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SOCIETY
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the GRAND OPHICLEIDE

Journal of the Atlantic City Convention Hall Organ Society, Inc.

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The Atlantic City Convention Hall Organ Society, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) corporation founded in 1997 and dedicated to the use, preservation and restoration of the organs in the Atlantic City Boardwalk Convention Hall.

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On The Cover — Set In Stone! Left façade tower on Boardwalk Hall. The captions read: FESTIVITIES, MUSIC, DRAMA, ATHLETICS. What a fitting setting for The Hall Of The Great Organ. See page 3 for other details.



A PERMANENT MONUMENT CONCEIVED AS A TRIBUTE TO THE IDEALS OF ATLANTIC CITY
 BUILT BY ITS CITIZENS AND DEDICATED TO RECREATION - SOCIAL PROGRESS AND INDUSTRIAL ACHIEVEMENT

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CURATOR POSITION

This ad appeared in the July issue of *The Diapason* magazine. Applications are being accepted for this distinguished position. Once filled, a new Curator will bring great and much needed strength to the care and restoration of the organs.

HISTORIC ATLANTIC CITY CONVENTION HALL SEEKS ORGAN CURATOR

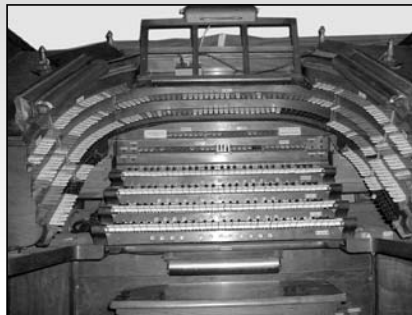
The Historic Organ Restoration Committee, Inc. is seeking letters of interest and qualification statements from professionals for the full-time position of Midmer-Losh and Kimball Organs Curator.

MIDMER-LOSH
 FIVE MANUAL PORTABLE CONSOLE



The Midmer-Losh organ was designed by NJ State Senator Emerson Richards, and built by the Midmer-Losh Company of Long Island, NY, from 1929 to 1932. With 449 ranks, 337 stops and approximately 33,000 pipes, it remains the world's largest pipe organ.

KIMBALL ORGAN
 FOUR MANUAL MAIN CONSOLE



The Kimball Organ is a fifty-five rank theater-style instrument specifically designed for the Atlantic City Convention Hall Ballroom by Senator Richards, and built by W. W. Kimball of Chicago, Illinois. It is considered one of the best Kimball installations in the country.

The Historic Organ Restoration Committee, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) entity serving as an advisory board in the stewardship of the Historic Atlantic City Convention Hall (NHL, 1929) Midmer-Losh and Kimball organs. Letters of interest and statements of qualifications shall be submitted in the manner detailed and prescribed in the Curator Qualification Regulations, which can be obtained by contacting the Historic Organ Restoration Committee, Inc. c/o Atlantic City Convention and Visitors Authority.

Only prospective applicants whose qualification statements are determined to be acceptable will receive a detailed position application and be contacted for further consideration.

HISTORIC ORGAN RESTORATION COMMITTEE, INC.

c/o Jeffrey Vasser
 One Miss America Way
 Atlantic City, NJ 08401
 Phone: (609) 449-2032



Editor's Note: One of the most memorable selections on The Auditorium Organ CD (ACCHOS CD/01 recorded in 1998) is Track 10 – Hymn, Abide With Me. We know of one gentleman who plays it in his car almost every time he drives.

Bernadette Rampton from England writes: "The best CD I have ever bought, that's for sure. My 13 yr old Autistic son thinks it's great too. He loves the Blowers the 100-inch Tuba and especially the 64-foot!! Abide With Me has become a daily routine with all the rest! At this rate it will be worn out soon.

Teresa Scarboro writes: "It's as though heaven and the angels appeared to us mere mortals with the breath of God and spoke in God's magnificent voice - 'You are Lord'!!! From the mighty 'wings of song' (track 10) to the 'depths of the sea' (track 14)!! this CD filled my soul with rejoicing!! Many thanks to all and loving blessings for continued Joyful music!"

During the recording session, it was suggested that a hymn might be appropriate to include on the CD. Various selections were suggested and Abide With Me ended up as a choice. How it got recorded is a case of amazing serendipity, and here is the story:



A Once In A Lifetime Experience

By Clifton Stroud

Exploring churches and the organs within them has been a lifelong habit of mine. I started it when I was thirteen years old; at about the same time I started studying the organ. Even though I had a church where I practiced regularly, I would go into all the churches in and around the neighborhood where I lived, find the organ, and if the console was unlocked, play it. It was exciting—each church was an adventure. I rarely got caught but if I did I simply explained that I was looking for a place to practice and would the church mind if I played quietly for

a few minutes. As an innocent-looking teenager who could play a hymn fairly well, I was usually forgiven this mild transgression.

Today, about thirty years later, as I travel both here and abroad as an aviation editor and writer, I find the church nearest to my hotel and go visit it to see what the organ is like. (I'm also a cathedral buff so it's a natural tie-in.)

And so I found myself in Atlantic City for about three days last November attending an aviation convention. Having grown up near Philadelphia, I had been to Atlantic City many times but

had never seen the great organ. I had made a pledge to myself that this time I would try and see the world's largest organ—not in a church but in the Convention Center. I had a free afternoon the second day of the convention; if I was going to see the organ it would have to be then because there would not be time the next day. I set out to find this magnificent instrument, which I had heard about for so many years.

From the start I was not very optimistic about my chances of getting in to see the great Midmer-Losh. In my mind I detailed the potential obstacles. There

could be a convention taking place, in which case there would be no way I would be allowed into the auditorium. Or I could be allowed in but the console would be under lock and key and I wouldn't see a thing. Or I might not even be able to get into the building in the first place.

Trying to think positively, I walked into the main lobby of the domed building where I saw two security guards blocking the entrance to the auditorium. They didn't seem too excited about my arrival. I asked if I might see the organ. They told me no, that there was a recording session taking place and only authorized people were allowed to go in. I asked if I might see the list of authorized attendees—thinking I might know someone—and the guards said yes. None of the names were familiar. One of the guards then wrote down the name and phone number of the organ curator, Dennis McGurk, and suggested I call him the next day and that he might show it to me. As I turned to leave, not hiding my obvious disappointment, a gentleman who had overheard my conversation offered to take me back to see the organ. The guard nodded his approval and off we went. First and most difficult obstacle overcome! We walked into the main auditorium from the opposite end of the stage. As we moved toward the stage, I noticed the immense size of the building. I was later told that it seats 41,000 people. Up on the right side of the stage I spotted the organ console, housed in a large kiosk. There was some recording equipment set up in the middle of the auditorium and five or six men were milling around the floor in front of the stage, and several others were on stage closer to the console.

Not wanting to be intrusive, I tried to stay out of the way and appear invisible. I was sure someone would soon come over to me and tell me to leave. But the exact opposite happened. Several of the gentlemen walked over and introduced themselves, politely inquiring who I was and what I was doing there. I learned that this was the second day of a recording session that had been planned for months to raise much needed capital

for an extensive restoration of this storied instrument, and that some of the people present had come from as far away as England to help with the recording—only the third to be made of the organ. After observing the proceedings for some time, and being simply ecstatic that I was finally able to see and hear this instrument, Antoni Scott, one of the gentlemen with whom I had been speaking, asked if I would like to play the organ. Without any hesitation I calmly said yes. In reality I was saying to myself, “Yes, Yes, Yes!” I jumped at the chance, walked up on the stage and sat down at the massive console.

Someone asked if I could play the hymn “Abide With Me,” which was on the music rack. I said certainly and then quickly realized that they wanted to record this. Stephen Smith stood on my right and ably managed the registration for me, since there was obviously no way I could master all the stops in the limited time we had. We did four verses of this wonderful hymn, starting with soft, lush strings and no pedal on the first verse, and adding more stops after each verse to build a rich, full and glorious sound at the end. The sound of such a magnificent instrument in such a huge hall is incredible. After five “takes”—there were all kinds of extraneous noises both inside and outside the building—we decided we had a good session. Antoni took some pictures of all of us in front of the console and that was that.

As if that weren't enough excitement for one afternoon, I was then treated to a

tour of one of the pipe chambers—above the stage to the right—where I got a close-up view of many of the odd shapes and sizes of some of the pipes. Then Dennis McGurk took me down to the basement to the main right-chamber blower room where three massive blowers—generating 225 horsepower—are housed. He started one while I was still in the room. The sound was almost deafening, as if I were on the tarmac next to an aircraft turbine spooling up.

This was a once in a lifetime experience. I feel privileged to have played this majestic, historic instrument and even more privileged to have actually participated in the recording. It was pure serendipity and a classic case of being in the right place at the right time. But it was also an experience I will never forget. And I want to express my profound appreciation to everyone at the recording session who made me feel so welcome that day, especially Antoni, Stephen, Dennis, Charles Swisher, and of course Rev. Henry Charlton—the gentleman who found me talking with the security guard. I am indebted to you all and hope that this magnificent instrument—which is a national treasure—will play on forever.



Editor's Note: Now that the Ballroom Kimball organ has been approved for restoration as one of the first steps in the overall process, it seems timely to take a look back in time with Tim Bovard's 1999 essay about this remarkable instrument. Since this was written, the Relay was unfortunately removed to make way for a staircase which now necessitates replacement with a solid-state relay. The old relay will remain on exhibit in the proposed museum scheduled for establishment in the huge Organ Work Room behind the Right Stage chamber.

Impressions Of The "Little" Acch Organ...

As many reading this will undoubtedly know, the Adrian Phillips Ballroom of the Atlantic City Convention Hall contains its own pipe organ apart from the big Midmer-Losh – Opus 7073 of the W.W. Kimball Co., of Chicago. This instrument, completed in 1931 comprises 55 ranks of pipes across 4 manuals and pedal, and is designed to be a “hybrid” instrument – capable of performing both popular music, and the ‘organ repertoire’. Like its big brother in the Convention Hall Auditorium, it was designed by Senator Emerson Richards, and bears his nameplate as well. Amongst other notable features, the organ includes a “Soloist” paper-roll player, and the largest ‘horseshoe-type’ console ever constructed by Kimball. There are two full-length 32’ stops (plus a resultant) and a generous assortment of traps and percussions. There are ‘theatre’ voices in the instrument (Tibia Clausa, Kinura, Brass Trumpet, etc.), and ‘classic Diapason choruses’ (two mixtures, one of which has 7 ranks of pipes!). The famous Kimball string stops are here in several “flavors”, as are numerous lush flute stops of various dispositions. All in all, this is a complete and unusually versatile instrument located in a wonderful acoustical environment with a lovely view of the Atlantic



A view inside the lower level of the House Right Chamber of the Ballroom Kimball shows the famous Brass Trumpet, flanked by the French Horn basses on the right, with the big zincs in the background as part of the 16’ string. The Post Horn is to the left of the Trumpet. Photo by Harry Bellangy

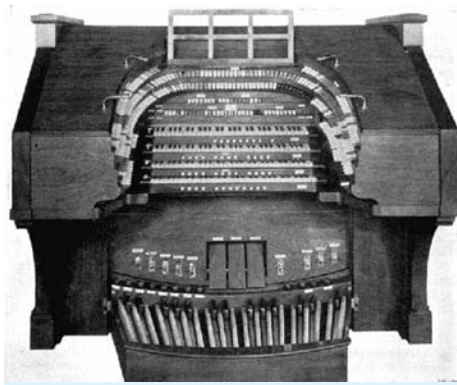


Photo of original Kimball console – the largest ever built by Kimball.

Ocean through the windows across the room!

During the week starting October 9, 1999, I was privileged to have been given the chance to be part of a group getting to know this Kimball Organ firsthand – inside out, and upside down (at times!). We examined every inch of the instrument from the blower room to the furthest reaches of both chambers – from the console and roll player to the relay room. I will attempt to report what we found below, but beware that I have mostly good news to report!!

To an Organ Technician, an old Kimball organ can be a dream come true. The Kimball Company built their instruments to such high standards of quality that it is usually a true pleasure to work on them. Craftsmanship, materials, and mechanical engineering of the instruments are superb. The Atlantic City Kimball is no exception to this rule. We arrived to find the console under its thick green velvet cover, probably unplayed for months. Upon uncovering it and switching it on, we found the organ to be quite playable, but with many obvious minor technical glitches. Odd dead notes here and there, a few obstinate stop tabs that just didn't want to behave, an erratic key or pedal once in awhile. Some really out-of-tune treble octaves, and the requisite ripe reed note every so often were also noted. On the other hand, there were no catastrophic wind leaks, raging ciphers, or unexplained crashing noises from the chamber grilles. We all took the chance to play/play with the wide variety

of sounds available from the organ, and spent several hours doing so. During this period, a phenomenon slowly started, which would continue throughout the week – the longer we actually used the organ, the more of the ‘glitches’, would resolve themselves!!

This, it would seem, is an instrument that wants to be played, and will reward the efforts by trying to perform to its best, despite the years of ‘lack of interest’. Fortunately, we had no shortage of personnel willing to sit down and ‘give it a go’ – all agreed that it is a most enjoyable experience to do so.

Before long, however, it was time to start to explore the chambers, and to again be reminded of the inner quality of a Kimball organ. Time has been kind to this instrument, and the chambers are in overall very good condition, and remarkably clean. Some chestwork in one chamber has suffered under a minor roof leak, and will require spot re-leathering. Also, some of the percussions and traps are in need of new leather. The winding system is intact and functional, albeit with the occasional leaky windline or reservoir gusset. Pipework is in excellent condition, in most cases only in need of a thorough tuning. All swell shade mechanisms have been re-leathered, and appear to operate perfectly (and very effectively!).

The relay room was next on the exploratory journey, and was found to be another monument to the level of craftsmanship of a



The shade control that is part of the roll player mechanism. This device is on the bottom left of the relay rack. Photo by Harry Bellangy

Kimball Organ. The relay and electrical system of this instrument is, like the rest of the organ, thoroughly original and intact. Some spot re-leathering has obviously occurred through the years, and a bit more is required now. Other than that, and again, only minor maintenance seems necessary to restore this equipment to full functionality. Due to the fact that the relay room adjoins an office, it has accumulated a goodly collection of 'stored material' other than organ items, but this is a typical situation that presents no real hazard to the organ at this time.

The console of the Kimball is probably the one single part of the organ in need of the largest amount of restorative work, simply due to the fact that it is the single part having received the most overall usage over the almost 70 year life of the organ. Even here, however, the situation is not overly grim. Being the largest Kimball horseshoe console, its original pneumatic combination action contains literally thousands of magnets, valves, and switch contacts. Many of these are in need of cleaning, renewal, or adjustment. Keys and pedals are loose and in need of re-bushing, and their electrical contacts are worn. The walnut cabinetry is showing the effects of the years, but responded well to a good dose of furniture oil and elbow grease. Overall, though, the console is currently in workable condition and is certainly an obvious candidate for a thorough and complete restoration to original condition.

Located next to the console in the gallery is the device that proved to give the greatest happy surprise of the whole 'Kimball experience' - the "Soloist" Roll Player. This machine had been unused for a great long time (nobody really knows how many decades), and its windline from the console had been disconnected. The electrical cable was still there, however, and apparently still connected to the organ, for we were pleasantly surprised to find that the spoolbox lights came on when opening the lid to the cabinet (revealing a roll still threaded onto the mechanism!). Upon opening the access panels to the inside of the machine, we found all to appear complete and intact. A couple of hours and a length of flexhast later, the machine had its wind again, and it was time to answer the BIG question: "Does It Still Work???"

After a few brief 'test pulses' of newly-connected wind, it seemed as though the leathers of the machine were still sturdy enough to be functional, and the wind was turned on and left on. Happily, upon starting to experiment

with the controls, the internal mechanisms could be seen and heard trying to again do their work, after so many years of inactivity. We rewound the roll that had been left in the spoolbox (Indian Love Call, played by Edward Benedict), and prepared to restart it. (We all felt that it would be appropriate to let the machine finish the music that it had been in process of playing when so rudely interrupted in years past.)

Now, with personnel stationed at the player cabinet, the console, and the relay room, it was finally time for the big "smoke test". The glass cover over the spoolbox was closed, and the



The Adrian Phillips Ballroom, The Kimball Console, The Soloist Roll Player

roll started to run. As its perforations started to pass over the tracker bar, the sounds of magnets operating and mechanisms working were heard from the back of the player cabinet, and our relay room observer reported a great mass of electrical activity there. Unfortunately, however, there was still silence from the chambers. Someone at the console turned on a few stops, and we suddenly had MUSIC!!!

There were many missing notes, and a few snafus in manipulating the controls, but we were ultimately successful in our quest to have the Soloist finish playing the Indian Love Call. Much happiness throughout the crew now, and big smiles all around were abundant.

In the many successive runs of the machine throughout the rest of the week, it (like the rest of the organ) seemed to start to steadily repair itself, as electrical contacts cleaned themselves and long-unused mechanisms began to loosen up. We were not successful in getting the Soloist to register its own stop combinations, but all feel that, had more time been available, we would certainly have been able to do so. This Soloist Roll Player, like the rest of the Kimball Organ, appears to want to be used and enjoyed. None of our crew observed any aspect of the player (or the rest of the organ, for that matter) that would appear catastrophic in nature.

One final minor triumph bears reporting here: During the course of the week spent at Convention Hall, a previously unknown cache of player rolls for the Soloist was discovered, adding by a third to the available repertoire of music rolls. These rolls represent a priceless chunk of organ music history, with such artists represented as Chandler Goldthwaite, Charles Courboin, Edward Eigenschenk, Allen W. Bogen, and numerous others. Amongst the composers represented are Bach, Schubert, Elgar, Chopin, Debussy, Wagner, Sullivan, Swinnen, Kreisler, Sousa, and many others. The musical selections include an assortment of popular music, transcriptions, and classic organ works. These performances cry out to be preserved for future generations to enjoy, as they have been enjoyed by past generations.

In conclusion, I will offer the one of my own personal feelings about the Kimball Organ that recurred more often than any other throughout the week we all spent with the instrument: This outstanding organ is ripe for a complete and thorough restoration to its original splendor; additionally, this restoration would not by any means be an overly difficult task to accomplish. Members and Friends of ACCHOS should not neglect the Ballroom Kimball Organ in future plans to preserve BOTH magnificent pipe organs housed at the Convention Hall in Atlantic City.

Timothy M. Bovard
Pipe Organ Technician
Nichols and Simpson Inc., Organbuilders
Little Rock, AR
November 1999

PART ONE

Five Days In Six Chambers

by Stephen D. Smith



A slightly dusty author, Stephen Smith, sitting on top of the 32' horizontal trombone in the ceiling adjacent to the Fanfare Organ during his detailed inspection of the Midmer-Losh in 1999.

(Note: This intriguing article originally appeared in the Summer 1999 issue of *The Grand Ophicleide*. It is being re-printed here as a refresher and the start of a series.)

Seibert Losh, in his unpublished book, *The Physics of Music*, wrote "The temerity of an organ man who is writing down and publishing...is matched in idiocy only by the presumption of a layman who ventures to instruct the professors." I know exactly what Seibert means, for despite more than two decades of researching the Midmer-Losh organ in the Atlantic City Convention Hall, some of the information I had accepted as fact was wrong and, in the past, I have been "writing down and publishing" it!

Fortunately, however, I am now able to correct that information thanks to

the kindness of Dennis McGurk (Curator of Organs) and Robert McClintock (General Manager) who allowed me to spend five days in and around six of the Auditorium instrument's eight pipe chambers (the two Upper chambers are out of bounds due to an asbestos hazard). Although this was not my first visit to the Convention Hall, it was my longest and undoubtedly the most profitable from a research point of view.

I should mention that, in the following pages, I sometimes make mention of changes to the specifications or additions to the instrument. These were made as construction progressed and, to the best of my knowledge, the only alterations made since completion are to be found on the Great organ — where the 32' Sub Principal stop-

key has been rewired as a 16' register and the sub-quint rank in the Grand Cornet has been disconnected (in fact, this stop is not working at all, at present.). These changes were made by Roscoe Evans, the instrument's first curator, at some time during the 1940s.

Anyway, here is the report of my findings:

Pedal Right Diaphone-Dulzian (stop 17)

The scale of this stop's 64' pipe has variously been reported as measuring 36" x 36" and 27" x 27". In fact, it is the latter, meaning that the 32' pipe of the Pedal Left's Diaphone (stop 11) is the instrument's largest in terms of scale, as it measures 30" x 30". I also discovered that stop 17 has diaphone



Dennis McGurk among the Pedal Left's massively-scaled Diaphone pipes.

pipes for its lowest 22 notes (from CCCCC up to AAAA), not the lowest 12, as I had previously been given to believe.

This stop has had a checkered history. Emerson Richards originally specified two 64' stops for the instrument; a Diaphone in the Pedal Right and a Dulzian in the Pedal Left. The Diaphone was deleted when the scheme was revised and the Dulzian was moved from Left to Right. However, its original stop number, 17, was retained, thus placing it out of sequence with the other Pedal Right stops (numbered 1-10). Experiments revealed that the reed's tone at this pitch was not desirable, as its harmonics were louder than the fundamental. Although leathering the shallot (as in the 64' Contra Trombone at Sydney Town Hall, Australia) would have absorbed many of the overtones so that the fundamental could be better heard, the contract stated that this could only be done in "exceptional circumstances." It seems that this criteria was not met so, to cut a long story short, it was decided to provide diaphone pipes for the rank's lowest notes.

Although I generally refer to the stop as "Diaphone-Dulzian," in my opinion it should be thought of as a 64'

reed which, coincidentally, happens to have diaphone pipes in its lowest notes. Indeed, the stop probably would be thought of in this way if the Diaphone Profunda stop-key had never been installed on the console (it was provided because, at one time, it was hoped that each pipe could produce both Diaphone and Dulzian tone with the aid of a special dual-tone shallot). In organs of more moderate size, diaphone pipes in the bass of a 32' or 16' stop would be of little interest to the organ fraternity and would go unnoticed by people who were not familiar with the instrument. It is only the fame of the Auditorium organ and the profound pitch of this stop that has drawn attention to its diaphone pipes.

Unenclosed Choir *Rausch Quint* (stop 171)

This stop provides two registers, 12-15 and 19-22, and the fact that they both have the same stop number lead myself and David Junchen, among others, to believe that the stop consisted of two extended ranks. In fact,

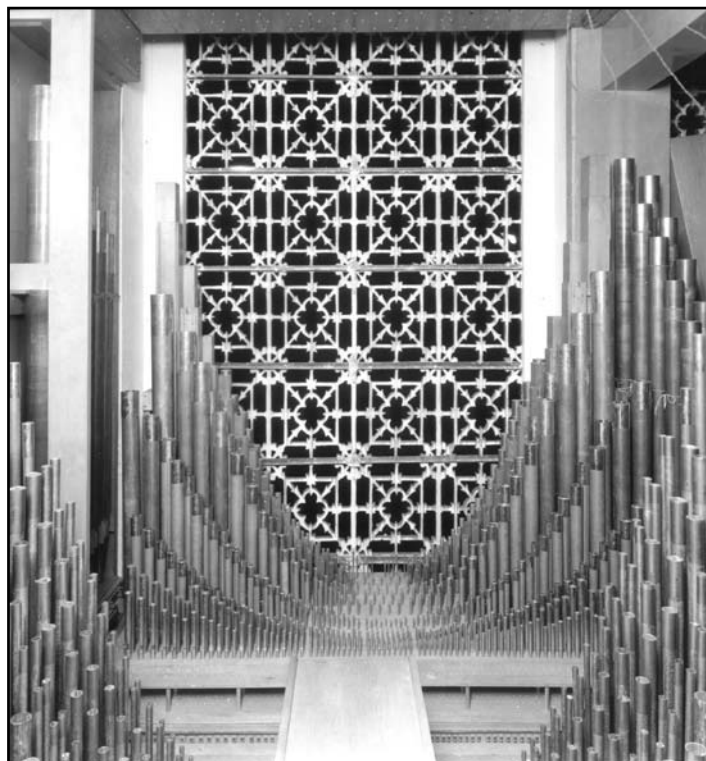
it has four straight ranks of 73-pipes each and, strictly speaking, it is *two* stops — because its ranks are operated as two pairs (rather than as one group of four). In this respect, the Rausch Quint is unique among the instrument's mixtures, because although certain ranks of other mixture stops *are* independently playable, it is always just one stop key that controls the whole.

Percussion Department (stops A-P)

As originally conceived, this department was to consist of 15 non-melodic percussions (drums, cymbals, etc) and a Grand Piano. It was to be enclosed in its own swell box in the Left Forward Chamber, alongside the enclosed Choir organ. However, because the stops were very quiet in comparison with the speaking stops, it was decided to move the department to a soundproof room on the right side of the auditorium below the gallery's seats (the Great-Solo's melodic percussions were also installed here). Sound from this room was picked up

by a microphone and amplified by the hall's public address system. The Grand Piano, however, was installed adjacent to the Gallery III organ in the Left Center chamber, where it still resides (it's a Chickering Concert Grand and cost \$900, according to the invoices for the instrument).

At some stage, *all* of the stops were moved out of the soundproof room and installed, unenclosed, in the Right Stage chamber and a cylindri-



The Unenclosed Choir organ. Nearest the camera is the Rausch Quint, with only two ranks in situ. However, closer inspection of the photograph reveals holes in the soundboard for the stop's other two ranks.

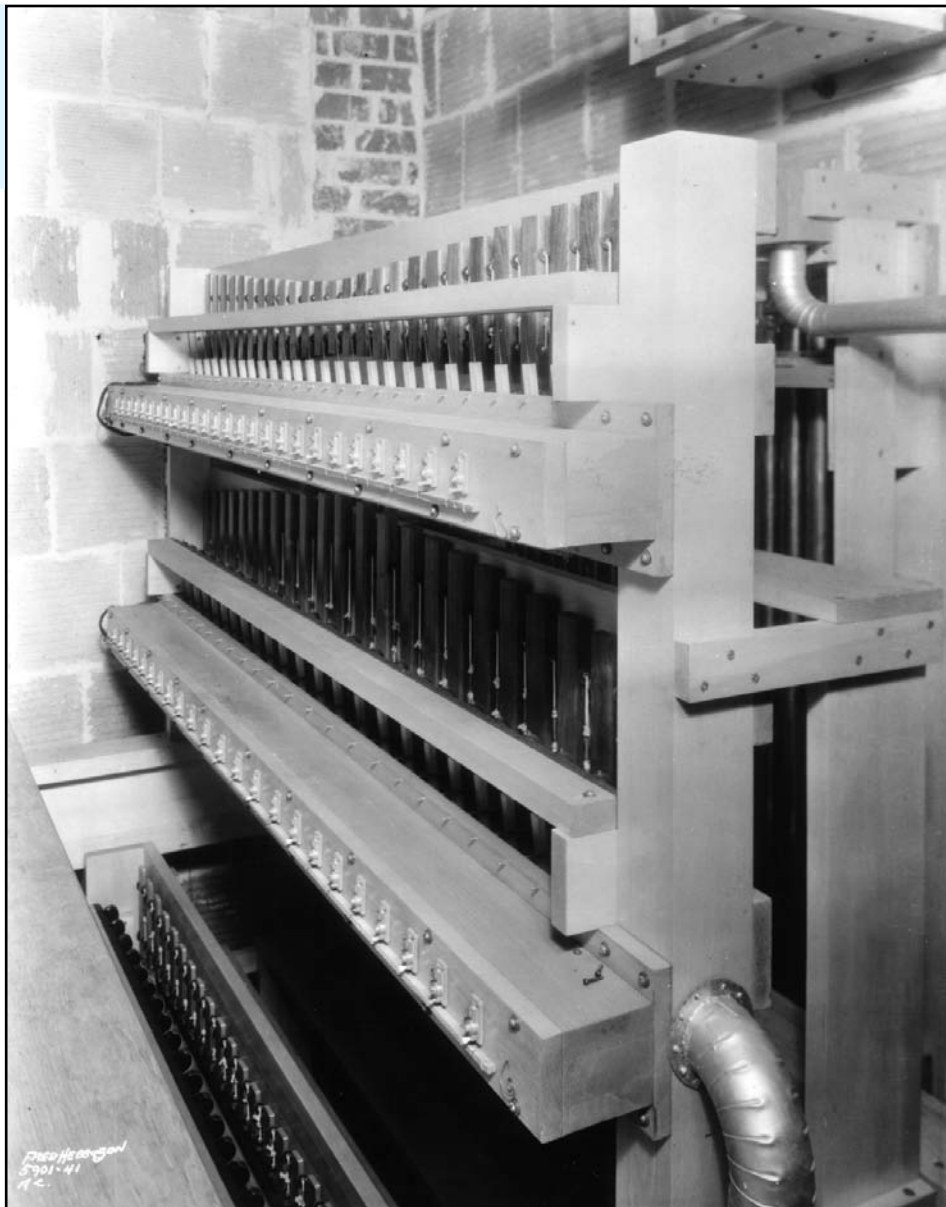
The Great-Solo's 49-note Xylophone. Originally this stop was to be enclosed with the department's "Organ" section and the Chimes and Harp were to be included in the "Orchestral" Division. All three stops are now unenclosed.

cal brass Gong was added. On the five-manual console, this Gong is operated by a piston and on the main console it is operated by the Great-Solo's Gemshorn 36th stop-key. The Gong piston is marked "A," which was formerly the Grand Piano's identifying letter.

In my opinion, it is quite right to think of the Percussion department as it now stands (as opposed to how it was originally conceived) as containing 16 stops, all non-melodic. The Grand Piano, being placed in a separate location, is not really part of the Percussion section and should be thought of simply as a stop in its own right without a 'home' department. Also, it could be legitimately considered as stop #321, thus giving it an identifying number (instead of a letter) like all of the instrument's other melodic percussions.

Because the Percussion department is now unenclosed, its swell box selectives — for switching its box onto the various swell shoes — are obsolete. Similarly, although the String III organ (located behind the Fanfare organ in the Left Upper chamber) was originally an enclosed department, its shades were removed when the decision was taken to enclose the Fanfare. Consequently, the String III's swell pedal selectives are also obsolete and the department's volume is controlled by the Fanfare's shades.

In summary, the corrections are as follows: The instrument has 449 ranks, not 447 (the extra two ranks being found in the Unenclosed Choir's Rausch Quint); the Dulzian has 22 diaphone pipes, not 12; the Percussion department's stops are *unenclosed* in the Right Stage chamber (as are the Great-Solo's percussions), not enclosed in the Left Forward chamber, and there is an additional stop,



the Gong. Finally, the Grand Piano is located in the Left Center chamber.

I should now like to move on to the subject of pipe numbers. This has been a hotly-debated issue over the decades, but I now feel able to speak on the subject from a position of some authority. I would say, however, that I doubt my figures are 100 percent correct, but at least I now have quite a volume of evidence in support of them. The official number of pipes, as stated in *The Guinness Book of World Records*, is 33,112 but I believed the figure was more likely to be in the region of 32,900-plus. In the event, my

calculations resulted in a figure very close to the official one.

I should perhaps mention here that many of the currently accepted pipe numbers are based upon information contained in copies of the Auditorium organ's contracts. Approximately 100 of these were printed and given to people who visited the hall whilst the instrument was being built. However, a number of details were changed as construction progressed, so some of the information in those contracts was redundant but, nevertheless, it still found its way into general circulation. For example, the Choir organ's



The String III organ is the most remote department from the main console, being approximately 325 feet from it.

big reeds, the Trombas and Brass Cornet, are voiced on 25 inches of wind not, as stated in the contract, 20 inches. Certainly, these contracts cannot be relied upon for accurate pipe figures, not only because the number of pipes in some ranks was increased or decreased, but also because some were incorrect from the outset!

In the past, much has been made by some people of a few letters which state that the Auditorium organ is incomplete. I agree, it is incomplete, but only because relays which would have allowed the two consoles to be played independently of each other were omitted (therefore, if a stop were to be drawn on the Great of the seven-manual console, it would also be playable on the Great of five-manual — if it were connected to the instrument which, at present, it isn't).

But what evidence is there to support the theory that all of the stops, ranks, and pipes are there? Well, firstly, there are photographs of at least one pipe from *every* rank in the instrument (suggesting that all stops *were* built). Secondly,

I am pretty certain that Emerson Richards would have refused to sign the Certificate of Completion if stops were omitted, and thirdly, I saw no vacant chests in any of the six chambers I visited (except where pipes had been moved due to water damage and the like). In the case of the Fanfare and Echo chambers in the ceiling, which I wasn't able to access, photographs show almost all of the pipes in those departments *in situ*. Likewise, there is a photograph of the String III organ *as installed*, so we know the department is complete.

Having said all of that, I am aware that the Pedal Left's Major Posaune has 44 pipes (16'-8") instead of the planned 85. The reason for this arrangement is not known, although it is likely that it was one of the last stops to be installed — at a time when money was in short supply.



The Pedal Left's Major Posaune. This stop now has only 43 pipes, as the smallest one, measuring about 1 ½ feet in length is missing — presumed taken by someone as a souvenir of their tour of the instrument!

What Is The Grand Ophicleide?

The question is often asked, especially by new members, so here is a reminder:

The Grand Ophicleide in none other than stop No. 9 on the Midmer-Losh organ. Voiced on 100" of wind, it was listed for years in the Guinness Book of World Records as the loudest stop in the world! This stop of



85 pipes is unenclosed in the Right Stage chamber and available on the Pedal Right at 16' and 8', Pedal 2nd Touch at 16' and 8', plus Grand Great at 8'. Needless to say, it is the showstopper on the organ.

Fear not however, when heard in the hall, the loudness is subjectively far from excessive. Rather it is the strength and grandeur of tone that embraces the listener.

A REMEMBRANCE

I will always remember the sounds of the great organ in Convention Hall in Atlantic City. I was a member of the All State New Jersey Chorus from Montclair High School in 1935 and 1938. The organ was the largest I had ever seen or heard. The magnificent tones filled the tremendous hall. I will never forget singing "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" with tears running down my cheeks as we were accompanied by the organ.

Please save this organ, the world's largest, for future generations to love and enjoy as much as I did.

Mrs. William G. Martin, Royal Oak, Maryland

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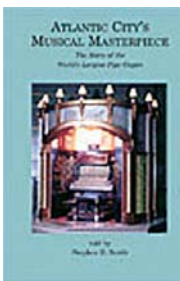
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