



A mountain to climb: Francesca is raising funds to reach Everest base camp

Everest, here I come!

Francesca Rolle, of Sedgemere Avenue, has spent months raising funds for a trip to the Himalayas. Here she explains why she's going.

I am climbing to Everest Base Camp in the name of charity. I hope to reach the camp at approximately 5,400m height in around nine days, braving harsh weather conditions, potential altitude sickness and mental challenges.

I am doing the trip in order to raise money for the well-deserving charity Childreach International, www.childreach.org.uk, which works to create better lives for vulnerable children around the world. I have to raise £2,450, of which £1200 will go towards covering the costs of the

trip and the rest will go directly to Childreach. I am trying to raise a minimum of £3000 or more, in order to increase the donation. The money raised will go towards helping children in Nepal, Cambodia, Tanzania, Bangladesh and India for access to education, healthcare, food and clean water, and to live a sheltered, safe life free from abuse.

What I love about Childreach is that it doesn't simply provide financial aid to these countries; it invests time and energy in providing training and grassroots development, personally communicating with and advising those affected by the issues at hand, and ensuring that money and aid is given to the right people.

If you wish to donate to the cause I am supporting please do so at: <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/francescarolle>

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Parking review as traders lose "up to £100 per day"

By Linda Sansom

Traders in East Finchley are losing thousands of pounds a year thanks to the new parking regime, according to Michael Doukaki, who runs Josephine's Flowers and Gifts in the High Road.



Michael Doukaki parked on the High Road. Photo by Diana Cormack

"Previously, customers could put 20p in a meter, get their flowers and sit in the nearby café and grab a coffee," he says. "They can still do this, but now they have to pull over, have a credit card, phone, and register their card. We are pushing shoppers to Brent Cross and other places where they can park and don't have to worry." Michael, who has owned the 60-year-old business for the past eight years and has a staff of five, says the owners of many local businesses have voiced the same concerns to him, and cites the closure of The Watch Factory further up the High Road as proof of the drop in trade (*THE ARCHER*, May 2012).

He says it's difficult to quantify the effect of loss of trade in monetary terms, but that it could be anything up to £100 a day, and even half that amount would equal an annual loss of almost £20,000. Michael would like to see the introduction of a borough-wide 20-minute free parking slot.

But there might be some good news. Cllr Dean Cohen,

Barnet Council's cabinet member for the environment, has announced a review of parking charges in the borough's town centres.

Half-day visitor vouchers for controlled parking zones, priced at £2.20, will be introduced as soon as possible and businesses will be able to buy vouchers at a discount. Cllr. Cohen has also asked officers to explore the possibility of introducing a 50p for 15 minutes parking tariff.

He said: "I appreciate that many people just want to nip into a couple of shops and this would make it much easier, although we have to look at the economics. I will also launch a review of parking prices in each of our town centres and major shopping parades.

"We need to strike a balance between ensuring a steady turnover of spaces for cars in these areas and ensuring that people have time to shop. I will be consulting with businesses in each of these centres before coming to a final decision."

Pasture's past

By Linda Dolata

Many of you already know about the Long Lane Pasture nature reserve, but for anyone who has never seen it now is as good a time as any. Situated behind the houses opposite the fire station on Long Lane is a relict hay meadow from the days when fodder was grown for London's horses.

It is at its very best right now, and only needs a smidgeon of sunshine to bring out all the native butterflies, bees, hover flies, grasshoppers and beetles that breed there.

Flower spotters

As it is the pasture's centenary year, archive research has been done. It substantiated links with Octavia Hill, of National Trust fame, and discovered a list of wild flowers collected by children from the local primary school on Squires Lane back in 1920. It makes lovely reading. In a few short weeks, 57 species were gathered as they flowered, from local lanes, fields, hedges, banks and ditches which the children passed on their walk to school.

The pupils who did this were named. Maybe someone reading this is a descendant of Kitty Saunders, Fred Barker, Doris Wright, Doreen Mellor, George Stanford, Eva Robinson, Harry Pike, D.Embleton, Stanley Sharpe, Mabel Sag, Nellie Selves, Lily Beadle, Sybil Cook, Irene Spear, or Gladys Cul?

We checked the plant species and do still have most of them, with beautiful old country names like honesty, creeping cinquefoil, knapweed, primroses, cowslips, Queen Anne's Lace, mouse-eared chickweed, goosegrass, tormentil, honeysuckle, speedwell, woody nightshade, jack-by-the-hedge, heartsease, goatsbeard and ladies smock. A hundred years ago the children would probably have known many of the names as a matter of course. The only plant that we have lost from their 1920 list is the early orchid, so we are doing a good job.

Centenary competition

Please take the time to come and see this fragment of our area as it would have appeared in their time. Even better, bring your camera or your paint box and enter our centenary Photo and Art Competition, which will be judged in October, and the best entries displayed at artsdepot, North Finchley. Entries must be of the Pasture in 2012, but could be drawings, paintings or photos of anything seen there.

Long Lane Pasture is always open at weekends from 10am until 5pm, and entries can be handed in on Saturdays between 10am and noon. Full details from www.longlanepasture.org/centenary. We hope to see you there.

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