

Osmonds speak out

By JIM WINDELL

What are Donny and Marie and Jimmy and the rest of the Osmonds really like?

When the Osmonds family held a Fireside Chat at the Bloomfield Hills Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints on Sunday afternoon, many people had an excellent opportunity to learn about another side of the famous show business family.

The Osmonds were in Detroit last weekend for a concert Saturday night at the Joe Louis Arena. Some \$500 enthusiastic fans heard amplified and popular music complete with smoking flashpots and the singing and dancing energy of one of the super hero musical groups of the '70s.

But, on Sunday morning, the six Osmonds, brothers and sister, and their parents, George and Olive, celebrated the Sabbath by attending a local Mormon church to share anecdotes about their life and religious faith.

Well known as singing, recording and TV stars for 10 years, the Osmonds have a strong religious commitment and a unifying sense of family life. For some two hours — in a meeting Mormon State President John Phifer said "was not scheduled to entertain you but to change your life" — the Osmonds individually discussed their beliefs.

THE PUBLIC SIDE OF their collective life has been well-publicized. The first Osmond Quartet began harmonizing in the family's home town of Ogden, Utah. Then they were discovered by Walt Disney.

Brothers Alan, Wayne, Merrill and Jay got national exposure through weekly appearances on the Andy Williams TV show for four years.

In the mid-60s the Osmonds started recording for MGM Records and in 1970 their hit single "One Bad Apple" won a gold disc award. That same year, Donny, who first joined his brothers on the Andy Williams show when he was only 4, won his own gold disc with "Sweet and Innocent."

Eventually, the Osmonds acquired their own record label, called Kolob, which Mormons believe to be a governing planet at the heart of the universe. By that time, the original quartet had been expanded by the addition of Donny and was called simply the Osmonds. Two other children at home, Marie and Jimmy, also were getting ready to join the group.

Marie became involved in show business in 1973 when her recording of "Paper Roses" was released. Later, she and Donny teamed up for their own television show, Jimmy, the youngest child in the family, actually had the first Osmond gold disc back in 1968, when at age five he scored with "My Little Darling." More recently he has joined his older siblings in performances.

FATHER GEORGE Osmond, an elder in the Mormon church, talked about the Osmond history as an entertainment family.

"We," he said referring to himself and his wife, "found out the children liked to sing and we bought them musical instruments."

When the family visited Disney World one summer the boys, who liked to harmonize, were heard by Walt Disney, who "fell in love" with them and the Osmond Brothers Quartet was officially born.

Olive Osmond, celebrating her birthday Sunday, emotionally related how her religious faith helped her overcome a serious illness 23 years ago and the strength and closeness of the family since.

"Don't talk to me about women's liberation," she said. "Liberation from what?" She said she was anxious to return home to Utah, before the family goes on a tour of the Orient to see her 21 grandchildren.

It was Jimmy's turn next. "I'm 17," he began, "and I see a lot of you girls out there. I'm available."

AS HE TOLD about how "neat and terrific" his family is, he said in a trembling voice, "My father means more to me than anything in the whole world." He went on to say that he was a Mormon not because his parents are but because he has looked at many religions and decided it was best for him.

"I'm Marie, as in 'Donny and,'" began 20-year-old Marie. She wanted, she said, to answer some questions she is frequently asked.

Has she changed? "I hope so. I'm always glad to be different than I was a week or a month ago. I think the Lord expects us to change. But, there are values and principles that don't change. Truth doesn't change."

Marie looks forward to having her own family and raising her own children, to pass on the same things she found in her home. "We always had a happy home with the knowledge that we were loved," she said.

Her relationship with her mother has been very special for her.

"I wish every girl could have a relationship with a mother like I had. I guess you could say I'm an old-fashioned girl and there's nothing wrong with that."

WHEN IT WAS Donny's turn, he commented that it was only a rumor that the family was splitting up. "That came out of a press conference in England. We each have things we're going to do, such as TV and records, and Jimmy may be touring alone. But, we enjoy being together as a family."

Donny related some amusing incidents from the TV show and his sister shared and passed this bit of advice to the many young people in the audience: "Instead of getting high on drugs and alcohol, get low — on your knees and get to know your heavenly father."

Brothers Jay, Wayne and Alan followed with their own testimony to the importance of a close, loving family and the value of a strong religious philosophy. Alan said, "We're in the business of show business, but we're just like you. We have times when we're discouraged. It is then we turn to prayer."

Are the Osmonds as sincere in personal relationships as they appear? David Garrett thinks he knows.

Twenty-three-year-old David Garrett of Royal Oak is a member of the Bloomfield Hills Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and was assigned to help with the Osmonds security during their visit to the metro area.

"THEY ARE very open and down to earth," Garrett said after he had driven the Osmonds to the airport and seen them safely off to Utah. "Even though there are problems with fan control, they stop and talk to people. They are always just, open, warm and kind."

Garrett also pointed out that he found all the Osmonds as easy to talk to as Donny and Marie.

"Problem solving comes very easy for them. They are warm people," he said.



second runs Tom Panzenhagen

A look at second-run films in the Detroit area.

● GONÉ BUT . . .

"The Wrong Man," 7 and 9:30 p.m. Saturday at the Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward (center from John R), phone 832-2730, \$2.

Somehow it seems a shame that Alfred Hitchcock died of natural causes. That was the finding last week when the 80-year-old maestro of suspense passed away in his home in Bel Air, Calif.

By all reports, Hitch went gently into that good night. Hardly his style.

But "The Wrong Man" isn't like that. That which is least likely to happen, happens. When you think something cannot possibly go wrong, it goes wrong.

When skies can no longer darken — guess what — they darken further. And all occur with complete credibility. Yes, wrong can happen to you, too, and when you least expect it. That was Hitchcock.

"The Wrong Man" was made in 1957, toward the end of Hitch's most productive period. "North by Northwest" (1959) and "Psy-

cho" (1960) would follow, but Sir Alfred was already moving into a decade that would spawn "Marnie," "Torn Curtain" and "Topaz" — hardly his best.

Classics such as "Rebecca," "Suspicion," "Lifeboat," "Spellbound," "Notorious," "Strangers on a Train," "Rear Window" and "To Catch a Thief" were products of the '40s and the earlier '50s.

What films! — a string of pictures that will not be equaled.

So go see Henry Fonda as the man wrongly accused, Vera Miles as his wife, and a film that will keep you in suspense from start to finish. Also starring Anthony Quayle, Harold J. Stone and Nehemiah Persoff.

● NOT FORGOTTEN

"Sons of the Desert," 7 p.m. Saturday at the Detroit Public Library, 5201 Woodward, phone 833-4049, \$2.50. (Also showing: "The Music Box," and film biographer John McCabe in person.)

Make no mistake, a contemporary such as Woody Allen is one of the brightest cinematic stars that has ever shown. But, when it comes to film comedies, they just don't make 'em like "Sons of the Desert" anymore.

"Robinson Crusoe on Mars," midnight Saturday, Channel 50.

You have to appreciate that the '50s were a time when people feared invasion from the outer space or, more likely, from man-made atomic bombs.

By no small coincidence, pictures such as "The Thing," "The Day the Earth Stood Still" and "The War of the Worlds" were products of that decade.

Well, forget all that and tune in on "Robinson Crusoe," a film made behind its time in 1964. How can you go wrong when: "An officer and a monkey, survivors of a U.S. space ship that crash landed on Mars, look for food, water and oxygen to sustain life?" Starring Adam "Batman" West.

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