

Autie Goodman, an Interesting Member of the Four Freshmen

by David Bentley

There have been 25 men who have called themselves "Freshmen". Some were called Bob, Ross, Ken, Bill, Rod and Mike, to name a few. One was called Autie, and about this iconic man I write.

Autie Goodman, a native of Burns, Oregon, has been a musician since he was an early teenager, first the clarinet, then the sax. Music was in his bones, and as he says "It's the only thing I've ever done."

Autie was with Paula Kelley & the Modernaires before joining the Freshmen, and later joined a hotel show band working in Las Vegas.

He joined the Four Freshmen in 1977 at the invitation of legendary Bob Flanigan, to replace Ross Barbour, when Ross decided to hang up his vocal chords. He brought a new instrumental sound to the group, that of saxophone.

Autie sat perched on a high stool for his drumming... this is one multi-talented guy... and had a special sax stand so he could grab that instrument quickly for solos. The combination of saxophone and the then keyboards was mellow and musical.

Autie sang solos, took on the difficult second tenor part in the group and contributed in a very personal and professional way to the group's continuing success. He was liked within and without.

Autie was a typical road warrior. He wasn't a partier, nor a drinker or smoker. Instead, he ran to keep himself in shape. Flanigan watched this, but did not participate. Autie and Bob developed a winning repartee on stage, and in many cases, had the audience howling with laughter. Autie's humor was dead pan, and Flanigan played off that. Something similar to what Flanigan and Ross Barbour had, but the hats with Autie were reversed. When Bob Flanigan retired in 1993, Autie followed suit. Flanigan was his idol and he couldn't imagine performing with anyone else.

Autie lives in Pahrump, Nevada with wife Perry and son Terry.

THANK YOU!

by Ray Gardner

Two words that perfectly explain a wonderful Sunday afternoon in a not-so-sunny Florida. Another packed house enjoyed the magnificent sights and sounds of the twenty-fifth group of the Fantastic Four Freshmen inside a lovely auditorium – the Glenridge Performing Arts Center in Sarasota, FLA.

Thanks to the good lady for driving us nearly 270 miles round trip. We were superbly entertained by Bob Ferreira, Jonathan Gaines, Stein Malvey and Tommy Boynton. My vocabulary is far too inadequate to properly describe the God-given talents displayed by these four gentlemen over a two-hour span. We were informed by a Society Member that lead vocalist Tommy Boynton had completely lost his voice for two days. But you'd never have known it because – as always – he was at the top of his game with both the melody AND bass guitar lines. Also delivering another sterling performance on guitar, Stein perfectly plucked those strings melodically methodical as Jonathan once again proved to be a great performer on both trumpet and flugelhorn. It goes without saying that percussionist and superb soloist Bob Ferreira was incredible as always. Bob is now in his 25th year and was both great and gracious as he informed the audience that the Four Freshmen would be celebrating their 70th year in September.

As it turned out, the seats we thought we had - we didn't. But we did get to sit on an extra row of folding chairs about half-way up and on level with the stage. My only difficulty was attempting to write in the dark. Here are

the song titles I was able to write down as Group #25 performed their first set: *Day In, Day Out*; *Give Me The Simple Life*; *You Stepped Out Of A Dream*; *Johnny Hartman's Fools Rush In*; and *There Will Never Be Another You*.

Returning to the stage they continued with both newer as well as older songs such as the neat tune *Ain't Seen Nothin' Like You* followed by *Basin Street Blues*. Bob related the story about a very popular song recorded the first time in 1956 – *Graduation Day*. Next they launched into two popular Latin tunes recently recorded by them – *So Danco Samba* and *Girl From*

Ipenema. They followed those up with the beautiful ballads, *It's Alright With Me* and *When I Fall In Love*.

They performed a sparkling version of *Alright - OK - You Win*; *Day By Day*; *Route 66* and then performed *Poinciana* as their encore. Bob mentioned the fact that they will soon be in San Antonio, Texas visiting Curtis Calderon. They will also be in South Bend, Indiana when the Society hosts their 31st annual reunion. They exited the stage to a standing ovation and then – as always – graciously came into the front foyer to meet and greet their hundreds of fans.

Many Four Freshmen Society Members like Barbara and Mel Meyers, Dave Blackwell, Marlene Lobsiger, Bob and Candi Suhrheinrich and others were in attendance. Sadly, I was unable to get all the names written down. Barbara Meyers handles the *FreshNews* for the Society and she will provide additional information on the upcoming October Convention in South Bend, Indiana. I highly recommend – if possible – you attend. This is a great opportunity to enjoy three or four days of wonderful entertainment and proximity to the Four Freshmen – a group I've fondly always called "The World's Greatest Jazz Vocal Recording Artists in the History of Music!"

So to each and every person who enjoyed this performance just let me add my personal THANK YOU!

