

Kennett Symphony of Chester County

Profile

Dr. D. Duer Reynolds, a prominent local physician, and Ray Lyman Ott, head of the Kennett Consolidated School music department, founded the Kennett Community Symphony Orchestra in 1940 as an all-volunteer orchestra. It quickly evolved into an association of professional musicians from Pennsylvania and surrounding states and gained a reputation for producing quality symphonic music. Today the Kennett Symphony of Chester County is Chester County, Pennsylvania's only professional symphony orchestra.

Since its inception 70 years ago, the KSCC has had the benefit of the services of eight outstanding music conductors beginning with Ray Lyman Ott (1942-1961) to the present conductor/director, Mary Woodmansee Green, who will begin her 23rd year with the 2010-11 concert season. Maestra Green was the first woman to be appointed conductor of a professional symphony in Pennsylvania.

The KSCC performs ten concerts annually including three free family concerts, some with an instrument petting zoo. Concerts are performed at venues throughout Chester County including Longwood Gardens Open Air Theatre, The Emilie K. Asplundh Concert Hall at West Chester University, the Kennett High School Auditorium, the Westminster Presbyterian Church and the Lincoln University International Cultural Center. Community outreach programs include scheduling annual instrumental and vocal performance competitions for young artists. Outreach was expanded in 1990 with the formation of a Kennett Symphony Children's Chorus now comprising nearly 100 student vocalists, ages six through eighteen. In 2006 the chorus transitioned to become the Kennett Symphony Children's Chorus in-residence-at West Chester University and is currently under the direction of Dr. Kristen A. Albert.

Among the highlights of the KSCC's history, in 2006 the Symphony was invited to perform a world premiere of *The Century Garden*, a commissioned work by Robert Maggio choreographed to dancing fountains, in recognition of the 100th birthday of the founding of Longwood Gardens by Pierre DuPont,

Support for the KSCC comes from ticket sales, fund raising events, educational and cultural partnerships, small businesses, corporations, foundations, government agencies, and individual contributions.

While paid professional staff and musicians have been essential to the success and longevity of the KSCC, without the dedicated efforts of countless volunteers, KSCC would not be the outstanding organization it is today.

The mission of the Kennett Symphony of Chester County is to present a wide range of symphonic music at an affordable price to entertain and enrich the lives of our audience, educate young audiences, and provide opportunities for young artists and capable musicians to perform.

Fact Sheet

Music Director Mary Woodmansee Green leads the Kennett Symphony of Chester County, the only wholly professional symphony orchestra in Chester County. Ten concerts are presented for over 5,000 people annually, including hundreds of children through the Annual Free Children's Concert with Instrument Petting Zoo. Subscription concerts include performances of classical music and pops music.

The KSCC offers several educational programs including three competitions for young artists: voice (singers age 18-26), instrumental (musicians in grades 9-12) and junior (musicians in grades 6-8), the Annual Family Children's Concert with Instrument Petting Zoo and the Kennett Symphony Children's Chorus in-residence-at West Chester University.

Founded:	1940
Classification:	The only wholly professional symphony orchestra in Chester County, Pennsylvania
Music Directors:	Mary Woodmansee Green (since 1998) Terry Guidetti (1980-1988) Jacques Voois (1979-1980) Peter Hill (1979-1980) Steven Gunzenhauser (1976-1978) Calvin Bourgeault (1971-1975) Powell Middleton (1961-1970) Ray Ott (1942-1961)
Orchestra Size:	55 musicians
Venues:	Kennett High School Auditorium (December); renovated in 2006, 775 seats Emilie K. Asplundh Concert Hall of West Chester University (October and March); 1,188 seats Longwood Gardens Open Air Theatre (June and August); outdoor venue on grounds of Longwood Gardens; 1,550 seats Westminster Presbyterian Church (April) 500 seats. Lincoln University International Cultural Center (October and March) 1,000 seats.
Concerts:	10 annually
Annual attendance:	5,000
Area served:	All performances are held in Chester County with audience members coming from Southeastern Pennsylvania, Northern Delaware, Northern Maryland, and New Jersey
Education programs:	2 performance competitions for young artists, annual free children's concert with instrument petting zoo, and Kennett Symphony Children's Chorus in-residence-at West Chester University
Annual Budget:	\$350,000

Endowments:	Kennett Symphony Fund of the Chester County Community Foundation Kennett Symphony Endowment Fund
Full-time staff	1
Part-time staff:	1
Volunteers:	100
Board members:	20 (6 emeriti)