

TRIBUTES TO BOB

President, Mel Meyers, speech at the memorial tribute

In behalf of the FFS, I am pleased to be here to speak to the memory of Dr. Robert Flanigan. I am grateful and feel honored to speak.

Bob was:

The Consummate Entertainer - he displayed his humor and skills on stage and off, easily.

The Musician - he was on a mission and that was to make the Four Freshmen sing as a trombone section so it's no surprise that from Club 113 to Five Trombones to Live Trombones were so musically unique and dynamic.

As a family man he responded to those issues we parents all have, as required. It didn't take long for Mary to figure out he was a "keeper".

As a story teller he was a delight. It seemed he knew everyone in the music industry and could tell a tale, make it funny yet, believable.

As a Friend - He and Mary stayed at our Toledo home prior to the Pittsburgh convention. It was his birthday. We thought we could show him Toledo's finest but, instead he asked "Do you have a Steak and Shake" here in town? He said they have the best crock of baked beans I ever had. Of course we ate there.. It was his birthday! Frequently, Barb and I would stop there to pick up meal and napkin. And then send it on to Bob. With that gesture we wrote on the napkin and sent it to him with a parody from "I thought about you." It went "I took a trip to Steak and Shake and thought about you." We still think about them.

FFS Member - he enjoyed the comraderie of the Society as provided by every convention as it provided him with the opportunity to enjoy the membership and tease the current Freshmen. What a Guy! He touched the whole Society and he will not be forgotten! The Society looks to the future to continue this Legend!

For me - he was a legend in his own time! Often I pressed him to write a book and record all he could remember. By the way I was told he had committed over 500 songs to memory.

But listen.. .shhhhh! You may be able to hear Bob and Stan tuning up again. He told me on one occasion, "If it weren't for Stan Kenton, The Four Freshmen would be still be singing up and down the Ohio River.

Listen..... Thank you and our love to you, Mary and your family.

ReFreshingly,
Mel Meyers, President Four Freshmen Society

Honoring Robert Flanigan (Aug22,1926-May15,2011)

The Flagship of Freshmen Nation has cleared the harbour breakwater and entered the broader seas beyond.

A twenty-one gun salute to the Captain, the CEO, the Chairman of the Board, the Commander in Chief of our 63 year and still counting love affair with the Four Freshmen and the Freshmen Sound - a sound that will live and flourish as long as men and women possess the gift of hearing.

So sail on, sail on, oh Ship of State. And may your journey continue to spread peace, joy and laughter throughout the universe.

When I first met Bob Flanigan, I addressed him as 'Sir Robert', later as 'King Flan', and finally as 'Hi Bob! It's really great to see you again' - each time with the greatest of respect and admiration for a master entertainer and eventually a friend.

I will miss him dearly. I will always remember.

With love,
Al Skane, FFS Boston
Retired Used Sweater Salesman

Here is what Bob Flanigan has to say about the 60 years of The Four Freshmen...

... "Bad Roads... Bad food... Good and Bad Hotels... Millions of air-miles in DC3s to 747's....

... being a part of Stan Kenton's life and being thankful for all the help he gave us from 1950 to his death....

... the People and Places: The Blue Note and Jack Teagarden, Stan Kenton at Boston's Storyville, Jazz City in Hollywood, CA, and Woody Herman, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Maynard Ferguson and so many more people and places....

... playing the great concert halls of the world and almost every college and university in the USA....it's very special to me because it means we have made, and continue to make, a real contribution to music in the WORLD over these 60 years and now into the future!"

"I recall a luncheon with Jerry West, one of the greatest basketball players of all time and we compared our professions in this way: We both agreed that the boredom is a problem if we allow it to be. He said "all the travel and hotels can create this, but all of it has to be pointed to 'GAMETIME' for him and 'SHOWTIME' for me."

"We have made many good friends through the last 60 years, most of whom are still friends. Friends are members of The Four Freshmen Society, the only support group of its kind."

"I have loved every second of the last 60 years and would not trade them for anything in the World!"