

Blaze Sweeps Basement

By a staff reporter

RESIDENTS at Sheffield's Grand Hotel were evacuated from their bedrooms yesterday when fire swept through the basement and spread to the dining room above.

Seven machines from Division Street stood by as firemen burst through the staff entrance door in Orchard Lane to reach the heart of the fire.

The fire spread from the basement area below, up the staircase, burned through the door, and smoke billowed out into the street.

A jet of water from one of the tenders was sprayed down the staircase before the firemen wearing breathing apparatus could get inside.

Meanwhile, members of staff went into the smoke-filled basement to tackle the fire with a hose pipe.

Concert

Firemen also went through the hotel's main entrances in Leopold Street and Balm Green to reach the basement nearly 250 guests and residents gathered in the foyer near the exit.

Among them were pop singers Clodagh Rogers and Gene Pitney, who had earlier appeared at the City Hall.

A fire brigade spokesman said that the cause of the blaze was still being investigated. "If the fire had spread, to a lift shaft there could have been a disaster," he said.

Deputy manager Mr. Philip Shepherd said "Luckily the fire did not cause any serious damage apart from that to electrical wiring in the basement and the door.