



December 2011 [www.westernparkgazette.co.uk](http://www.westernparkgazette.co.uk)

News and Views for Western Park • Westcotes • The Fosse



Rudy Dalby Age 7

## Hello From The Editor

**Hello and welcome to the Christmas issue of the Gazette.**

First of all congratulations to the winner of our Christmas picture competition, Seven year old Rudy Dalby whose picture of Santa is on the front cover. And he's taking his family to the De Montfort Hall to enjoy Peter Pan on Ice this Christmas! This month, Helen Knott has a seasonal moan over buying presents when you haven't a clue what to get, Tony Huxley gets to grips with mistletoe and Richard Perry thinks it's only a matter of time before computers become invisible.

If you've been into the city centre, you'll have seen the stunning Christmas tree next to the Clock Tower. Roger Blackmore looks who actually built the tower.

And since news is a bit thin on the ground, we'll take a look back at some of the stories we've featured over the last year.

We are always looking for contributions, so if you've ever fancied writing for a magazine or you have some local news and information or you're holding an event, please get in touch.

Sharon e: [editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk](mailto:editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk)

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The Western Park Gazette

# THE CLOCK TOWER

The lovely civic Christmas Tree standing this year beside the city's historic Clock Tower calls to mind the architect and designer Joseph Goddard who, as a young man of 28, won the competition to design this historic city centre monument back in 1868.

Originally known as Barrel Cross; this central crossroads, traditionally the site of the city hay and straw market had, by Victorian times, become a hugely congested area.



The memorial clock tower was designed as part of a pedestrian island to help combat the problems caused by the large amount of horse drawn traffic cluttering up the junction of five main city streets. As a result the competition was held and the clock tower built by public subscription.

Joseph Goddard, like his father and grandfather, was originally a general builder; responsible for various buildings in the Belgrave Gate area as well as the somewhat unusual design of Turlington Church out in the county.

The clock tower was built mainly of Ketton stone brought in from Rutland with its four statues sculpted from Portland Stone by a local mason, Samuel Barfield, working for Goddard the designer. These four images commemorate Simon de Montfort, William Wyggeston, Alderman Gabriel Newton and Thomas White, the founder of the famous charity which still bears his name.

Joseph, went on to become a Fellow of the Royal Society of Architects and after going into partnership with AH Paget, he became President of the Leicester and Leicestershire Society of Architects in 1879. The firm were responsible for a wide range of commercial and domestic buildings in the city and county as well as other churches such as St. John the Baptist in Stoneysgate.

In 1888 Joseph and Paget were joined in the practice by Joseph's son Henry, who is well remembered for his design of St James the Greater on London Road; not finally completed until 1914, just before he went off to fight in France during the First World War.

Joseph Goddard himself died in 1900. Not only do many of his buildings still stand but his descendants still carry on business in our city to this day. **Roger Blackmore**

## Make a Splash! The Western Park Gazette

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## Another Cannabis Farm

**Police raided a house in Western Park in November and seized 320 cannabis plants.**

Police were called after neighbours noticed a strong smell coming from 94 Ainsdale Road.

Piles of growing equipment were removed along with gear designed to illegally take power from the electricity mains to run lamps and heaters. One man was arrested at the scene and the property made safe by electricians.



Neighbour say they noticed nothing unusual when the rented art deco house became occupied in May. One neighbour said: "The curtains were drawn and the only noise was the sound of taps running in the morning."

# Events Diary

**Zumba Class** Tues 6.45-7.45 & 8-9.00pm at New College. Call Sarah 07810 307 113.

**Festive Arts and Crafts:** 18th Dec 11-4pm Activities £2.50. The Guildhall. 0116 253 2569.

**Police Carol Service:** 19th Dec. Cathedral. 7-8.30pm. Free.

**Follow that Star - Traditional Xmas Concerts:** 19th-22nd Dec. Guildhall. £8.50. 0116 253 2569.

**Spirits of Christmas:** 21st Dec. Seasonal Ghost Stories at the Guildhall. 7.00pm. £7.50.

**Xmas Farmer's Market:** 22nd Dec. City Centre.

**Solstice Activities:** 22nd Dec. New Walk Museum. 11-4.00pm. Activities £2.50.

**One Snowy Night:** 22nd Dec-12 Jan. Curve

**42nd Street:** Until 14th Jan. Curve.

**Peter Pan on Ice:** 19th-31st Dec. De Montfort Hall.

**Hanukkah Lights Switch on:** Dec 25th. Victoria Park. £4.00pm.

**Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival Preview:** 13th Jan at De Montfort Hall.

**Classic Rock Show:** 14th Jan. De Montfort Hall.

**Knit & Stitch Club:** Thursdays. Braunstone Library. 1-3.00pm. Free

**Study Support:** Braunstone Library. Tues/ Thurs. 4-6.45pm.

**Fosse Camera Club:** Fridays. St. Peter's Church Rooms. 7.45pm. 0116 299 2230.

## St. Anne's, St. Paul's and St. Augustine's

### **At St. Anne's Church Hall -**

**Mon - Fri** Sandhurst Playgroup 285 7440.

**Mon:** 5.30 - 7.00pm: W.E.A. Yoga 255 6614.

7.15 - 9.00pm: Tai Chi. Call Rick 285 5159.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Tue:** 2.00 - 4.00pm: MU Speakers.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Tue:** 7.30 - 9.30pm: W.P. Gardening Club.

**Wed:** 5.00 - 8.00pm: Weightwatchers.

**Wed:** 8.00 - 9.00pm: Tai Chi with Rick.

**1<sup>st</sup> Wed:** 2.30 - 4.00pm: Wednesday Club.

**4<sup>th</sup> Wed:** 7.00 - 9.00pm: MU Speakers.

**Thurs:** 9.00 - 10.00am: Pilates for fitness.

1.30 - 3.30pm: Pram Club. (Term time)

6.30 - 8.00pm: Rebounder Aerobics.

**Fri:** 10.00am: Coffee Morning.

**1<sup>st</sup> Fri:** 1.30 - 1.00pm: Lunch club.

**2 & 4th Fri:** 2.00 - 4.00pm: Folk dancing.

**Tuesdays** 10.00am: Mums and Toddlers: Over 60's Club. 12.30 (**St. Paul's**)

## Church of the Martyrs

### **Westcotes Drive Leicester**

**Tomatoes Cafe Church** live music alternate

Saturdays 19th Nov, 3rd, 17th Dec, 10am-12pm.

**Shake Rattle & Roll** for babies toddlers & carers

every Thursday in term time- 9.30-11.30am.

**Street Self Defence** 7.30-8.30pm Mondays in the Hall. Call 07788 637 686 for details.

**Martyrs Football Training** every Weds eve 9pm at New College, Glenfield Rd.

**Carols by Candlelight** 6.30pm Sun 18th Dec.

**Beer & Carols** 8pm Tues 20th Dec at the Western pub.

**Crib Service** 5pm Christmas Eve.

**Family Service** 10.30am Christmas Day.

**Post Xmas Walk & Lunch** 27th Dec, 10.30am

on Bradgate Park and lunch at the Bradgate Pub.

**Indoor Games Afternoon** Sun 15th Jan, 2-5pm in the hall.

Details of events and services can be found at [www.martyrs.org.uk](http://www.martyrs.org.uk)

## **St. Andrew's Methodist Church**

### **Glenfield Road East, Leicester**

**Weds:** Brownies. 6.30-8.00pm. T: Heather Valentine 0116 287 1056. **Fri:** Pram Club. Term

Time. 10.00-11.30am. T: Jean, 0116 255 2912.

## **Parish of St. Peter**

### **21 Hinckley Road Leicester**

Details of events and services can be found on line at [www.stpetersleicester.org.uk](http://www.stpetersleicester.org.uk)

## **Epworth Methodist Church**

### **Blackbird Road, Leicester**

**Weds:** Boys' Brigade 6.00 - 9.30 (ages 5 - 17 years) Tel: John Ogleby 0116 233 7978

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# Peter Pan Competition

**Congratulations to 7 year old Rudy Dalby whose Christmas picture is on the front cover of the Gazette.**

Rudy has also won a family pass to see the fantastic Peter Pan on Ice show at the De Montfort Hall.

We chose Rudy's picture because it was extremely vibrant, very straightforward and without too

much detail. It makes an ideal festive front page and captures a child's view of Christmas; so well done Rudy!

We thought the standard was very high and would like to thank everyone who took part. and as a result decided to print the runners up as well.

From left to right-  
Rebekah Webster-Aikman (13), Fern Poppy Powell (8), Charlotte Kennedy (7), Linda Dalby (10)  
Sean Powell (6) Róisín Kelly (12) Caitlin Powell (9) Jane Kyprianou (11)



# KNOTT'S LANDING

*Helen Knott*

**Modern life throws up all sorts of strange etiquette dilemmas and Christmas can be a complete minefield.** My current *bête noir* is people who say "Oh I'll just give you the money and you can buy the present for X. I don't know what to get them and I don't want to get the wrong thing so I'll leave it to you."

Now I am grateful for every gift I receive, especially in these straightened times, but these are gifts with conditions. The condition is that I can have their money but I have to spend time and effort getting their gift, wrap it for them and attach their hand written label to it before placing it under my tree.

This makes me cross because as any woman knows, Christmas is the busiest time of the year. Adding extra work to someone's already tight schedule is unconscionable in my book. When I think about how much time and effort goes in to planning and executing Christmas it makes me want to hide in a darkened room with a large bottle of gin. So when another perfectly capable person asks me to add buying, wrapping distributing their gifts to my to do list, it starts to make my blood boil.

It just seems so thoughtless, careless and runs completely against everything I think Christmas is about. I don't care if it's another comedy teapot cover. I don't care if it's a Christmas jumper. I don't care if it's a truly awful set of reindeer mugs (thanks bruv). It is a gift, from you to me. You thought about me enough to think I might like it, buy it, wrap it and give it to me. To me, that is special.

But then I might be wrong, it does happen occasionally, and it may now be perfectly acceptable to behave in this way. I'm no etiquette expert. I just think it's sad that in the future there will be no Christmas jumpers to laugh over, no reindeer mugs to get out each year and smile at, no comedy teapot cover to remind you all year that Aunt Doris thought it would blend with your modernist kitchen. At least she thought of you and next year she might not be there to make you smile. So when you are thinking about writing cheques or sticking cash in envelopes, take a step back, take a tenner out and go buy something. It's the thought that counts.

Merry Christmas to you and yours.



## Festive Fun On-Line

We've got into the spirit of Christmas on our website [www.westernparkgazette.co.uk](http://www.westernparkgazette.co.uk)

We've joined our friends at Radio Snowflake, to offer non-stop Christmas tunes from Bing Crosby to the Pogues! All you have to do is click the link on our homepage and you can hear the station on your computer or smartphone.

And for the children, there's the chance to follow Father Christmas as he makes his journey from the North Pole by Clicking the NORAD Santa Tracker link also on our homepage.

## COUNCILLOR'S SURGERIES

**Fosse Cllrs Surgery** Monthly, first Sat, 10.30-11.30, Fosse Neighbourhood Centre & last Sat (10-11.30am) Woodgate Residents Association.

**Westcotes Cllrs Surgeries** Westcotes Library, 1st Sat each month, 10.30 - 11.30am and 3rd Fri each month, 5.30 - 6.30pm. West End Neighbourhood Centre, 4th Tues each month 1.30 - 2.30pm.

**Western Park Cllrs Surgery** Monthly-2nd Thursday, St. Paul's Church Rooms, Kirby Road. 7-8.00pm.

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# Yuletide - The Story

**Although Christmas is a rightly viewed as a Christian celebration, its roots can be traced much further back than the Nativity.**

Christmas, as we know it today, is an echoic combination of pagan festivals and traditions dating back at least to a time when the Summer and Winter Solstices were worshiped at Stonehenge, some 3600 years ago.

For our ancient ancestors, December 21st, the shortest day, marked the time when the sun was reborn, growing in strength through the next six months to the Midsummer Solstice.

The 12 day celebrations around the 25th were called Yule. The word Yule could originate from an old Anglo Saxon expression for sun and light, once again referring to solar rebirth.

In many parts of North and Central Europe, fire played a large part in rituals. Candles or lamps were kept going through the 12 days, along with the Yule log, generally a whole tree trunk made of oak or ash and lit from the remains of last years



log at sunset on the 25th.

In Celtic Britain and Gaelic Europe, the log or tree was anointed with salt, holly, wine and evergreens. The ashes were later sprinkled on the fields to ensure the gods smiled on the harvest.

Holly is thought to be historically important because it stays green through the winter months and was a symbol of summer life in harsh winters. Holly was also the male symbol and Ivy the female, so were often paced together for luck.

Our decorated Christmas trees are nothing new either. There was an old Roman tradition of decorating pine trees with the image of the god Bacchus during the Festival of Saturnalia which was celebrated from December 17th until 23rd.

December 25th is also the festival day of the Roman sun god Mithras, who was a serious threat to the early Christian church. Scholars believe it was this rivalry in the third century that finally fixed the date of Christmas as the 25th of December. It was a way of merging the birth of Jesus, the date of which is unknown, with Mithras and the much older festivals which were celebrated by the pagan community.

You could say that today, with the holly, ivy, decorating the tree, even Father Christmas - we are really celebrating Yule and the winter Solstice feasting, rather than Christmas. *C.B*

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## December Police Update

**Two youths were appeared in court on December 1st, charged with burgling a house in Alma Street in Newfoundpool.**

The house was broken into the afternoon before, when two guitars and other electrical equipment was stolen.

The pair, both aged 17, were arrested later the same day.

**Police in Westcotes have completed a three day initiative at the end of November to combat gas pipe thefts.**

Officers property marked residents' gas copper pipes and valuables with Smartwater, a clear solution that shows up when an ultra violet light is shone across it.

During the three days, forty homes were visited, including 20 recent victims of copper pipe theft and a further 20 neighbouring properties.

**Officers are appealing for public help after jewellery was stolen during a burglary in Pool Road on November 24th.**

A number of items were stolen including a distinctive 18 carat gold ring which was made for the victim. It has a square face and a diamond in

one corner and white gold Yorkshire rose in the other corner.

Other items included a nine carat gold ring with a crest and the word Crossley under it, an 18 carat gold tie pin with a Yorkshire rose on the top, a nine carat gold 24" chain and a Longines 18 carat gold watch with a leather strap and a black and cream face.

PC Adam Goodenough is investigating the incident, he said: "I would urge anyone who has come across any of the jewellery to contact the police, especially jewellers or pawnbrokers who may have been approached by someone trying to sell them on."

**Witnesses are being asked to come forward following a robbery in The Rally between 8.20am and 9.30am on Thursday November 24, near to the children's play area of the park in Tudor Road.**

The victim was threatened by two men who demanded he hand over his cash. It is thought one of the men was carrying a knife. The victim handed over his cash and the two men then left the park in the direction of Bonchurch Street.

The suspects have been described as being black, between 19 and 24-years-old and of slim build.

## SPOTLIGHT ON DOVELANDS

**Being a city school we really value the outdoor environment which we can offer our children.**

With the support of some of our parents, we are now beginning to make some major changes to the garden area at the rear of the school.

Over the past few months we have had some major developments, starting with the new anti-climb fencing which was paid for in part by a grant from the local ward. This has allowed us to secure the area and allowed us to plan further improvements. We then had the whole area cleared and began asking the children what they would like to do with the space. Using their ideas and

the skills of some parents we put together a plan which we are working towards now.

One of the things many children wanted was the opportunity to grow fruit and vegetables, so we have included this in the plan by creating four raised beds which we were putting in on Sunday with the help of Dave Hornby a local builder and parent at the school. The planks we used were also donated by a builder working in the local area. Further plans include a willow 'fedge', a wild-life pond and using money from our PTFA an outdoor classroom and play surfacing to allow the classes to use the space throughout the year. Who knows what other ideas will be added as the garden progresses.

All the children have been really enthusiastic and are not afraid to get their hands dirty. Regular groups are working in the garden to continue this fantastic start each week.

*Jane Westmoreland*



Our local schools are special places. If you're a parent or teacher and you would like to feature your school in the Gazette, send the details, including pictures to: [editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk](mailto:editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk)

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## Nice Box - What's in it? Richard Perry

**20 years ago if you had a mobile phone, you were a bit of a poseur.** 10 years ago if you had a home computer, you were still in the minority and 5 years ago if you had an expensive plasma screen TV, you had more money than sense. Today, they can all be just one device the size of a paperback book.

Computer based technology may have become much smaller, faster, interconnected and more affordable, but it's still hardware. It's still a box with a blinking light. So what happens next?

The answer is... it will disappear from sight.

Mark Rolston from Frog, the company who designed the original Macintosh, wants to decouple computing power from the hardware and hide it. The room is your computer; he says: "I can talk at it and wave at it, but the computers compose in the moment as we need them, and they are no more ornate than we need."

Computers can already have eyes and ears, thanks to Windows Kinect and iPhone's Siri, but the trick is to make the hardware hide away and let the software await a command from the human body. Designers will have to work out what gesture's will become universal or easy to perform repeatedly, as well as understanding how to tell a computer, which has eyes and ears, that you want to talk to it, rather than the person next to you.

This concept of hiding the computer is emerging in other areas, too, like this health monitoring wristband from



Jawbone which contains as much computing power as a desktop computer did a decade ago. It has a tremendous amount of sophisticated software hidden away inside it, keeping a check on your body and uploading data to your phone; yet it looks like jewellery from the Very Bazaar.

This phenomenon is accelerating. Apple, for instance, are masters of designing cool stuff you didn't think you wanted until you've seen it.

I have serious iPad envy as a result.

But companies of all kinds are going to have to adapt to this new environment, both by making their products as noncomputer-like as possible and by taking advantage of the intelligence and connectivity being built into even the smallest objects around us.



# 2011 in View

**The demolition of the Bow String Bridge site on Braunstone Gate continued apace in January and February as planning permission was granted by the City Council for the development of an £8 million sports hall and leisure complex.**

The section of the blue brick railway arches behind the rubble of the Pump and Tap were controversially demolished just before Christmas 2010.



**In March Residents in the Western Park Estate lodged 160 objections against plans to develop a much used green space into housing.**

The green on Finch Close, which has been used by local children for over 40 years, is the subject of a vocal campaign by residents.

Their aim was to lobby the Council to prevent the building of seven houses and parking, by having the green declared as common ground.

**During the Local Election on May 5th Leicester voters filleted the Lib Dems and Conservatives and returned a Council that is completely Labour controlled winning 52 of 54 seats, compared to 38 in 2007.**

Long standing Councillors were swept aside by a labour landslide. Western Park lost veteran Lib Dem Councillor Pete Coley to Labour's Sue Barton and George Cole. Whilst Labour increased their reach in the Westcotes and Fosse Wards.

**In June Royal Wedding fever hit West Leicester!** As Kate and William walked up the aisle, the food and drink flowed in celebration!



Hundreds joined in the fun as three street parties celebrated the Royal Wedding with style.

At the Kingswood Area Party - fancy dress and red white and blue were the order of the day as party goers, young and old, joined in with the live drumming and bopped away to a DJ.

The Lord Mayor joined dozens enjoying the festivities on the Green at Finch Close and for those who preferred a less traditional, and louder type of party, residents of Daneshill and Stretton Road, let their hair down with a vengeance!

**Also in June a huge cannabis haul was found in West Leicester.**

Police took away hundreds of cannabis plants and piles of growing equipment from The Huntsman's Rest, better known as the Blue Moon pub on Carlisle Street.

Police acting on information made the discovery in the closed down pub on June 19th and began removing the plants and equipment in flat bed lorries the following day.



**Two people were charged with the manslaughter of 40 year old Fiaz Ahmed Anzari following an explosion that destroyed Kams King of the Grill takeaway on Narborough Rd on August 29th.**

Leicester Magistrates heard that Mr Anzari's body was found by contractors clearing the site later that day.

The post mortem of Mr Anzari, who was an employee of the takeaway, indicated he had been close to the heart of the explosion.



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## Tony Huxley's Garden Tidings



**Christmas is often seen as a romantic time of the year, so what could be more romantic than stealing a kiss under some "dung twig"?**

Well that's the old Anglo Saxon translation of *Viscum album* or Mistletoe. Birds love to eat the sticky white berries, which is how the Mistle Thrush got its name. Their pip filled excrement sticks to the branches of potential host trees and the plant begins its life-cycle again.

Like many gardeners I'm a fan of odd and interesting plants. Mistletoe is both. There aren't many parasitic plants in this country, and few with as much mythology as Mistletoe. It is a symbol for fertility, an ancient poison capable of killing a Norse God, a lightning deterrent and a Druidic ingredient used by the Gauls in the Asterix comics. It's also a valuable cash crop. Tenbury has its own winter Mistletoe



Market and Festival. But Mistletoe isn't only confined to the apple orchards of Worcestershire and Herefordshire. The Lime trees on Aylestone Road host some large colonies, and I've seen it on Poplars in the Knighton area. I've yet to spot any in West Leicester, but I am on the lookout.

In the meantime I've decided to try and grow some on one of my fruit trees.

Mistletoe has quite a low germination rate so propagation requires quite a number of berries.

These are mashed into a gloopy paste which is pushed into bark fissures on the branch of a host tree.

Tie hessian around the area to protect the seeds, using sisal string which will rot off and not disfigure the tree. Like Holly, Mistletoe

plants have separate male and female plants so you may need more than one to ensure you get berries. You'll also need patience as Mistletoe can take 5 years to flower, quite a while to wait for a kiss!



More from Tony in the New Year

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Your thoughts and opinions on the Gazette are appreciated.