

“Rendezvous” Salutes the Four Freshmen

by Mike McCoy, FFS Wisconsin Rep

I recently had one of the biggest pleasures a Four Freshmen fan can have, perhaps only second to hearing the Four Freshmen in person - hearing another professional group perform a Four Freshmen arrangement and credit the Four Freshmen in introductory comments for the Freshmen's continuing musical influence.

Adding even more to the experience was finding out afterward that one of the quartet members is also a member of the Four Freshmen Society!

The group is called “Rendezvous,” and is composed of the following Chicago-area musicians: Jennifer Schwarz (high baritone), Lynda (lead) and Mark Keever (low baritone), and Andy Isbell (bass). Jennifer is the FFS member.

“I just joined the Freshmen Society,” Jennifer told me in a subsequent e-mail, explaining that she picked up the FFS application form while attending the Freshmen performance at the College of DuPage several months ago. She also mentioned that she also has friends who have been FFS members for years “so I always know when they are in the area.”

“I’ve been a fan since the late ‘50’s, when I sang in a mixed group - The Double Daters. I remember seeing them someplace in the Chicago area then, and I was hooked. My late husband, Phil Schwarz, sang in a quartet (Chicago Natural Gas) that used string bass and guitar, and they did several FF charts. They performed on the Friday night show when the FF convention was in Chicago at the Lincolnshire. That was my first, and so far, only, convention.

“I have seen the FF two times in Chicago at Fitzgeralds and most recently at the College of DuPage. I have many albums from years ago, and will go see them anytime I can.”

As Rendezvous members explain on their Web site, all four are accomplished singers in the barbershop style, while their repertoire now ranges from popular songs to jazz, folk and gospel. “With a fresh, vibrant, energetic sound, they sing the songs you remember in a style you won’t forget.”

The Freshmen arrangements they sang at the show I saw were “If I Knew Then What I Know Now” (included on the FF album “The Freshmen Year”) and “Somebody Loves Me” (included on multiple Freshmen albums). Both are on the Rendezvous CD.

Songs from the CD you can hear online with a Real player include “If I Knew Then What I Know Now,” plus “Dream a Little Dream of Me,” “59th Street Bridge Song (Feeling Groovy),” “I Fall In Love With You Every Day,” and “Gospel Medley.”

Other songs on the CD: “I’m Beginning to See the Light,” “Two Sleepy People,” “I’ll Never Find Another You,” “So Wrong,” “Here’s That Rainy Day,” “Silly Song Medley,” “More Than You

Know,” “A World of Our Own,” “The Red Corvette,” and “Looking Through Your Eyes.”

The CD can be ordered by mail or by going to their main Web site (like the Four Freshmen Society, they also have another Web site, at Yahoo Groups). (Addresses for both appear at the end of this message.)

For the CD, send \$18 (\$15 plus \$3 shipping/handling) to Rendezvous, c/o Jennifer Schwarz, 450 Raintree Court, #2D, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137. Make checks payable to Rendezvous and be sure to include your name and address for shipping purposes.

The Web site also has biographical sketches on each member of the group, a calendar of upcoming engagements, pictures of the group, Web links, and contact information for booking the group.

I encourage FFS members and FF fans to keep an eye out for Rendezvous performances. They put on a very entertaining performance, and I look forward to having a chance to see and hear them again.

Rendezvous Web site addresses:

<http://www.harmonize.ws/rendezvous/index.cfm>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Rendezvous Quartet/>

Hawaii Jazz Festival July 18-21, 2002

This was the Ninth Annual Hawaii International Jazz Festival in Hawaii at the Blessedly Concert Hall on July 18-19. On July 4th we were at The Outrigger Willie Resort in Maui. Saturday night, July 4th, was Eric Marienthal, one of the most flexible young alto sax jazz stars of today. The Four Freshmen bring to the audience the excitement of swing and beauty of ballads and they do it with their unique and powerful brand of Freshmen harmony. Joining The Freshmen on stage was Gabe Baltzar playing his beautiful alto sax.

Tierney Sutton and Buddy Childers with the USC Band. Tierney and Buddy are educators for USC. Tierney heads Jazz Vocal Dept. at USC. Together Tierney and Buddy make beautiful music together.

There were so many great musicians that it was a fun-filled two days in Maui.