

# Did it really happen, or just a dream?

Yas Ichiura, FFS Japan

On Friday evening at the FFS Fort Wayne Convention, September 6, 2013 to be exact, I was enjoying the self-accompanied Four Freshmen concert. After some songs, Curtis Calderon asked ME in the audience to bring trombone from my hotel room to play together with the guys. I was so sure that he was teasing me, as I was unqualified to play with such talented super stars.

To make the long story short, sooner than later, I was standing on stage with my trombone and played the instrumental solo part of *The Day Isn't Long Enough*. I was so happy and honored to play in front of almost 500 fellow Freshmen fans. Right before they started this

song, I interrupted Curtis on MC and said "I will not play until I know who pays and how much". However, it was not the end of the story. When I was about to get off the stage, Curtis asked me to stay to sing a song with them. How could

I refuse? Among a very few songs I memorized, I proposed "After You" to sing Bob Ferreira's part. Can you believe I sang with The Four Freshmen on stage?



# You Stepped Out of a Dream (Or So It Seemed)

When the Four Freshmen stepped onto the stage at the Grand Wayne Convention Center in Fort Wayne, on Friday September 6, 2013 it was as if they had "stepped out of my dream." Since the day that Dave and I learned from Sara Lou Lantz at a jazz festival in Marshall, Michigan that the original Four Freshmen had made their very first professional appearance at the 113 Club in Fort Wayne, Indiana my dream was that one day we would bring the current Four Freshmen back to that very location where Bob, Hal, Don and Ross began. Well...it happened 65 years later and I was NOT dreaming!

Dave and I, as Co-chairpersons of the Fort Wayne convention, were overjoyed to see everyone having a good time sharing music and friendships. The Thursday night Jam Session was packed with entertainment with features such as, the Comstock family performance and former Four Freshmen, Greg Stegeman and Rod Henley favoring us with their talent. We were delighted that our members had the opportunity to have the great Jim Steele combo as back-up for their set! Fort Wayne does not lack talent, having some of the finest jazz musicians in the area including The New Millennium Jazz Orchestra

who played some lesser known Kenton arrangements as a tribute to Stan Kenton on Friday night. We were pleased that we could bring our own Fort Wayne Philharmonic string players, under the direction of Rod Henley, to the convention to perform with the Four Freshmen for a delightful Saturday evening performance.



The Afterglow party in the Hotel Atrium turned out to be spontaneous and great fun! What began with our friend and colleague, Dona Longbon playing a few tunes as we gathered in the Atrium, became a two hour sing-a-long as many of us gathered at the piano where we sang the traditional standards and some of the great Broadway choruses. Most of all, Bob, Vince, Brian and Curtis joining us at the Afterglow was an honor and great opportunity to share with them the stories we love to tell about following the journey of the 21 groups before them and how much we appreciate and love their music still; The Fabulous Four Freshmen-#22.

Dave and I were blessed with your attendance and the support of a wonderful committee who stood with us these past two years while we were in the planning of this 65th Anniversary celebration. With the dedicated work of a great committee and the friendship and encouragement of many we were able to be, "BACK TO THE 113 CLUB" in Fort Wayne, Indiana....where it all began.

We offer our sincere thanks and blessings to everyone who attended the 2013 Convention. We'll see you in Tampa 2014.

Marlene Lobsiger and Dave Blackwell

Co-chairpersons, 2013 Four Freshmen Convention.



I tried my best not to cry and sang my part in harmony with Brian, Vince and Curtis, including a trombone solo. I felt like I was in Heaven. I wish the recording of this song would be as good as I felt on stage.

I think I'm ready to die, because my dream came true, however, it doesn't mean I will die soon. Thank you to The Four Freshmen, Marlene and Dave together with the Fort Wayne committee.