

The Four Freshmen at the Dirty Dog Café

By Ellie Nosky
Photo by George Nosky

The Four Freshmen, Group 25, performed eight sellout shows at The Dirty Dog Café in Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan, July 19-22, 2017. This was their eighth consecutive year there. The Dirty Dog is a great venue for them. It's a lovely intimate place that makes connecting with the audience just perfect. It was a wonderful evening.

The Guys opened the concert with a great old song, *Let Me Love You*. Apparently this song has not been sung by the Freshmen for 60 plus years. They decided to revive it. A great decision! It's a beautiful song and they did it justice.

It felt good to hear so many of the old Freshmen songs along with a few newer ones. The Freshmen introduced seven new arrangements. A couple memorable ones were *Ain't Seen Nothing Like You*, *Basin Street Blues* and a Frank Sinatra standard, *Come Fly With Me*. The audience seemed to really love it.

They work hard to ensure their audience is aware of the group's history and their commitment to maintain the sound. There is NO doubt they are maintaining the sound. They paid homage to the original four, Don, Ross, Bob and Hal, by dedicating *It's a Blue World* to them.

We have heard many outstanding groups through the years. In my opinion, this group doesn't take a back seat to any of them. It's hard to believe they have only been together for seven months!



CONFESSION OF A FOUR FRESHMEN FAN

by Dave Mehl, FFS Louisville, KY

Since first hearing *It's a Blue World* on WBRN in Big Rapids, Michigan in 1952, I have been a HUGE Freshmen fan. Their intricate harmonies and styling set them apart from other groups, as all of the readers of "Fresh News" know only too well.

With that as background, here is my confession.

On July 20, 1956, a couple of young musician-buddies and I traveled 70 miles from Big Rapids to Fruitport, MI to hear Stan Kenton and his Orchestra. The Kenton band was, without a doubt, our very favorite big band.

They were playing a dance/concert at the Pavilion on Spring Lake. The Fruitport Pavilion hosted many great bands over the years. It burned in 1963.

We went stag and were envious of the guys who had lovely dance partners, all decked out in their finest. But the good news was that we could stand directly in front of the band with a foot on the riser. We did that for the entire performance.

I'll always remember the thrill I had watching Stan and the band a few feet away, and listening to their fantastic sounds. (Stan was wearing a French-cuff shirt with sleeves too long.)

The last song of the first set featured the trombone section, which included the gifted Bob Fitzpatrick and Carl Fontana. It was beautiful---clean, amazing chord changes and smoothly phrased---similar to the Four, you know who. I was extremely impressed.

As the band was leaving the stand, Stan Kenton and I met for the first and last time. We exchanged a few words and I thought I had praised him enthusiastically about the band. (continued on page 5)

