

MORRISTON BAND.

MORRISTON is one of the most important tinplate manufacturing centres in South Wales, and is situated three miles to the north of Swansea. Practically speaking, it is part of Swansea, seeing that it is in the borough of the said town. The population of Morriston is nearly 20,000, and the majority of the industrial class are tinplate workers.

THE MORRISTON BAND was not originated at Morriston. It was founded by the late Mr. James Hanney some 40 years ago, at a little village called Marksbury, near Bristol. Mr. Hanney, who was a clarinet player, had several sons, who at a very early age showed a strong desire for music, so the father, who was not in particularly good circumstances, set to work and got some second-hand instruments, which the youngsters soon made progress with, and in a short time he had a small band solely from his own family.

The father arranged all the music for the band, and so they plodded along in their own style of playing for several years, getting a good number of engagements at the country clubs, &c.

Meanwhile the boys were growing up, and wanted to leave the old country village, and having a few friends at Morriston they aimed for this place, and so crossed the Bristol Channel some 30 years ago.

They soon found work, and so settled at Morriston, and it was not long before they had a good share of the local engagements. The people seeing the band was composed of all one family, gave them the name of the "Happy Family Band," or "Hanney's Band," and the band still goes by the above names.

Mr. James Hanney, who suffered from shortness of breath, gave up the leadership about the year 1873 to his eldest son George, who still holds that position.

There was another band at this time in Morriston, and there arose a little jealousy between the two bands, which lasted for some time, but finally it was decided in a contest got up expressly for the two bands in 1875. The test piece was "Hallelujah Chorus," and the family band came off victorious, this being their first achievement.

The defeated band did not last long after this. One by one the members joined Hanney's Band, which now being much stronger in number competed at Swansea, in 1877, and took the first honours, the test piece on this occasion being "Lift up your Heads."

Although there has been no proper record kept of contests attended and prizes won since the above event, they can certainly boast as being one of the best and most successful bands in Wales.

In 1883, they attended a contest at Abergavenny. The prize was £25 and a silver medal. The test piece was the glee, "Queen of the Valley," and a selection own choice, Morriston playing Verdi's "I Lombardi."

The judge, the late Mr. Brinley Richards, without hesitation awarded them first prize, remarking that Morriston had played like an organ, and that he never thought an amateur band could have played so magnificently. Numerous instances of this kind could be quoted, if space would only permit.

The band possesses nine medals, including the gold medal from the Champion Belle Vue Contest, which event the band attended last year, obtaining fourth prize and beating Black Dike and other excellent combinations.

No doubt their success at Belle Vue was an eye-opener for some of the North of England cracks. The fact that they attended the Champion contest for the first time and had never received a lesson from any professional trainer, other than that of their respected

bandmaster, was sufficient to justify the assertion that they were on a level with some of the best bands of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

An eminent musician and a North of England adjudicator wrote to them, after last year's September contest, as follows:—

"Allow me to congratulate you on your success at Belle Vue Champion contest. Your performance was a long, long way ahead of anything I have before heard from a Welsh band, and you are quite entitled to assign yourselves and to do so without flattery—the 'Welsh Besses.' This is only one of the many congratulations which they received after this contest.

These are the judge's remarks on their playing at Belle Vue:—

(1) Good start, cornet a little out of tune from bar 14 style good.

(2) Euphonium good style and phrasing, but too mild; baritone good.

(3) Euphonium, bar 7, played B flat instead of B natural. Accompaniments good; ensemble very good, euphonium very good in cadenza.

(4) Good start, cornets very good; soprano broke "a," bar 52; better 2nd time. Style at end of movement not so good as before.

(5) Horns good, trombone very good; phrases well, but not so well in bar 16 at the triplets; otherwise a good player.

Start good; soprano very good. Solo Cornet very good, also in cadenza; good expression; ensemble good.

(7) Start very nice; horns very good; movement played very nice indeed; Bravo!

(8) Tempo good; 1st time very neat; 2nd time very good and an excellent finish. Bravo! (103 marks.)

The bands are now agitating for funds towards the purchase of a complete set of Boosey's Compensating Piston Instruments, which it is to be hoped they will soon get. They have not attended a single contest this season, because the instruments now in use are worn out and not fit for contesting.

As a proof of the excellence and superiority of the band, we may say that while in camp at Tenby the people were so pleased with their playing that the Corporation have engaged a part of the band for ten weeks, in preference to 43 other applicants. In conclusion the writer feels it his duty to say that the brothers Griffiths and W. Vagg's services have been highly appreciated in the band for a number of years.

The band at present is composed of the following:—

Bandmaster and Conductor—Mr. G. Hanney.	
Soprano—Chas. Hanney.	2nd trombone—H. Griffiths.
Solo cornet—J. E. Hanney.	
1st—Hy. Hapgood.	Bass trombone—W. H. Hanney.
Repiano—Jonthn. Hanney.	
Flugel horn—R. Jones.	Eb bass—J. C. Hanney.
2nd cornet—A. Plaister.	do—E. J. Hanney.
3rd cornet—R. Lloyd.	BBb bass—S. Hanney.
Solo horn—A. Hanney.	Eb clarinet—A. Buckland.
1st horn—J. Griffiths.	Solo clarinet—T. Griffiths.
2nd horn—Phillip Wern.	Do—O. Griffiths.
3rd horn—W. Harries.	1st clarinet—D. Cadogan.
1st baritone—J. T. Hanney.	2nd clarinet—D. Lloyd.
2nd baritone—Hy. Hanney.	Do—D. Williams.
Solo euphonium—F. Hanney	Bass drum—W. Vagg.
(sen.)	Side drum—M. Williams.
2nd euphonium—W. E. Wern.	Secretary—W. J. Hanney.
Solo trombone—F. G. Hanney.	