

In writing history, possibly the hardest subject is one who is still living and so modest as to prefer that any reference to her career be given to her work—not to herself. For that reason, more emphasis is put upon the **Gertrude Dobyns Piano School**, than upon Miss Dobyns herself, who through her love of things fine and good, and ambition to help any who showed promise of ability, likely contributed more to the culture of Shelbina and its immediate community than any who preceded her. Literally hundreds—likely more than a thousand—have had piano or kindergarten instruction from Miss Dobyns. Following is the story written under the heading of "The Gertrude Dobyns Piano School," and the introduction above is the uncensored, unapproved opinion of a member of the Historical Committee.

This unusual music school is Shelbina's most distinctive possession. It was established in 1920 by Miss Gertrude Dobyns and received its first pupils in September of that year. For a number of years she conducted a kindergarten in connection with it. No town in the state of Missouri, unless it be one of the large cities, can boast of a comparable institution, for it has been, and is, a veritable cultural center for Shelbina, and for a wide area in Northeast Missouri. Miss Dobyns' rare personality, combined with her exceptional capabilities, has not only made the school a unique educational enterprise, but also has contributed largely to the best side of life in the community.

Miss Dobyns, a daughter of one of Shelbina's early families,

acquired her musical education in Germany under the best of teachers, one of them being a pupil of Liszt. She taught in the Minneapolis Conservatory for some years. Between that period and her coming to Shelbina to build her studio, she served with the Red Cross in France during World War I. She also had the interesting experience of working for a time in Hull House with Jane Addams.

Through the years Miss Dobyns was instrumental in keeping the Red Cross organization alive in Shelby county, so that when World War II came it was ready to function.

She was the first sponsor of a Camp-fire group in Shelbina and she continued that work for years. Those early Oa-ha-ha (Indian for Salt River) Camp-fire girls will never forget those sessions in the studio around the fireplace, their long hikes and camping trips with Miss Dobyns participating, and other noteworthy activities carried on under her tutelage, such as earning money for children's books to give to the library and taking the lead in establishing the custom of singing carols around the community Christmas tree after singing to shut-ins.

Miss Dobyns is a charter member of the Shelbina Woman's Club, a civic organization, and has always been a great help in suggesting and carrying out its project. As a member of the Library Board, she helped the library struggle through its lean years to its present prosperous status.

Miss Gertrude Dobyns may truly be said to be Shelbina's most distinctive resident.

Belles Of The Bonnet



Belles of The Bonnet—Pictured above are, top row, left to right, Mrs. Ike Carlson, Mrs. Arch Bowling, Mrs. Roger Monteith, Mrs. R. L. Caldwell, Mrs. Otis Buckman, Mrs. Darrell Purdy, Miss Jane Thompson and Miss Naomi Koontz. Bottom row, Mrs. Myrtle Keith, Mrs. Harold Morgan, Mrs. Sue Kemp, Mrs. Bert Fitzpatrick and Mrs. Keith Bradshaw.