

The New Wychwood Singers

The 'New Wychwood Singers', who rehearse every Tuesday 12.30pm to 2pm at the Baptist Church Hall in Milton-under-Wychwood, started life as a very small group



of people encouraged to sing under the Age Concern banner. It was an idea originally thought up by this organisation to get people to come out during the day and take part in a fun activity.

A Legal 'High'

That was about three years ago. Now the group numbers around 45 members of mixed age, who meet every week to sing and rehearse a whole variety of music from jazz, gospel, folk, classical, musicals, song and pop. Their enthusiasm for singing just gets more the more they do, and all agree that it is not only fun but extremely therapeutic, promoting a real feeling of well-being every time. A legal 'high' is how I, the musical director, describe it, as singing is well known for releasing the same pheromones that extreme exercise promotes in us. Singing too is a great exercise in itself using at

least 40 muscles every time, especially in the intense warm-ups that I believe are vital to good vocal technique and to getting the best out of the vocal muscle itself. Many of the members

would not have considered themselves able to sing but now many of those same people regularly take on solos; they have improved that much. Not to mention improved confidence levels, which are also extremely important for us all.

Come and Sing

I was trained at the Royal Northern College of Music as a professional singer and then went on to sing major roles for most of the Opera companies. After fifteen years as a soloist I moved into stage directing which is something I have done for the last 20 years. I still perform, write and now direct four choirs within the Oxfordshire area, all of which are growing in numbers. If you would like to join us email me at robinmo@btconnect.com.

Robin Martin-Oliver

Red Kites over the Wychwoods

Many of our readers have commented on the magnificent fork-tailed red kites which we can now routinely see wheeling gracefully over our fields, even over the Surgery! What a triumph for the long-lasting conservation programme that the birds, which were almost extinct, have been re-introduced so successfully.

However a word of warning, these beautiful creatures have a wing span of almost two metres, so please don't be tempted to feed them, there are tales from the neighbouring Chilterns of red kites attacking ladies over their washing lines and even attempting to take small pets. They can find their carrion without our help, let's just admire them!