

Columbus Boychoir All Boy

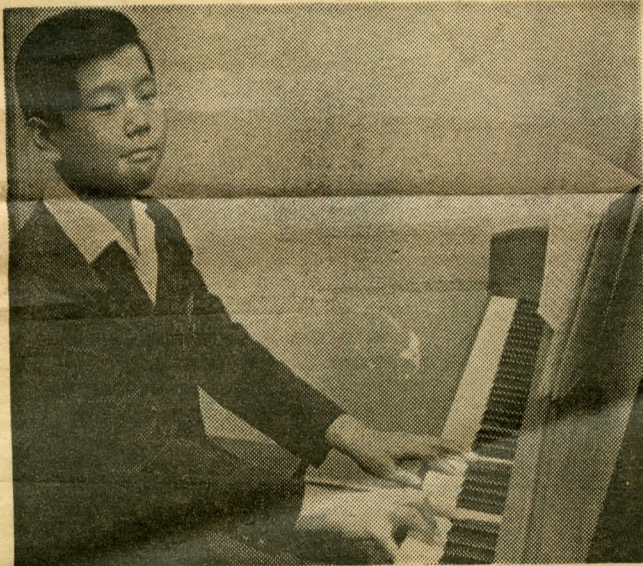
By DONALD P. DELANY
Staff Writer

Listening to the 85 members of the Columbus Boychoir in a concert — angelic expressions on their scrubbed faces and heavenly sounds coming from their lips — you might have a bit of difficulty in reconciling this stage image with the fact that the school's football team was undefeated for two seasons.

Or, as you admire their classical treatment of the music of Handel, or Haydn, or of a medieval Christmas carol, you might be surprised to learn that many of the boys are jazz buffs and that seven of them have formed an excellent rock 'n' roll combo.

But when you visit the Boychoir School on Rosedale Road in Princeton and watch these same youngsters on their athletic fields and in their classrooms, tousle-haired, running, yelling, pummeling each other, it all seems natural and logical. They are real boys, not Christmas-card seraphs.

THEIR ANGELIC SIDE will be on view next Thursday when the Boychoir presents its annual Christmas program in McCarter Theater. It will include their annual performance of Gian-Carlo Menotti's opera, "Amahl and the Night Visitors," and their traditional recital of Christmas carols. There will be



Boychoir member John Mark Kamitsuka is a gifted pianist and fine athlete.



The Boychoir School's rock combo includes, from left, Mark Hill, David McKenas, Michael Lynn, Timothy Lanham, Don Brearley and Jim Trueblood. Flutist Tor Sherkerjian was absent when the photo was taken.

a matinee at 2:30 and the evening show at 8:15. Donald T. Bryant, the school's musical director, will conduct.

Because of their age range — from 8 to 15 — the boys have difficulty finding other schools to play in football. They're too young and small to take on a high school team, and there aren't many junior high school football teams in the area. But they usually play a schedule of four or five games each season with such teams as Princeton Country Day School. Last year and the year before they went through the slate without a loss. This year they were not able to play because they were on tour most of the gridiron grid season.

One of the stars of that unbeaten team was 12-year-old John Mark Kamitsuka, whose grandparents came to this country from Japan about the time of World War I and whose parents are now Presbyterian missionaries in Japan.

John's football career came to an abrupt end last year, and for an unusual reason. He is a gifted young pianist, and those who have heard him play predict a brilliant future for him. While he was tackling and being tackled on the football field, no one gave much thought to the possible consequences of an injury to his hands. One day in practice another boy suffered a broken finger, and it was unanimously decided that John should turn to other sports as an outlet for his energy.

A tall, husky, articulate young man, John recently won second place in a Young Talent Competition sponsored by the Garden State Philharmonic Orchestra of Toms River, and appeared as soloist with the orchestra in Bayville. He played the Haydn Concerto in D Major. He has bright, confident manner at the keyboard, and a crisp technique which is remarkable for a boy who has been studying the piano for only a little more than three years.

HE FIRST LEARNED to play while living in Japan with his parents, but did not study seriously until he came to the Boychoir School. He gives all the credit for his rapid progress to his teacher, Robert Haley, who is the assistant musical director at the school.

The rock combo at the school has an unusual arrangement of instruments — electric harpsichord, piano, tambourine, cello, two flutes and drumsticks.

One of the flutists in the group is 13-year-old Tor Shekerjian, of New York City, who also is playing the role of Amahl in the Menotti opera for the first time this year. Tor is described by Lauren D. Rhine, headmaster at the school, as a "very gifted boy." He is so accomplished as a flute player that he has been soloist with the Boychoir in a number of its concerts this year. Incidentally, in "Amahl" he plays primitive wooden shepherd's flute.

Other members of the combo are Mark Hill, of Cape Girardeau, Mo., who plays the drumsticks; David McKenas, of Oneida, N.Y., piano; Michael Lynn, of Meadville, Pa., flute; Timothy Lannam of Cincinnati, tambourine; Don Brearley, of Chicago, cello, and Jim Trueblood, of Baltimore, harpsichord.

The Columbus Boychoir School is observing its 30th anniversary this year. It was originated as a community enterprise in Columbus, O., in 1937, under the sponsorship of the Kiwanis Club and the Borad Street Presbyterian Church of that city. Its founder was Herbert Huffman, the minister of music at the church.

THE CHOIR GREW so rapidly that in 1940 Huffman organized a day school for the boys, and within a short time the enrollment had increased to 70. Harry C. Marshall, a local school administrator who had been instrumental in forming the day school, served as headmaster for eight years.

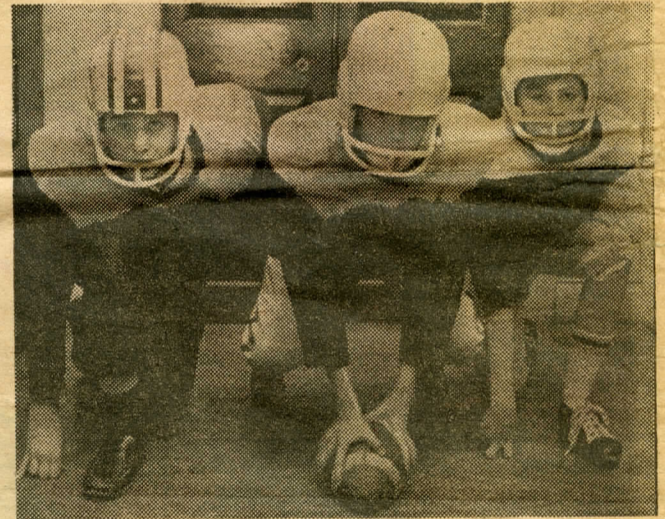
In 1943 the choir gave its first New York recital, which gave it a big boost toward its present international fame.

The school continued to grow so rapidly that soon its facilities in Columbus became inadequate. In 1950 Dr. John Finley

Williamson, founder and then president of Westminster Choir College, invited the Boychoir to move to Princeton.

Through the efforts of Westminster College, the Boychoir School was located in the estate of Gerard B. Lambert, which had been acquired by the college. In 1954 the estate, "Albermarle," became the Boychoir's permanent home when it was purchased from Westminster.

The Boychoir members come from all parts of the country. About 30 are from the Trenton area, and some 20 of these are day students.



Jacie Watson, Dan Chilson and Ed Carney are key members of the Boychoir School's undefeated football team.

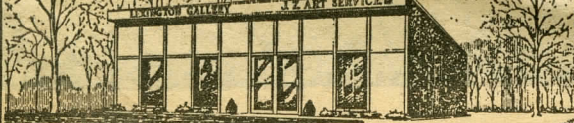
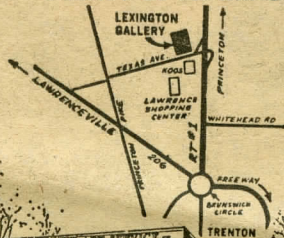
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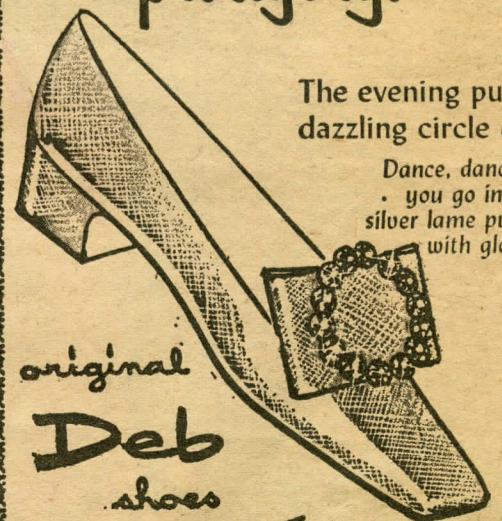


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