

the **GRAND OPHICLEIDE**

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

Issue 13

Fall 2001



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***the* GRAND OPHICLEIDE**

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

1009 Bay Ridge Avenue, PMB 108, Annapolis, Maryland 21403
www.acchos.org • info@acchos.org

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restoration of the organs in the Atlantic
City Boardwalk Convention Hall.*

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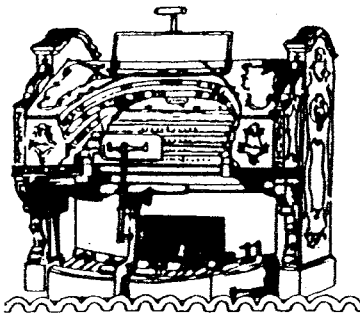
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On the Cover — Fantasy or future Reality??

A prominent Atlantic City businessman who, for years, has dreamed of such a billboard sign coming into Atlantic City inspired this interesting computer-generated montage. If there was a book titled: *Harry Potter and the Hall of the Great Organ* no doubt sales would pay for the complete restoration of the Midmer-Losh organ!

ATOS



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September 12, 2001

Mr. Stephen D. Smith, President
The Atlantic City Convention Hall Organ Society, Inc.
1009 Bay Ridge Avenue PMB 108
Annapolis, MD 21403

Dear Mr. Smith:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the American Theatre Organ Society let me congratulate you and your team on a mission to create public awareness in the Convention Hall organs and the efforts in eventually overseeing their restoration. Neither of these goals are easily attained but both are essential in helping tell the long history of the King of Instruments.

The ballroom Kimball is a wonderful example of one of our greatest organ builders at the zenith of their craft. The Midmer-Losh is a niagara of an instrument. Full of wonderment and folly, its story of amazing technical achievements and the people who made this dream a reality is truly mind-boggling.

ATOS is ready to stand and be counted as an organization that is ready, willing and most importantly able to commit its resources in the preservation and restoration of these true American treasures.

Let us know what we can do.

Very truly yours,

Nelson Page

NEP/dcw

Photo by Harry C. Bellangy



The Gallery Organs

by Stephen D. Smith

When Emerson Richards conceived the original specifications for the Atlantic City Convention Hall organ, there were to be 43,000-plus pipes housed in just four chambers, i.e. the Stage and Upper (Ceiling) pairs. Exactly how it would have been possible to accommodate a greater number of pipes in a lesser number of chambers is a matter for speculation, for although there is some free space within the instrument's chambers, there isn't *that* much! However, in any event, the number of pipes was reduced and the number of chambers increased.

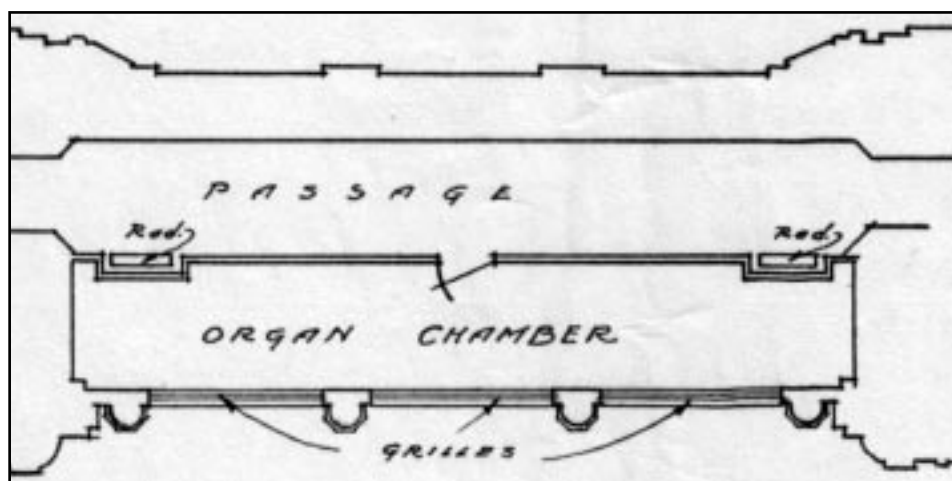
As stated above, the Stage and Upper chambers were the only ones specifically built for the organ. The Gallery organs at this time were to be accommodated in the Upper chambers and, originally, were to be known as Dome organs. The Forward and Center pairs of chambers were added later by simply bricking-up areas in the gallery to create enclosures. The Gallery organs were then moved to the newly created Center chambers — which are located directly below the Upper chambers.

Interestingly, Richards refers to these

GALLERY I

Diaphone 16, 8 (85 pipes, 25" wind)
Mixture Mirabilis 1-5-8-12-15-19-22
(511 pipes, 25" wind)
Trumpet Mirabilis 16, 8, 4 (85 pipes,
100" wind)
Tuba Maxima 8, 4 (73 pipes, 100"
wind)

Although the Gallery I organ possesses less than a handful of stops, it is one of the louder departments. The unison and octave ranks of the *Mixture Mirabilis* are available on their own stop-



Plan showing how the new Center and Forward chambers were created.

departments in the contract as the “Gallery organ” (singular), saying:

“The object of the Gallery organ — with its Reed, Flute, Diapason, and Orchestral divisions — is to supplement the main organ by introducing very assertive voices in the center of the hall. In view of the inevitable time lag between the front and rear of the auditorium, this would seem to be necessary, particularly when the hall is filled, to deliver a large volume of tone midway, so that the sound will reach the rear more quickly. All stops will be voiced to yield the greatest possible volume of tone consistent with the scales and wind pressure involved.”

Also in the contract, he sets out the dates by which each department should be completed. The schedules for the Gallery organs were: Gallery III, November 1929; Gallery IV December 1929; Gallery I & II, May 1929.

The contents of each department are as follows:

keys and it is worth noting that the reed registers have a 61-notes compass, whereas the *Diaphone* unit's registers and the mixture's ranks have a 73-note compass (the highest octaves of which will only sound when the department is coupled to an extended clavier). On the main console, seven registers, including two melody couplers, are derived from the 100-inch reed units.

Both of these reeds were built by Harry Willis, making use of the “pocket” shallot invented by his father, Vincent. Both stops have open metal flue pipes in their top octaves and there is said to be little difference in volume between them, although the trumpet reportedly has a thinner tone than the tuba. The small and medium-sized



Trumpet Mirabilis (nearest camera) and Tuba Maxima ranks.

100-inch pipes are secured in position by sprung wires; not to prevent them being blown off the chest (a common misconception), but to ensure a tight fit between each pipe's toe and the soundboard hole in which it stands, as air escaping through the slightest gap can produce a whistle almost as loud as the pipe's note.

According to the contract specifications, the 100-inch trumpet was to be “voiced as a fiery trumpet, yielding the greatest possible quantity of tone. A veritable blaze of sound will be required.” However, it was not to be and *The American Organist* of July, 1932, reported that the Gallery I reeds “did not prove to be the extravaganza predicted”. Years later, on August 22, 1941, Richards wrote to Aubrey Thompson-Allen saying: “The 100” reed in the Gallery organ has never been a success; great things were expected of it but did not materialize, although it cost Losh quite a lot of money.”

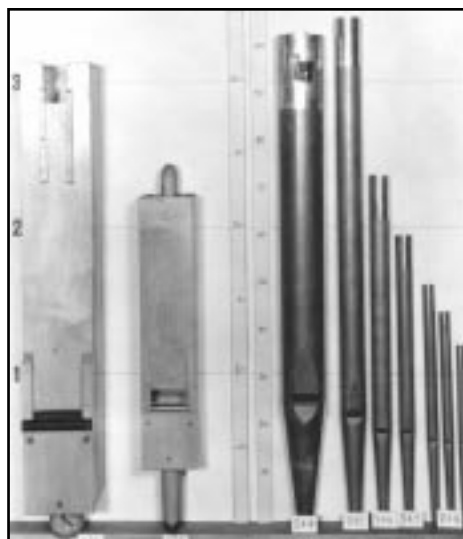
In the same letter, Richards states that Harry Willis had likened the effect of the reed striking the pocket shallot's long face to a cricket ball hitting somewhere near the middle of a bat, rather than the lower end. Presumably Willis considered this to be an advantage in terms of tone production, but both Emerson Richards and Roscoe Evans, the instrument's first curator, believed the stop's lackluster



Tuba Maxima “pocket” shallot

performance was due to the design of these shallots. Evans wanted to make new shallots for these stops but his ambitions in this respect were never realized.

Quite why Richards had entrusted Willis — whose reputation was primarily as a voicer of flues — with these 100-inch reeds is something of a mystery. The *Grand Ophicleide* and *Tuba Imperial* were produced, without pocket shallots, by Evans; perhaps suggesting that Richards regretted giving charge of his *pet stops* to Willis. Indeed, perhaps Willis himself admitted failure when he reportedly suggested “it would be even better if the pressure was much higher”.



Gallery II organ pipes.

GALLERY II (25" wind)

Flauto Maggiore 16, 4 (stopped wood, 97 pipes)

Jubal Flute 8 (wood, 73 pipes)

Harmonic Flute 8 (metal, 73 pipes)

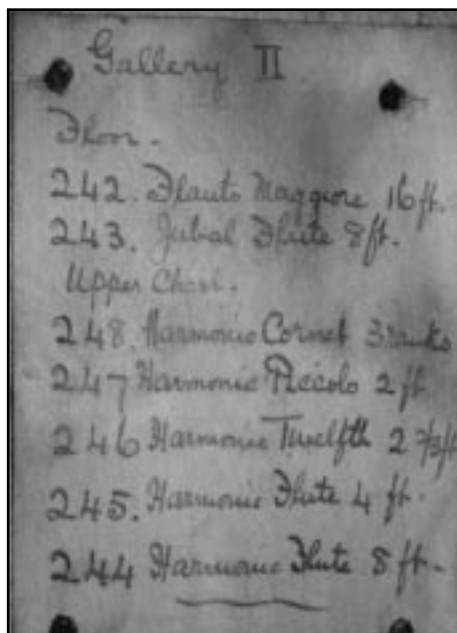
Harmonic Flute 4 (metal, 73 pipes)

Harmonic Twelfth 2-2/3 (metal, 61 pipes)

Harmonic Piccolo 2 (metal, 61 pipes)

Harmonic Mixture 17-19-22 (metal, 183 pipes)

Among this chorus of large-scale flutes, the *Jubal Flute* is the big solo voice. The stop originally had double languids but it seems that the upper languids were later removed. All of the department's other stops, except the mutation and the mixture, have double languid pipes. Richards, in a letter to



Gallery II organ, chest “guide”.

Jean-Louis Coignet, said of the metal ranks: “Despite the fact that I voiced them, I do not like them.”

GALLERY III (20" wind)

Contra Diapason 16, 4 (97 pipes)

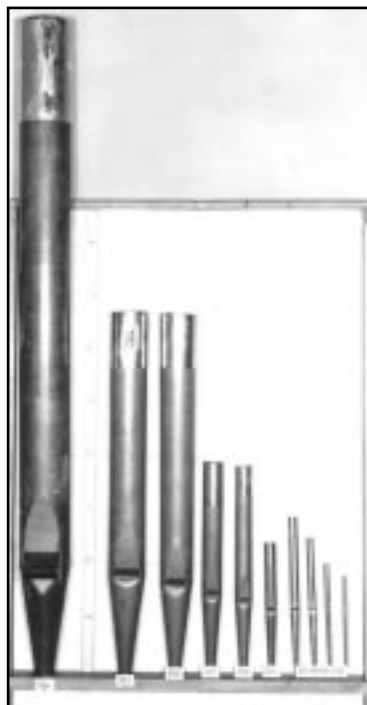
Diapason I 8 (73 pipes, #37 scale)

Diapason II 8 (73 pipes, #40 scale)

Octave 4 (73 pipes)

Fifteenth 2 (73 pipes)

Mixture 12-15-19-22 (292 pipes)



Gallery III organ pipes.

The *Contra Diapason* is the department's only extended stop and its lowest pipes are of wood, installed horizontally. The majority of ranks in this division have double languid pipes. Like many of the instrument's other diapasons, the stops that comprise the Gallery III organ all sound with the bright, silvery tone favored by the organ builder Edmund Schulze, but these stops speak on higher wind pressure and are of a larger scale than anything Schulze built.

GALLERY IV (25" wind)

Saxophone 16, 8, 4 (85 pipes, brass)

Brass Trumpet 8 (73 pipes, brass)

Egyptian Horn 8 (73 pipes, brass with copper bells)

Major Oboe 8 (73 pipes)

Major Clarinet 8 (73 pipes)

Cor d'Orchestre (73 pipes)

Euphone (73 pipes)

Musette Mirabilis (73 pipes)



Gallery IV organ pipes

As a brass and woodwind section consisting “entirely of exaggerated orchestral tone colors,” this department contains some of the instrument's more exotic stops, and includes a number of ranks with pipes made of brass. In the original scheme the *Brass Trumpet* was to be called *French Trumpet* and the *Egyptian Horn* was to be called *Egyptian Bazu*. Gotfried supplied all stops in this department, except the Major Clarinet and Major Oboe.

It was a photograph of pipes for the Gallery IV organ that lead to the instrument in Saint Paul's Cathedral, London, acquiring what is arguably its most famous stop, the *Trompette*

Militaire. One evening in 1929, Emerson Richards and Henry Willis III were having supper at the Ritz Hotel in London, and Richards was passing around indexed photographs of the Auditorium organ. Willis's eye was caught by the stop numbered 300, the *Brass Trumpet*, so he asked Richards to order one for him and within three months it was delivered to the Willis factory. Willis claimed he removed the stop's shallots, replacing them with Willis "eschallots", and tongues, but actually, he did not. He simply placed the stop, complete, in the Dome organ at Saint Paul's, and it wasn't until the instrument was rebuilt by Mander's in the 1970s that the original tongues were replaced. At one time, it was rumored that Wurlitzer made the *Trompette Militaire*, but Gottfried's distinctive lozenge-shaped stamp is still visible on the block of the CC pipe, even though a crude attempt has been made to scratch out the lettering.

Listed below are the Gallery organ stops that didn't make it into the

instrument, together with their contract descriptions:

Gallery I

Ophicleide Phonon 8 [50" wind] "will be voiced with considerable more harmonic development than the Tuba Sonora, about midway in quality between the Tuba and the Trumpet."

Clarion Mirabilis 4 [50" wind] "will be well developed harmonically in order to form a suitable octave to the 8' Reeds."

Gallery III

Flute Overte 8 "double languid, will be of normal, unimitative flute quality."

Zauber Flote 4 "harmonic stopped wood, will be voiced to yield a clear, unimitative flute tone of considerable power, suitable as a solo voice."

Gallery III

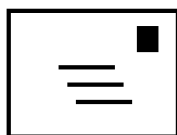
Diapason III 8 "will approach on an exaggerated Geigen type of tone."

Gallery IV

Cor Anglais 8 "will be imitative of the orchestral type."

Fagotto d'Orchestre 8 "will be imitative of the orchestral Oboe."

The Gallery organs can be played from any manual on either console, and the engraving on their coupler stops-keys refers to them as "Reeds I", "Flutes II", "Diapasons III", and "Orchestral IV". On the main console, the Bombard (seventh) manual has no speaking stops of its own and is, in effect, a coupler keyboard (from which only the four Gallery organs can be played). However, as its keyslip contains the pistons for the Gallery organs and because specially designated "Master" couplers are provided for coupling them to the Bombard, it is quite clear that this manual was intended to be a "boarding house", if not a "home", for these floating departments. However, in reality, this seventh manual was almost certainly added in order to make the instrument look bigger than the Wanamaker organ's six-manual console — in a word: one-upmanship!



we get mail

My name is Elva Cook (Rosser). I am William Rosser's sister and I have been receiving letters of stories about my brother and I am overwhelmed that you all remember him so well. He was so proud of that organ and proud to explain it to who ever was interesting in listening. I also read about the attribute to Mr. Rosser from Antoni Scott and I would like to thank that gentleman for giving so a nice story on my brother. That really would have put a big smile on his face and would have lasted for days. I want to thank your society for still thinking of William Rosser and again thanks to Antoni Scott.

Truly yours,
Elva Cook (Rosser)

Dear Mrs. Cook,

Many thanks for taking time to write about your brother. I'm so glad you enjoyed Antoni Scott's article and I will certainly pass on your thanks to him and I'll ask him to send you a message. Toni and "Bill" were great friends, both inside and outside the Atlantic City Convention Hall.

Your brother was a great man and looking after such a treasure

was undoubtedly a heavy responsibility but he executed his task to perfection and with enthusiasm. It is thanks to him that some of the instrument is still playable today - though I suspect he'd be rather saddened to see its present condition. Nevertheless, our society is hopeful of restoring the instrument to its former glory in the fullness of time. You can check our website www.acchos.org from time to time to see how our work is progressing.

Since its formation in 1997, the Atlantic City Convention Hall Organ Society has made a CD recording of the organ and published a number of books about the instrument. In our next book, "Atlantic City's Musical Masterpiece" (available from early next year), there is a photograph of your brother. The picture was taken by Antoni Scott and shows him among the pipes of the organ that he loved and cared for. We hope that this picture can serve as a tribute to Bill and to his work.

Again, many thanks for your message, please feel free to stay in touch if you wish.

Yours sincerely,
Stephen D. Smith, President
Atlantic City Convention Hall
Organ Society, Inc.

Dr. Rollo Maitland Gives Fine Program Before Appreciative Audience**Pipe Organ At Hall Dedicated With Musicale**

May 26, 1930

Creation of a complete symphony in the presence of the audience, featured the recital by Rollo Maitland, noted organist, dedicating the world's largest theatrical organ in the ballroom of the Atlantic City Auditorium last night. The concert was enjoyed by a capacity attendance of music lovers.

The four themes or tunes selected for the improvisation by Mr. Maitland had been submitted by the audience, and the themes providing each of the themes were played before the symphony was composed in order to familiarize those present with the tunes.

Another outstanding number was a fantasy, "A Trip to Atlantic City" conceived by Mr. Maitland especially for the dedicatory concert. It bordered frankly on the descriptive and suggested all the happenings of the trip from the start of the family to the shore, to their return home, tired, but happy. This novel composition gave full opportunity for a dramatic display of the many musical effects with which the mighty instrument is equipped.

During the rendition of several of the numbers, the unusual lighting effects of the ballroom were appropriately used to dawn, the breaking of a storm and other parts of the various movements.

In the playing of Liebestraum (Love's Dream) and The Spinning Song, originally designed for the piano, Mr. Maitland featured the grand piano situated on the stage and played electrically from the organ console.

The recital was opened with the Grand Festival March, an unpublished composition for orchestra by Victor Herbert, transcribed for the organ by Mr. Maitland from the original score, which was loaned by the late Irish-American composer especially for the purpose.

Other numbers in the recital were the overture, "William Tell," Allegro from the sixth organ symphony, and Southern Rhapsody.

The organ, built by the W.W. Kimball company, Chicago, was designed by Senator Emerson L. Richards. It has 4,115 pipes and is controlled by 354 stops. It is of the orchestral concert type, containing faithful representations of all the voices in the orchestra, including the violins, second violins, cellos, contra bass trumpets, trombones, French horns, English horns, clarinet, saxophone, oboe, oboe horn, flutes, piccolos, drums, traps, harps and the electrically controlled grand piano. The console is the largest ever built by the Kimball Company.

The Person Behind the Camera***Fred Hess — the Photographer who founded Fred Hess & Son***

His photographs are legendary, especially those taken of the Atlantic City Boardwalk Hall Midmer-Losh pipe organ from 1929-1932, but little has been seen or said about the man himself.

Ferdinand Hess was born in Ottenberg, Bavaria on October 22, 1858. At the age of 13 he moved to America and settled in Philadelphia where he worked for a furrier. He moved to Atlantic City in the mid-1890s and established the photographic company that bore his name. He went on to build up one of the finest photo studios in the Jersey Shore region, and operated a pioneering enterprise of its type in Atlantic City. He proved himself a master of all types of photography, and his reputation extended throughout the East. For many years, he operated his studio under the name of Fred Hess, but when his son, Myron, joined him in business, the name was changed to Fred Hess & Son. The firm was located at 166 South Virginia Avenue. Ferdinand Hess died in Atlantic City on September 15, 1932, having won a place of lasting recognition in the life of his city. His skill in the photographic field, no less than his capabilities in business affairs, identifies him as one of Atlantic City's most gifted citizens of past years.

Myron Hess headed the firm until his death on November 6, 1950.



Fred Hess



Myron Hess

BREAKING NEWS!

On October 25, L. Robert Kimball & Associates, Environmental Safety Consultants for Boardwalk Hall, made an elaborate and complex test on the Right Stage chamber to determine if there was asbestos particulate matter present. The organ was winded for the first time in three years and was played vigorously for almost a half hour with all stops pulled. The tests proved **negative**. This now means both the Left Stage and Right Stage chambers are released for restoration work. Tests on the wiring in both the Kimball and Midmer-Losh organs proved negative and **passed** inspection

for asbestos concerns.

Equally exciting is the news that the Midmer-Losh will sound much better in its new acoustic environment. There is no doubt that the organ will speak with considerably greater clarity, brilliance, and diffusion in the hall.

The new “look” in the hall is remarkable. The original color scheme has been restored, along with spectacular color illumination of the proscenium arch and the hall ceiling. With the organ restored, the hall will be the setting for a real *son et lumière*!



Photo by Harry C. Bellangy

See a full-color version of this picture on our website: www.acchos.org and click on “Gallery.”

The Kimball Factory Files

Only four complete sets of original Kimball Factory Files are known to exist and the Ballroom Kimball organ is one of them. A copy of this very large file has been given to the ACCHOS for its archives. The following are some brief excerpts from the extensive correspondence found in the files. The letters from "E. Hagstrom" were all hand-written on stationery from the Hotel Monticello on the Boardwalk in Atlantic City. Talk about trials and tribulations!

August 2, 1929

Letter from W.D. Hardy at Kimball to Emerson Richards

Last night I attended the opening of the organ in the Chicago Stadium, which so far as I can judge, sounds like the usual \$15,000 theater organ magnified about ten times...I stayed until the intermission, which was really enough to ask of anyone...the organist who was performing is probably the worst I have ever heard.

October 10, 1929

Letter from FKR to Richards

In regard to the air filters for the above organ, the Spencer Turbine Company advised us that the blower will handle 5,000 cubic feet of air at 10" wind pressure and 2200 feet of air at 15" wind pressure. The suggest that you caution, whoever is supplying the air filter, to supply one large enough to take care of this organ without any appreciable loss in wind pressure.

January 23, 1930

Letter from E. Hagstrom to O.J. Hagstrom

I am at my wits end in trying to find out anything here. I am presuming that the Piano goes on the stage but nobody knows anything or wants to say anything about the work concerning the organ, except Senator Richards and I have not been able to get in touch with him since he came back from Chicago.

March 8, 1930

Letter from E. Hagstrom to O.J. Hagstrom

We have the Console in position now, without any incident, and it looks good, everybody that have seen it, Senator Richards included, thinks it is classy.

I don't think there is any chance, whatsoever, to get away from the roar and noise without putting reservoirs in the blower room, the pipes carry the roar direct from the fans in the blower so it sounds like the blower was near to the organ chambers.

I don't think you have any other blower of this size, connected direct to the organ and I was really surprised over the way the roar carries up such long distance.

Senator Richards was in yesterday the first time when we have had the wind on when he came, and I steered him away from the chambers to the Console...

Next in order is the Vox Humana, it needs an extra reservoir...

I just got the proper authorities to decide about the location of the player console today, and I believe a 2" hose will run that, as it has to run on the floor, the smaller item be the better.

When I mention "proper authorities" it don't sound like being much, but it means a lot.

For example, the console had to be hoisted about 20 ft. to the balcony, and included rigging up a jimpole in the Ballroom which had been a risky matter considering floor and decorations, I wanted them to take out a light reflector overhead so we could drop a cable from the roof girders, which meant to see the management to get permission to go up to look at it, then the construction engineer had to pass on it to see of it was practical, then the Electrical Engineer had to pass on whether a reflector could be removed, next the management gave him order to proceed and he in turn gave the electricians order to do the work.

Through a dozen personal calls and several dozens phone calls to different offices and departments, I succeeded in getting the machinery to move at such a "terrific" speed that all this was passed on in 4 days.

I relate this matter just one incident of

what a person has to contend with here.

March 9, 1930

Letter from E. Hagstrom to O.J. Hagstrom

I mentioned about the other organ having reservoirs outside of the chambers, the 100" has one in the blower room also, I saw it once when the wind was on, and was not anxious to go too close to it.

However, I stood near the blower watching that, which was a heavy cased affair and running at 3500 R.P.M.

A few days after, the blower blew into thousands of pieces, shortly after Mr. Brooks had shown it so some visitors, if anybody had been there at the time they would most likely have been killed.

The top of a reservoir blew off a while ago, so I am not "snooping" around their high pressure stuff anymore.

April 7, 1930

Letter from E. Hagstrom to O.J. Hagstrom

Senator Richards was over yesterday and tried the organ, and we understand then that it was hopeless to try to satisfy him with the Tuba.

April 13, 1930

Letter from E. Hagstrom to O.J. Hagstrom

It is only Sundays that we can get Senator Richards to go over anything with us, and I have been camping on the job all day today, which is not very interesting.

The tone of the Clarabella doesn't suit him, but there is not enough difference between the Flutes and he likes it more on the Concert Flute type. While that evidently is his fault (he practically admitted that) I would suggest changing it as it may help to get him satisfied with things in general. He is, by no means, easy to satisfy.

April 25, 1930

P.E.R. to E. Hagstrom

We sent the new Concert Flute by Express yesterday. This ought to make the Senator feel satisfied. It may be a good policy to keep the Clarabella pipes on the job until the organ is finished in case Mr. Richards does not approve of the Concert Flute pipes and would like to have the Clarabella pipes back again.

April 27, 1930

Letter from E. Hagstrom to O.J. Hagstrom

The blower reservoirs are now in commission and they done away with 90% of the noise, I have just had session with Richards today, and his is well satisfied on that score.

Senator Richards paid us a "signal honour" today, by coming over to our sides first, which has not happened before, and he seemed well disposed today so I don't believe he will ask for any more changes.

May 26, 1930

Letter to Kimball from E. Hagstrom

The organ opened officially last night and behaved fairly good, we had one small pipe squeal a little once, but we were prepared and caught it quickly so I don't believe any one in the audience noticed it as they had a large and not very quiet crowd there. Mr. Dickey, the Manager, is very pleased with the organ and plans to use it a good deal.

October 14, 1930

Letter from Arthur Scott Brook to R.P. Elliot at Kimball

Dear Mr. Elliot:

Senator Richards returned from his European trip yesterday and learns from the Auditorium authorities that the Ball Room Organ is in so bad shape that it is of very little practical use.

We do not seem to be able to connect up with the people in Philadelphia who are supposed to keep the instrument in good order, and so the Senator has directed me to acquaint you of our difficulty and to ask you to take such steps as will give immediate and competent relief to the situation.

The impression prevails that this instrument is entitled to a visit every two weeks and while I have not been able to keep exact count of the visits I do know they have been very far apart and that the Organ has suffered greatly in consequence.

It would comfort the Senator very much if you will be kind enough to give your early and kind attention this matter.

Yours very sincerely,
Arthur Scott Brook

October 27, 1930

Frank H. Niemann, Church Organs, Philadelphia to Mr. WW. Kimball

Re: Ballroom Organ, Convention Hall, Atlantic City

Dear Mr. Kimball:

Answering yours of the 16th found considerable work on this organ on my visit last week.

Some of the keys on all manuals and pedal were sticking. Joints of two pedal wood pipes were opening up; about ten reeds of French Horn had become loose. Many wires on various stop switches had become unsoldered. Rewind on Player on all time; Reeds were badly in need of tuning.

Although there was heat in the building while I was there, yet I believe this is shut off at times thus causing much dampness and swelling of the organ parts.

Yours very truly,
Frank H. Neimann

September 16, 1935

Letter to Kimball from Roscoe Evans

Gentlemen:

The large Kimball you installed here in the Auditorium Ballroom is a fine instrument in every way except one thing and that is the combination action. This combination action has been causing us trouble for the past three or four years and it's getting worse.

Last Fall, we had 25 organists here from all parts of the country who played this Kimball organ. By my working every day on this combination action, pushing the valves, twisting and turning by hand in and effort to make pneumatics more flexible, we managed

to get by but it was not safe to use the general pistons. This year, I can't work them loose, some will stick in spite of everything.

This organ goes on the air every day and by the way, it is the best organ I ever heard on the air.

We have strange organists coming here with conventions, etc., and they surely need the combination action, but if it gets any worse, I will have to shut it off permanently.

Could new combination chests be installed in place of these, with the proper kind of leather on pneumatics and most important of all, with springs to reseal the valves. Another trouble here is, after the valves set a while they stick to their seats and the pneumatics will not pull them loose. Something should be put on the valve seats to keep them from sticking.

We will appreciate your suggestions and cooperation in helping us get this thing fixed up.

Yours very truly,
Roscoe Evans

January 11, 1940

Letter to Kimball from Roscoe Evans

In 1935 I wrote you regarding our Kimball organ here in the Convention Hall relative to the combination action which, at that time, had become very sluggish and was getting to the point where I would have to shut it off. However, I put springs on the valves and the result was such that we were able to use the action for about two years. But the leather on the pneumatics became so stiff and hard that I finally had to shut off the action altogether.

In your reply (September 28, 1935) to my inquiry, you stated that you could furnish new pneumatics with very limber leather, which would be more satisfactory than re-conditioning the old ones. We should like to inquire as to the cost of 708 pneumatics and valves and for how many years you can guarantee the pliability of the leather in this climate.

Yours very truly,
Roscoe Evans
Organ Maintenance

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