

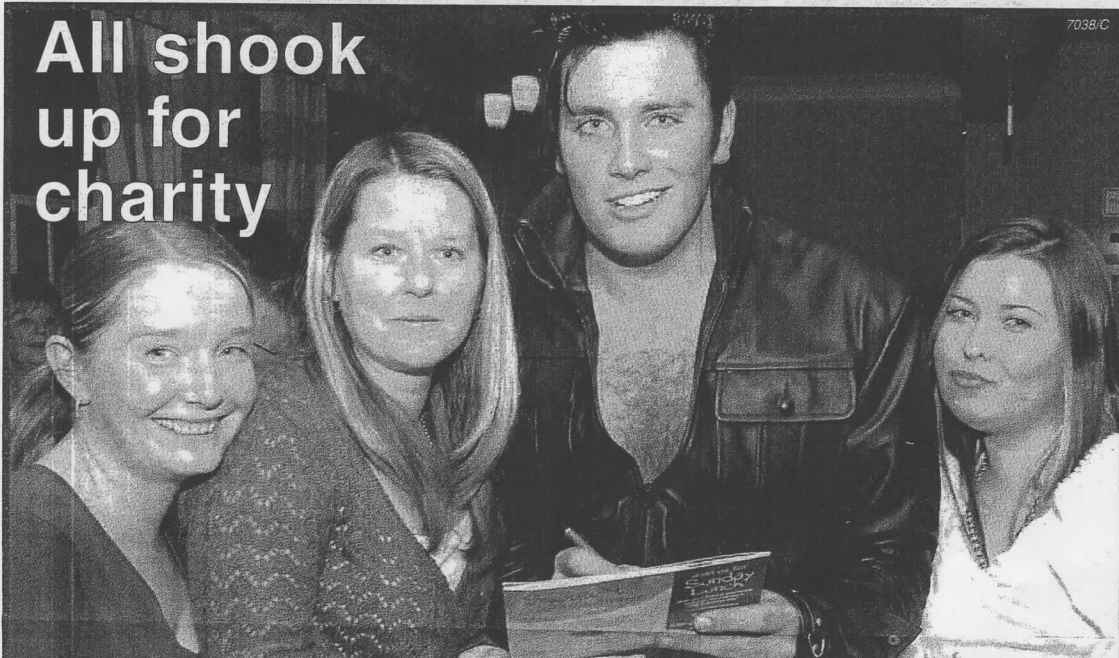
The Mercury

BEXLEY

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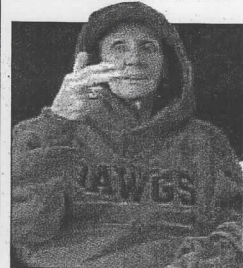
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All shook up for charity

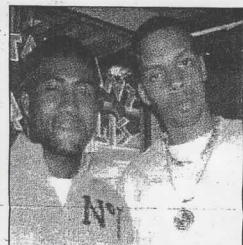


ELVIS Presley impersonator Lee Wendon signs autographs for Bexleyheath's Travellers Home pub regulars Emma Thornton, Joanne Wright and Rosalyn Eastwood after performing in aid of Children in Need. More than £350 was raised at the event at the pub on Friday

INSIDE YOUR 32-PAGE MERCURY THIS WEEK



Nanny cool on video **Op3**



Coke gang jailed **Op11**



Studio wins gong **Op16**

I'M INCENSED

Researcher claims inquiry evidence 'not taken seriously'

By JULIA LEWIS

A HEALTH researcher claims crucial evidence submitted to the Belvedere incinerator public inquiry is not being taken seriously enough.

Anti-incinerator campaigner Michael Ryan, originally from Erith, works closely with fellow campaigner Dr Dick van Steenis - a former Government consultant.

He believes emissions from existing incinerators in South-east London have caused a high rate of birth defects in Bexley and another incinerator would only make matters worse.

In his evidence submitted to the public inquiry into Riverside Resource

Recovery Ltd's (RRRL) proposal to build a waste-to-energy incinerator in Belvedere, Mr Ryan included figures he obtained from the Treasury, which showed Bexley is the London borough with the highest number of babies with birth defects.

In 2002, there were 59 babies born with defects in Bexley compared with

six in neighbouring Lewisham.

He said: "My data came from the Office of National Statistics. They should look at the figures and see what is causing this."

He was amazed when his submission was refuted in a report by toxicologist Professor Jim Bridges, of Surrey

Turn to p2

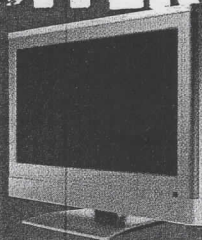
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News

Dedication's all they need



The Lights of Love ceremony lights up Bexleyheath Shopping Centre last year

7017/C

REMEMBER missed loved ones this Christmas while helping to raise thousands of pounds for terminally ill people.

Lights of Love ceremonies are being organised by Greenwich & Bexley Cottage Hospice in Bostall Hill, Abbey Wood, for the 11th year running.

People are invited to send in donations to dedicate lights on Christmas trees at seven services across Bexley and Greenwich.

Fundraising manager Howard King said: "Christmas is a time for many to remember those loved ones who are no longer with them."

"We go out into the community to hold services so people don't have to travel too far."

He added the services were open to everyone and had been hugely

successful in past years, with thousands of dedications being made.

The hospice helps care for the terminally ill, as well as offering day care and support for families. It needs to raise £3million a year for running costs.

The list of dedications will be on view at all the venues and then at the hospice itself until January 6.

They can also be viewed by logging on to www.cottagehospice.org.uk

The Lights of Love ceremonies will be held at:

● Christ Church, Victoria Road, Erith, on December 11 at 6.30pm

● St Paulinus Church, Manor Road, Crayford, on December 12 at 7.30pm

● St John's Church, St John's Road, Blackheath, on December 13 at 7.30pm

● United Reformed Church, Court Road, Eltham, on December 14 at 7.30pm

● Our Lady of Grace, Charlton Road, Charlton, on December 16 at 7.30pm

They will be held outside Broadway Shopping Centre, Bexleyheath, on December 15 at 7.30pm, and Greenwich & Bexley Cottage Hospice on December 17 at 6.30pm.

Dedications can be made online or by post to the Fundraising Office, Greenwich & Bexley Cottage Hospice, 185 Bostall Hill, Abbey Wood, SE20GB.

Call 020 8312 2244 for more information.

Evidence 'not taken seriously'

From p1
University, acting on behalf of
RRRL.

Mr Ryan claims the professor's information was based on current figures, which group Greenwich, Bexley and Bromley together.

The Treasury figures, says Mr Ryan, reflect the true situation because they are for Bexley alone.

A spokesman for RRRL said its solicitors had notified the DTI that it rejected Mr Ryan's submissions and the company would not withdraw Professor Bridges' paper.

A spokeswoman for Bexley Care Trust said it regularly received the Government figures but considered the overall numbers to be low and any variations likely to be random or due to reporting procedures.

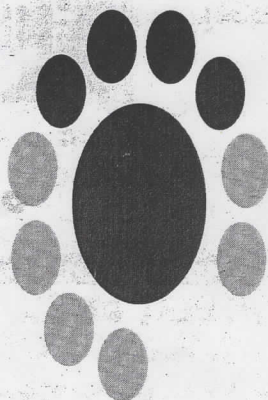
In 2002, the Trust received two alerts, but after investigating, found there was no cause for concern.

She added: "The Health Protection Agency advice is that although incinerators clearly do emit pollutants into the environment, provided they comply with modern regulatory requirements, they should contribute little to the concentrations of monitored pollutants in ambient air."

A spokesman for SELCHP, which runs an incinerator in nearby Deptford, said: "All of our energy recovery facilities, including the facility in Lewisham, operate to the strictest environmental guidelines."

The inquiry into the Belvedere incinerator proposal closed last month.

Trade Secretary Alan Johnson will make his ruling decision next year.



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