



## The Foreman Organ and Carillon

*A Gift to Simsbury United Methodist Church From Charles W.L. Foreman 1918-1996 and Margaret Heydecker Foreman 1919-1998*

### The Foreman Organ

In the year 1986, Mr. and Mrs. Foreman proposed to Simsbury United Methodist Church a musical gift comprised of a sophisticated three-manual pipe organ and fifty-five bell carillon.

The Foremans explained that they had two objectives in offering these magnificent gifts. First, they would enhance musical opportunities in Church services. Second, they hoped to stimulate the Church to form a separate organization with the objective of bringing quality musical events to the greater Farmington Valley. This organization would utilize the organ and carillon and join with other civic groups to generate music not otherwise available.

Church members gratefully accepted the gift and steps were taken to establish the self-sustaining, non-profit Farmington Valley Music Foundation, Inc. The carillon was installed in the Church tower in the late fall of 1986. The Austin Organ Company of Hartford, CT built the organ and installed it in the spring of 1987.

The organ was designed to effectively accompany individual and choral singers as well as to perform in concert as a solo instrument. The organ has 1,731 pipes ranging from a few inches to sixteen feet in length. It produces sound from three sources, each of which is played by one of the three keyboards or manuals. Pipes in the front of the sanctuary are the Positiv organ, those to the right or north room are the Swell organ and pipes at the rear are the Great organ. Devices known as couplers make it possible to interchange the relationship of the keyboard and its related organ source. The organist plays foot pedals and their sounds are distributed among the other three sources.

A pipe organ is capable of producing a phenomenal variety of sounds by arranging the pipes in a series of "ranks," similar to the ranks in the military formation. There are twenty-nine ranks, each with sixty-one pipes. The ranks

are classified as flutes, strings, reeds or principals, with each of these categories further subdivided. The organist varies the sound from these ranks by choosing from a series of levers on the console known as stops.

The Forman Organ console is normally located at the front of the sanctuary so that the organist faces the choir with back to the congregation. The congregation cannot see the organist because of a removable decorative partition.

However, the organ console can be rolled out and is connected to its various sources of sound by a huge "umbilical cord." Thus it can be positioned in the front of the sanctuary so the audience can see the organist, and the space the console normally occupies can be utilized for other purposes.

Eight-foot horizontal pipes are visible at the rear of the sanctuary. These are known as *Trompette en Chamade*. They are designed to simulate the brilliant, directional sound of antiphonal trumpets and are very effective in certain kinds of music. The carillon can be amplified into the sanctuary. The organist at the console and the carillonneur at the keyboard in the tower can communicate and play simultaneously with choral and/or instrumental accompaniment. Performances can be recorded on tape.

Farmington Valley Music Foundation has utilized these instruments inviting professional performers from as far as Denmark, Belgium, and Netherlands. They have also held choral, string, wind, brass, and jazz ensemble events in various Valley venues.

Thus the Foreman's vision of quality music in the Farmington Valley has come to fruition and continues even after their passings. We salute you Chuck and Peggy Foreman.

### Specifications

#### SWELL

Contre Viole: 16'  
Flute a'cheminee: 8'  
Viola de Gambe: 8'  
Voix Celeste: 8'  
Prestant: 4'  
Nasard: 2 2/3'  
Flute a' Bec: 2'  
Tierce: 1 1/3'  
Plein Jeu: III  
Tremolo

#### GREAT

Montre: 8'  
Bourdon: 8'  
Prestant: 4'  
Nachthorn: 4'  
Spitzfifteenth: 2'  
Fourniture: IV  
Trompette en Chamade: 8'

#### POSITIV

Gedecki: 8'  
Viole de Gambe (Swell): 8'  
Koppelflote: 4'  
Principal: 2'  
Quint: 1 1/3'  
Cromorne: 8'

#### PEDAL

Bourdon: 32'  
Montre: 16'  
Contre Viole: 16'  
Octave: 8'  
Gedeckt: 8'  
Super Octave: 4'  
Rauschquint: II  
Trompette: 16'  
Cromorne: 4'



## The Foreman Carillon

A *carillon*, (accent on the first syllable), is a musical instrument comprised of 23 or more finely tuned bells covering at

least two octaves. The bells are rigidly mounted to steel beams and do not move. A *carillonneur*, (accent on the last syllable), plays the carillon from the keyboard which has levers or *batons* in the sequence of piano keys. The carillon console is constructed of durable, time dried oak. The batons are connected to the bell clappers through mechanical linkages. Only the clappers move; the bells are stationary.

The profile for the modern carillon bell appeared in Europe in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The low countries of northern Europe developed rudimentary playing consoles in the 16<sup>th</sup> century but scientific tuning techniques only appeared in the late 1890's. This tuning improvement resulted in heightened interest in carillons and the first complete instruments arrived in North America in 1922.

Depending on how one defines a carillon, there are now about 600 in the world, 180 of them in North America. For a small state, Connecticut is blessed with ten. Five of these are quite large, (49 or more bells). The Foreman Carillon has 55 bells; First Presbyterian Church in Stamford has 56, United Church of Christ in West Hartford, 50, Trinity College, 49 and Harkness Tower Yale, 54.

The Kirk-In-The-Hills Carillon in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan contains a record 77 bells, the largest of which, called *bourdon*, is about six tons. The 74-bell instrument at Riverside Church in New York City has a bourdon bell which weighs 20 ½ tons. The bourdon bell in the Forman Carillon weighs 4,730 pounds, is 59 ½ inches in diameter and 49 13/16 inches high.

Petit Fritsen, Ltd., a 300-year-old foundry in Aarle-Rixtel, The Netherlands, cast the bells for the Forman Carillon. After the molten bronze cools (requiring up to three weeks) the bells are removed from their molds and permanently tuned by removal of small amounts of metal on a lathe. A carillon bell sounds five important pitches called partials. Each partial must

be tuned separately to accomplish the proper relationship between it and all the other bells in the carillon. Since there are no dampers, the sound of the bells lingers until it dies away naturally.

Petit and Fritsen shipped the bells to the I.T. Verdin Company of Cincinnati, Ohio who designed and fabricated the frame, mechanical linkages and the console and installed the instrument in the tower. Richard Watson designed the carillon and supervised its installation. Carl Coppersmith of the church managed the preparation of the bell tower to receive the bells. One of his early challenges was to convince a flock of pigeons who had made their home in the tower to seek quarters elsewhere. Another was to cut a large rectangular opening in the roof of the bell tower in order that a crane could raise the bells and delicately lower them into position. Installation required several weeks and the meticulous services of specialized, skilled craftsmen. Lois Jungas and Betty Swick were the first carillonneurs at the church. DeLores Dupuis and Kathleen Colbert have played subsequently for many occasions and Chris Eberly, a member of the Guild of Carillonneurs of North America, is the current resident.

In making the gift of the carillon as well as an organ to the church, it was the wish of the Forman family that these instruments would enhance church services and stimulate the greater community to the broad interest in quality music. Consequently, Farmington Valley Music Foundation, Inc. was formed in 1987.

In addition to many other musical events, the foundation presents a carillon concert each Memorial Day prior to the traditional parade and a series of concerts at 7 PM on each Sunday evening in July. Guest carillonneurs come from throughout the United States and Europe.

A tour of the carillon facility including the keyboard room, the practice instrument and the bells themselves is educational and enjoyable. Interested listeners are cordially invited to take such a tour following the concerts.

Personnel at Simsbury United Methodist Church would be pleased to provide additional information. Please call the church office, 651-3356.

*Revised text composed in July 1995 by the late Stuart R. Hall, Executive Director Farmington Valley Music Foundation*