

How About A Couple of Very Special Vintage Freshmen Recordings

Tom Purvis (Pres. FFS)

I am pleased to announce the availability of two great Four Freshmen recorded albums on compact disc.

Our President Emeritus, John Bangs, was able to secure for our Music Mart a supply of an Import from Spain by THE JAZZ FACTORY of the Complete 1950-54 Studio-Issued Recordings of the first two Four Freshmen groups. This recording includes 29 songs from that era which include Hal Kratzsch or Ken Errair on all songs. This album duplicates, in part, the music on the Mosaic set issued some time ago; however, I find the quality of these re-mastered songs to be exceptional. The liner notes are very good, but unfortunately they put a picture of the wrong group on the cover. Nevertheless, a great treasure for our fans, and this album will be available at the Grand Rapids convention and later through our Music Mart. Don't miss this one - we have only a limited supply!

Sometime soon after our 2004 convention we will also be offering a rare find - a one-hour recording of the Four Freshmen and June Christy from a couple of 1961 BBC radio broadcasts. A young fan, named Barry Aldous, recorded these programs from the radio on a reel-to-reel tape recorder. Some forty-three years later Barry discovered that the Freshmen were still performing and that now there was a Four Freshmen Society devoted to their music. He retrieved the tapes, digitized them and up-loaded them where they were captured by our dedicated Web-Master, Chaz Cone, and the process for recovery began. There has been input from Ross Barbour, Ken Albers and technical magic by member, Paul Halac. The process is nearing completion and these very special recordings will be available very soon.

A digression from the current high-tech music world, for those of you who still collect and enjoy vinyl recordings. Recognizing that turntables, phonograph needles and cartridges, etc., can be difficult or impossible to find, a bit of good news: Rick Neiditz of RAM World Electronics, 1898 West 25th Street, Cleveland OH can maybe save your favorite record machine. Rick doesn't believe in obsolescence. He can fix your 8-track, maybe a Beta-Max, and has 3,000 phonograph needles in stock going back to the 1930's. I plan to visit him very soon, just to meet him. Rick's phone number - 216-241-0107!

The recent Live in Holland album appears to be doing well with sales through our Music Mart and from the Freshmen at concerts. There has been no commercial distribution as the supply is not adequate to support such an effort, but the Freshmen are now offering the CD via the Internet at www.fourfreshmen.com. It has been getting some radio play, at least in the Midwest, and one radio personality was recently recognized by the Freshmen for his support of this great new

recorded concert. Dave Hayes of Clear Channel Radio had the honor of the first commercial air play of this new album, and he played the entire album. The day that the CD's were received, I delivered a copy to Dave at WLEC radio in Sandusky OH. The following day I was returning from delivering copies to our Music Mart in Pittsburgh and came into range of the local station and heard the full 7-minute version of Route 66, followed by Angel Eyes. Dave featured the album all week on his afternoon show and played all fourteen cuts, several times. At their concert in Toledo recently the Freshmen introduced Dave to the audience with a thank you for his important support.

FRESHMEN INVADE OREGON

by Dick Waterhouse, Oregon

During the month of May, Oregon was blessed with not one, not two, but three performances by the "Four Freshmen."

It all began May 10, with an early morning appearance on the jazz station KMHD (89.1 FM) in Gresham, which is operated by Mt. Hood Community College.

Art Abrams, who has a big band called "The Swing Machine" did the interview. It began and ended with songs from the "Live In Holland" album, but the highlight came in the middle with two tunes, done live with just a guitar accompaniment. That evening the Freshmen appeared at the college's Visual Arts Theater. I missed that one.

The next performance, May 11, was in Tillamook, on the coast of Oregon, in the Don Whitney Auditorium (Tillamook High School). It was a very enthusiastic audience, and it was the first time I had heard the Freshmen in person since 1953. That's a lot of years, but when the music started I closed my eyes and I was back again in California. Stan Kenton was back in Balboa, Sammy Davis was knocking 'em dead at Ciro's with his imitations, The Four Freshmen were in Century City, Kid Ory, Jack Teagarden, Mel Torme, and the Nat King Cole Trio - all warm memories.

It is true what they say about Group #22. They have the sound down to a "T." Just like Glenn Miller, whose music is still going strong under the direction of Larry O'Brien. The Freshmen gave an outstanding performance sprinkled with some new material and plenty of the golden oldies that kept the audience wanting more.

Two nights later they were in Roseburg, Oregon. Gil Peterson will fill you in on that one in this issue of "Fresh News."