



Pipes & Personalities

The Sixtieth Anniversary party for the 2/6 Wurlitzer, formerly in the Punch and Judy Theatre in Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan, was held in its new home in Sterling Heights. It was a fun evening for the crew and friends who had worked so hard to remove it with only four days to save it from the wrecker's ball.

In 1928 the organ was originally installed in the Wurlitzer Building in Detroit, and sold to the Punch and Judy Theatre in 1930. The organ wasn't used much until 1967 when it was restored by Motor City Chapter. For years, concerts and programs were arranged by Motor City through the cooperation of the management. In 1986 the organ was donated to Motor City Chapter by Robert G. Edgar and Richard S. Crawford, owners of the Punch and Judy Theatre, who had decided to remodel the theatre portion of the building for commercial offices and stores.

Motor City has sold the organ, intact, to Gerald B. Elliott, and it is now in his home. John Steele installed the organ. Following more than 1300 hours of labor the 60-year old Wurlitzer is in top condition and, according to experts, a beautiful installation.

When Motor City took over the organ at the theatre they separated the Tibia from the main reservoir and it played on its own reservoir and tremulant. Chuck Heffer and Herb Head installed a Wurlitzer Diapason by attaching a small box with five toggle-switches to the music rack to work the sixth rank. The entire organ was in a triangular, 15-foot chamber with a Glockenspiel and Xylophone installed above the main pipes with the relay on top, all supported with four screws in the side of the main wind chest, in short, a very precarious installation. In the theatre, you could only hear the Tibia and Vox Humana. You couldn't hear the rest of the organ because of a large bass drum installed right in the middle of the main chest. The blower was in the basement.

Now it is installed in a shallow chamber only eight-feet deep but across one whole basement wall. The organ is speaking into the length of the basement and, with shades across the entire front, the music comes out. The chambers are lined with wood. The seven-foot ceiling required laying the bass pipes down. Father Miller helped with the tremolo and Dave Voydanoff helped adjust the regulators. The Model 150 Wurlitzer usually had a style D Trumpet, but this organ has a Tuba.

Future plans include the addition of three or four more ranks: a String Celeste, Orchestral Oboe, Kinura and Clarinet. The console is being finished in black walnut with gold trim around the edge of the horseshoe. The organ is being played every day and organ students are having experience playing a theatre organ. Anyone who would care to hear or play the instrument when visiting Michigan is most welcome. Call Gerald Elliott at 313/268-5921.

Dorothy VanSteenkiste



L to R: John Steele, Gerald Elliott, Dave Voydanoff.
R. VanSteenkiste photo

News From Rodgers

Rodgers Instrument Corporation's latest, most sophisticated, and largest product of the Oxford Series, the Oxford 985 four-manual classical organ, was introduced to the public in a series of four southern California concerts featuring Frederick Swann, Thomas Hazleton, David Lee Heinzman, and Keith Chapman. The first concert took place at our Lady of Guadalupe Roman Catholic Church of La Habra on February 10, featuring Frederick Swann in the premier public performance on the new Rodgers Oxford 985 and David Lee Heinzman on the 85-rank Casavant organ in a "dueling" organs concert. St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Upland, featured Keith Chapman on the four-manual Oxford 985 with Musical Instrument Digital Interface capabilities. A fourth concert at Our Lady of Sorrows, Santa Barbara, March 17, featured Frederick Swann.

The new Oxford 985 is billed by Rodgers officials as the most sophisticated and tonally authentic electronic organ ever built. Rodgers digitally controlled Linear Tone Generation (LTG), based on Rodgers recent microprocessor organ patent, makes this new organ the best sounding "pipeless" organ yet. These impressive new Rodgers instruments use an advanced microprocessor control system to produce organ tone based on actual pipe organ characteristics. For the ultimate in authenticity, these organs are preprogrammed to accept up to 60 ranks of pipes creating large comprehensive pipe organs with electronic voice supplementation and the reliability of the famed Rodgers consoles.



Rodgers Oxford 985 four-manual organ installed for a duo concert featuring Thomas Hazleton and David Lee Heinzman along with the Van Nuys First Baptist Church's Casavant Organ.



Frederick Swann at the console of the Rodgers Oxford 985 organ at Our Lady of Guadalupe Roman Catholic Church.



Young Christopher Bannister, 1988-89 winner of the London chapter competition, is a student of John Norris, Principal of the Southern Music Training Centre, Fawkham, Kent.

John D. Sharp photo



ATOS Director Ashley Miller flew to California to attend the Jim Roseveare Memorial and Simon Gledhill concert at the Oakland Paramount Theatre. Miller visited Ye Olde Pizza Joynt in Hayward on January 27. Resident organist Jerry Nagano invited Ashley to try out the 3/13 Wurlitzer. Other organists in attendance were Johnny Seng, Jim Riggs and Lyn Larsen.

Dr. Ed Mullins



Simon Gledhill at Oakland Paramount Theatre.

Dr. Ed Mullins photo

She's Little . . . But Oh My!

by Del Castillo

Sometimes prize packages come in small containers. Jeanette Acosta (pardon, Mrs. Gary Hunziter) is a prime example, all five feet of her. Jeanette has been a featured organist since she was 13, and she is still going strong. Her refreshing modesty does nothing to detract from her assurance at the organ keyboard, developed from a decade of solo performances, nationally, from Denver to Los Angeles.

In 1978 she won the Los Angeles Professional Organist Scholarship as she displayed a wide range of memorized renditions. Her training has been primarily in the hands of Del Castillo on organ and Harry Fields on piano. Equally proficient on either, Jeanette expresses a preference for the organ on which she has been featured in concerts in the Los Angeles area. She has also been heard in her home state of the Philippines where she was acclaimed in 1982 as one of the most outstanding Filipinos overseas and given an award by the Philippine President from the Junior Chamber of Commerce.

Her broad range of interests has led her into majoring in law at Los Angeles City College, but her preference for organ has kept her steadfast at the organ keyboard. For the past two years, she has been featured as the organist on *Murphy's Law* on ABC. Remember her name — you'll hear it again!



Del Castillo and Jeanette Acosta when she was 15.



Jeannette Acosta Hunziter, now in her twenties.

Simon Gledhill

Simon Gledhill, rising young British star, dedicated his January 28 concert at the Oakland, California, Paramount Theatre to late house organist James C. Roseveare. "From This Moment On" was his console-raiser at the 4/27 Wurlitzer. Gledhill's clean cut, boyish good looks and British accent captivated the audience that looked like the "Who's Who" of both classical and theatre organ worlds.

Simon's choice of music was a breath of fresh air in programming. "Suite of Suites," a group of four pieces from different suites copied a trick played by Gerald Shaw at the Odeon Cinema, Leicester Square, London. He also played "Hurry Home," a novelty tune written by British cinema organist Stanley Wiley.

Announcing his tribute, Gledhill said, "Last December a very great and nice man and a wonderful musician, Jim Roseveare, the house organist here at the Paramount Theatre, died at the very untimely age of 46. Everybody who knew James very much will certainly miss his music. Playing the organ this evening is kind of a spooky experience, because it was Jim who really was behind the ar-

ranging of this very concert for me this evening. It's very sad that he can't be here to enjoy the concert tonight, too. I'd like to play a tribute to Jim tonight in the form of one of the pieces which will always be associated with his playing, "Two Cigarettes in the Dark".

A hush fell over the audience as the house lights were dimmed and the theatre totally darkened, save for the console stoprail lights. Simon then played a close approximation of the piece in Roseveare's style. It was a very touching and moving experience that Jim would have loved.

His closing number was Jacques Offenbach's "Orpheus in the Underworld" Overture. The audience gave a well-earned and appreciative standing ovation. Two encores followed. "Memories of You" and that Gracie Fields World War II favourite, "Wish Me Luck As You Wave Me Goodbye."

Well, this young man gets luckier the harder he practices. He is a "natural" theatre organist and a talent that no organ buff should miss. At 23 he has a future and the musicianship to go with it. The Paramount Wurlitzer never sounded better.

Dr. Ed Mullins