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Songs from Our Past

Golden Oldies Forever

By *Renee Weinfeld*

On Thursday, May 22nd, the Entertainment Advisory Committee, under the leadership of Judy Clickner, sponsored a program by Charlie Horner, a fellow Somerset Runner, who did a fabulous job enlightening us about the evolution of Doo Wop. Charlie is a music historian with forty years of Doo Wop research and twenty years as a DJ on Philadelphia's WXPB-FM radio station under his belt took us on a multimedia journey, as if in a time machine, back to the 1940's to learn about rhythm and blues and vocal harmony. The lead vocalist of the group sang the melody while other singers imitated various musical instruments.

In the Clubhouse Ballroom, Charlie played many song bites and displayed on the screen numerous pictures of vocal groups. Remember the Ravens in 1948 singing "Old Man River," their smash hit? Richard Barrett, on Broadway, New York City, discovered many groups, recorded them, and made them legends. I remember hearing Frankie Lyman and The Teenagers singing "Why Do Fools Fall in Love."

Most of us can recall hearing these wonderful groups who harmonized under the streetlamps to tunes like "In the Still of The Night," "Gloria," and "Earth Angel." Charlie enhanced his presentation by personal reminiscences about these groups. He displayed various records, photographs, sheet music, and other memorabilia. Members of the audience sang along with the sound bites, their feet tapping, or humming the music and enjoying the musical journey.

Frank Tapper, an avid fan, joyously commented, "I thought the presentation was very well organized, perfect, wonderful, and exciting. I could listen to Charlie for many hours. This music influenced my life and reminds me of my teen years." The audience thoroughly enjoyed this great presentation.