



Extinction Rebellion group urges action at a local level

By Daphne Chamberlain

*Emergency, emergency
Can you understand the urgency
Of the climate threat to humanity?
It's hard for us to comprehend
The reality
Of the end.*

These words came out of the East Finchley Festival in June, when visitors to the Extinction Rebellion (XR) stall took up the offer to write something about the climate emergency. XR then challenged the festival bands to set the lyrics to music and perform them. Kate Galston, Rob Thom and Miss Havisham's Digital Clock all took part enthusiastically.

Getting involved

Our festival was just one of the fairs and fetes that the Barnet XR group have been visiting during the summer. Their aim is to raise people's awareness of what climate emergency means: namely desertification, wildfires, water shortage and crop failure. Nationwide protests targeting governments and financial and commercial organisations are currently keeping the subject in all our minds.

Hazel Mason, a long-standing East Finchley resident, told us last month: "I've joined the Barnet XR branch. It started in mid-May with a handful of people, but we now have about 70. I've never been involved in any protest before, but I thought I must do something about the threat from climate change. My daughter camped out in a tent at Marble Arch, and she told me there were demonstrators who were more than 80 years old."

Over 1,000 demonstrators arrested in April are facing prosecution, but Hazel said, "The last thing we want is to alienate people. Nobody wants to get arrested, but if that happens and we are charged, it gives us a chance to speak out".

Emergency action now

The local group acknowl-

edge that Barnet Council have already taken some good initiatives on environmental policies, with help from funding from the London Mayor. Barnet supported the recent London Climate Action Week, which emphasised cutting carbon emissions to keep global temperature increases within the Paris agreement of 1.5°C.

XR believe, though, that there is more to be done, and much more quickly. They say that if Barnet Council declared a climate emergency, people would be more likely to work together to achieve higher goals.

Their website quotes scientists as saying: "We are in the middle of a mass extinction of our own making." Former and present UN Secretary Generals say: "Act now to save our planet and our future. We need emergency action." XR Barnet can be contacted at Barnetrebels@gmail.com.

Can you deliver?

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All Shook Up: Dan Leclerc on stage as Elvis. And (inset) all dressed down: Dan as you might see him in daily life.

The King lives... in King Street!

By Diana Cormack

Elvis Presley fans from all over the world will gather at Graceland in Memphis, Tennessee, this month to commemorate the death of the King on 16 August 1977. Among the activities to be held there during Elvis Week is an event to find the best Elvis tribute artist and one of the main contenders for this crown lives in East Finchley.

Dan Leclerc has lived in King Street, N2, for seven years but hails from Tennessee, having been brought up in Pigeon Forge (of Dolly Parton's Dollywood fame). Now in his thirties, at age four Dan was already singing Elvis songs and later got to know musician Charlie Hodge, a long-term close friend and confidant of Elvis who had lived with him at Graceland and stayed on there to help sort out things after his death.

Sounding and looking the part

Dan played the guitar, piano and violin and at 15 began to enter talent shows at school. His first proper Elvis contest at 17 was in Tupelo, Elvis' birthplace, where he came second in a group of experienced impersonators.

Like Elvis, he joined the army, leaving at the age of 26 and wondering what to do next. A nine-to-five job did not

appeal, so he became a session musician but kept up his Elvis tribute appearances. From these various contracts came his way.

Sounding so much like Elvis, to look like him Dan uses a wash-out hair colour and wears outfits made by B&K in Indianapolis, embroidered there by Gene Doucette, the original decorator of the King's costumes and jump suits. These really complete the picture for the touring legends shows that Dan performs in.

Being a contender

There are a surprising number of contests in the Elvis tribute world, many of which offer large prizes. Aside from competing in Memphis, Dan will also be heading off to competitions in Las Vegas, Germany and Poland. This talented, thoughtful man donates any money he wins to charity, the most recent recipient being Great Ormond Street Hospital.

Fun finding out facts about East Finchley

By Diana Cormack

This summer families can have fun following a trail and finding out facts about East Finchley.

Sheila Quinlan has devised a fold-up clue card with script and pictures to guide you around the area from the start at the tube station to the finish at Cherry Tree Wood.

There are instructions along with 20 questions to be answered en route. By marking off your answers a secret code is revealed which can be entered into the N2 postcode breaker prize draw. The clue card costs £3 and is obtainable from Sheila at stomping.ground@yahoo.com



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