

Kendallarks leave mark on Farmington history

The Kendallarks, a chorus which received numerous community awards during its 22 years of existence, dispersed scrapbooks and memorabilia to various community organizations this month.

Most of the items will become a permanent part of the Farmington historical archives housed in Farmington Community Library and available for viewing during regular library hours.

The female singers disbanded about two years ago to form the nucleus of the Farmington Area Community Chorus, which is open to both men and women under the sponsorship of Farmington Parks and Recreation Department.

"We enjoy even greater opportunities for community spirit and service now," said Bea Scaglione of the community chorus after the first annual reunion of the Kendallarks.

It was at the reunion that members voted how they wanted to dole out the various possessions they had accumulated over the years.

The Kendallarks' piano was donated to North Farmington Baptist Church, "in appreciation for the many years the group used the church facilities for rehearsals," Scaglione said.

The sound system was given to the Farmington Area Community Chorus. The music repertoire was given to Farmington Musicals.

THE CHORUS was formed in the fall of 1957, born as one of many interest groups within the Kendallwood II Newcomers Club. The first group leader was Martha Danz, appointed by the first Newcomers Club president, Bonnie Cooper.

Women residents from both Kendallwood I and II were invited to join, and

there were 11 members upon formation.

The first director was Eddie Ellegood. Over the years subsequent directors were George Assemany, William Feucht and Jim Whitten, who now directs the Farmington Area Community Chorus.

Through the years membership included women from Farmington, Farmington Hills and many surrounding communities. Many hundreds of performances were given for area schools, churches, clubs and organizations.

Kendallarks performed in the kickoff concert for the first Farmington Founders Festival, July 21, 1985, at the Farmington Junior High School on Thomas Street. They shared the stage with the McKenny Choristers and the Sweet Adelines.

The group has entertained in every Founders Festival since until they became the nucleus of the Farmington Area Community Chorus in September 1979.

Whitten, and accompanist Susan Garr and many former Kendallarks members are still with this group.

IN CONNECTION with the celebration of the 40th annual observance of National Music Week, sponsored by the National Federation of Music Clubs and locally by Farmington Musicals, Kendallarks performed in the first local shopping mall programs series at Livonia Mall on May 5, 1971, and have taken part in most National Music Week celebrations since.

Kendallarks gave the first concert of the first "Summer in the Park" series, sponsored by the Farmington Arts Council, in June 1975, and have taken part in the series each year thereafter.

On Oct. 28, 1976, the group received a citation from the city of Farmington Hills for exceptional service to the city for offering concerts in community. Then came a framed certificate signed by Dorothy Gordon, chairman of Farmington Hills Beautification Commission, and D. Keith Deacon, mayor.

In December of the same year the group received a certificate of appreciation from Farmington Bicentennial Committee, signed by John W. Anhalt.

The Michigan Legislature passed a resolution of tribute on July 2, 1976, honoring those who contributed to the Bicentennial celebration, and Kendallarks received a copy of the resolution signed by Billie S. Farmum, secretary of the Senate.



Scrapbooks, awards and memorabilia accumulated by the Kendallarks over a period of 22 years are now part of Farmington Community Library's historical collection. Past presidents of the women's

chorus flank Beverly Papai (second from left), who accepted the gift on behalf of the library. Betty O'Connor is on Papai's left. Marci Yutendale and Bea Scaglione are on her right.

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