interested.

TRANSPORTATION FROM AIRPORT TO HOTEL: The Hilton Hotel offers a free shuttle from the Fort Wayne International Airport by calling (260) 420-1100. Rental cars and taxi service are also available at the airport.

HOTEL PARKING: Parking is free for hotel guests **with in and out privileges.**

The Early Convention Years

by Palle Christensen, Denmark

I joined The Four Freshmen Appreciation Society FFAS (today FFS) in 1988 and my first issue of *FreshNews* is dated January 1988. The July-August 1988 issue included this invitation:

"You're invited to our 40th Anniversary Celebration on the 18, 19 and 20th September"
and right away I was hooked.

The next issue, September-October, gave further details about the event. The first annual Get-Together of FFAS with Four Freshmen shows at the Barbary Coast Hotel plus special events and FFAS features at the Hacienda Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada. *FreshNews* included a very detailed schedule of events very similar to today's convention schedules. Through my Freshmen friends, Keith Murray from England and Jorgen Bjorno from Denmark, I learned a bit more about the event. I told my wife that I had to go to Las Vegas. So my family decided to visit friends in Redlands, CA, while I went to Las Vegas.

September 1988

Friday the 18th of September, my family boarded a SAS flight direct to Los Angeles. After a short stop, I continued to Las Vegas by Delta. The Barbary Coast rooms were fully booked, so Bob Flanigan had reserved rooms at the Hacienda Hotel where the hospitality suite and some of the fun would take place. After the taxi trip from the airport, I went to my room to freshen up. I phoned the president, Edd Townsend who told me that a shuttle would be ready in front of the hotel at 9:00pm. I was very excited about the whole thing and I was on time in the lobby. I am sorry to say, that I do not remember those of my fellow conventioners at that time, but you know who you are.

The shuttle let us off at the opposite corner of the Barbary Coast. The sign at the crossing said "Don't walk" so we had to wait for it to say "Walk". Suddenly, I saw a guy standing next to me, tall and with curly hair. It was Mr. Flanigan himself. My heart skipped a beat as I turned to him and said: "Hello Mr. Flanigan, I just travelled half the world to meet you."

Bob answered, "Then your name is Palle."

Edd Townsend had told Bob that there would be some crazy Danish guy for the Get-Together.

Everyone went into the Barbary Coast lounge where the concerts should take place and there I met the Four Freshmen line-up with Bob Flanigan, Autie Goodman, Mike Beisner and Gerry Lee Rosenburg. There were concerts scheduled at 10:00am, 12:00pm and 2:00pm for a duration of one hour each. There was a minimum cover charge of \$4, which included two drinks. I enjoyed all three shows although I was suffering from jetlag due to the 9 hours of time difference. During each break Mike Beisner asked me if I was tired.

For this convention we were a group of Freshmen fans from abroad. The Murrays from England and from Denmark, the Bjornos, the Soborgs and me.

Here I have to add my first personal meeting with Ross. Jorgen Bjorno knew that Ross had some Ampex tapes in his garage with the contents of the Four Freshmen in Sweden. As I worked for Scandinavian Airlines, I had the possibility to get the material shipped to Denmark and there was a contact to the Danish Broadcasting Company

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to inquire if they were interested in converting the tapes to VHS (before DVD). However, the deal was cancelled and instead Ross worked with Wally Heider to release the Stockholm broadcast. At the Barbary Coast, Ross came to me, asked me for my name, put his hands on my shoulders and said that he was sorry to change the agreement, but he felt more secure with Heider as he did not know me.

On the morning of Saturday the 19th, we all met at the pool area. Some people told Freshmen stories while the rest of us listened with very big ears. I especially remember Bob Watts' stories and pictures from the very beginning of the Four Freshmen. Suddenly Bob Flanigan came along just to see how we were. Before leaving to go home and do some vacuum-cleaning, he invited us to Mary and his house for brunch Sunday morning.

A room at the Hacienda Hotel was used as the hospitality suite where there was a little mart with different things, including t-shirts designed by Ross Barbour. And yes, I still have mine. I was assisting Edd with serving beverages and the t-shirt sales. There was no convention fee, so it was all on Edd Townsend, unless someone supported him.

There was a lot of activity in the hospitality suite. Four Freshmen harmonies with current and alumni guys, including Ross Barbour and Bill Comstock. Edd had also supplied a guitar. As Bob Flanigan was busy vacuum-cleaning at his home, Sue Barbour sang the lead.

Saturday night at the Barbary Coast was similar to the day before with three shows and a lot of Freshmen talk. Plus, the Freshmen themselves were there to entertain us during the breaks.

Sunday the 20th was the real anniversary day. Bob Flanigan had arranged transport by a mini bus from the hotel to the Flanigan residence. As a little gift I had bought a bottle of Champagne and it needed some wrapping. I took the elevator down to the hotel lobby shop. While going down, I had company of Sue and Bill Comstock. This was the first time I had been so close to the Comstocks and I must admit, I was a little starstruck.

The transport to Flanigan's was fine and everyone was singing the Freshmen harmonies. We were greeted by Mary and Bob and afterwards we enjoyed a very nice brunch with drinks and the hospitality of the Flanigans. We were all around the house and studied the many trophies from Bob's career. Bob had a cassette copy of the *FRESHMAS* album which had not been released yet. It was fantastic to be there in the Flanigan living room and listen to a not-yet-released Freshmen album. The one-liner came from Keith Murray who said to me with a British accent, "Think Palle, this little boy from Gateshead England sitting in Bob Flanigan's house."

On Monday the 21st, it was time to say goodbye to everyone. I flew to Ontario to join my family. The fantastic super weekend was over.

September 1989

A convention was planned by Edd Townsend by and published in *FreshNews*, but was cancelled last minute. However, I already had plans to go but the word was that the unions in Las Vegas were planning to block the performances. With shaking hands I called Mr. Flanigan, expecting his answering machine, but at the other end of the line, Flanigan picked up the phone, "Flanigan here." Bob told me that he would investigate and if I called back in two hours, he would know more about it. Later I called and the answering machine was cleared of all other messages and said. "Hi Palle. Just come over, we are working." This is why I participated in the 2nd convention in the year of 1989.

I am sure that some of my fellow Freshmen fans were in Las Vegas in 1989 too. I have asked Ross about his opinion of this and he said that Sue and he were there, saw the Four Freshmen at the Barbary Coast and stayed with some friends in Las Vegas. I am sure that other Freshmen fans were there. Were you?

The official 1989 Get-Together was in Toledo. But, neither Flanigan, the Barbours nor the Four Freshmen attended, so I do not count that event.

June 1990

My 3rd convention took place in Springfield, Ohio, on June 16th, 1990. My son, Jesper, and I flew to Dayton and then took a taxi to the Springfield Inn. Dick Hatfield was the convention manager of this event.

On Saturday, the 16th of June, the Four Freshmen concert took place at an outside theatre with a big band. Before the show, the Freshmen went to rehearse and I have to

(continued on page 11)

The Four Freshmen Society Inc.

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GUESS WHO!

This lovely Lady was very important to one of our Founding Four Freshmen.

She is from Bryan, Ohio and went to the University of

Toledo. Met her love at Cedar Point, a famous amusement park, where he was performing. He told me she didn't like him at first, but he fell in love with her cute little daughter.

(If you guessed Mary Flanigan you were right.) She is the bridesmaid and her twin sister, Marilyn, is the bride.

I am proud to call her my friend. While I lived in Las Vegas we shared many fun luncheons. Our favorite place was a quaint little tea room.

Mary is now residing in a beautiful assisted living apartment. If you would like to send her your notes or cards, send them to IVI and they will happily forward them to her.

— Barbara Meyers



CONVENTION SURVEY RESULTS

Chairman Jack Morrison, Gil Peterson, Bruce Camlin, Barbara Meyers

Twenty two people responded to the Survey. Twenty plan to attend the Fort Wayne Convention, two are unable to attend. One has health problems and one wants the conventions to go back to the Summer.

As expected, the primary reason for attending is to enjoy the performance of The Four Freshmen, followed by the desire to see old friends and people with a common interest in music. The Thursday Night Jam Session placed third, followed by the local tours and the Wannabees singing.

Additional reasons for attending is to discuss the Four Freshmen Society and it's importance, to conduct FFS business. To support the convention and the current Four Freshmen. A great time shared by all.

The reasons for *not* attending are: health 11, cost of travel 9, flying 7, cost of registration 2, program 1.

The last questions were: Would you attend a cruise? 12 said yes, 5 no. Should we meet in San Antonio? 13 said yes, Kansas City received 12, Chicago got 11 votes, Las Vegas 8, Tampa 0. There were some write in suggestions with one or two requests.

The Convention Site Committee sends thanks to all who took the time to respond. We think the small number of responses is an indication of satisfaction with the conventions. See you in Fort Wayne.

The Four Freshmen Society Inc.

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The Early Convention Years (continued from page 9)

tell you a little story about that. During the afternoon, we were all in the hotel lobby, talking and waiting to see our heroes off to the rehearsal session with the big band. They came down with their instruments, walked through the lobby and out to a waiting limo. As the car was ready to drive, Flanigan came out and walked back to me. "Palle, would you and your son like to join us to the rehearsal?" You better believe that Jesper and I were some proud guys sitting in the limo with the Four Freshmen?

The Dan de la Torre's DVD of the 25th Anniversary shows a few pictures from this occasion.

June 1991

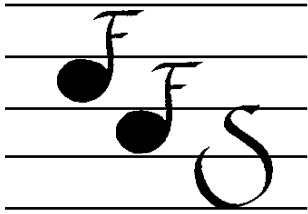
The 1991, convention was hosted by President John Bangs in Oshkosh. It was very successful. I remember taking the Greyhound bus from Chicago O'Hare Airport all the way up to Oshkosh, which I just knew from the yearly airplane Get-Togethers. We stayed at the Hilton just around the corner from the bus station. John Bangs had arranged the Old Opera House for the Four Freshmen Concert. The concert was recorded and made available from the Music Mart.

In addition to the participants from the earlier years, Betty Kratzsch was now with us. I am sure that those of us who were sitting one evening by the river side exchanging viewpoints of life, still remember this occasion.

While in Oshkosh, I had the possibility to visit the Bangs' residence - which also was the FFAS head office. John is a beer bottle collector and I have never seen so many bottles in my life.

More conventions followed, and I'm sure that many of you can complete this list of conventions.

Finally, I hope you have enjoyed my story about the early Four Freshmen Conventions. Writing this article has been a trip down memory lane with *FreshNews* newsletters, pictures, videos, music, etc. I would like to thank everyone for their friendship during these 25 years. Mentioning all of you would take up way too much space. But let me just add, that I have enjoyed the company and friendship of Bob, Ross, Bill and their families very much and I am very thankful for that.



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Here are the folks responsible for its creation:
Dan de la Torre, Yas Ichiura, Marlene Lobsiger, Dave Blackwell,
Sara Lou Lantz, Don Boland, David Barnes, Dina Roth, Barbara Dana,
Richard Larson and Linda Harrison.

