

Which chapter started the Kappa Pickers groups that I've heard about? During the 1960s, musical groups known at the Kappa Pickers were established in many of our chapters. In a way, they were an early version of the group portrayed in today's popular TV show "Glee"—a group of students getting together to sing and perform and having a great time!

In the book *Then and Now ... And In Between*, authored by eight good friends from Marion, Ind., Janie Harker Clark, *Indiana*, told about founding the first Kappa Pickers group. In the fall of 1960, after attending Sullins College for Women in Virginia, she transferred to Indiana University and pledged Kappa. She had been in a hillbilly band at Sullins and thought it would be a great idea for the Kappas.

She organized the group and taught Ann Collins, Bonnie Gordon, Sydney Goos, Sandy Leach, Carole Schulhof, Judy Schmoyer and Sue Vetter how to play the various instruments; then the group performed at a chapter meeting. The first public performance was at the chapter's fall barn dance. The group entertained during rush parties, at dances, on the campus and at fraternity parties. The Indiana Pickers wore bib overall shorts with red-and-white check shirts. Janie played a banjo, and the girls played baritone ukuleles. The original washtub was a tub, string and broomstick. The noise-makers included bongos, spoons, a set of claves and a pair of Coke cans filled with rice to sound like shakers. They were made by washing the cans, drying them using hair dryers, pouring rice into them to a level which gave a nice maraca sound and covering the opening with adhesive tape. Before graduation, the Pickers cut a record, *All Keyed Up!*, at Emmes Recording Company in Bloomington.

In 1969, they went on a 28-day tour with the USO to entertain the troops in the Caribbean. On Page 12 of the 2000 spring issue of *The Key* is a photo of the Delta Kappa Pickers with former NBC anchor Jane Pauley, *Indiana*, seated in the front row playing the washboard. Delta Picker groups entertained at the 1964, 1966 and 1970 General Conventions. They were always a hit and inspired other chapters to return to their campuses and start similar musical groups

Colorado State Pickers were part of another 1969 USO tour. They gave 52 performances over five weeks of pickin' and singin' at military installations and hospitals from Japan and Korea to the Philippines. In 1970, they toured Vietnam with the 25-day Hollywood Christmas Show. SMU Pickers appeared on the 1979 Bob Hope Holiday Special.

The fall 1967 issue of *The Key* had a photo of the SMU Pickers on the cover and told about their entertaining at Six Flags Over Texas, an amusement park near Dallas. For the summer they changed their name to "The Sisterhood." They wore patchwork-quilt shirts, plain skirts and blue sneakers. One girl played the piano, the rest picked up toy trombones, washboards, spoons and even toy ukuleles.

The cover of the 1990 summer issue of *The Key* pictured the North Texas Pickers. That year, the General Convention was held in Dallas. When the Kappas checked into the hotel, they were welcomed by a group of alumna Kappa Pickers led by "Ma Picker," Pam Haworth Barbera, *Mississippi*. At one time the Albuquerque Alumnae Association had a Kappa Picker group led by the "Original Ma Picker," Janie Harker Clark, *Indiana*.

Regional Director of Chapters Kelly Matyas Magyarics, *Pittsburgh*, reports her chapter had Kappa Pickers in the '80s and '90s. "We wore jean shorts or overalls and red-and-white checkered shirts and pigtails. We also painted fake freckles on our faces if we didn't already have real ones. I remember we sang 'Thank God I'm a Kappa Girl' to the tune of 'Thank God I'm a Country Boy.'"

Today these chapters continue the tradition of Kappa Pickers: Arkansas, Baylor, Butler, Missouri, North Texas, Oklahoma, Texas, Texas A&M, TCU and Texas Tech. Some of the chapters have groups that sing at Recruitment as well as Founders Day and wear whatever is appropriate for the event. Westminster reports that they do not have an *official* Kappa Picker group; however, for the last several years, the sophomores have learned the Kappa Picker songs that the chapter used when Westminster had frills in Recruitment. It's their way of carrying on the Kappa Picker tradition.

Yes, Kappa Picker groups are alive and well today, just as much fun, and continuing to entertain as they did when they began. If you are interested in reviving the Kappa Picker tradition in your chapter or alumnae association, ask your advisers or local alumnae who played in these groups to help you, or contact Janie Harker Clark, JHarkerClark@aol.com, who started it all—50 years ago.