

Inland Discontinues Children's Chorus

By **BETTY DIETZ**
Daily News Fine Arts Editor

After 35 years, the Inland Children's chorus program is being dropped by the sponsoring Inland Manufacturing division of General Motors. Since the death of the founding director Richard Westbrook, Joseph Geiger has trained the children.

The chorus is being disbanded for a number of reasons, according to T. O. Matthews, general manager. Some lessening of interest and attendance on the part of the youngsters was a factor but weighing even more heavily was the response of parents (mostly Inland employes) and the community in general.

"IN TERMS of value received, cost per employe affected in our sphere of activities (West Side and Vandalia), it has been more costly than any other program," Matthews said.

"I'm sorry to say it's a sign of the times," he added.

"There are so many activities now, so many demanding of the parents' time as chauffeurs and in other ways."

Another factor in the decision was the slackening interest on the part of the public. When attendance by Inland employes at chorus concerts dropped off, the doors were opened to the public. Even so, Matthews noted, recent programs drew only 800 to 1,000. In the past, it was not unusual for the chorus to sing to capacity audiences at Memorial hall.

ACCORDING to the Inland executive, "People say the programming hasn't kept pace and that may be. The public today is exposed to so much professional performance that it's difficult to compete."

Each year the chorus has been giving back-to-back programs at the Dayton Art institute and for many years participated in Christmas concerts with the Dayton Philharmonic orchestra.