

## Tribute To Mrs. Kettering Inspires Children's Chorus

Last night's concert of the Inland Children's chorus in the Dayton Art Institute was dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Charles F. Kettering.

J. D. O'Brien, general manager of Inland division of General Motors, sponsor of the chorus, made the announcement from the stage, stating that the action was being taken because of the intense interest of the Ketterings in the welfare of the group.

We have never heard the 100 children—50 boys and 50 girls—sing so well as they did last night. It was one of four appearances in the third annual spring festival of the chorus. Two more concerts are to be sung tomorrow afternoon. Primarily they are for Inland employees and their families and friends.

For the festival, the children are immaculately clad in their usual manner and occupy the tiered platform originally arranged and lighted by Raymond Sovey, of New York.

Under the expert guidance of Richard Westbrook, their director from the start, 10 years ago, they sing with gorgeous tonal effect



Westbrook

and a responsiveness to directional demands that is nothing short of uncanny at times.

### Rich In Versatility

Their first group includes three popular numbers, "In a Monastery Garden," "The Green Cathedral" and the "Valse Triste." For encore they give their marching song, the prayer from "Hansel and Gretel."

The second part of their program is picked from some of the best-known of operatic scores. They sing these with distinction, with moving effect on the audience, quite overwhelmed with the beauty of it all.

From Romberg they take the bold measures of "Stouthearted Men" from "The New Moon" and catch the magic of springtime in "Deep in My Heart" from "The Student Prince." From Friml they select the melodious "Indian Love Call" from "Rose Marie" and extract the humor of "The Donkey Serenade" from "The Firefly."

They catch the lilting love notes of "Summer Time" from Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess" and they make an outstanding contribution of "An Irish Lullaby," with an unusually fine boy soprano voice doing one chorus as solo. Hoagy Carmichael's "Stardust" is splendidly interpreted also.

Augmenting Westbrook's directorial finesse are the organ and piano accompaniments of Mary Werner McCash and Isabel Herbst, which background and bind the vocalization into a solid unit.

### Serves a Dual Purpose

O'Brien, in a brief introduction, told the audience that more than 700 children now have reaped the benefit of training in this chorus, thereby gaining an appreciation of music and realizing the value of teamwork.

"We believe music to be a means of better understanding and a medium through which hate eventually may be abolished," he said. They sound like wise words.

This afternoon there will be a special private concert at which the chorus will sing for the 175 Negro children who are being trained for the Linden Center children's chorus under Inland sponsorship. No date has been set as yet for their initial public appearance, O'Brien said last night.—A. S. Kany.

May 4, 1946  
The Dayton Herald

Courtesy of Shirley Whiting

See the following page for a photo feature and article describing the first performance of the Linden Center Children's Chorus. An earlier choir at the Linden Community Center performed with Paul Robeson in a concert to which the Inland Children's Chorus members were invited guests.

[www.inlandchorus.com/PDFs/Photo-1941-J29-Robeson.pdf](http://www.inlandchorus.com/PDFs/Photo-1941-J29-Robeson.pdf)



### 60 VOICES HEARD IN NEGRO CHORAL CONCERT

PART OF THE 60-voice Linden Center Children's chorus is pictured above with Director Wade Hampton Bowers during their initial public performance in the Dayton Art institute last night. The girls surrounding Clarence L. Thomas Jr. are, from left to right, Barbara Jean and Phyllis Coletta Clark, Kathryn Casselberry and Syble Hurt. The boys, also from the left, are Robert Lee, William Russell Rucker and Barrett Roger Williams Jr. (Journal Staff Photo)

## Linden Center Chorus Makes Debut Here

Twenty-one months of study and practice by the Linden Center Children's chorus culminated last night in the group's initial public performance in the Dayton Art institute.

Under the direction of Wade Hampton Bowers, a New Yorker brought to Dayton by the Inland Manufacturing division of General Motors corporation to develop a Negro children's chorus, the 60-member choir sang 12 Christmas songs.

The program included traditional carols and hymns as well as that "coming classic" by Irving Berlin—"White Christmas." Della Smith Walker was the accompanist.

Last night's selections were in rehearsal three months but the group itself has been studying together four times a week since February, 1946. The project was inspired, according to J. D. O'Brien, general manager of Inland, by the success of the Inland Children's chorus.

December 24, 1947  
The Dayton Journal

The Linden Center Children's Chorus under Inland's sponsorship would remain active for nearly ten years. See the bottom of the "Music" page to view and listen to recordings of this chorus.