

April 6, 1975

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# Few Cities Can Top Worces

By **RAYMOND MORIN**  
Telegram Music Critic

Among Worcester's most valuable musical resources are organs whose combined value at today's costs is well over \$3-million.

It's doubtful if there is another city in the nation of comparable or even considerably larger size that is so endowed with outstanding instruments.

Most of them date from the late 1920s.

Considering but 12 pipe organs from among hundreds in churches and secular auditoriums, there are virtually all types — Baroque, German, French, Romantic, Tracker — electronic, etc.

Most were especially designed and have distinctive characters, indicated by the "opus numbers" that some of the builders gave them.

Primarily, the instruments were created, replaced or rebuilt specifically for purpose of worship. But the intention was also to design instruments with recital potentials.

The objective was not status symbol.

In support of this impressive wealth of instruments is an unusual number of outstanding local performers whose reputations have reached from coast-to-coast, and several foreign countries.

**MECHANICS HALL** — Still reigning supreme is the organ in Mechanics Hall, built in 1864 by E. & G.G. Hook Co. of Boston.

It remains a marvel of historical and national interest, and is said to be the only surviving four-manual (keyboard) Hook organ in existence.

During the 19th century, it was known nationally as the "Great Organ." The largest organ that Hook had built up to that time, it had many innovations — pneumatic lever action, and stops not previously made by American organ manufacturers.

Dedication was Nov. 10, 1864. Its four manuals, two-and-a-half octaves of pedals, 50 complete registers (sets of pipes), 75 stops thundered through Mechanics Hall to the utter amazement of the audience.

Three organists took part — B.D. Allen and J.W. Wilcox of Boston, and W. Eugene Thayer of wider-spread fame.

As Worcester's pride and joy, it was played regularly. When organs went electrical, it was fitted, in 1926, with electric action. The original pipes were



From left, organist William Self, Paul B. Morgan Jr. and Peter Morgan at the console of the organ at the Worcester Art Museum.

voluntary pledges, amounting to the total cost of \$9,040!

It would cost \$150,000 to replace it and plans are under way to raise funds for restoration. Spearheading the project is the Worcester Chapter, American Guild of Organists.

In recent years, it has been used mainly to precede the Mechanics Association's annual lecture series.

**WESLEY METHODIST CHURCH** — Cost of restoring the magnificent Ernest M. Skinner Organ at Wesley Methodist Church, in 1970, was about \$60,000. The instrument had been dedicated in 1927 by the noted American organist, Palmer Christian.

Its value is now in the neighborhood of \$200,000.

In 1954, minor tonal changes were

Reconditioning, instead of replacement, was decided after exhaustive deliberation.

With Wesley organist LeRoy Hanson as consultant, a committee sought the advice of Dr. Robert Baker, dean of the School of Sacred Music, Union Theological Seminary, New York City.

Baker's summary was,

"The organ was installed in 1927 when Ernest M. Skinner was at the height of his ability and reputation. As such, it is not only an excellent church organ in the concept of Skinner's day, but in a real sense an instrument of historic significance."

It took the Berkshire Organ Co. of West Springfield one year to complete the work. Two new stops were added to the original 70, with 4,602 pipes.

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**ALL SA**  
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# 600-pipe organ needs place to play

by Bronislaus B. Kush  
Telegram & Gazette Staff

**WORCESTER** — The pipes of the massive concert organ at the Worcester Memorial Auditorium, which have enthralled thousands over the decades with their broad range of sounds, may be silenced forever if the Worcester Juvenile Court moves to the historic Lincoln Square building.

As workers busily remodel the first and second floors of the auditorium for court use, city officials are scrambling to figure out what to do with the 600-pipe organ.

Ultimately, they believe, the Kimball organ will have to be moved.

The officials say they're examining all options, but add that any solution to the problem will be costly.

Stephen F. O'Neil, director of the city's Office of Planning and Community Development, said one estimate he's received places the cost of taking apart and reassembling the huge musical instrument at up to \$1 million.

"We don't have a lot of information at this time and we're trying to contact some experts," O'Neil said. "Some have said we can't even take

it apart, while others have said it shouldn't be a problem. What we want to do now is to get some answers. Our goal is to protect and preserve it."

City officials found themselves in the dilemma shortly after City Council authorized City Manager Thomas R. Hoover to sign a lease with the state so the court could move into the auditorium building. Terms of the lease still are being negotiated.

The court is under pressure to move from its current location at 75A Grove St. To accommodate a move, workers are now making the auditorium suitable.

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## Organ at Aud needs place to play

Continued From Previous Page

Because of the accelerated work schedule, a number of graduations, for example, had to be moved from the auditorium.

For the short term, O'Neil said the basement area where some of the organ's mechanical parts are located can be cordoned off. The main portion of the organ is located near the stage on the first floor and won't be readily accessible to the public when the court opens.

But city officials said some decision will have to be made on what to do with the organ. There's been some discussion of moving the organ to Union Station, the Worcester Art Museum or to Mechanics Hall.

Hoover plans to appoint a committee to come up with some answers.

"The organ has to be considered

part of the overall renovation plan for the auditorium," said Jill C. Daggilis, Hoover's assistant for operations. "It's a beautiful piece and we have to find a way to preserve it."

Judith A. Ollikkala, a member of the Worcester Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, said the organ was custom built for the war memorial in 1933. She estimates its value at \$2 million.

"There's no question that it needs some work, but it should be preserved," Ollikkala said. She noted that organ groups from across the country have raised concerns with her about the instrument's future.

She said city officials originally planned to put it in storage somewhere or seal it up.

"That would have been wrong," she said. "We're not talking about your ordinary church organ."

# Weir Recital to Open Drive To Support Kimball Organ

A recital by organist Gillian Weir at 8 p.m. Friday on the W.W. Kimball organ in Worcester Auditorium will launch a fund drive in support of the 1933 instrument that has been called one of the finest concert organs of its kind.

The program will include music that ranges from Bach and Dupre to Franck and Messiaen and is sponsored by the Worcester Chapter, American Guild of Organists. The guild is playing a major part in the fund drive, which is conducted under the auspices of an Auditorium Organ Committee. The committee is headed by Allen Langord of Southboro. Members are Peter S. Morgan, vice president of Morgan Construction Co.; William D. Wallace, executive director of the Worcester Historical Museum; Stephen Long, organist, Trinity Lutheran Church; and Richard F. Jones, curator of the Mechanics Hall organ; Nancy Chouinard, an executive board member of the Worcester Chapter, American

Guild of Organists; Patricia Abdajiel, manager of the Auditorium; and Ea Miller of Andover, a nationally known recitalist.

The late Virgil Fox hailed the Kimball organ as one of the finest in the nation, an enthusiasm expressed by more than 600 organists from New England who heard the instrument during their convention at the Auditorium last year. More than \$1,000 was raised at the convention to begin a restoration fund for the organ.

Ms. Weir, a distinguished recitalist who has performed on every continent and with many of the world's prominent orchestras, has designed a program that will display the full resources of the Kimball organ.

All tickets to her Auditorium concert are \$5. Tickets are available through the M.T. Plante Ticket Office in the Mechanics Hall lobby or at the door the evening of the concert.

# TELEGRAM & GAZETTE

Established Jan. 1, 1866

BRUCE S. BENNETT, *Publisher*

HARRY T. WHITIN, *Editor*

ROBERT Z. NEMETH, *Editorial Page Editor*

LEAH M. LAMSON, *Managing Ed./Local News*

## In our opinion

# Organ transplant?

Auditorium instrument must be preserved

City officials overseeing the alteration of Worcester Memorial Auditorium for juvenile court use now face the conundrum of what to do about the auditorium's towering, 600-pipe organ.

One thing's certain: Nothing they do must damage this impressive instrument or compromise its quality in any way.

At the same time, every effort should be made to ensure the organ's future use.

The history of the organ closely parallels that of the auditorium itself.

It was custom-built in 1933 by W.W. Kimball Co., expressly for the war memorial building. The organ quickly became a familiar — and awe-inspiring — fixture of the city's cultural and civic life.

Time has taken its toll on the instrument, which has fallen into serious disrepair. It has received minimal maintenance work and, like the monumental 19th century-style auditorium that houses it, the organ is something of an anachronism.

Dismantling and reassembling it elsewhere is a possibility. Given its estimated replacement value of nearly \$2 million, however, the estimated \$1 million cost of that task seems excessive.

Another possibility worth exploring is making the organ part of the Little Theater that will be preserved as an entertainment and concert venue.

The organ might be sealed off at relatively low cost, but that would be risky. Once closed off, it could stay hidden away for years. That has been the sad fate of the historic Rogers-Kennedy Memorial in Elm Park, which was partly dismantled for repairs more than a decade ago and remains entombed in a nondescript plywood housing.

City officials are seeking advice on short-term solutions. Cultural organizations and performing arts groups — Music Worcester, the local chapter of the American Guild of Organists and others — should come to the rescue.

In the long term, preserving the Kimball organ should be high on the agenda of Worcester's cultural community and civic-minded foundations. It also would make a truly worthy project for preservation groups.

After years of deterioration and neglect, restoration of the auditorium should provide the impetus for resurrection of the long-neglected Kimball organ as well.

# Organ Resounds in Auditorium

By David Lasky

Organist Earl Miller, performing on the Worcester Memorial Auditorium's great Kimball pipe organ last night, entertained 250 people in a program titled "Ice Cream and Organ Pops."

Proceeds from the concert, sponsored by the Dairy Queen of Spencer, were given to an existing fund for the restoration of the large and somewhat eclectic 1933 Auditorium organ. It is hoped that the instrument, greatly in need of cleaning and maintenance, can be put in top condition for the 1990 National Convention of the American Guild of Organists, which will take place in Worcester.

Miller is nationally recognized as a specialist in organ literature and transcriptions of the Victorian and Edwardian periods, and often performs little-known works.

Above all, Miller is a master of registration (or orchestration) at the organ. While he has a fine technique, his repertoire is far too large for him to perform everything flawlessly. An occasional sloppy passage or missed note is not uncommon for him.

## Winsome Performer

But he is a most comfortable and winsome performer. He chats informally with his audience between pieces, humorously informing them about the instrument and the music. Miller is both an artist and an entertainer, somewhat of a throwback to times when classical concerts were more fun — and also better attended.

Miller performed several works, many of which were arrangements from various other media, such as for orchestra or piano). To open, Miller slowly ascended from the orchestra pit while playing the famous "Light Cavalry Overture" by von Suppe. This work set the tone for the concert, as the full organ as well as the clean, clear solo reeds were well contrasted with each other.

A novelty item, David Clegg's "A Church Service Interrupted by a Thunderstorm," featured a well-known Protestant hymn tune over low, heavy pedal notes intended to simulate thunder.

Handel's "Water Music" Suite fea-



Telegram Photo by ROBERT W. LILYESTROM

Organist Earl Miller performs on the Worcester Memorial Auditorium's great Kimball pipe organ, with the help of Nicholas Rosen.

## Music Review

tured both full organ tone and lighter flute or string tone. Particularly interesting was the use of the reed chorus in the Minuet movement, and the powerful and intentionally romanticized concluding Allegro Maestoso movement.

### 'Grand Chorus'

One of the better pieces last night, Frederick Maxson's "Grand Chorus for the Organ," was actually written for the organ. Miller played this festive processional with all the necessary flair and bigness of registration.

But other works written for the organ, the Toccata in D Minor and the

"Little" Fugue in G Minor, both by Bach, came off less well. Miller tends to play Bach in the manner in which he plays his specialty music, especially in his overuse of rubato and general romantic treatment of rhythm and registration. In the latter work, also, the organist suffered moments of coordination loss, but recovered admirably.

Once Miller returned to his area of most convincing musicality, such as MacDowell's beautiful and impeccably registered "To A Wild Rose" or Lefebure-Wely's romping "Sortie in E-Flat," all was in fine order.

At the end, the audience accorded the soloist a standing ovation, and Miller offered, in return, a brilliant rendition of "Stars and Stripes Forever."

David Lasky is free-lance music reviewer.

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In the long term, preserving the Kimball organ should be high on the agenda of Worcester's cultural community and civic-minded foundations. It also would make a truly worthy project for preservation groups.

After years of deterioration and neglect, restoration of the auditorium should provide the impetus for resurrection of the long-neglected Kimball organ as well.

# City's urged to pull out all the stops to save pipe organ

By Nick Kotsopoulos  
Telegram & Gazette Staff

**WORCESTER** — An effort is under way to come up with \$150,000 so the massive, 65-year-old pipe organ at Worcester Memorial Auditorium dismantled and removed from the building.

Erwin H. Miller, chairman of the Cultural Commission, said if the towering 600-pipe organ is not dismantled by the end of this year, it could end up "entombed" in the auditorium, which is now being renovated to house Worcester Juvenile Court.

He said the only way the organ could be removed from the building after that is if the new construction is ripped apart.

"It would be sad to lose it," Miller said in an interview. "Unless we are able to get the money that is needed to dismantle the organ, it could be lost to the community forever, and that would be a real shame."

Miller is also a member of the 15-member committee City Manager Thomas R. Hoover has appointed to come up with recommendations as to how best to deal with the pipe organ. The group met for the first time Tuesday.

He said the group was told that it would cost about \$150,000 to dismantle the Kimball organ, crate it up and put it in storage until a new home could be found.

But, he added, finding the money could be the big problem, because the city is not expected to step forward and foot the bill to remove the organ.

Even though the state will be paying the city \$1.17 million per year to

lease the basement of the auditorium for the Juvenile Court, Hoover said that money will cover operating costs and the costs the city incurred to renovate the auditorium.

He said no money will be available from those payments to deal with the organ.

Finding money in the city budget could be equally difficult. The City Council is looking for ways to cut Hoover's \$365 million fiscal 1999 budget proposal.

The city manager's contingency account is also an unlikely source for the money. Even though \$2.45 million has been set aside in the city manager's contingency account for next fiscal year, about \$2.1 million of that will be gone early in the fiscal year to pay for retroactive pay raises. That will leave the city with a contingency account of about \$300,000 for the rest of the year. In comparison, the contingency account for this fiscal year was \$710,000.

"We understand the city's position and the fact that the City Council is looking to cut the budget, not add to it," Miller said. "That is why we're hoping that people and groups outside of government might come forward."

The organ, which is still playable, was custom-built in 1933 by W.W. Kimball Co. expressly for the war memorial building. The organ's pipes are on both sides of the auditorium's stage, and some of them are up to 32 feet high. It has been estimated that the pipes alone weigh a combined 50 tons.

While the renovation work for the Juvenile Court is now centered on

the basement of the auditorium, the second phase of the project will start later this summer, when work begins on the building's first floor.

It is that phase of the project that will most affect the organ.

"Based on the projected work schedule, I'm afraid that if we don't get the organ out of there by December, it could end up entombed in the auditorium," Miller said.

At its meeting Tuesday night, the Cultural Commission unanimously voted to urge the city to do everything within its resources to preserve the organ for future generations in Worcester.

Miller said the first preference would be to find a new home in Worcester for the organ. He said there had been talk about moving it to Union Station or the Worcester Centrum Centre, but both sites have been dismissed because it has been determined that the organ would not fit in either of them.

"We're not talking about your typical church organ," Miller said. "This is really a massive instrument. We would probably need 3,000- to 4,000-square feet just to store it once it is dismantled."

Miller said it will be difficult to market the organ to potential outside buyers. First, he said, it is expected to cost more than \$600,000 to renovate the organ and get it back into good shape.

Also, he said, there is very little market in the United States for such an organ. He said there may be more of a market for it in Korea and Japan.

"We really have fairly limited alternatives," Miller said.

# ENTARY

## Action is needed immediately to save the auditorium organ

By John C. DaSilva

Earlier this week, the committee formed by City Manager Thomas R. Hoover met to discuss the fate of the organ at the Aud, also known as the Worcester Memorial Auditorium.

It was determined the organ must be moved out of the Aud, due to the building's conversion for a juvenile court. This must be done by Dec. 1, because at that point the main hall will be under construction.

Due to the large size of this great organ, only a short list of possible relocation sites exists. To replace this organ at today's prices, if a builder could be found to build an instrument of this size and quality, it would cost between \$2 million and \$3 million.

The short list of possible sites for its relocation include the renovated Union Station, the Palladium (formerly Loew's Plymouth Theater), the downtown Showcase Cinema, now closed, Chestnut Street Church and the Worcester Centrum Centre.

We were told the Centrum Centre is a "no," based on the opinion of Susan Dunn, Centrum manager.

Chestnut Street Church is a "no,"

**AS I SEE IT**

**T**he city owes this to the men and women of Worcester who gave their lives for this country and whom the auditorium memorializes. It is the heritage of the residents of Worcester.

JOHN C. DaSILVA

based on one committee member's knowledge of an undisclosed plan for the church.

That leaves the Showcase building, the Palladium and Union Station.

We, the committee, have been charged to investigate the remaining possibilities.

Now comes the impossible part. The cost to remove the organ and crate it for transfer is approximately \$150,000. We were told that there is, "no money, no money, no money," from the city to do this, by Jill Daggis, representing the city manager, and that we were to come up with ways to pay for this. It was suggested that we seek grant money unless a new home is found and the instrument would be restored.

It was agreed upon by the committee, that if none of the short list locations is agreeable to having the organ, that it be put in storage until a new site can be found. We must find out if this is possible at the Worcester Regional Airport in an unused hangar; some of the pipes, including those 32-foot tall, must be stored standing upright, until a new site could be found.

It behooves the committee to try and make sure that this organ, a city and national treasure, stays and is used in Worcester. It behooves the city to come up with the \$150,000 it will take to move it to storage if no

new home is quickly found.

The city owes this to the men and women of Worcester who gave their lives for this country and whom the auditorium memorializes. It is the heritage of the residents of Worcester, thousands of whom graduated to the strains of this magnificent organ when such events were held there. This instrument is a Rolls Royce of organs, and Worcester cannot afford to lose it.

One suggestion was that if we can't find a home for it in Worcester, that it be marketed to Asia, who would snap it up for the cost of removal. This suggestion so jostled a trustee that he said he would rather see it destroyed than go to a former enemy, as it is a war memorial.

The reason I'm writing now is that we were told the city budget will be finalized next week and, after that, there will be no possibility to get the money for the project if it's not in the budget. At that point, the organ would become "entombed" in the courthouse construction, possibly irretrievable in the future.

Therefore, citizens of Worcester, veterans and city councilors, unite and demand that money be allocated in the budget — now.

John C. DaSilva is president of the Worcester Memorial Organ Restoration Committee Inc.



# City must preserve auditorium organ

There is a magnificent intact Kimball concert pipe organ in Memorial Auditorium at Lincoln Square, now called the AUD. It is functional and played for graduations, but needs chest restoration and repair work. The city fathers have plans to convert the great historical building into a juvenile courthouse. The work is planned to begin this summer.

Of great concern is the future of this pipe organ, which has never been altered. It was beautifully made at the time of the great orchestral instruments, and is one of a kind, constructed by the famous Kimball Organ Co. of Chicago. It represents a style of organ building and construction that we may never see again. Awareness of what the changes in this auditorium will mean should be of concern to veterans, organ lovers (both theater and classical), concertgoers and the general public.

The Kimball pipe organ has a historical plaque given by the

Organ Historical Society in 1983 denoting its significance and importance. It is priceless today. The auditorium was built at a cost of \$2 million in 1933 "in memory of those who died in the war."

The Art Deco building was designed by Lucius Biggs of Worcester and Frederic C. Hirons of New York. It is a treasure, along with the organ, and is known worldwide as an integral part of the city of Worcester.

Citizens of Worcester and the area must make concerns known to the city fathers about the preservation of the building and its pipe organ. Remember, Mechanics Hall was allowed to become a roller derby rink and a wrestling match center and was almost torn down. And other cities such as Sacramento, Milwaukee and Minneapolis are restoring their great concert halls.

JUDITH OLLIKKALA

Worcester

5-10-98

EDITORIAL - SUNDAY TELEGRAM 6-14-98

## A Worcester asset

### Preserving Auditorium organ is public responsibility

The massive Kimball pipe organ at Worcester Memorial Auditorium is a municipal treasure that must be protected and preserved.

As renovation work proceeds to accommodate relocation of the Worcester Juvenile Court, the 65-year-old organ is in danger of being damaged and entombed — perhaps lost forever for use or possible sale.

That must not be allowed to happen.

The projected cost of disassembling the organ for storage is \$150,000. Thus far, city officials have been silent about finding the money for that purpose.

So the committee appointed by City Manager Thomas R. Hoover to deal with the organ's future is seeking private donations for the project.

If money can be found in the

private sector, that's all to the good. But make no mistake, the city cannot wash its hands of this municipal responsibility. It has an obligation to the historic instrument's safety and survival.

The organ is public property, built into a memorial edifice owned by the city. The state will pay Worcester \$1.17 million a year for leasing part of the auditorium for a temporary juvenile court facility. While most of that sum goes for renovation and maintenance, enough money should be set aside for the Kimball organ. Protecting the instrument is part of the renovation process.

The Worcester Cultural Commission is urging city government to do everything within its resources to preserve the organ for future generations in Worcester.

The powers at City Hall would do well to heed that sound advice.

# A Solid Auditorium

Good news: The city is finally providing the hard cash needed to replace the roof on the Memorial Auditorium. This project has been squeezed out of budgets for a long time. A major facility can only take so many patch jobs before deterioration shows.

It will cost \$293,000 for the roof — expensive but a bargain if you consider the brisk business this Lincoln Square war horse has been doing in recent years.

The deficit, now around \$100,000 a year, has been declining over the past five years, says auditorium director Patricia A. Abadjieff. Revenue for the last fiscal year was \$107,000 — an all-time high. The bottom line is looking better all the time.

Bookings run at a good clip. The pro basketball team, the Bombardiers, will make the auditorium its home for another season. Many benefits and concerts are scheduled, including the Boston Ballet for the Music Festival. Two kennel shows

and wrestling events are booked. All weekends are booked solid till next June, says Ms. Abadjieff.

This is good news for a place some thought would become a white elephant after the Centrum opened. Obviously, there is a place for both.

Unlike the Centrum, however, the auditorium is 50 years old and in need of careful maintenance. Aside from the roof job, this year's budget includes money to paint the Little Theater, for a new traveler curtain in the main hall, some new flooring and reupholstering of balcony seating.

More needs to be done, such as replacement of the main floor seats, but that will have to wait for now. Whether the place should be air conditioned is undecided. It could cost as much as \$100,000, but might prove a worthwhile investment.

Good things are happening at the auditorium. It is a tremendous community asset. City Hall must make sure that it stays in decent shape.



Auditorium: New roof, more business

# \$150,000 needed to dismantle, remove pipe organ

## Continued From Previous Page

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## Kids celebrate city's diversity

### Continued From Previous Page

The students played baseball in recognition of the first perfect game, pitched by Worcester's John Lee Richmond against Cleveland in 1880, and the famous poem "Casey at the Bat," penned by Worcester's Ernest L. Thayer in 1888.

Even the big rubber boots donated by the Worcester Fire Department for the boot race represented the city's one-time prominence in the shoe and boot manufacturing industry.

Finding money in the city budget could be equally difficult. The City Council is looking for ways to cut Hoover's \$365 million fiscal 1999 budget proposal.

The city manager's contingency account is also an unlikely source for the money. Even though \$2.45 million has been set aside in the city manager's contingency account for next fiscal year, about \$2.1 million of that will be gone early in the fiscal year to pay for retroactive pay raises. That will leave the city with a contingency account of about \$300,000 for the rest of the year. In comparison, the contingency account for this fiscal year was \$710,000.

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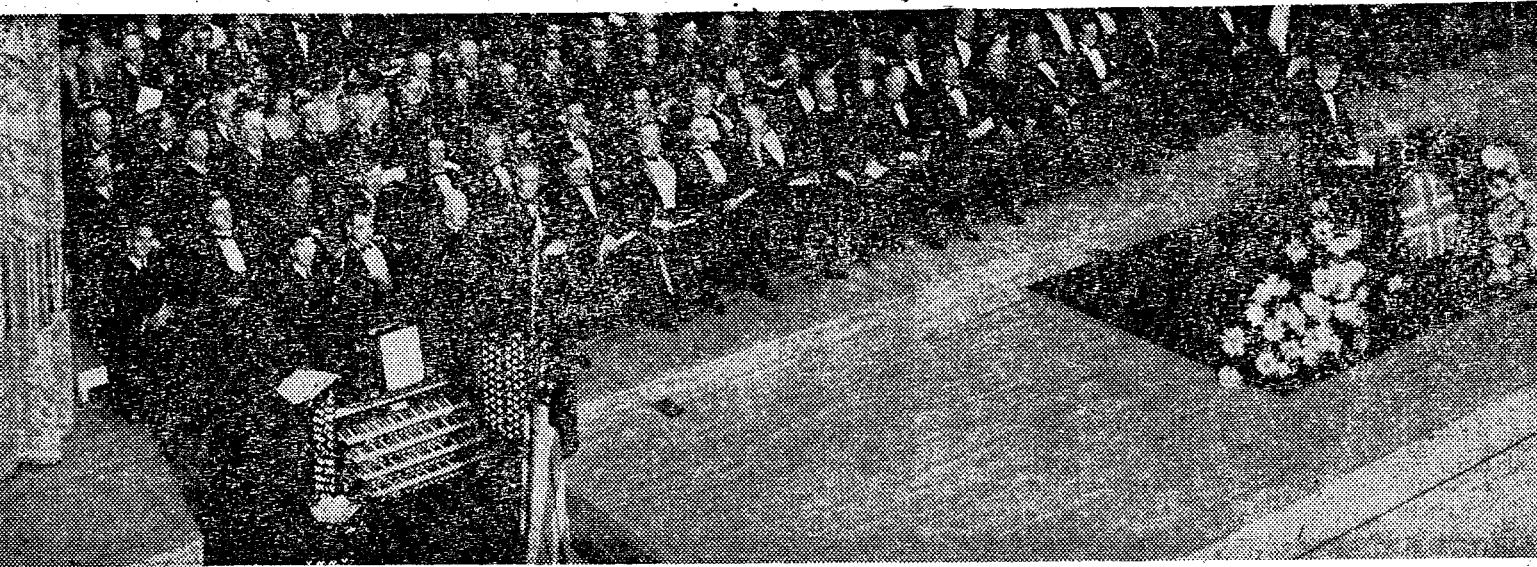
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1950s

# — The People's Forum —

The People's Forum is open to all readers for the discussion of any topic on general public interest. Each letter must bear the contributor's name and address, which will be published. Letters may be shortened by the editor when necessary.



The Auditorium organ played a prominent part in this ceremony at which the building was dedicated on Sept. 27, 1933.

► Residents wary  
of road widening  
PAGE B3

ON THE WEB  
[www.telegram.com](http://www.telegram.com)

# City urged to pull out all the stops

## Kimball organ at the Aud needs a costly transplant

By Nick Kotsopoulos  
Telegram & Gazette Staff

**WORCESTER** — An effort is under way to come up with \$150,000 so the massive, 65-year-old pipe organ at Worcester Memorial Auditorium can be dismantled and removed from the building.

Erwin H. Miller, chairman of the Cultural Commission, said if the towering 600-pipe organ is not dismantled by the end of this year, it could end up "entombed" in the auditorium, which is now being renovated to house Worcester Juvenile Court.

He said the only way the organ could be removed from the building

after that is if the new construction is ripped apart.

"It would be sad to lose it," Miller said in an interview. "Unless we are able to get the money that is needed to dismantle the organ, it could be lost to the community forever, and that would be a real shame."

Miller is also a member of the 15-member committee City Manager Thomas R. Hoover has appointed to come up with recommendations as to how best to deal with the pipe organ. The group met for the first time Tuesday.

He said the group was told that it

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# Public to Hear Concert On Kimball Pipe Organ

By Peter P. Donker  
Of the Telegram Staff

Organist Earl Miller of Andover will give a recital of light classics and popular transcriptions of well-known music at 7 p.m. Thursday on the Kimball pipe organ in the Worcester Memorial Auditorium. Entitled "Ice Cream and Organ Pops," the concert will offer a rare opportunity to hear one of Worcester's major instruments that is rarely used in public programs. Miller's concert will be the first public recital on the 54-year-old pipe organ since 1984. Proceeds from the recital will benefit the Memorial Auditorium Organ Restoration Fund.



Miller

Among works to be performed are Rossini's "William Tell Overture," Debussy's "Claire de Lune," and Handel's "Water Music." Also, works by Bach, Von Suppe, Strauss and David Clegg's novelty work, "A Church Service Interrupted by a Thunderstorm." Seating for the program will be cabaret style.

The concert is presented under the auspices of the Worcester Chapter, American Guild of Organists, which established a restoration committee for

the Kimball organ in 1983 with the cooperation of the Auditorium's trustees. As one of its public activities, the committee sponsored a concert by the internationally known organist Gillian Weir in 1984 at the Auditorium. Since that time, the committee has undertaken several feasibility studies for a possible restoration.

Richard F. Jones, chairman pro-tem of the Restoration Committee, said yesterday that although the Kimball organ is in remarkable condition, the studies found that the instrument needs considerable work. Dirt, he said, is one of the worst problems. The organ has not been cleaned since it was installed in 1933 and the accumulated dirt, according to Jones, has a tendency to muddy the sound of the pipes. In addition, many of organ's parts are just about worn out and need to be replaced, according to Jones. Jones, who is curator of the Mechanics Hall organ, said restoration will probably cost more than the \$200,000 that was spent on the restoration of the Mechanics Hall organ. Initial estimates for a restoration of the Kimball organ are in the \$300,000 range, according to Jones.

The Restoration Committee is made up of representatives of the city's musical, cultural and historical organizations. The Kimball organ is one of the few unaltered large auditorium organs remaining in the country. At one time often used for concerts, the organ has been infrequently heard in recent years, according to Jones.

At the Miller concert Thursday, refreshments will be sold by Dairy Queen of Spencer. Admission is \$5 adults; \$2 for students and senior citizens; and \$8 for family admission.

## Sylvester Stallone Files For Divorce

HOLLYWOOD (UPI) — Actor Sylvester Stallone announced yesterday he has separated from his wife of a year and a half, actress Brigitte Niel-