



Pennsylvania Federation of Music Clubs

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CRUSADE FOR STRINGS

During the 1960s, schools and colleges were abandoning strings in pursuit of instruments of the band. Logically, people liked bands plus bands played at sports activities and for parades.

To revive interest in strings, National Federation of Music Clubs began its nationwide call to participate in the "Crusade for Strings." Because of the many affiliated clubs and musical groups, people in Federation rallied to promote "Crusade for Strings."

I know from experience. At the time, Musical Art of Lancaster sponsored a student musical art society under the guidance of its members who served as counselors. These students were already active in ensembles and chamber groups which gave us a nucleus. To begin the project, my dear mother, Edna Humpf, encouraged me to invite local music teachers to our home and get their response to our call.

Through those contacts and the courage of Musical Art Society, we began the Lancaster Junior Symphony (as it was first named). It so happened that Lancaster planned to host the state convention of PFMC in 1965. In those days, the final day of each state convention was "Youth Day."

Enter Virginia Darnell - a member of Musical Art Society and teacher who owned Darnell's Music Shop. She supplied music to all the schools in the district plus many teachers taught in her store studios. Eloise Johnson, now of Michigan, served as president of our society and was a college instructor at Elizabethtown College. She asked Miss Darnell to conduct the newly-formed orchestra. Youth Day, May 1965, at the convention was held at Fulton Opera House talented award and scholarship students were showcased. Closing the afternoon's concert was the premier performance of the Lancaster County Youth Symphony conducted by Miss Darnell.

Forty-one years later we are still crusading for strings.