

Birchington & its Bandstand

Back in 1985-6, the Parish Council discussed the possibility of getting a bandstand for the use of the Silver Band. Iris Bedwell and the other Council members were trying to decide whereabouts it should be sited. Minnis Bay was suggested, as well as Dog Acre and Crispe Park. Alf Bedwell and Iris followed up an advertisement for an unwanted stand in Deal (or was it Hythe?) and went down to look at it. The bandstand was in fairly good condition – its main need was a good coat of paint. The owners did not want anything for it, but they wanted the space it was on, so whoever had it was to pay for its transport to a new site.

When the Silver Band was approached for their thoughts on the idea, they were not enthusiastic. They pointed out the problems with bad weather, people trying to find parking nearby to come and listen, providing the chairs that would be needed for the audience, the intrusive sounds of traffic (particularly for Dog Acre and Crispe Park) the limited or complete lack of toilet facilities at all three venues – etc, etc.

Alf and Iris found someone who could transport the bandstand to B'ton, but I seem to remember the cost was pretty prohibitive. In the end, the whole idea was shelved. The lack of enthusiasm from the Band was a big factor in that decision, according to Iris.

It might be worth asking Neville Hudson for his memories of the episode – especially on what happened to the money raised for the project.