

KIMBERLY JUNIORS ANNOUNCES ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

The Board of Trustees of Kimberly Juniors proudly announces a year of celebration for the 100th year of Kimberly Juniors. The Board of Trustees plans many special events to commemorate this milestone, including a reunion celebration in June 2016.

The organization was founded by Helen Cheney Kimberly as the Junior Women of the Contemporary Club. According to meeting minutes of the Contemporary Club, on April 1, 1916, "Mrs. Kimberly was asked to make further suggestions about the organization of a Junior membership which she proposed at the Annual meeting. Mrs. Kimberly stated that her idea was to have it include daughters of club members and their friends. . . A motion was made and carried that a committee be approved. . .Mrs Kimberly was appointed chairwoman, with power to select her committee."

By the fall of 1916, the organization was established as the Junior League and open to membership of girls between the ages of 12 and 21. In a publication celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Contemporary Club, Jessie H. Jeffery wrote of the Juniors:

"The diversity of usefulness [of the Contemporary Club] is shown in the various sections, the most recent being the Junior League organized by and under the earnest, benevolent guidance of Mrs. J.A. Kimberly, by which our girls are quietly cultivating their minds and bodies to the end of good citizenship."

Continuing on in near reverent language, Jeffery wrote:

"When the time comes for them to enter the kingdom of the future they will be able to recognize the beauty, the truth and the goodness of the world. No matter what their position in life, they will remain untarnishable emblems of winsome, womanly heroism. These Juniors of ours will face the issues of life with a broad minded, but sane, and well balanced judgment. . . they will make the world all the better for their presence therein."

No less important than the development of these young women was the acknowledged leadership of Mrs. Kimberly in guiding the program:

"Regarding this section, the club acknowledges with gratitude Mrs. Kimberly's untiring interest, so substantially shown in her maintenance of the Junior League and gifts to the club. During the last two and a half years, these contributions aggregate the sum of almost \$3000."

Over the next hundred years the age range of membership would reduce until it matched the current years to correspond to "high school aged" young ladies. Its name would also change several times, being known successively as the Junior League, Junior Women of the Contemporary Club, Sub-Junior Women of the Contemporary Club, and finally, Kimberly Juniors of the Contemporary Club.

These photographs are particularly precious memories of former KJs with Mrs. Kimberly, taken at Kimberly Crest. Can you identify these ladies. (Hint, the young ladies surrounding the seated Mrs.

Kimberly are the 1930-31 officers). We would very much like to know the identity of the young woman with her daughter.



As the centennial celebrations unfold over the course of the next year, watch for news articles highlighting our history, the program, the organization and the remarkable contributions of Mrs. Kimberly and her daughter, Mary Emma Shirk. Indeed, it was Mrs. Shirk's involvement with Kimberly Juniors, a commitment that spanned nearly 60 years, that insured the viability of the organization through the last half of the 20th century. The organization continues to thrive under the leadership of the Board of Trustees which was established following Mrs. Shirk's death in 1979.

We are actively building our contact lists to insure all interested former Kimberly Juniors, parents, and Board of Trustees members are included in the celebrations. A beautiful stained glass window is being made for the Heritage Room at the Smiley Library by Tom Medicott. Funds can be donated for that as well as the Celebration in June 2016. A book, "Kimberly Juniors - The First 100 Years" by Bev Cain is just one of the fund raisers that you can purchase. Monetary donations to these centennial events and items are always gratefully accepted and should be sent to Kimberly Juniors Centennial Committee at 645 Los Altos Drive, Redlands, CA 92373.