

WESTFIELD'S BURGEONING ARTS COMMUNITY HAS OFFERED OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVITY SINCE LATE 1800S

BY MICHELLE H. LE POIDEVIN

Since the late 1800s, Westfield has been known as a region rich in the arts, and the wealth of professionalism and excellence continues today.

Notable fine artists, such as Harry and Wende Devlin, Hazel Finck, cartoonist Charles Addams, and actor Andrew McCarthy have put Westfield on the map.

Additionally, various corporations and production companies have chosen Westfield as the ideal backdrop for their commercials and television shows (such as NBC's "Ed") because of its "Colonial hometown appeal."

However, virtually every resident is a celebrity in his or her own right because of their membership and involvement with arts organizations dating back to the town's birth.

A Westfield tradition since 1912, the Westfield Community Band was organized by Al Drake in his Stoneleigh Park mansion in 1892. This early band was originally a marching band directed by E.L. Taylor, who dressed his ensemble in military-type uniforms. In 1896, the band performed for a gubernatorial inauguration.

However, the band was truly established when a group of train commuters and local businesspersons decided that Westfield should have its own band. Three years later, the ensemble had 45 members and a patron membership of 100 citizens paid \$1 as subscribers.

While the band has been directed under several different and notable batons, the ensemble consists of almost 75 members,

performs regularly at Mindowaskin Park in Westfield during the summer months, and especially dazzled townspeople when members participated in the town's bicentennial in 1994.

The Musical Club of Westfield, which was

established in 1915 with approximately a dozen members, works to foster and encourage music, providing opportunities for performance through various concerts held primarily at the First Baptist Church in Westfield, and supporting college music

scholarships.

Consisting of current or former professional singers, the organization also sponsors the Junior Musical Club of Westfield, which is composed of high school students. These young musicians perform regularly at concerts and recitals.

The Westfield Art Association began in 1922 as a group of artists supporting one another by providing quality programs and exhibits of their work.

Since then, the organization provides demonstrations of art techniques during meetings to members and guests, sponsors outreach programs at senior citizen centers and at the Westfield Neighborhood Council, hosts the "Art in Westfield" Sidewalk Show & Sale in the fall and spring, and presents a members-only exhibition in April at the Westfield Municipal Building, which is open to the public.


The Westfield Glee Club, organized in 1928, is dedicated to offering polished performances of choral music. Membership includes both men and women, and the group offers spring concerts in May and two winter concerts in December.

The club invites senior students from local high schools to apply for its annual scholarship. The group also participates in sing-outs (shortened versions of concert scores) for local community organizations.

Founded in 1934, the Westfield Community Players has staged over 200 productions in their cozy vintage theater on North Avenue, West. Every year, approximately four unique comedies, mysteries or dramas and



VINTAGE MUSICIANSHIP...ACCORDING TO THE WESTFIELD COMMUNITY BAND'S WEBSITE, "THE PRESENT BAND TRACES ITS ORIGIN TO 1912, WHEN A GROUP OF TRAIN COMMUTERS AND LOCAL BUSINESSMEN DECIDED WESTFIELD SHOULD HAVE ITS OWN LOCAL BAND, IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN TO COMPETE WITH NEIGHBORING TOWNS. GEORGE W. FRUTCHERY IS CREDITED WITH ORGANIZING THIS BAND, AND IT WAS DIRECTED BY HAROLD F. WELCH, WHO YIELDED THE BATON TO WILLIAM N. BARTOW IN 1915." ONE OF THE EARLIEST ENSEMBLES IS PICTURED, ABOVE.



The Choral Art Society of New Jersey
Post Office Box 2036, Westfield, NJ 07091

James S. Little, Musical Director

*PERFORMING CLASSIC CHORAL
MUSIC FOR THE WESTFIELD
COMMUNITY SINCE 1964*

The Choral Art Society of New Jersey is a non-profit association of avocational singers dedicated to the study and performance of great choral masterpieces, ranging from the Renaissance to our own time. Each year we perform two concerts, with orchestra, and sponsor a Messiah sing at the beginning of the holiday season for the enrichment of our community. Additionally, the Choral Art Society Chamber Choir performs at retirement communities, nursing homes, and hospice care centers.

Rehearsals are held on Tuesdays from 8:00 to 10:00 PM at the Presbyterian Church in Westfield, Mountain Avenue and Broad Street. New singers are welcome.

EXPERIENCE OUR NEXT PERFORMANCE


May 14, 8:00 PM
The Presbyterian Church in Westfield

LUIGI CHERUBINI'S REQUIEM IN C MINOR

CONCERTS BROADCAST ON COMCAST TV36

For more information about The Choral Art Society of New Jersey, visit our website at www.thechoralartsocietyofnj.org or call Jill Tozier at 908-654-9046.

Funding for The Choral Art Society of New Jersey has been made possible in part by the New Jersey Council on the Arts, Department of State, a partner agency of the National Endowment of the Arts through a grant administered by the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs to encourage our best, and broadly connect us to community life in ways that make full use of our creativity and talents.



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