

# How I First Heard The Four Freshmen... A Philco Radio, Lorraine, and a Guy Named Bill

by Trudy Feigum, VA

Bob Ferreira has asked me more than once how I came to be a fan of the Four Freshmen. My expedient answer is, "By marriage." The real answer (and why I don't often tell it) requires more time. My coming to be a fan kind of evolved.

Without telling my age, my family had one of those large Philco radios. You know, the tall, wooden beauty that sat on the floor? Not only did I listen to *The Lone Ranger*, *Superman*, and *Sky King*, but that's how I first heard the Four Freshmen. I recall *It's A Blue World* and wondered at the time why freshmen were singing such a mournful song. Did they miss being in junior high?

Growing up in Colorado, my teen-aged friends and I listened to Country/Western music. Amid the likes of Johnny Cash, Faron Young, Buck Owens and Patsy Cline, I learned to play the alto sax and the piano and discovered how much I enjoy singing—at school and in the church choir. Plus, I spent many Saturday nights in front of the TV with my dad watching and dancing to the Lawrence Welk Show.

When I married Tom I was introduced to jazz. Stan Kenton, Stan Getz, Dizzy Gillespie, Dave Brubeck, Bill Evans...and the vocals of Ella, Sue Raney, the Singers Unlimited, Mel Tormé...and the terrific big bands of Glenn Miller, Count Basie, Tommy Dorsey (we both love to dance).

One night Tom took me to see a very favorite group of his, The Four Freshmen. They were appearing at a local nightspot in Denver, Taylor's Supper Club. We sat at a small table, close to the stage and were among the youngest people in the room. Tom asked if I'd heard the Freshmen? I had heard them a few times on my parents' Philco radio, I said. Little did I know. The tunes and lyrics the guys sang were familiar, but different than anything I'd ever heard. I was enjoying myself immensely, laughing at Bob Flanigan's antics and watching and listening to the guys play off each other. Then it happened. Ross Barbour swung into his rendition of *Sweet Lorraine*. You know the one in his Leroy voice? I couldn't believe a singer would purposely make his voice squeak like that. And, he was having so much fun. Ross knew I was intrigued and really hammed it up. I was smitten!

We saw the Freshmen a couple more times in Denver and bought some of their LPs before we settled in Pierre, SD in 1978 for our working years. Tom and I owned and operated Feigum Funeral Home and I was executive director of the South Dakota Dental Association and the South Dakota Dental Foundation. Toward the end of the 1990s, Tom suggested we invite a recent widower to join us for Thanksgiving dinner. His son—a guy named

Bill—was still in town and would join us. Sitting comfortably around our dining table, conversation turned to music. Imagine our surprise to learn the guy named Bill was Bill Byrne, road manager and trumpeter with the Woody Herman Band. Bill asked if we knew Bob Flanigan with The Four Freshmen, describing his talent on the trombone as top-notch. Bill and Bob were good friends and what stories Bill told! Before leaving, Bill asked if we'd heard about The Four Freshmen Society? He told us it is the Freshmen fan club and meets once a year around the country. He encouraged us to find out more.

The first year after Tom and I retired—2000—we decided to attend the Four Freshmen Society Convention in Colorado Springs. Group #21 headlined: Brian, Greg, Vince and Bob. Wow! This was it for me. I may have been smitten with their sound back in the 60s and 70s, but experiencing their wonderful harmonies at this convention was where I fell in love with the Four Freshmen. Believe it or not, this same convention is when I first suggested the need to develop a foundation. And, using a familiar phrase, Now You Know!

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## The Four Freshmen...On the Road!

Check the Website: [fourfreshmensociety.com](http://fourfreshmensociety.com) or [fourfreshmen.com](http://fourfreshmen.com) for updates

For bookings: International Ventures Incorporated

Dale Sheets & Dina Sheets-Roth

P.O. Box 256, McGregor, TX 76657

Phone: 661-259-4500

Email: [ivimanagement@me.com](mailto:ivimanagement@me.com)

Please note: Dates subject to change without notice.

*Due to the current health restrictions, please be sure to keep up with the status of concerts online.*

### November 15, 2020 Largo, FL

Central Park Performing Arts Center, 105 Central Park Dr  
Show times: 2:00p and 7:00p Tickets: 727-587-6793

### January 24, 2021 Malibu, CA

Lisa Smith Wengler Center for the Arts, 24255 Pacific Coast Hwy  
Show time: 2:00p Tickets: 310-506-4522

### February 4, 2021 Lawrenceburg, TN

Crockett Theatre, 203 North Military Ave  
Show time: 7:00p Tickets: 961-762-4231

### February 17, 2021 Green Valley, AZ

Community Performance and Arts Center, 1250 W Continental Rd  
Show times: 3:00p and 7:00p Tickets: 520-300-1750

### February 18, 2021 Scottsdale, AZ

ASU Kerr Cultural Center, 6110 N Scottsdale Rd  
Show time: 7:30p Tickets: 480-596-2660 (Tickest on sale later)

### March 26, 2021 The Villages, FL

Laurel Manor Recreation Center, 1545 Buena Vista Blvd  
Show time: 7:00p Residents Only!  
Fund raiser for the Bob Washington Jazz Scholarship

### June 9-11, 2021 Bay City, MI

Four Freshmen Convention & Reunion  
Doubletree Hotel, One Wenonah Park Place  
Open only to members of the Four Freshmen Society.

### December 5, 2021 Horseshoe Bay, TX

Quail Point  
Show time: 4:30p Tickets: TBA