

FFS CONVENTION FRIENDSHIPS EXPANDED ON TRIP ABROAD

by Mike Collins (Texas)

One of the most pleasant aspects of FFS conventions is the quality of persons you meet...folks you genuinely would like to see again under other circumstances, as well.

So it was during an April trip to Asia (10 days in Manila and 3 in Tokyo) when I telephoned Yas and Michiko Ichiura. Yas drove me to several areas within the city, then showed me his remarkable collection of FF memorabilia, which included FF remakes that I never knew existed.

Michiko cooked simply the best meal that I had during this trip, which included five (count'em) different new delicacies that I had never tried before, in addition to some more standard fare, excellently prepared.

I look forward to seeing them again in Pittsburgh, along with others.



The Ichiuras and Mike Collins in the tasteful living room of the two-story house in Meguro-ku, just a few miles south of the famous Ginza and Shinjuku areas.



Mike Collins is amazed that Yas doesn't weigh 300 pounds considering Michiko's culinary skills.

The Los Angeles Jazz Institute - Encores in Big Band Jazz Jack Crosthwait. Huntington Beach CA

The Los Angeles Jazz Institute's Encores in Big Band Jazz was held at the Four Corners Sheraton at LAX, Thursday May 25th through Sunday May 28, 2006. As the Institute's program brochure announced, "Artistry in Rhythm Meets Woodchoppers Ball, celebrating the musicians and the music that created the Stan Kenton and Woody Herman legacy." The Four Freshmen were right at home in this auspicious company, just as they were when appearing and touring with Stan Kenton in their formative years. The Four Freshmen's concert was number nine of a total of sixteen featuring, among others, the artistry of Mike Vax and his Kenton Alumni band, the Woody Herman Orchestra, the bands of Buddy Charles, Maynard Ferguson, Bob Florence, Terry Gibbs, Bill Holman, Al Porcino, as well as the three Jazz Bands of California State University, Long Beach, Los Angeles and Fullerton.

Decked out in blue suits with natty ties, looking like the professionals they are, the Freshmen, #22, were received with enthusiasm by a packed, knowledgeable, jazz crowd. Their program kicked off with the upbeat "Day in Day Out" and went through a program of seventeen songs including the new from "In Session," sounds from "The Five Trombones," and back to the Original Four with "Blue World," closing the hour long classic Four Freshmen show with "We'll Be Together Again."

A Man Worthy of Our Praise Bob Baker, Convention Chairman

In previous convention memos I have alluded to the Society's desire to honor a very important member. This man, simply put, has meant as much as anyone to build our organization and to keep the Freshmen sound alive. Charles H. Trafford....known to us as "Chick," is that man.

I have no intention in this brief writing to attempt a "bio." Most of you know some of his exceptional work, good deeds and generosity. No one can imagine everything that he has accomplished. Working with Chick for several years producing Freshmen and Friends was an eye-opener to the passion he possesses for the group and for the FFS. Although I tried, there was no way I could match that passion.

The time is near for us to say thank you to Mr. Trafford. There will be a designated time at the Friday evening (August 25th) Dinner/Concert for us, enmasse, to express our love to the man. Seek out the opportunity to speak to Chick. He has done everything except sing the fifth part. No, wait a minute, he does that daily.