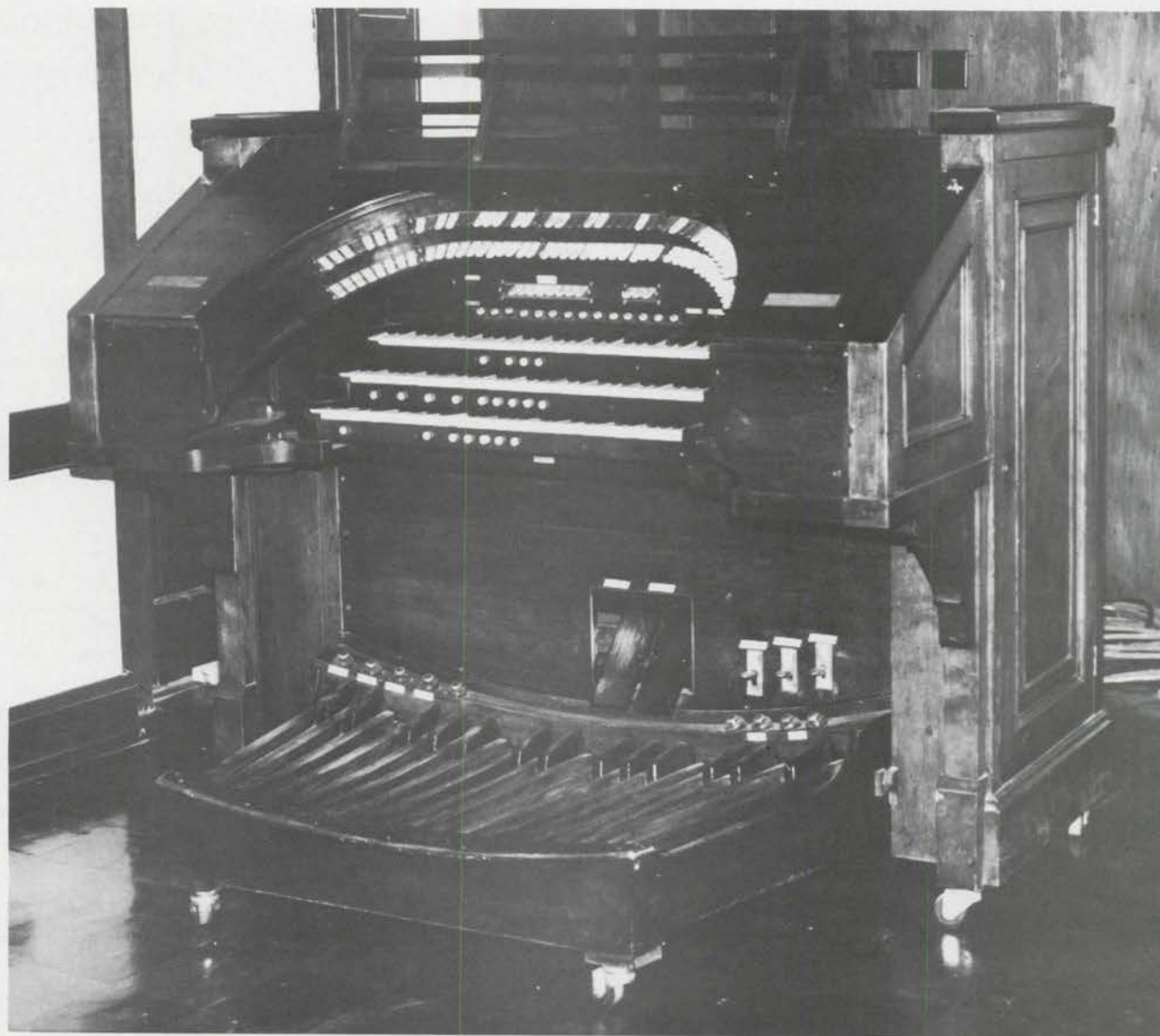


# “What’s A Nice Girl Like You ... ... doin’ in a place like this??”

by Gary W. Jones

*A fine question, indeed,  
when you consider the life led by Kimball’s KPO #7047.*



*3/6 Kimball theatre pipe organ in Foster Auditorium, Southside Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama.*

*Gary W. Jones Photo*

*Today, this little Kimball happily resides  
as one of Birmingham’s remaining theatre organs  
and will be featured in the 1988 Regional Convention.*

Life began as a 3/8 instrument installed in the Marion Theatre, Marion, Ohio. This was a short-lived stint, and the organ was removed in 1930. Various attempts have been made to find out why the organ was removed from the Marion Theatre. No one in Alabama knows for sure, but this little Kimball began a new life in 1930 as Birmingham's WAPI Studio organ. The WAPI Studio originally was located atop The Protective Life Insurance Corporation Building, and the organ led a very useful and prolific life. The Echo Division of two ranks was removed, bringing it to its current six-rank size, and the original Kinura was swapped by Kimball for an Orchestral Oboe (Kimball made no attempt to alter the setter board, although the stop-tabs were changed. "Marion Theatre" and "Kinura" are still written on the board).

The Kimball was used daily as a broadcast organ, showing off its talents as a solo instrument, providing background music, and for transitioning from show to show.

In 1953 WAPI decided to move their studios to the south side of Birmingham and modernize their production facilities. A Hammond organ was purchased for studio use, and the Kimball was once again without a home. An executive with WAPI was also a member of Southside Baptist Church. Southside Baptist is one of the largest churches in Birmingham and has several auditoriums located throughout the complex. Arrangements were made to have the organ donated to the church, and the Kimball was installed in Foster Auditorium on the third floor of the auxiliary building. Foster Auditorium seats approximately 200 people and is a very "live" hall — perfect for a smaller instrument. The organ is used on a regular basis by the church and by the Alabama chapter. The chapter recently has completed a rebuild of all the percussions and currently is rebuilding the combination action.

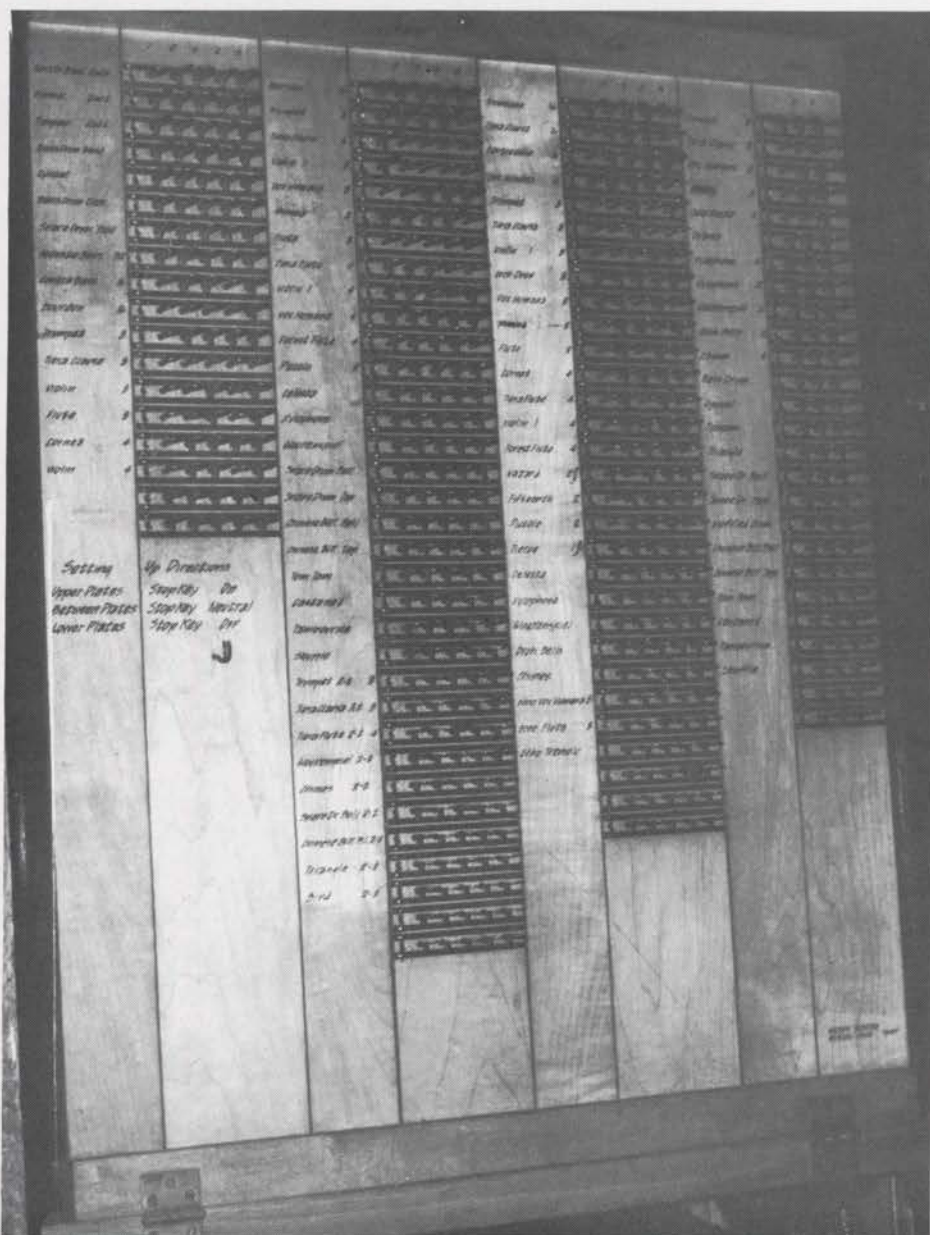
The organ consists of a Trumpet, Tibia Clausa, Vox Humana, Violin, Oboe, and Flute. There is also a Celesta (Harp), Glockenspiel and Xylophone, as well as a complete set of traps. The organ is "unaltered" and remains as it did when it left the WAPI studios. The 99 stop tabs, 21 effect keys and 24 pistons control the six ranks — the organ is highly unified, with no couplers. Sitting on a moveable platform, the console is easily moved from a storage area to center stage. The single chamber has swell shades reaching almost floor to ceiling allowing great flexibility in volume control.

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Highly unified Kimball console controls six ranks plus percussions and traps.

Gary W. Jones Photo



Unique Kimball setter-board reveals relative ease in changing pistons.

Gary W. Jones, Photo