

BOBBY WELLS- THE PHILANTHROPIC MUSIC MAN

Not many people can say they have always known what they want to do in life. Nor can many people say that such dreams would come to fruition and span decades of success. Bobby Wells, leader of the last great American show band, The Infernos, is such a person. "Music has been the driving force in my life," Wells says. At the age of 5, he began studying and performing music, particularly the piano. His appreciation for the craft and its many genres developed over time but began with the television music shows of the 50s, 60s, and 70s. Moving from his hometown of Brooklyn to New Jersey in the early 60s, Wells fell in love with the Jersey vocal and show groups like The Four Seasons, Bobby Darin, and Frank Sinatra.

After his formative college years, Wells toured the east coast with a variety of different show bands before finally landing the incredible gig of music directing The Duprees. It was his time traveling the world with The Duprees that Wells says was responsible for "formulating the recipe of success" that would help drive the work of The Infernos.

Upon leaving The Duprees, Wells says he "was looking for a challenge both musically and vocally" that would take him to the next level. Pursuing his unquenchable thirst for music and vocal variety, Wells began with an acapella group singing on street corners to which he later transformed into a vocal group backed by professional musicians. This was the beginning of The Infernos.

Deeply rooted in the landscape of New Jersey, The Infernos have become one of the last great show bands in the United States and abroad. They have performed in China, Italy, state governor inaugurations, for past Presidents, on television and in venues both large and small. When asked what The Infernos is best known for, Wells replied that the band is well known for their humanitarian efforts and the "never ending effort to be the best at what we do."

In the past year alone, Wells and his Infernos have helped to raise over \$3 million dollars for the Susan G. Komen Race For a Cure foundation with Hoda Kotb from the Today Show, and they have travelled to L'Aquila, Italy to bring international awareness to the devastating earthquake suffered in 2009. "We had heard about the earthquake through some of our longtime Italian friends," says Wells, "we want to make a difference and bring awareness to the recover needs." Through performances and tapping in to The Infernos own extended influence, The Columbus Citizen Foundation was able to donate over \$100,000 to L'Aquila's relief efforts. Wells and The Infernos are also involved with bringing aid to over a dozen other charities, some including the Muscular Dystrophy Association, Alzheimer's Association of New Jersey and Camp LeMar for Special Needs Children.

Wells and The Infernos also include original recordings among the top things they do best. Since incorporating Kenny Simmons (formerly of The Commodores) in 2002, the band has released several albums with their own label Rotunda Records that include many original songs. With thousands upon thousands of fans and clients spanning an impressive 30+ years, it's no wonder Wells hasn't thought about doing anything else. "It's a labor of love," he says, "If you want to give up, you don't deserve to call yourself an entertainer and musician." But beyond just the love of music and performing, Wells believes in his work. "We are the last of the great show bands. We're selling happiness and people always crave that."

For Bobby Wells and the incredibly talented and beloved Infernos, there is no end in sight. "I have had a non-stop 40 year plus career entertaining millions, helping the needy and maintaining the quality the world has come to expect from us, every performance. I'm not stopping now!"



JUST THE FACTS

Favorite performance venue

The Spanish Steps in Rome, Italy

Who is your favorite recording artist of all time

Frank Sinatra

Favorite NJ Hotspot

The Jetty, The Latin Casino then, Atlantic City now

What is your favorite musical instrument

The Piano

Where is one place you would love to see The Infernos perform?

Saturday Night Live performing one of their originals