

FFS Remembers Palle Christensen

(continued from page 3)

He called himself a "Bathroom Singer" and didn't sing much at Wannabee sessions, but he surely enjoyed seeing people trying to sing FF songs. He was very well informed especially about vocal harmony groups and he acted as voluntary disk jockey at a radio program in Copenhagen. I received several copies of his program in cassette tape, and enjoyed playing it, even though he spoke in Danish. I could figure out what he was talking about, as I could recognize some artists names.

I used to visit Sweden on my business and Copenhagen was my airport to arrive and leave from Sweden. He often came to my departure gate to say hello, as he worked at SAS airlines in Copenhagen airport. At that time, only travelers were allowed to go inside terminal buildings, except qualified people like airline employees. One day, while I was on a ferry boat from Malm, Sweden to Copenhagen, I heard *It Never Occurred To Me* by The Four Freshmen on background music. I think that was my first experience to hear The Four Freshmen as background music. I was so excited and wanted to tell this story to somebody. Later, I was walking inside the big airport terminal building. Somebody touched my shoulder from behind. Of course, it was Palle. He was the very right person to tell my recent experience in the ferry boat. I tried to let him know my flight back to Japan in advance.

I looked for his photos in my entire photo library saved in my Mac and found 109 of them (good or bad), which are now shared at the following link: <https://www.icloud.com/photostream/#A2GWUKfSG4nZCa>. I tried to sort by date and I did mostly. Click any of the photos, then it will appear in larger size. Then, click right or left arrow key on your keyboard to move to next one. Wait for a second to see sharper images.

On the last day of each FFS Convention, Palle and I had a routine to say "See you next week!" as we thought one year is as short as a week and we can talk to each other so easily after one year time. I recall his happy and smiling face each time we find each other and come closer to hug. I really miss him as this won't happen again.

I thank Palle madly for being a very good friend of mine for more than 20 years. I wish he will enjoy another life in Heaven and want to hug him when I get there.

*"Butterflies count not months
but moments, and yet
have time enough."*

Rabindranath Tagore, Bengali poet

Fresh Memories

by Ann Smith, Texas Coordinator

This year we had "Fresh Memories" instead of the usual "Fresh Talk." The various participants included two Freshmen widows and several former Four Freshmen. They told us interesting and unusual tales of the Four Freshmen, according to what they thought would be interesting to us.

Sue Barbour decided to tell us what happened to the Four Freshmen in 1956, since this was a particularly eventful year for them. In January, the Barbours bought a house. In March, Ken Albers replaced Ken Errair. That was the year that the Four Freshmen did the tour with the Ted Heath Orchestra. Notables in the lineup included June Christy and Nat King Cole. That was the tour when Nat King Cole got attacked by a deranged concert attendee in Mississippi. It was unnerving to him and he was visibly shaken, though he recovered from the attack alright.

April 19 was Don Barbour's birthday. At the party for Don, Ted Heath (from England) was asked what impressed him the most about the United States. His reply was, "The size of Texas."

The record company had been saving the Freshmen release of *Graduation Day* to have it come out closer to graduation time. Word came down that the Rover Boys were about to release a recording of this song, so the record company got the Four Freshmen version released really quickly.

At a Salt Lake amusement park, Ross was having trouble trying to play badminton and collapsed. Three weeks later, he was diagnosed with type 1



Sue, Nancy, and Kirk share their "Fresh Memories."

diabetes. He was in the hospital for two weeks and only weighed 124 pounds when he got out.

1956 was also the year that Elvis was on the Ed Sullivan Show for the first time. Ray Anthony had a TV show and

the Four Freshmen were on it. In Sue's words, it was not a big success. According to her, they had to do "dumb" choreography, which didn't work, and they ended up quitting the show.

In order to stay employed, the Four Freshmen started doing one-nighter college tours. This proved to be a big success for them. The college kids loved the Four Freshmen and the Freshmen sound.

Sue ended her comments by saying that in 1957 they sold their house, moved to California, and became Californians.

Nancy Albers, widow of Ken Albers, shared her memories with us next. She had never traveled with the Freshmen because she always stayed home with the kids. The first time she did, it was a 17-day cruise, which included their three children. The Freshmen party were the only passengers on board besides the crew. They went through the Panama Canal on this cruise.

She also related how Ken was not a big talker, especially on stage. The one reply the other guys could get out of him was his famous response to any question: "My girdle's killing me." Nancy said it's on several CDs.

Bill Comstock regaled us with a tale that he thought was particularly humorous. A friend asked him after a performance if the Freshmen would come to his

(continued on page 10)