



The late Lois Miller, for many years Convention Hall organist, is pictured at the console.
(From the Lloyd Klos collection)

Organ Restoration to Require Two Years and Cost \$1.5 Million

According to a recent article in *The Atlantic City Press*, local resident Mildred Fox has been working for the last two years to stir up interest and raise funds for the restoration of the giant 7-manual Midmer-Losh organ in the Atlantic City Convention Hall. She was instrumental in obtaining a survey of the organ, which resulted in an estimated cost of \$1.5 million and two years of work to repair and rebuild.

The survey revealed a number of key problems, among which were: only two blowers out of eight are functioning; severe water damage to windchests and pipes of several divisions; antiquated relays that need to be replaced; the combination action was destroyed in the 1944 hurricane; and, of the 22 divisions, only four

are playable and they are out of tune and in extreme disrepair. It is proposed to install a computer system to control some parts of the organ.

Designed by New Jersey State Senator Emerson Richards in the late 1920s, the organ cost \$500,000 to build. It was first used publicly on May 11, 1932. Its seven manuals are somewhat unusual; the bottom two having 85 keys, the next above having 73 keys, and the top four 61 keys each. There are 1,477 stops arranged in 15 curved rows on either side of the manuals, seven expression pedals, and 33,112 pipes. Its eight blowers total 365 hp.

Emerson Richards was also responsible for the design of the large 4-manual Kimball organ installed in the gallery of the ballroom of the auditorium. The Kimball, with a theatre-style console, was completed in 1929, shortly after the auditorium itself.

RUTH E. DREHER

Ashley Miller Premieres New Canadian Theatre Organ

On September 17 Ashley Miller played the opening concert on Canada's largest theatre pipe organ, located in Kingston, Ontario.

The concert climaxed four years of effort by a local group of theatre organ devotees (musicians, aspiring musicians, and technicians) to bring live theatre organ music to Kingston. These members of the Kingston Theatre Organ Society heard their first musical sounds from the organ just over a year ago. Since last fall the organ has been used at regular church services at its new home, the Church of the Redeemer.

The organ is a 3/21 Kimball, plus piano and six tuned percussions. It was originally installed in a theatre in Youngstown, Ohio. The console contains 256 stop tabs and 70 combination pistons. It has been completely rebuilt with advice from a number of top performing artists and technical experts, and includes the use of solid-state technology.

DON CRESWELL □

BOOK REVIEW



by Lloyd E. Klos

ESTEY REED ORGANS ON PARADE by Robert B. Whiting. 150 pages. Available from Vestal Press, Box 97, Vestal, NY 13850. Price: \$15. New York State residents add 7% sales tax.

For those whose ancestors had one of the parlor pump organs in their homes, the status symbol of the day, or for those who have an interest in these instruments, this book will fill the bill most adequately.

A history of the company, from its beginnings in 1846 until its takeover in 1961 to become Estey Electronics, gives impressive background. Reproductions of several Estey catalogues show engravings of the numerous models. Descriptions of the stops, care of the organs, price lists, and bibliography round out the text. □