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Wagons and Horses

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Joy Clements at White House - Page 6

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LaDonna (Beatty) White

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## Letter From Jack

**J**OY CLEMENTS, a beautiful young and talented woman, who sang her way from Dayton to the Metropolitan opera, is the subject of our cover story in this issue of Leisure.

Betty Dietz Krebs, fine arts editor and music critic, traces Joy's accomplishments through the Kettering school system's Fairmont high school to her success with the Met.

Even a prima donna such as Joy, though, faces similar tasks as the suburban housewife who does her singing around the house and while under the shower.

In chatting together for the story, Betty

and Joy also talked of such things as housekeeping and baby-sitting. Right now, Joy does her own housekeeping in between dates at the Metropolitan and the White House besides mothering two children, Lori, 6, and Matthew, 18 months.

Getting babysitters is a little different for Joy than most mothers, however, since she must have someone not only responsible and dependable but someone who can stay for days at a time when she has a prolonged engagement away from home.

Joy, whose maiden name was Albrecht, is one prima donna who doesn't like to be away from home, husband, and children too long

at any one time as Betty points out in "A Short Road to the Met" on Pages 6 and 7.



Jack



Joy

*Jack M. Osler*

Jack M. Osler  
SUNDAY EDITOR



Joy Clements Joins Lady Bird Johnson to Greet Young White House Guests, Shown Also on the Cover—Photo by Bernie Boston

# A Short Road to the Met

By BETTY DIETZ KREBS  
Fine Arts Editor



Daytonian as Gretel in Scene From Humperdinck Opera Given at White House

JUST A little more than nine years ago Dayton singer Joy Clements and her husband, L.D., figured they would try their luck in New York.

At the time, the two young singers were up to their larynxes in rehearsals and performances for summer theater at Memorial Hall. They were both in the chorus and one of the highlights of the summer was a well worn show by the name of "Where's Charles?"

Today, after five years as a leading soprano with the venerable Metropolitan Opera company, Joy admits she has to sit down once in a while and ask if all this is really happening to her. Joyce Albrecht Clements, L.D.—he was Dave to his friends during the Memorial Hall stint—has just completed what Joy calls a very successful three-month season with the San Francisco Opera and now is in the talking stage for the coming Gilbert and Sullivan season at Lincoln Center.

ONE OF the bright spots of the year for the comely brunet was the recent holiday visit to the White House for a performance of Hansel and Gretel at a party Mrs.



Keeping the Voice in Shape Singer Joy Clements' Big Job

Beauteous Prima Donna Typical of New Opera Image



Lyndon Johnson gave for under-privileged children.

Joy and Marcia Baldwin, who played Hansel, had to hurry to the reception to greet the children along with Lady Bird.

Giggling, Joy says, "Suddenly I realized there we were running through the White House halls without our shoes."

The young prima donna's father, V. E. Albrecht of Patterson Rd., finally admitted: "I always wanted you to be a lawyer but I guess singing at the White House will do."

At the reception, a little boy the same size as the Clements' six-year-old Lori gave her a long look.

"Are you really a grown-up lady?"

JOY ADMITS the decision to tackle New York took some soul-searching for her and her husband. They determined they had to try but that the family unit had to remain important.

"There were some very insecure times," Joy says. And when young singers ask her for advice, she makes it clear that it's going to be a tough fight.

Joy would be the first to concede that luck plays a huge role in making or breaking a career.

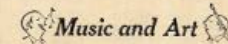
A Fairmont high school graduate, she was building up from years of singing with the Miami Opera guild and the University of Miami—that's where she and L.D. met—and had auditioned for the City Center Opera in New York. But the big break came when word got out that composer Gian-Carlo Menotti had heard her and been impressed. Sub-

sequently, she worked with him in a performance of his opera, The Medium, when it was done for the Omnibus show on television.

"There are lots of fine singers, many with great talent," Joy observes, "but many of them are just not seen at the right time at the right place. That's luck."

MANY singers like to protest about their ties to the Metropolitan. Not Joy. She knows at this stage it's a tremendous advantage.

"But we are on call—theoretically about



24 hours a day," she adds with a laugh. Then, more soberly she explains, "It actually depends on the contract. But for 15 weeks I'm responsible most of the time to the Met."

This year she was called in several times in addition to her assigned performances. Christmas Day, for example, she was notified at 5:50 p.m. that she would have to do Gretel again.

"I was feeling pretty lousy," she complains cheerfully, "but I guess the other soprano was even more so."

Another time during the season she had two hours' notice to sing one of the genres in the Magic Flute. Since the Clementises

have moved from Manhattan to Lincoln Park, N.J., where Lori is in the first grade, the 25-mile drive to New York's Lincoln Center involved some close figuring. (The Clements' also have a son, Matthew, 18 months old.)

KEEPING the voice ready requires constant preparation, Joy points out. However, she is careful not to overwork and thinks resting is important when she feels any signs of fatigue. Her schedule usually includes a voice lesson each week and when she's preparing a role she works with the Metropolitan coaches.

When I talked to her, Joy was in the middle of preparations for a performance of the Mahler Fourth Symphony with the Pittsburgh Symphony. The concert was to be given in Philadelphia. Later in the season she'll go to Florida for two weeks of the Masada Ball by Verdi. Then it will be back to New York for the completion of the Met season.

Chances are she'll also go on tour with the Met. And just the other day the Cincinnati Summer Opera announced that she will sing the role of Adina in a new production of Donizetti's Elixir of Love next season.

Opera performances allow only for an occasional visit to appear with symphony orchestras. Joy sang with the Dayton Philharmonic orchestra a few seasons ago. But she hopes to have time for more concerts and possibly a tour of Europe.

But the European tour would depend on a number of things—not the least of which would be the family.

Joy is one prima donna who doesn't want to be far from home and husband for very long.

Joy Clements (née Joyce Marie Albrecht [1932–2005]) is listed in the December 1944 and 1946 DPO concert programs. See the forum and photos pages for comments and photos.