

SWINESHEAD : SWINESHEAD SILVER PRIZE BAND – BANDROOM

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WAREHOUSE TO BE
'HOME' FOR MUSIC

Swineshead's 'Do-it-yourself'
bandsmen are ready

[A photograph accompanies original article]

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For the first time in its 74 years' existence, Swineshead Silver Prize Band has its own bandroom – a former sack warehouse right on the side of South Street.

Although an old and insignificant building, to the Swineshead bandsmen it is a palace, for it means that no longer will they be bothered about hiring rooms, sometimes too small for the 23-piece band, and often not available for more than one night a week.

Now, with their own building, the musicians will be able to practice any night of the week, give concerts when they please, and have a permanent music library and instrument store.

On Saturday a "Standard" reporter and photographer visited the new bandroom and found a hive of activity as a gang of bandsmen worked on renovation of the building.

It was an example of the voluntary work the members of the band have been doing in their spare time since they purchased the old warehouse just over a month ago.

Hard-working

Talking to Herbert Thorpe, Frank Atkinson and Herbert Ceaser, three hard-working bandsmen, our reporter learned just how much the bandroom meant for them.

"We can have practice when we like – that's a thing we have never been able to do. We have only been able to have one night in the week in the past", they explained.

The room's nearness to the road raised the question about traffic noise interfering with their playing, but the bandsmen explained – above the deafening roar of passing lorries – that it would not bother them.

They had also thought about the noise they would be making on practice nights, and so, thoughtfully, asked neighbours of the new bandroom whether their music would be any bother. They were told everything would be all right.

No complaints

In fact instead of complaints from villagers the bandsmen have met nothing but generosity.

The renovation of the building offers no problems, for the bandsmen are working under the supervision of Eric Rose, one-time carpenter. Taking a hand are coalmen, farmers, ambulance men, motor mechanics, Council workers and clerks.

Between them they have cleaned the place out, put new glass in the windows, built a music library and instrument store in one corner, and painted outside and inside – the interior walls are an attractive jasmine yellow.

And all, they hope, will be completed in a week's time.

The band has been using the Swineshead Methodist schoolroom, a room half the size of the new one. The purchase cost of which - £100 – is being defrayed by proceeds from concerts and donations.

The present membership of the band has been bettered only once before. That was in 1935 when there were 24 members.

There have been bad times though. Mr. Atkins remembered the occasion when only eight players turned out.

On the upgrade

Today, however, both he and Mr. Ceaser, who have been with the band for over 30 years, say it's definitely on the upgrade, and an important factor is that there seems to be more interest among the youngsters.

Ages of members range from 15 to 80, and the majority of them hail from Swineshead and district. One of those living outside the district is bandmaster Reg Patchett, piano tuner and music teacher, of London Road, Boston.

Under him are Messrs. Frank Townell, aged 80, black bass; Frank Atkinson, treasurer, solo tenor sax; Herbert Ceaser, solo cornet; Alf Simpson, "E" flat bass; Joe Eaglen, double "B" bass; Herbert Thorpe, secretary, side drum; Fred Thorpe, solo trombone; Norman Robinson, librarian, second trombone; Eric Rose, solo cornet; Phillip Reynolds, repiano cornet; Gerald Timm, solo cornet; Bob Papworth, euphonium; Bill Cox, first baritone; Brian Eaglen, solo cornet; Barry Pinner, "G" trombone; Roy Butler, solo cornet; Ken Cook, William Pordham, second cornets; Barry Rogers, second tenor sax; Peter White, cornet; David White, trombone; and two "learners", Wendy Patchett and Mrs. V. Robinson.
