

## Back Home Again

(continued from page 3)

Greencastle, and Hal Kratzsch from Warsaw. The group, all of whom were music students at the Arthur Jordan Conservatory of Butler University in Indianapolis, was originally a barbershop singing quartet named Hal's Harmonizers. They were later renamed the Top Hatters when they began to experiment with more modern harmonies. Significantly, in September of 1948, the quartet hired a Chicago talent agent, Dick Sheldon, who changed their name to the Freshmen Four and contracted their first professional gig at the 113 Club in Fort Wayne. Coincidentally, the Grand Wayne Convention Center and the connecting downtown Hilton Hotel, location of both the 2013 and this year's Convention, is nearly at the same location of the old 113 Club where Group #1 was booked for a week beginning on September 20, 1948. Following that week, the group continued with several other Midwest gigs until a January booking in Green Bay, Wisconsin, after which their name was changed to the Four Freshmen!

Seventy-five years later, it's also appropriate for us to celebrate the uninterrupted record of that great Freshmen sound as it has been continued for our fan pleasure by two dozen additional dedicated musicians including the great guys of Group #27 this year in Fort Wayne: Bob Ferreira, Tommy Boynton, Jake Baldwin, and Ryan Howe.

Without question, the track record of the 33 previous Conventions of the Society promises to be another great event for #34, and we hope to see all of you "Back Home Again In Indiana."

# The Four Freshmen: Crooners Club

By Don Follet

It was a little scary; just a little, when the Four Freshmen bounced onto the Crooners nite club stage with pre-Halloween masks, singing *Fools Rush In* in a slow, haunting manner.

It got a rousing laugh from the audience. Then your favorite quartet soon broke out with *Day In, Day Out* to officially launch the Oct. 30 show.

The Crooners Club at a Minneapolis suburb has supported jazz singers and bands for only a few short years, but is drawing good crowds and had the Freshmen return, following their successful 2021 gig. The setting at Crooners was a large tent, set for dining-in. The Four Freshmen show was the last of the tent's fall season. The Crooners has other smaller rooms for more intimate shows.

As always, the FF 90-minute set covered some of the Freshmen's song history — *Easy Street* and *Poinciana* as well as their current CD, *From This Moment On, All the Things You Are*, and *Have You Met Miss Jones?* It was an appreciative crowd, responsive and in a good mood.

The night's performance showed again it's still the tight harmony, up-tempo or otherwise, which so identified The Four Freshmen in their first 74 years, while highlighting some super instrumental performances.

Jake Baldwin, featured in several songs, continues a tradition of outstanding Freshmen horn work. New member, Ryan Howe, showed he can carry forth the important lead voice in the Freshmen delivery.

For Jake and Tom Boynton the Twin Cities area is their home base now. Jake is a well-recognized horn player in the area.

Coming down the show's closing stretch, the group ended with *The Day Isn't Long Enough* and *Route 66*, two stable tunes that brought standing applause, with *In This Whole Wide World* being the group's encore.

Minnesota FFS state rep Ann Johnson was busy chatting up the tables and sales were brisk for the new CD.



Ryan and Jake sounded fantastic at the Toledo, OH concert for Mel.

