

# Dallas Junior Woman's Club Plans December Projects

In an effort to benefit the community, the Dallas Junior Women's Club has scheduled several projects for December. Areas of conservation, education, crippled children, caring for the aged, and aiding patients at Retreat State Hospital are included in the contributions of the club.

The conservation department will meet Dec. 10. The use of returnable bottles will be discussed at this time.

Each year the club provides a \$500 scholarship to a Dallas area high school senior. A meeting will be held to update the scholarship applications.

The public affairs chairman, Mrs. Charles Parente, reported that two-way radios will be installed in the school buses to alleviate some of the busing problems.

Ninety-two pair of shoes were donated to the Wyoming Valley Crippled Children's Association. Anyone with shoes to donate can leave them in boxes provided at Humphreys or Fairview Shoe Store.

A Christmas Party will be given at the Maple Hill Nursing Home, sponsored by the welfare department. A party will also be given at the Retreat State Hospital.

Christmas baskets will be given to 15 families in the area, Dec. 15. Food will be collected by area chairman from Nov. 30 to Dec. 6.

The next club meeting will be held Dec. 3 at the Irem Temple Country Club. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Reservations can be made with Mrs. Andrew Stahovec until Nov. 27. The Dallas Women's Club Chorus under the direction of Mrs. David Wojciechowski will provide a program of Christmas music.

Cookbooks and jewelry will be available for sale at the meeting.



The Orpheus Choral Society will present their First Christmas Concert Dec. 7 at 8:30 p.m. in the Wilkes College Center for Performing Arts.

## Music Review

### Oratorio Society

by Harry Trebilcock

The Wyoming Valley Oratorio Society, under the direction of Clifford Balshaw, presented a program of 20th century choral music last Sunday at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Three works were performed—Poulenc's Gloria (1959), Calabro's "The Floods are Risen" (1973), and Vaughan-Williams's "Dona Nobis Pacem" (1936). I found two-thirds of the program superb, and my reservations about the remainder have to do with the music, not the performance.

The Poulenc "Gloria" was the only familiar work to me. The opening movement (there are six in all) sounded unsettled, but everything came together in short order. The Latin text is taken from the Catholic mass, and Poulenc's setting of it has always intrigued me. I'm sure the composer had some reason for stressing weak syllables (Je-su Chris-TE), but I haven't the faintest idea what that reason might be. It hardly matters for the piece works. It is moving, well, even tightly, constructed, and jaunty. And why not? I know of no law that says praises must be snug solemnly.

I have long thought this composer at his best in his religious music (perhaps the group will present the "Stabat Mater" in the future) or when he was being urbane, even witty. On other levels of communication (the opera "Dialogues des Carmelites" comes to mind) I find him dull or pretentious. Not so with the "Gloria." The chorus and orchestra gave of their considerable best and delivered an accurate and often very moving performance.

I can not say that the soprano soloist, Joanne Netter Herron, sang like an angel for the simple

reason that I have never heard an angel, but neither do I expect to hear the part sung better. The solo line is treacherously difficult; crossing vocal registers, lying cruelly high, and demanding complete control. Ms. Herron met the challenge head on. She sang with purity of tone, secure pitch, did not flinch from the altitude of the music and floated roughly a dozen high A's. (I think they were A's.) Some of her singing had a disembodied, other-world sound that was ideal for the music and the text.

It is a truism that one can only once hear a piece of music for the first time. I was hearing both the Calabro and Vaughan-Williams for the first time. I have come to depend on what is colloquially, if not elegantly, called a gut reaction to music new to me. This reaction falls into two broad categories. The first is, Thank God that's over; the second, where can I get a score and learn more about this piece. Mr. Calabro's work hit me in the first category.

As with Poulenc, weak syllables were stressed (I must confess I could not understand most of the words) and the vocal writing, particularly for the soloists—Dorothy Balshaw and Christopher Unger—, would be more suitable for a keyed instrument. The work is brief, knowing the forces involved I assume it was well performed, but it did nothing for at least one listener.

On the other hand, Vaughan-Williams's "Dona Nobis Pacem" ("Grant Us Peace") almost did the same listener. The texts are taken from Walt Whitman (at least patriotic and most poetic), John Bright, the Catholic mass, and the Bible. It

seems an odd combination but, like the Poulenc, it works. Considering the date it was written (1936) it may have been the composer's reaction to what was happening in Europe. I neither know nor care. That is the sort of thing best left to musicologists.

Looking beyond the obvious imagery of the texts, I sense a desire for peace far removed from battlefields of war. And that, I think, I will leave to the mystics. Some of the writing reminded me of Mahler, but a Mahler with control and no nervousness or hysteria. The chorus sang superbly, although at times they were overwhelmed by the orchestra, the soloists—Harriet Santos and David Scott—were absolutely right for their brief but important parts, and the orchestra could hardly have been better.

Catharsis is not a word I find much use for, but there was in this performance an element that transcended the limitations of musical notation and human fallibility. Given more rehearsal time some of the minor rough edges might have been smoothed out. I'm not sure smoothness would be a virtue here. There was a craggy honesty and, at the conclusion, a feeling of fulfillment that no amount of polish could ever replace.

### Orpheus Choral Society Plans Christmas Concert

The first Christmas Concert given by the Orpheus Choral Society will be presented Dec. 7, at 8:30 p.m. in the Wilkes College Center for the Performing Arts. Ann Lutz is chairman of the Concert Committee and David Williams is president of the chorus.

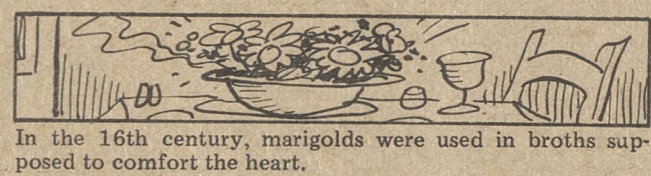
The Chorus will present a variety of Christmas music under the direction of Eugene Kelleher, a resident of Plymouth and a graduate of Wilkes College. He has done graduate work at the University of New Hampshire and Kent State University. Mr. Kelleher has given many performances in the Wilkes-Barre Scranton Area as a soloist.

Marjorie Briggs George who is choir director and organist at the Firwood United Methodist Church will accompany the group. She is Past Dean of the Organist Guild and is a member

of the Senior Mozart Club. The Chorus gives many concerts throughout the year for churches and other organizations beside their Annual Spring Concert.

This Christmas Concert is being sponsored by the Triple "S" Class of the Firwood United Methodist Church. Orpheus has approximately 70 members who come from all walks of life but who enjoy singing.

The following Back Mountain residents are members of Orpheus: Martha Dilley, Arline Klinger, Margaret Rowett, Grace Scott, Marie Troxell, Eleanor Vojtko, Dorothy Adams, Sylvia Schooley, Midge Smith, Elayne Campbell, Richard Oliver, George Stolarick, William Clewell and Dave Schooley.



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### Women's Club will Offer Cooks' Delight Cookbook

It was announced by Mrs. Billie Kisailus, club president of the Wilkes-Barre Junior Womens Club that due to the requests of many residents the club will again have available their member compiled cookbook entitled "Cooks' Delight."

"Cooks' Delight" was a flood-related inspiration by the club members who used the proceeds to assist Agnes Flood disaster victims. Many persons were able to feel a little less grief by the donations received

from this cookbook, and the members are hopeful that their efforts will again be supported by the entire community.

Donations for this "secret" recipe-packed book are \$2.50 and a copy may be obtained by contacting Valerie Johnson, committee chairman at 824-4766, Barbara Zigmund, co-chairman at 822-8264 or any club member.

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