

THE FOUR FRESHMEN



TOMMY BOYNTON singing 1st tenor and playing bass. Growing up in Aurora, Co., his musical journey began in the 3rd grade, singing in a children's chorus, and studying piano and drums. Tommy's love for music lead him to Phil Mattson's prestigious School for Music Vocations in Creston, Iowa. He then graduated from the New England Conservatory in Boston, MA, where he studied with Dominique Eade and Ran Blake. Boynton continued to share his love and passion for music by returning to SMV to teach. Tommy has shared the stage with several Grammy nominated musicians, including jazz pianist Fred Hersch, and critically acclaimed jazz vocalist Kate McGarry. While on the road, he does miss his kitties, Alice and Little Brother, more than anything.

Stein Malvey sings the 2nd tenor and plays guitar with The Four Freshmen. Growing up in Northfield, Minnesota, he began his musical journey at age four, studying piano. Growing restless with classical repertoire, he discovered guitar at age 12, and fell in love. Just two years later he was playing guitar professionally. Stein graduated with a Bachelor of Music degree in guitar performance from Lawrence University Conservatory of Music. Stein spent years in both the New York and Minneapolis music scenes, recording and touring with groups in many genres: rock, pop, r&b, soul, funk, jazz, country, and avant-garde. When he isn't touring with The Four Freshmen, Stein lives in Los Angeles.

Born in 1992, **Jon Gaines** was introduced to the world of music at the age of 5 when he began taking piano lessons from his grandmother in his hometown, Derry NH. By fifth grade, young Jon was expanding his musical talents to the trumpet, but it wasn't until Jon first heard a recording of Louis Armstrong that a passion was sparked and this new found love of jazz set him on a life long pursuit for musical excellence. Gaines's high school years were spent performing with a wide variety of concert and jazz bands as well as several vocal ensembles. After high school, Jon attended the prestigious New England Conservatory where he furthered his studies in jazz improvisation with the likes of educators John McNeil, Jerry Bergonzi, and Frank Carlberg. Jon also continued to advance his trumpet technique through lessons from venerable instructors Steve Emery and Laurie Frink. Along with all his instrumental studies on trumpet and piano Jon also undertook several years of vocal instruction before earning his bachelors degree in 2014. Outside of his music career Jon is an Eagle Scout and when not performing in his current home town of Boston he enjoys exploring the great outdoors, in particular the woods of Northern Maine.

BOB FERREIRA auditioned for The Four Freshmen in 1992 for bass voice and percussion, while a music student at Central Washington University. The group asked Ferreira to join, presenting him with a difficult decision of whether or not to leave his academics behind in lieu of a career in entertainment. Bob is still pleased with his decision and has not looked back since. He enjoys being part of such an iconic musical legacy having performed in fifty states, ten countries, and on nine Freshmen recordings. When not on the road with The Four Freshmen, Ferreira occasionally freelances as a drummer in Las Vegas.

THE FOUR FRESHMEN

MASTERS OF HARMONY & GREAT GENTLEMEN OF SONG

The Four Freshmen are America's most enduring vocal group. From the moment they step on stage The Four Freshmen will get your heart pounding and your feet moving. With pure energy and great songs from the past and present. The Four Freshmen deliver a world of music that will take listeners back to the bygone era of their youth while introducing others to a brand of vocal harmony entertainment unique to the legendary Four Freshmen. A Four Freshmen concert is one you will never forget!

One might think that after 69 years, a multitude of recordings, 6 grammy nominations to their credit, they would just ride the wave of success through nostalgic renderings of hits like *"It's A Blue World"* and *"Graduation Day"*, but you would be sorely mistaken. One thing THE FOUR FRESHMEN do as the celebrated vocal group has done since its inception in 1948 has been to forge ahead; constantly redefining their sound all the while maintaining the core integrity of their unique and innovative vocal harmonies that have inspired such iconic groups as The Manhattan Transfer, The Lettermen, and the legendary Beach Boys.

While The Four Freshmen happily pay tribute to the history and evolution of the Freshmen sound by way of performing the hits of their predecessors they are unafraid to break new ground through songs that strike a chord with listeners of ANY generation. Whether it be a reimagining of such classic standards as *"Come Fly With Me"* and *"Stompin' At the Savoy"*; profoundly evocative and energetic interpretations of Antonio Carlos Jobim's seminal hits *"The Girl From Ipanema"* and *"So Danco Samba"*; or the introduction of heart-wrenching originals like *"A Little While"*, the listener will be taken on a musical journey via the greatest song writers ever to set pen to paper and four accomplished musicians who, from the stage, exude nothing less than the energy, sincerity, and passion deserving of the great music they perform.

See the Four Freshmen with a big band and you'll be blown away. Watch them with a symphony orchestra and you'll be awed. Catch them self-contained and you will be thoroughly amazed and entertained. No matter how you see the Four Freshmen, just SEE THE FOUR FRESHMEN! You will thank yourself.

Route 66
Poinciana
Avalon
Day In Day Out
Come Fly with Me
The Day Isn't Long Enough

Day By Day
Stompin' at The Savoy
Just A Gigolo/ I Ain't Got Nobody
It's A Blue World
Give me The Simple Life
Graduation Day



THE FOUR FRESHMEN



"An Ultra talented Quartet of Vocalists" The Wall Street Journal

"I have loved the Freshmen harmony since the first time I heard them. They are my favorite band to watch perform live." Brian Wilson

"I am a big fan! Love listening!" Vic Damon

"The Four Freshmen have endured for the simple reason that they are tops in their class." Charles Osgood

"...singing a super-tight, ultra-hip four-part harmony over a foundation of straight-ahead jazz... borderline magical, downright electric, inducing chills." Palm Beach Daily News

"This group is so talented, even more so than the original. They bring a new kind of presence to the stage." PalmBeacher

"The Four Freshmen harmonies are something you don't hear a lot. It's very jazzy and takes you on a melodic journey in your soul. Even to this day they still are killing it with their music and their comedic timing on stage! You need to go see them live!"- Casey Abrams

"Unisons, harmonies, open voicings, movable inner parts—all so beautiful and so, so modern. The Four Freshmen of today are as good as the band during the Ken Albers days. ... the good news is the Four Freshmen are still making great music." Tim Hauser The Manhattan Transfer

"With a trunk-full of tried and true melodies, a friendly stage presence and a soaring harmony that was so tight a sheet of paper couldn't slide between it." Lebanon Daily News

They delivered an evening filled with romantic tunes weaving smooth, rich harmonies with their expert instrumental accompaniment. La Junta Tribune-Democrat

Long live The Four Freshmen. May they never graduate! The Wall Street Journal

Watching the Four Freshmen in their timeless act, you'd never guess they've been around for three generations. These guys look so, um, fresh. Detroit News

- Downbeat Magazine has honored the group with its prestigious Best Vocal Group Award 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1958, 2001
- JazzTimes awarded The Four Freshmen its top Jazz Award~ Best Vocal Group in 2003, 2005, 2007
- 2001 induction into the Vocal Group Hall of Fame sharing company with ABBA, Bee Gees and the Beach Boys
- 2010 Satchmo Award from the Jazz Club of Sarasota
- 2013 The Four Freshmen receive a Star on the "Walk of Stars" in Palm Springs

Four Freshmen Highlight New Year's Eve Gala at the Bankhead Theater

Thursday, December 15, 2016

The Four Freshmen will be featured in the Livermore Valley Performing Arts Center's ninth annual New Year's Eve Celebration at the Bankhead Theater. The evening begins at 8:00 p.m. on December 31, 2016 and ends with a festive champagne reception in the lobby immediately following the show. Tickets for the full evening range from \$50 to \$80.

Since 1948, the Four Freshmen have been known for their trademark smooth vocals built on the barbershop tradition. Today's ensemble has been called the greatest jazz vocal group of all time, delivering a fresh take on old favorites with "a twist of elegance and a splash of swing." The Four Freshmen were the very first group to perform on stage at the venue in October 2007 and were also featured at the first LVPAC New Year's Eve celebration in 2008.

The Four Freshmen perform classics the group was originally known for including "Day by Day" and "Blue World," as well as new arrangements of such songs as "Something's Gotta Give," "September Song," and "My One and Only Love." Unlike some other vocal groups, members of the Four Freshmen have always been both vocalists and instrumentalists, at times switching off so others can take different roles. Although the members have changed over the years, this tradition continues. Each member of today's Four Freshmen is an accomplished vocalist and musician in their own right, and brings new influences and perspectives to enrich the group's musical heritage.



Current members of the Four Freshmen include Bob Ferreira on drums, Curtis Calderon on trumpet, Stein Malvey on guitar, and lead vocalist, Tommy Boynton on bass. Ferreira told the Detroit News that they take great pride in the group's legacy and stick to the great American songbook and jazz standards. At the same time, he said, "We are who we are, we're not trying to be the original Freshmen." They bring a new and vital dynamic to the classic sound and "have a lot of energy and a lot of fun," Ferreira added. Over the last six decades, the Four Freshmen have released more than 45 albums with 70 top hits and six Grammy nominations, among their many accolades.

The Bankhead Theater is located at 2400 First Street in downtown Livermore. Tickets may be purchased at the box office, online at www.bankheadtheater.org or by calling 373-6800. The ticket office is open Tuesday through Saturday from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m and on performance days from two hours before to 30 minutes after the scheduled start of each show.

Long-running group The Four Freshmen headline Mount Dora Music Festival

February 19, 2016

MOUNT DORA — The sound of the Four Freshmen's vocal harmonic jazz has followed Americans for six decades and the group's influence has been as pivotal as it has been long-lived.

Bob Ferreira is one of the heirs to the tradition.

"After 23 years with the group, I love it as much as I did my first day," he said. "Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys always gives credit for his music to the Four Freshmen. When he comes to our shows, he's like a kid in a candy store."

The Four Freshmen will headline the 19th annual Mount Dora Music Festival, performing at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at the Mount Dora Community Building.

Dizzy Gillespie was a fan as is Kenny Rogers. The Lettermen and the Mamas and the Papas acknowledged their debt to the group.

The group, originally founded in 1946, took the sounds of Big Band vocal groups such as the Modernaires, who sang with the Glenn Miller Band, and mixed it with the dissonant sound of the trombone section of the Stan Kenton Band.

"It's vocal jazz," Ferreira said. "It's weird and dark **dissonant four-part harmony with the melody on the top voice. That is unusual.** The melody is usually done by a female voice or by one of the inner parts of the group. **It's a complex sound.**"

Apply that sound to standards such as "Avalon," "Moonglow," "Stardust" or "Body and Soul" and **the result is music that doesn't sound like anything else.**

The group is also differentiated by the fact that they accompany themselves on the bass, guitar, trumpet and, in Ferreira's case, drums.

Ferreira wanted to make one thing clear.

"**We are not a nostalgia group,**" he said. "We want to keep our fans happy, but we want to keep the group moving forward. **We are not just singing tunes, but we're performing songs.**"

A favorite of audiences, he said, is when they do "The Girl from Ipanema," they break into Portuguese.

They also will sing the signature Four Freshmen song, "It's a Blue World," the group's first charted hit.

The Four Freshmen bring their harmonies to the Hoogland



Dan Naumovich
Correspondent

For the past half century, **One of things that has made the [Four Freshmen](#) unique among vocal ensembles is that they also accompany themselves instrumentally. Singing complex harmonies while playing instruments is a feat that not every street corner doo-wop group can pull off.**

“Usually it’s just the four of us up there making a lot of noise,” said Bob Ferreira, in a phone interview. “There are a million things that are going through our heads when we’re on stage, but hopefully the audience only notices that we’re performing well.” Ferreira and the other three Freshmen will be performing at the Hoogland Center for the Arts this Sunday at 3 p.m. There, he will have the especially difficult task of keeping the beat on drums while adding bass vocals to the songs. He attributes this ability to singing backup while drumming for a rock band in high school.

“For some reason, I never thought much about it. It was something I would just do,” he said. “So I think this ignorance helped me when I started playing a more complicated jazz style and singing intricate harmonies. It is a challenge. The key is practicing enough so that every song is second nature and then I can focus on entertaining people and presenting the song with whatever emotion it requires.”

Ferreira is the most senior of the current Four Freshmen class, having been with the group since 1992. The other three Freshmen are Tommy Boynton on bass guitar and first tenor, Stein Malvey on guitar and second tenor, and Curtis Calderon on trumpet and baritone voice.

The original iteration of the Four Freshmen began performing in 1948. After starting in a barbershop style, they evolved to the jazz style that was popular with the Big Bands of the day. After enjoying early commercial success, the group fell out of popular favor with the rise of rock ‘n’ roll in the 1960s. Their influence, however, made its mark in this era as Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys cited the Four Freshmen as an inspiration for the indelible harmonies he wrote for his group.

Twenty-five performers have passed through the group over the decades. They have recorded over 60 albums during this time, the most recent of which is 2015s’ **“[Four Freshmen and Friends](#),”** that was released on both CD and vinyl.

Ferreira said that in recent performances, songs from the new album are getting the biggest response from audiences. “They’re all classic and familiar tunes like ‘Stompin’ at the Savoy’ and ‘Girl From Ipanema,’” he said. **“They get a great response because they highlight a new element of what the Four Freshmen harmony can do.** They’re very much in line with our sound.”

With over 24 years in the group, Ferreira has now been a Freshmen longer than he hasn’t been. He was invited to join the band while a student at Central Washington University on the recommendation of a former member of the group. Since that time he has performed in all 50 states and 10 countries. While the memories and highlights are many, one in particular stands out. “My favorite football team is the Pittsburgh Steelers and in 1995 we got to sing the National Anthem for Monday Night Football in Three Rivers Stadium,” he said. “It was the first NFL game I had ever been to. Being a Steelers fan and getting to watch the entire game from the field in front of 60,000 screaming fans was really something special for me.”

Being **a vocal ensemble known for impeccable harmonies, the Four Freshmen can’t hide behind jacked-up amplifiers,** or in the case of many singers today, rely upon electronic vocal enhancements. That’s why it is especially important for them to stay rested and healthy. Spending a lot of time in busy airports and meeting crowds of fans after performances puts them in contact with the many pathogens and viruses that are always about, especially in the winter months.

“We never know what germs we may come in contact with, but we just have to do our best to stay healthy and forge ahead,” he said. “If we do get sick, we perform anyway. I’ve performed with whooping cough, strep throat, We just do what we have to do to get the job done. Fortunately we’ve all been healthy this year.”

Those attending the Hoogland show can expect to original Four Freshmen hits such as **“It’s a Blue World”** and **“Graduation Day,”** along with songs from the new album other selections. “They’re going to hear a great spectrum of songs from the Freshmen’s history. **It will be 100 percent energy and a good time.** And we hope we get to talk with everyone while we’re here,” Ferreira said.

LA JUNTA

TRIBUNE-DEMOCRAT

NEWS NOW

A trip through time with the Four Freshmen

Posted Oct. 16, 2015 at 3:00 PM

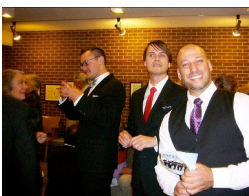
An **appreciative, enthusiastic audience** accompanied the Four Freshmen on a trip through time Thursday evening in Otero Junior College's Ed Stafford Theatre. The Four Freshmen, a group that was founded in 1948, has continued to entertain audiences for 67 years, with new voices and faces replacing previous members as one would leave the group. But they have made a point to keep the **intricate, tight harmonies** of the original jazz group.

Current members include bass singer **Bob Ferreira** playing percussion, baritone **Curtis Calderon** playing trumpet/flugelhorn, first tenor **Tommy Boynton** playing bass and second voice **Stein Malvey** on lead guitar. **They delivered an evening filled with romantic tunes weaving smooth, rich harmonies with their expert instrumental accompaniment.**

Their trip through time began with music from the early '50s. "**Now You Know**" featured a wonderful mellow bass solo by Ferreira. Among the songs from the mid-'50s were selections from the Four Freshmen's first full-length album, *Voices in Modern*. The 1955 song "**In This Whole Wide World**" featured a muted **trumpet interlude by Calderon**, the first of many during the evening **that made the concert remarkable**. Another memorable trumpet solo was included in "**There Will Never Be Another You.**"

The second half of the concert included, among many other songs, "**Nancy with the Laughing Face**," an a cappella version of "**Central Park West**," "**Graduation Day**," "**Come Fly with Me**," "**The Day Isn't Long Enough**" and "**Day by Day**." From their 2015 album they sang "**The Girl from Ipanema**."

They concluded the concert with two songs they dedicated to the original members of the Four Freshmen (Ken Albers, Ross Barbour, Bob Flanigan and Don Barbour) – "**It's a Blue World Without You**" and "**Route 66**." After a standing ovation, they offered an encore of "**Somewhere Over the Rainbow**." **It was a wonderful evening of harmony and musicianship.**



Four Freshmen members Tommy Boynton, Stein Malvey and Bob Ferreira greet fans after the concert. Curtis Calderon signs a CD for a young fan after the concert. Tommy Boynton and Stein Malvey meet concertgoers in the lobby after the concert.

Four Freshmen bringing extensive history to Kokomo



September 25, 2015
 Martin Slagter Kokomo Tribune

Kokomo Community Concerts is ready to take you back in time next weekend when famed vocal group The Four Freshmen come to town.

The Four Freshmen, who have recorded more than 75 albums, 70 top-selling singles and received six Grammy nominations in their 67 years of existence, will perform at 2:30 p.m. Oct. 4 in the Kokomo High School Auditorium.

Since forming in 1948, the group's sound has inspired harmony-based acts like The Beach Boys, The Mamas & The Papas, Frankie Valli and Manhattan Transfer.

The group's roots go back to the end of the 1940s and a barbershop quartet-influenced outfit called Hal's Harmonizers organized at the Arthur Jordan Conservatory of Butler University in Indiana by two brothers, Ross and Don Barbour. The band caught its big break when it caught the ear of bandleader Stan Kenton, who was responsible for bringing the Freshmen to Capitol Records, where they would eventually record 23 albums.

Although the lineup has undergone periodic changes in its 67-year history, current member Bob Ferreira said the quartet will perform a variety of its standard hits along with newer material during its 24-show tour.

"The majority of the fans have known the group, been friends with us or had some incredible memories of the group dating way back to even the late 1940s," said Ferreira, who has been with the group for 23 years. "We're always looking to pick up new fans or rediscover old fans that didn't realize we were still around and touring."

Ferreira is joined in the current lineup by Tommy Boynton, Curtis Calderon and Stein Malvey, performing many of the Freshmen's standards like "Day By Day" and "Blue World."

After decades of existence, being able to perform those songs live is still a thrill, Ferreira said. "I enjoy it as much as the first day I stepped on stage," he said. "I love the traveling experience, seeing different countries and all of the wonderful and diverse venues we have played at. We could be at a small jazz club in Tokyo one night and then at a 3,000-seat auditorium the next night."

The Four Freshmen
 Curtis Calderon, Tommy Boynton, Stein Malvey and Bob Ferreira make up The

If You Go

WHAT: Kokomo Community Concerts presents The Four Freshmen, who have recorded more than 75 albums, 70 top-selling singles and received six Grammy nominations in their 67 years of existence

WHEN: 2:30 p.m. Oct. 4

WHERE: Kokomo High School Auditorium, 2591 S. Berkley Road

TICKETS: Tickets for the show are \$20 the day of the show and are available 30 minutes before the show at the door. Season tickets are \$45 and can be ordered by visiting www.kokomocommunityconcerts.org or purchased at the door. For more information on tickets call 765-210-0686.

Four Freshmen Bring big band to St. Joe

Posted: Friday, September 11, 2015 6:00 am | Updated: 11:24 am, Fri Sep 11, 2015.

By Andrew Gaug | St. Joe Live Andrew Gaug can be reached at andrew.gaug@newspressnow.com. Twitter: @SJNPgaug.

When you've served as the inspiration for The Beach Boys, you live on forever.

The members of the Four Freshmen don't look like the four whippersnappers from the late '40s whose music inspired many popular bands to use harmonies in their songs, but the attitude is all the same.



"This vocal sound is one of the most influential in the music industry. They inspired Brian Wilson and The Beach Boys. The Freshmen inspired Kenny Rogers, The Mamas and The Papas, The Four Seasons, Frankie Valli," The Four Freshmen member Bob Ferreira says. "I actually spoke with Frankie Valli years ago at suit shop and he said 'Oh, The Four Freshmen was such a huge influence on my life.'"

That influential four-part harmony sound will be on display as the group comes to the Missouri Theater at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 12, as part of a Performing Arts Association production.

Some quick background on the Four Freshmen: They were a vocal band that blended jazz with a big band sound and inspired generations of bands who would supersede their popularity. One person described them as a quartet that sounded like his 43-piece ensemble. The group had a catalog of hits, including "Mood Indigo," "It's A Blue World" and "It Happened Once Before," but it was the album "Four Freshmen and Five Trombones" that was a smash hit, charting for more than eight months.

It's a strong legacy worth paying homage to, which is why the group continues to tour many decades later.

"I listen to stories of our fans after shows and they say when they first saw the group or how they fell in love with their wives or husbands to this certain song or sound. These are powerful memories," Ferreira says.

In the group since 1992, Ferreira has been through several rotations of members and gone on countless tours. The most important aspect of the group is making sure their harmonies and the chemistry is just right, he says.

"Chemistry is really one of the main components that is often taken for granted when you try to make a group successful. You could have the best musicians in the world, but if egos or commitments get in the way, it just won't work," he says.

The current Four Freshmen — Ferreira, Curtis Calderon, Stein Malvey and Tommy Boynton — have the chemistry, along with a ton of talent.

"We genuinely care about the legacy of the Freshmen. We don't take that for granted. We love the music," Ferreira says.

Ferreira says the Four Freshmen are looking forward to bringing some harmonies to the area.

"We love to run the gamut of history. So we're going to take them all the way back to 1948 and 1950, the early years and the heyday with Capitol Records. But we're also going to be showcasing songs from more recent recordings, like one we just released in January ... it's called 'Four Freshmen and Friends,'" Ferreira says.

And please, if you've seen them before, feel free to share stories with the group after the show.

"The fact that we're a re-creation of what people were listening to 67 years ago, it's wonderful. And as the sound continues to grow, we're not just there to rehash old memories, we're there to create new memories," Ferreira says.

JerseyJazz

Journal of the New Jersey Jazz Society

Dedicated to the performance,

promotion and preservation of jazz.

In 2013, Stein Malvey replaced Vince Johnson in the **FOUR FRESHMEN**, marking the first change in the group's makeup in a dozen years, and earlier this year Tommy Boynton replaced Brian Eichenberger who had been with the group for almost 20 years. The remaining members are Bob Ferreira and Curtis Calderon. To those who wondered how these changes would affect the sound of the group, you can hear for yourself on the first recording from the current lineup on *Newport Beach Jazz Party* (Self-Produced) "**THE FOUR FRESHMEN & FRIENDS**".

To these ears, this is still a great vocal aggregation that retains the sound established by the original FF 67 years ago. For this live outing, the group is joined by Ken Peplowski on clarinet and tenor sax, Chuck Redd on vibes, Ron Escheté on guitar, Katie Thiroux on bass and Butch Miles on drums. They fit in well with the Freshmen sound, and add a nice additional dimension to the proceedings.

There are eight new arrangements by Calderon, "Avalon," "Moonglow," "Central Park West," "The Girl from Ipanema," "Don't Be That Way," "Stompin' at the Savoy," "Here's That Rainy Day" and "So Danco Samba." When they conclude with the classic FF arrangement of "It's a Blue World," it is apparent that all is well in Freshmanville! (www.4Freshmen.com)





Billy Stritch & Jim Caruso, Tommy Tune and More Set for Royal Room Cabaret This Fall

**The Four Freshmen
Back By Popular Demand**

It wouldn't be December in the Royal Room without the 12th annual visit from The Four Freshmen, the nation's longest lasting vocal harmony group who are celebrating more than a half-century of crowd-pleasing performances. From their first hit song, "It's a Blue World," to being voted Down Beat Magazine's Vocal Group of the Year in both 2000 and 2001, the group presents classic jazz-pop songs with cutting-edge vitality. The Four Freshmen have released more than 40 albums and 70 singles and been nominated six times for a Grammy.

Reviews of The Four Freshmen:

+ David A. Frye, Palm Beach Daily News: "The reason for the long collaboration (between The Colony Hotel and The Four Freshmen) is simple: the combination of tight, spot-on four-part harmonies, brilliant arrangements of carefree classic tunes and the intimacy of the Royal Room is a near-perfect match."

+ Charles Osgood, CBS Sunday Morning: "Some musical groups survive and even flourish, year after year, decade after decade. The Four Freshmen have endured for the simple reason that they are top in their class."

+ The Virginia-Pilot: "A more charming evening of jazz there never was."

+ Topeka Capital-Journal: "The sound of The Four Freshmen remains as fresh and vibrant as when the original quartet started singing more than 50 years ago."



In Harmony:

The Four Freshmen perform at the Redondo Union High Auditorium on Feb. 10

Wednesday, February 4, 2015

Michael Hixon



The Four Freshmen were formed and are still going strong 67 years later.

With songs like “Graduation Day,” “Day by Day” and “It’s a Blue World,” The Four Freshmen have been entertaining audiences with their vocal harmonies for 67 years. While the last original member retired more than 20 years ago, the current incarnation of the group still travels the country that includes a stop at the Redondo Union High Auditorium on Tuesday, Feb. 10.

The jazz vocal band was an inspiration for groups like The Beach Boys and The Manhattan Transfer. The Four Freshmen have featured 24 members and more than 20 different lineups in their long history. Vocalist and drummer Bob Ferreira joined in 1992 when original lead singer Bob Flanagan was retiring. He was mentored by Flanagan, who stayed with the group in a managerial and ownership capacity until his death in 2011, and drummer and baritone Ross Barber, who retired from The Four Freshmen in the 1970s but continued to be a supporter of the group.

“When I got the opportunity to audition, playing drums and singing, I was like, ‘Wow, that’s great,” Ferreira said. “Of course, it’s such an iconic group, for a 22-year-old, that’s quite an amazing thing and I guess one of those landmark moments in one’s life when you are able to land a job that is something you love to do. I was very fortunate and still feel fortunate to be doing it for this long.”

Two days after their performance in Redondo, they will record their concert at the Newport Beach Marriott, a show, like the one in Redondo, that features classics and new material. Ferreira said The Four Freshmen is like “constant car maintenance.”

“What we do is so unique. There are hardly any vocal groups out there who sing four-part vocal harmony, especially the intricate harmony that we sing, but also play instruments at the same time,” Ferreira said. “A lot of it is being able to lock in with the other guys, both vocally and instrumentally and entertain. We’re having a great time on stage, but the biggest challenge is to have everything so solid musically and in the entertainment area, so solid that the audience never notices how difficult it is what we’re doing on stage.”

Ferreira said he doesn’t consider The Four Freshmen a “nostalgia group,” since they continue to challenge themselves with new arrangements and new recordings.

“We are always trying to keep the Freshmen sound relevant, but we rarely stray from the formula that made the Freshmen popular and made them such an inspirational group. We always keep that in mind when we’re choosing songs or creating arrangements. We still want something that’s in the vein of what we do, but is also defining the current members of the group in this legacy.”

The Four Freshmen will take the stage at 7:30 p.m. at the auditorium located at 631 Vincent Park. Tickets are \$20. For more information, call (310) 326-8184, or 4freshmen.com.



Lebanon Daily News

Lebanon crowd loves The Four Freshmen

1,200 fans enjoy latest lineup of vocal group that originated 65 years ago

By Marylouise Sholly

For The Daily News

Posted: 04/30/2014 08:39:59 PM EDT

With a trunk-full of tried and true melodies, a friendly stage presence and a soaring harmony that was so tight a sheet of paper couldn't slide between it, The Four Freshmen captivated their Lebanon audience on Sunday afternoon.

Lebanon was the last stop on the group's most recent tour, and the vocal group played to a crowd of about 1,200 in Lebanon High School's William Starr Auditorium. The internationally renowned band — which has changed lineups several times over the years — has been making music for the past 65 years and is considered by some in the music business to be the best jazz vocal group ever assembled. The Four Freshmen have released more than 50 albums and have had 70 top-selling singles.

The Four Freshmen were booked by the Lebanon County Community Concert Association, the organization responsible for introducing many national and international acts to Lebanon. It was the final concert of the LCCCA's 80th year.

Spanning more than six decades, the Freshmen have had 24 different members over the years, with the last original member retiring in 1993. The current lineup includes Curtis Calderon, Brian Eichenberger, Bob Ferreira and Stein Malvey. The four tour internationally and many times play to a sold-out audience.

Never underestimate the power of memory; the LHS auditorium on Sunday was filled with people who remember the vocal harmonizing of the original Four Freshmen from their youth, and the band gladly served up memories of a '50s world to their appreciative audience.

"For those of us of a certain age, it certainly brings back memories," said Fred Jones of Cornwall, as he waited for the band to return from a break. "They sound like the original Four Freshmen. It doesn't matter that they are not the originals. You can tell they're having a good time; they're a fun-loving group."

And never underestimate the power of real musical talent. All four members of the band started playing instruments at a very young age, and their technique and professionalism was apparent. But it was the four voices, expertly blended, that brought the audience to their feet.

"I love their harmonies, their harmony was beautiful and they are very professional," said Kathy Luciotti of Lebanon. "I'm just enjoying it all."

Exquisite harmony is what The Four Freshmen are best known for, and they didn't disappoint.

"It's a lot of hard work, a lot of practice," said Four Freshmen drummer and vocalist Ferreira. "It's not something you get by standing on a street corner, and singing. It takes a lot of hard work to get it to sound like it does today. And, we always strive to be better."

Ferreira has been one of The Freshmen for the past 22 years, and he said it's still easy to keep the sound "fresh," because he enjoys what he's doing.

Palm Beach Daily News

THE SHINY SHEET

REVIEW

Four Freshmen deliver rollicking musical tour of old and new



The Four Freshmen — from left, Bob Ferreira, Stein Malvey, Brian Eichenberger and Curtis are performing at The Colony's Room Royal through Saturday.

By David A. Frye

Special to the Daily News

The Four Freshman returned Wednesday to The Colony, marking 12 years of appearances there.

The reason for the long collaboration is simple: the combination of tight, spot-on four-part harmonies, brilliant arrangements of carefree classic tunes and the intimacy of the Royal Room is a near-perfect match.

While the original group dates to 1948, the current lineup of bassist/lead vocalist Brian Eichenberger, guitarist Stein Malvey, Curtis Calderon on trumpet and drummer Bob Ferreira continue to carry the torch in first-rate fashion, keeping that classic sound as fresh as ever.

After warming up with chestnuts *Poinciana* and *Pick Up Your Tears*- (one of the group's first singles), the quartet took off on a rollicking musical tour of old and new favorites, with each member bringing something unique to the party.

Calderon's masterful horn was never better than in the up-tempo *There Will Never Be Another You*, and this was just one of several well-received solos by each of the players throughout the evening.

Ferreira breezed through fun numbers, such as *Give Me the Simple Life* and *Just A Gigolo*, with a contagious energy in his resonant vocals and tasteful percussion. Using just a snare, a single conga, a cymbal and brushes, he laid down more of a solid downbeat than many drummers armed with a double-bass trap set.

Malvey, the newest member of the group, held his own with some sweet guitar work, and Eichenberger's crisp, clear tenor provided the key ingredient for that classic Freshmen sound that has been delighting audiences for more than 60 years.

And it's that natural, lo-fi approach to the material – from the perspective of the musical arrangements, as well as the live-sound mix – that the true beauty of the act can be found.

With little to no amplification on the instruments, the voices – in all their four-part harmonic glory – are out front where they can be easily heard and thoroughly enjoyed.

Rounding out the evening were note-perfect readings of Freshmen signatures *It's a Blue World*, *Angel Eyes*, *Route 66* and the group's biggest hit, *Graduation Day*, but there were also enough surprises to keep long-time fans happy as well.

Truly, a swinging time was had by all – and the good times continue through Saturday at the Royal Room.



Thursday, November 7, 2013

BY TOM NETHERLAND | SPECIAL TO THE HERALD COURIER

Time marches on and so do the Four Freshmen.

Neither eras passed nor nearly two dozen personnel changes dim the lights that yet shine on one of the most renowned vocal groups of the 1940s and '50s.

So catch the spotlight when it casts upon the Four Freshmen in Bristol. Slated to sing the classics on Nov. 12 at the Paramount Center for the Arts in Bristol, Tenn., the venerable group of vocalists aim to entertain with songs long heralded from America's most legendary of songwriters.

"We sing the great American songbook," said Bob Ferreira, for 21 years the bass vocalist in the Four Freshmen. "We're taking songs that are timeless standards that belong in any generation."

Plucked from the pages of Irving Berlin, George and Ira Gershwin and so forth, the Four Freshmen en-case the classic with their jazz-shrouded vocals to make the songs jump once more.

"We do '**Stardust**,' which was written by the great Hoagy Carmichael," Ferreira said. "It was a hit by Nat King Cole. We recorded it in 2012 and it's on our new album. We take pride in keeping that sound going."

The Four Freshmen date to 1948. Jazz powerhouses of the day including Dizzy Gillespie and Stan Kenton took note of the **hooked-on-harmony lads**. Kenton introduced them to Capitol Records, who signed the fresh-scrubbed group. Four years into their formation, hits began to flow like water from a leaky faucet.

"Their first hit was '**It's a Blue World**,' in 1952, which brought the Four Freshmen to the masses," Ferreira said.

Singles including "**Mood Indigo**" and "**Day by Day**" followed in 1954 and '55. Those set the stage for the group's signature song, "**Graduation Day**," in 1956.

"It was their biggest commercial hit," Ferreira said. "When we sing 'Graduation Day,' people will start clapping. We love to see that people can still remember those songs."

But take note. **The Four Freshmen are distinctly not a group of rusty relics. They're young, studious of the group's sound of old and yet able to subtly contemporize a sound that never grew old. Vocal harmony defines the Four Freshmen, and singing never ages.**

"The vocal harmonies of the Four Freshmen were always different," Ferreira said. "It's more of a jazzy sound. The chords are more complex than some of the other groups of the era like the 4 Lads and The Crew Cuts."

While myriad vocal harmonies underscore their sound, each member will step out during the show to sing solo numbers.

"Brian (Eichenberger) sings '**If I Only Had a Brain**,' from 'The Wizard of Oz,'" Ferreira said. "I'll do '**Just a Gigolo**.' We like to feature the individual solo talents of each member of the group. It gives the audience a chance to choose their favorite."

And it lends nuance to their show. **Showmanship rides shotgun alongside vocal talent built with an eye to nostalgia and strong songs to make the Four Freshmen fresh despite their 65-year history.**

"Maybe people expect to see people in their 70s and 80s up on stage, but we're up there singing and jumping around," Ferreira said. "We talk about the history, but **it's all about the music**. These are some of the greatest songs of the 20th Century." Tom Netherland is a freelance writer. He may be reached at features@bristolnews.com.



The Four Freshmen will sing classics Nov. 12 at the Paramount Center for the Arts in downtown Bristol.

CAUGHT IN THE ACT

April 17 2013

THE FOUR FRESHMEN

The Newton Theater, Newton, NJ
April 17, 2013

By Joe Lang

The current incarnation of The Four Freshmen, Bob Ferreira, Brian Eichenberger, Vince Johnson and Curtis Calderon, has been a unit since 2001, making them the second longest tenured version of the group. This longevity has given them the kind of empathy and **natural stage presence** that comes with years of performing together. This was readily evident during their **highly entertaining and musically satisfying concert** at the Newton Theater.

From the opening strains of *“With Plenty of Money and You,”* it was evident that the **enthusiasm** between and among the group and the audience was at a **high level, and it remained so throughout the evening.** There was an occasional comment or request from the audience, and the guys handled these moments with aplomb, humor and consistent courtesy.

Humor is an important element in the performances of The Four Freshmen. It infuses most of their commentary, and often seeps into their singing. **They always appear to be having a good time performing, and that attitude is infectious, bringing the audience right into their territory.**

The program was **loaded with Freshmen favorites like “Graduation Day,” “In This Whole Wide World,” “Route 66,” “Somebody Loves Me,” “Poinciana,” “Day By Day” and “It’s a Blue World.”** They gave a nod to the group that was inspired by the Freshmen sound, The Beach Boys, by giving a Freshmen version of *“Surfer Girl.”* Their new arrangement of *“Stardust,”* a song not previously recorded by any of the Freshmen groups, was another highlight. It was also wonderful to hear *“Now You Know,” “Invitation,” “Guilty”* and a **bucketful of other terrific selections.** When they came back for an encore of *“The Day Isn’t Long Enough”* and a musical goodbye, **there was a sea of fans with smiling faces on their feet cheering wildly.**

Calderon, who alternated between trumpet and flugelhorn, was the dominant instrumental presence during the concert. He is a **terrific brass player with a strong, clear tone, and a fine musical imagination.** Eichenberger on guitar, Johnson on bass and Ferreira on percussion provided a **steady and propulsive rhythm section.** Their voices blend wonderfully with Eichenberger’s lead providing the high end and Ferreira’s bass filling out the bottom.

This version of The Four Freshmen always gives an audience their money’s worth, but this concert seemed to take things to a **special level.** Several long-time Freshmen fans to whom I spoke shared this view with me. It is a real pleasure to be present at occasions like the one provided by the group this time out.