

In Memoriam



Rune Rosander
1914-1993

Rune Rosander, founder of the Pearl Microphone Laboratory Company, Astorp, Sweden, died April 5, 1993. He was born in Västerås, Sweden, in 1914.

Rosander was the dean of the Swedish electroacoustical industry, a trade that has attracted very few Swedes, but where nevertheless a few names and brands have won world recognition over the years. His lifework was devoted to microphone technology. In addition to the reputation of his products, he earned honors and awards through the years. Among them was the AES fellowship awarded to him in 1989.

In 1987 he assigned his company to a fellow worker, but he never retired from his unceasing effort to improve designs and circuits. In the middle of the last decade, he was responsible for unique innovations: the best example is the TL 4-type with its special diaphragm and directional pattern used for orchestral pickup. We, who visited his home, could almost certainly find him busy in his lab, intensely absorbed with development work and calculations, a true enthusiast.

Rosander experienced changing vicissitudes during the 30s, with, among others, contributions to the

then new office intercom telephone development, followed by electronic designs for the leading diamond prospecting and rock surveying company in Scandinavia. In 1939 he formed his own firm, which was not formally incorporated until 1941. He could now devote all his time to his interest in building microphone capsules—by tradition, an area dominated by imports to Sweden.

It is now legendary how, during the isolation years of World War II, he grew his own Rochelle Salt crystals and how his home in northwestern Stockholm had to function as a warehouse, laboratory, and workshop. "The war presented me with a whole market," he used to say about this active period of time. Since the Swedish defense and the country's industry were cut off from all normal import with the outbreak of the war, the modest Rosander factory was soon due to cover the need for microphone assemblies and parts of many kinds.

In addition to the defense forces and a number of other purchasers who now became regular customers, the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation entrusted him with conversion of their workhorses of the time, old American microphones lacking spare parts, in order to overcome the constraints of the war blockade.

At the end of the 40s, the company became a great supplier to both the Swedish and Nordic electronics industry. At that time it had long moved to new facilities in the greater Stockholm area. From there a number of new microphones were supplied. They were commissioned by the Scandinavian Airlines System and based upon the new and untried semiconductor amplifying/conversion, which followed one of Rosander's first visits to the United States after the war.

During the next decade he was

granted patents for a number of innovations. At the end of the 50s, he naturally committed himself and PML to the new stereophonic recording technique, and soon such models of new microphones were introduced from Pearl to the professional studio operators.

In 1960 his company moved to the south of Sweden where he had the benefit of integrating the entire manufacturing process, from raw materials to the finished products, under one roof.

He was fortunate enough to experience many technical successes and to see a world market gradually open to all his Swedish microphones, in spite of the exotic brand name Pearl. He took particular pride in, as a reviewer phrased it, "seeing his products used at the peak of national public life." PML microphones were installed on the speakers' rostrum in the new Parliament building in Stockholm and in the plenary hall for the 200 legislators in the Riksdag.

Rosander's foresighted advancement of the new wireless microphone development also belongs to the lasting achievements from the 70s.

It is sad to no longer hear Rune's friendly laugh or to take part in his quite unique experiences in the field where all recording and broadcast activities ultimately start. We, his friends and staff members, knew him as an uncompromisingly quality-conscious designer and a strong-willed, devoted personality in his duties. Rune Rosander showed, behind his temperate manners of reticence, a friendly, generous and caring person: someone who inspired great confidence.

It is an important lifework that has now come to an end, but his old enterprise will continue the tradition in his spirit.

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