

Dohanyys get into the act

By HANK MEIJER

John Dohany's piano composition hasn't got a name yet, but if he performs it often enough at the Plymouth Fall Festival it may become the celebration's theme.

Dohany and his son, Mike, who live at 9004 Elmhurst, have both composed original songs and will performing them at the Kellogg Park bandstand during the festival.

Dohany's daughter Rosemary, 23, of Westland sings and will perform with both her father and her brother. She is at ease singing the swing era compositions of her father as well as Mike's folk-rock.

John Dohany will be on stage Friday, Sept. 6 at 4:30 p.m. and Mike will play his guitar pieces Saturday, Sept. 7 at noon. Although their performances are only hours apart, their music spans the years.

"When it comes to the music there's quite a generation gap," said 20-year old Mike, who is a 1973 graduate of Plymouth-Salem High School. He has played the guitar for two years and will begin music classes this fall at Schoolcraft College. The lessons will be a first in the family of gifted musicians.

John Dohany is 63 and has been playing the piano for the last 52 of those years. "I never took a lesson in my life," he said. "My mother played and I was bound and determined to be as good as she was."

He's a man with music on his mind. "I love music," he said. "There's hardly any time of the day when a song isn't running through my head."

When Dohany isn't playing the piano he's talking about it. "He's like super-talkative," said Rosemary. "He can walk into a doggone funeral parlor and the dead would get up and walk over."

The retired Continental Baking Company employe has memorized 400 songs over the years and still has them all at his command. He plays the accordion and organ, too. "The keys are exactly the same," he said. "It's just the touch that's different."

He recalls the early days when he

used to practice "My Merry Oldsmobile" on his mother's upright piano. Later he played bars, performing on the spoons as well as the piano.

When he wasn't playing honky-tonk and "getting in brawls all the time" he was catching the concert of every great pianist who passed through Detroit. Rubenstein, Horowitz and Schnabel are his favorites.

In 1967 Dohany brought his family and his stack of Classical records to Plymouth Township. They had to sell the family piano, but just as Dohany was growing restless enough to go back to playing in bars just to be able to bang on one, a lady's house burned. Her baby grand was intact but she didn't have a place for it so she offered it to the Dohanyys.

Although his father has been trying to make a piano player out of him, Mike Dohany prefers the guitar and harmonica. He corresponds with a friend in California who writes the lyrics to go with his tunes.

"I'm a strummer," he said. "There's plenty of room for me in the musical world."

His father agrees. "You're starting to get that harmony that I had," he told Mike. "There's never too much music around."

Mike and Rosemary have been playing together informally for years, but this will be their first performance together on stage. While Rosemary, a 1971 Plymouth High graduate who sang in the choir, sings along with both of the family's musicians, her musical tastes lie somewhere in between theirs—she prefers the Carpenters and Dionne Warwick to Mike's rock and Dohany's golden oldies.

All three are practicing now for their Fall Festival roles, with the greatest amount of preparation involved in readying the Dohany overture. "I haven't named it yet," Dohany said. "We might put up a contest for it at the festival. In the meantime I'll be beating my brains out."

Rosemary doesn't think her father is all that nervous about his own performance. "You're more worried about me blowing the solo for you," she joked.



A DOHANY AT THE KEYBOARD and another on the guitar will highlight musical events at the Plymouth Fall Festival. John Dohany (left) and his son, Mike, each accompanied by singer Rosemary, John's daughter, will perform their own compositions for piano and guitar. (Staff photo by Bob Woodring).

Lions continue 11-year tradition

Lions Club participation in the Plymouth Fall Festival began in 1963, when the Lions sponsored their first Melon and Ice Cream Social.

Wives of the Lions pitched in with the serving of cantaloup halves with a scoop of vanilla ice cream, home baked cake (baked by the wives), and coffee.

Located in the center of Kellogg Park, the event was continued for six years and eventually an old fashioned hot dog stand was added to the activity.

In 1969, the Ice Cream Social was dropped in favor of the Friday Fish Fry. This year's dinner, on Friday, Sept. 6, from 5 to 9 p.m., will be the sixth annual Lions Fish Dinner, marking 12 consecutive years of participation in the Fall Festival by the Plymouth Lions.

General chairman of this event for the first four years was Dick Schwalder, who just completed his year as president of the club. In 1963, the

chairman was William Fehlig and this year's chairman is Robert Erdelyi.

The Fish Dinner has grown steadily over the years. In 1970, 2,000 dinners were served and by 1972, the number was approximately 2,500. This year, Chairman Erdelyi plans to serve 3,000 dinners, requiring 1,200 pounds of fresh Iceland perch, 900 pounds of French fries, and 500 pounds of cole slaw, along with all the rolls and beverages that are served with each meal.

Each year the food handling and cooking capacity has been increased, and this year six gas-fired cookers will run at capacity to keep the lines of diners moving steadily.

The proceeds from this event will help finance the traditional Lions Club projects: Leader Dogs for the Blind, Michigan Eye Bank, Plymouth Community and School Eye Examination and Glasses Program, local Boy Scout and Girl Scout Troops, Cub Packs and many others.

Pets are welcome

Birds of the air, beasts of the land and creatures of the deep will assemble in front of the Penn Theater for the Fall Festival's annual pet show on Saturday, Sept. 7, from 9 to 11:30 a.m.

The pet show is sponsored by the Plymouth Optimist Club in conjunction with the Plymouth Parks and Recreation Department.

A panel of judges will award 45 ribbons in three categories: dog, unusual pet and cat. The animals will be selected for grooming, behavior, friendliness, cuteness, smallness and largeness, as well as the most unusual pet.

The competition is open to all pet owners and almost all pets. Large animals, such as horses, aren't allowed. In past years a wide variety of ani-

mals, such as snakes, snails, goldfish, spiders, goats and even invisible dogs have been entered.

The Optimist events will take place in the air as well as on land with a balloon race. Participants may purchase a helium-filled balloon at the Optimist booth in Kellogg Park, write their names on the attached card, and release the balloon into the air.

A \$5 prize will be awarded to both the sender and the receiver of the balloon. In the past balloons have been found as far away as Cleveland.

The balloons can be purchased from 6 to 10 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 5, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 6, and Saturday, Sept. 7, and from noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 8.