



Twenty years of singing

By Valerie Cowan



Club members in full voice. Photo courtesy of Memory Lane Singing Club.

Memory Lane Singing Club recently celebrated 20 years of singing in the community. The club is a registered charity and entertains in Barnet care facilities. The 20th anniversary event in October featured popular medleys of favourite songs, tea and biscuits and a singalong. Mike Freer MP attended. There were 100 guests at the celebration including members of the Alzheimer's Society and residents of several local care homes and day centres, as well as friends and family of the singers.

The therapeutic benefits of singing are well-known. It was great to see the audience singing along with old favourites such as Let's Face the Music and Dance, Sentimental Journey and the Beatles' Ob La Di, Ob La Da.

Find your voice

Memory Lane is based at St Mary's Hall, Hendon Lane, but its members come from all over Barnet including East Finchley. The club meets every Friday from 11.30am to 1.30pm under the direction of Linda Perillo, a soprano, who teaches several singing groups in Finchley. Phil Davies accompanies on piano. Singing is ideal for those looking to develop new skills and make new friends. It's a wonderful way for people living alone to have a sense of belonging to the community.

There are no auditions and you don't have to read music. New members are welcome. Come along any Friday for a free taster session. Call Valerie on 020 8458 4508 for more details or email v.cowan@hotmail.co.uk. Visit www.memorylanesingingclub.co.uk

Why drumming is good for the soul

By Nick Young

There is only one person in Britain who runs music classes for people with behavioural and personality disorders. It so happens that he is a resident of East Finchley.

David Naylor has been drumming for over 20 years, during which time he has appeared on BBC TV, played at Glastonbury, recorded alongside many artists and travelled to Cuba to study drumming techniques there.

In the last few years, he has found his role in working with some of the most vulnerable members of society, helping them to express themselves via the medium of drums and percussion.



A conduit for others

"It helps bring peace to the soul," explained David, whose company, EET Music (Enabling Expression Through Music) was established in 2010, several years after he started working as an enabler for teenagers with cerebral palsy. "I wanted to shift from 'self' to 'others'. It's not about me, it's about people."

"I realised that although someone may be restricted in movement or speech by a physical disability or cognitive condition, they may still have a desire and ability to create music or express themselves through music," said David. "What they need is a conduit,

someone to act as a pair of hands or a voice for them to channel their ideas through. I knew that I could be that conduit."

Since establishing EET Music, his work has taken him to the HIV centre in Hammersmith (initially, he had to hire some drums and carry them down there on the Tube) and the Priory Hospital in Roehampton.

Locally, he has worked with pupils at Oak Lodge School off East End Road and has recently started a community drumming group at the CUFOS centre at Alexandra Palace.

For more information, visit David's website www.eetmusic.co.uk.

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Visitors always welcome

MP joins fight to restore Old Barn to the community

By Janet Maitland

MP Mike Freer has joined the battle over the management of the Old Barn in Tarling Road. The management difficulties began when a group of new trustees led by Reverend Geoffrey Muhoro took over the centre following the resignation of the old trustees in 2010.

Soon after, services such as the Monday Club Youth group found themselves homeless. In 2011, nearly 100 local people applied to become members of the Old Barn to ensure the trustees ran the services the community needs, but the applications were not accepted by the new trustees.

AGM fiasco

The Council, Community Barnet and the Charity Commission have all been trying to resolve the issues. When the Charity Commission directed the trustees to hold an AGM so that people from the local community could get involved in the running of the centre, twenty two local residents contacted the Old Barn for membership forms in the run up to the meeting scheduled for 21 July. But a week before the meeting no one had received anything from the trustees.

The Charity Commission

therefore wrote to the trustees to say that the AGM could not go ahead as proper procedures had not been followed. But the trustees ignored this instruction and held an 'AGM' regardless.

Youth losing out

"It is just not acceptable that an organisation pretends to be a community based charity and then excludes the very community in which it is based," said Mr Freer, who has asked for a meeting with the Charity Commission and Community Barnet. Separately, it is understood that the Charity Commission is starting an investigation into the governance of the Old Barn.

"The lack of services for young people is a tragedy," said local resident Will Hudson. "A generation of young people in East Finchley will have grown up with the feeling that they have been left to cope on their own."



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