



WILLIAMWOOD
PARISH CHURCH

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THE ORGAN and "ORGANZA"

Constrained by budget disciplines from the outset, the War years and an overriding desire to meet repayment quotas which an industrious Congregation had achieved in SEVEN years instead of the stipulated TWELVE, little thought could be given to the financing of a replacement for the original electric Organ.

Not only was the instrument itself inadequate to accompany an ambitious Choir and an expanding Congregation, its location at the front of the main, central bank of pews was wholly unsuited to the requirements of the organist and choir master.

Although slow to gather momentum, change was finally heralded in the Parish Newsletter of October 1970 -

"We shall have had the first of two Sundays with the demonstration of a new organ."

and

"For a good singing Congregation as ours the distribution of sound from the organ has been unsatisfactory and the tone, never as pleasing as a traditional good pipe organ, has deteriorated"

A development of an electronic organ was the subject of what was to prove to be an abortive, if progressive, encouraging and useful experiment.

WEDNESDAY, 29 MARCH 1972 saw the Church filled to capacity by members and friends to hear Stephen Hicks of St. George's College, Surrey give a superb recital which not only earned him a most enthusiastic ovation, but also convinced the membership that the range and capabilities of the ALLEN ORGAN in its new location within the CHANCEL more than satisfied their requirements, as has been demonstrated by subsequent organists.

The 14 hours rehearsal undertaken by Stephen Hicks prior to his recital on that March evening more than amply rewarded the Congregation and the Congregational Board.

The evening provided for a delighted Stephen Hicks the largest audience experienced by him for any recital he had performed either at home or abroad, including the United States of America.

With available funds amounting to some £3,400-00, a further £1,600-00 was still required to meet the overall cost.

Saturday, 13 May 1972 saw the balance raised through prior and subsequent donation, coupled with a less than typical CHURCH FAIR DAY, aptly named "ORGANZA" !