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## Hello From The Editor

**Blimey that was quick! December already and welcome to the Christmas edition of the Western Park Gazette. Who stole 2017?**

This month Western Park saw its first ever comedy night held in the Hall at St Anne's on Letchworth Road, a local Traffic Action Group continue their fight against bad parking with the help of Lord Willy Bach and Liz Kendall and the Brite Centre kicks off the Christmas period in style. We also get up-to-date with some of the activities at Shaftsbury Junior School and we find out who's benefiting from the money raised from the Western Park Beer Festival.

It would be fair to say the Season of Goodwill does not extend as far as Helen Knott who, quite rightly in our opinion, has got it in for Advent calendars and Tony Huxley who's clearing out a cupboard full of unwanted gardening gifts. In a unyuletidy (We make up words now) topic Roger Blackmore reveals why Leicestershire could have been in at the very start of powered flight but isn't and there's a bigger than normal Crossword puzzle in the on the back page.

All that remains is to wish you a very Cool Yule and a prosperous 2018.

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# Events Diary

**Fosse Coop Camera Club:** Fri. St Peter's Ch Centre, Westholme St. 7.30pm. [fossecoopcameraclub.co.uk](http://fossecoopcameraclub.co.uk)  
**Peter Crebbin's Cool Swing Band:** 1st Sun Monthly. at the Hilton Hotel, Meridian. 1-3.30pm  
**Thursday Club:** 2-4pm. Robert Hall, 147 Narb' Rd.  
**West End Pay As You Feel Café:** Thurs 7-8.30pm. Tues, Fri & Sat 11-3pm. WE Centre. Andrewes St.  
**Coffee Mornings:** Fridays 10-12 noon. St Anne's Hall.  
**Relaxed Dru Yoga Sessions with Emma:** **Sunday's** 7.15 - 8.30pm. Until 17th Dec. Restarting Jan 8th. St Anne's Hall. 07393 811150.  
**Snow White:** 18th Dec. Y Theatre. 2.30pm.  
**Upstairs At The Western:** 18th Dec - **Uncle Armando**, 19th Dec - **Christmas With Lynda Unsu-dimi**, 4th Jan - **Silent Movie Night**, 7th Jan - **Comedy Workshop**, 9th Jan - **Above the Mealy Mouthed Sea**, 10th Jan - **The Collaborators**.  
**Scrooge:** Until 7<sup>th</sup> Jan. **George's Marvellous Medicine:** Until -20<sup>th</sup> Jan at Curve Theatre.  
**Beauty & The Beast:** Until 6th Jan. DM Hall.  
**Dick Whittington:** Until 7th Jan. Little Theatre.  
**Films for Xmas:** 2nd Dec. **Muppets Xmas Carol**. 5.00pm. **Scrooge!** 7.15pm. Guildhall.  
**Ghost:** 19th Dec. 7.30pm. Guildhall.  
**A Christmas Carol With Gerald Dickens:** 23rd Dec. 1.30pm & 7.30pm. Guildhall.  
**Xmas Party, Fundraiser & Quiz:** 24th Dec. West End Brewery. From 5.30pm. Quiz from 8.00pm.  
**Leic Comedy Fest Preview:** 12th Jan. DM Hall. 7.30pm.

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# IT'S A LAUGH!

Almost a year after it opened the new community hall on Letchworth Road played host to the first ever stand up comedy show in Western Park.

Compered by Jason Neale and headlined by Tom Houghton ably supported by Jon Wagstaffe, Lindsey Santoro and Tom Rackham, the capacity 160 strong audience roared with laughter as these professional comedians filled the stage.

The Comedy night has its roots in a well attended charity gig run by West Leicester comedienne, Sarah Johnson, at The Newfoundpool Working Men's Club. Jason Neale, who also helped organise the Western Park event, said: "There are lots of gigs in Leicester, including the monthly 'Proper Funny' night we run on the last Saturday of every month at The Criterion pub in town, but we realised there were lot of people who were keen to attend events locally, like the Western Park Beer Festival, but were reluctant to go into the city centre.

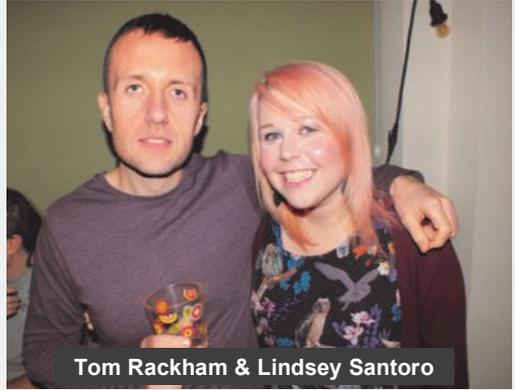
"We decided we'd give it a try and we're glad that



Jason Neale

we did. Feedback has been extremely positive, although lots of people waited too long to get tickets and missed out - so we hope they'll get them early for the next night on the 21<sup>st</sup> April."

Ticket sales are going well but to book your search for the Western Park Comedy Night at [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk)



Tom Rackham & Lindsey Santoro



## CHRISTMAS CRACKER

Q: What's the difference between a clementine in your stocking and Donald Trump?

A: They're both a little orange...

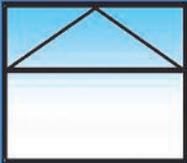
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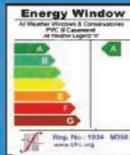
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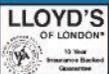
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## A MAGNIFICENT MAN

The history books tell us that on December 17th 1903, Orville Wright made the first powered flight. It lasted just 12 seconds. But for a horrific accident in the autumn of 1899, Leicestershire might have gone down in history, instead of Kitty Hawk North Carolina, as the location of a pioneering flight in the history of aviation. Today the county is famous in several ways for the development of powered flight not least with the jet engine development work of Frank Whittle at Luteterworth in the 1930's and 1940's.

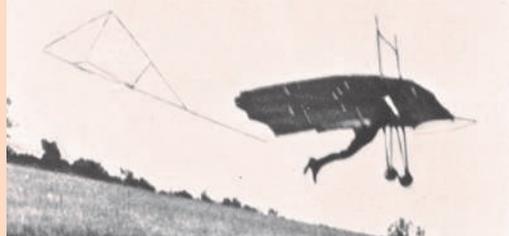
Our particular magnificent man in a flying machine was Percy Pilcher. He was born in Bath in 1866. During his six years in the Royal Navy he developed an increasing interest in engineering. Over the years his interest in aeronautics grew. In 1895 he built a hang glider which he called the Bat to be followed two years later by another which he called The Hawk.

It was with The Hawk that, not long afterwards, he broke the world distance glider record at just over 800 feet flying at Stanford Hall in the south of Leicestershire.

Percy Pilcher now began to turn his attention to the possibilities of powered flight. Despite increasing money worries he persevered with this and by the autumn of 1899 he believed he was in a position to fly his new tri-plane fitted with an internal

combustion engine. To this end he invited members of the Aeronautical Society to Stanford Hall for a demonstration flight.

Alas his new plane suffered a broken crankshaft and despite bad weather he prepared to give an alternative flight in The Hawk. The Hawk rose to thirty feet at which point there was a loud crack as the tail gave way and Percy crashed to the ground. He was taken to hospital but died two days later.



Had he survived that accident he would almost certainly have gone on to develop the first means of powered flight in Britain and indeed the world. His face might well have appeared on our bank notes and his fame outshone that of the Wright brothers. As it is his story remains one of the great "ifs" of history

A monument to his memory may still be found near Stanford Hall.

*Roger Blackmore*



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# KNOTT'S LANDING

Advent calendars are the work of the devil. There is a new advent idea for everyone this year. They are a month long breakfast chocolate binge designed to hype up over-tired children to get them out of the house in time for school at the end of the longest term; sound's lovely doesn't it! I'm probably grumpy because no-one chose to buy me the gin advent calendar I have been eyeing longingly for the last few months. A shot of gin every morning sounds like the perfect start to a Monday morning. Everyone would leave the house in a gloriously relaxed state! My friend suggested just swigging gin from the bottle each morning but I fear even I could not get away with claiming it is just mouthwash as I stand in the playground.

I recently saw a cheese advent calendar in a super-market but dismissed this instantly as ridiculous because it needs to be in the refrigerator and we all know, advent calendars sit on the mantelpiece or somewhere in the hall. What sane human would eat a piece of warm cheese that has sat above the radiator for a few weeks? Not me!

I have also heard tell of a pork scratching advent calendar which sounds good in theory. I have yet to see it executed so I am withholding judgement. I fear the packets will be micro-morsels.

We shall not discuss the hideous brick system advent calendars that cost £25 EACH! I love my child dearly but he can go whistle for an advent calendar costing as much as that. Teenage girls who follow the vlogger Zoella can also do one if they think they are getting



a £60 advent calendar that only has 12 doors!!!! Just 12.... ZOELLA, ADVENT IS THE 24 DAYS LEADING UP TO CHRISTMAS - YOU NUMPTY.

No, the best advent calendar I have seen so far is the Dadvent calendar idea from some guy on YouTube. He went out and bought a catering pack of Scampi flavour fries.... 24 on a card, just like you see at the pub. The perfect number for advent, packaged in a simple, eco-friendly way and containing proper sized packets of scampi flavour snacks.... I have seen the future and for once the chaps are right, Dadvent is where it's at.

**Helen Knott**

**CHRISTMAS CRACKER**  
 Q: What do you say when you can't get at your Advent Chocolates ?  
*A: Follid again!*

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# TRAFFIC ACTION GROUP

**Lord Willy Bach & Liz Kendall in Western Park**  
**Lord Willy Bach, the Police and Crime Commissioner, visited our area on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November.** We took him on a walk around the area – highlighting traffic related issues – speed and volume of traffic, parking around the schools, and size of vehicles which use the roads as a cut through. A good number of people joined the entourage and spoke to him about their concerns and experiences. We spent time on Hinckley Road – talking to the home owner whose wall was demolished by a speeding driver on the previous Saturday night – as well as experiencing the horrors of the traffic on Hinckley Road.

Lord Bach then met members of the community in St Anne's Church: representatives from Community Speed Watch, Neighbourhood Watch, residents, parents and 3 of the local schools.

Councillor Su Barton gave an update from City Council highways dept about the 20mph zone and proposed schemes for Dovelands and other schools in the area. Many issues were raised and discussed and people also provided written comments and suggestions.

We have written a summary for Lord Bach and he has promised to discuss the issues with the City Mayor.

Leicester West MP Liz Kendall came for a short visit on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November. We highlighted our concerns and asked her to raise questions in the Houses of Parliament:

- About the lack of Police resources to address increasing road and traffic offence issues due to 'austerity' – and to press for more funding for the Police
- To initiate a nationwide campaign to address driver behavior and speeding.

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Fb: Western Park Traffic Action Group



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## CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA

The Brite Centre on Braunstone Avenue kicked off December by getting into the Christmas spirit with a festive open day.

Three hundred people attended the three hour event to witness the Christmas light switch-on, seriously test out the mulled wine and feast on mince pies.

The whole event proved extremely popular as local families met Father Christmas, had a go at biscuit decoration and hula-hooping or watched a dance show performed by youngsters.

Joe Smith from b-inspired, one of the organisers, said: "It was a joint event coordinated and delivered by Active Leicester: Braunstone and Rowley Fields project (b-inspired), the Brite Centre (Leicester City Council) and the ER Crew. The event aimed to give the local community a chance to participate in a number of festive themed activities, as well as promote local services and activities.

"It also gave us a chance to complete surveys with local residents linked to 'community business', as we have now been funded by 'Power to Change' to start working with local people to create 'community business', which are businesses who operate in way that is completely beneficial to the community."

*Find out more: [www.be-inspired.org](http://www.be-inspired.org)*



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the West End Brewery Braunstone Gate

# 'Cheers For The Beers'

Local Charities Benefit From Beer Festival

The Western Park Beer Festival Committee is delighted to announce that the total raised for charity this year was £8,275.

The money will help LOROS, our local hospice, support one nurse and two healthcare assistants for a whole month. A donation will also go towards installing a disabled lift at St Anne's Church Hall, the venue of September's two-day event.

Members of the beer committee were recently shown the facilities at LOROS's Groby Road hospice by senior fundraiser Adrian Walker and fundraising co-ordinator Abi Jarrom.

The tour included a look at the hospice's complementary therapy rooms, the day therapy room, an arts and crafts room, the multi-faith chapel and the home assessment room where patients can learn techniques and experience new equipment to support them living in comfort at home.

The group also learned that LOROS has a specialist lymphoedema service for patients in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Lymphoedema is a chronic swelling that can affect any part of the body. It often develops as a result of cancer surgery, but can develop for any reason when the fluid drainage system – the lymphatic

system – is struggling. This specialist service makes a huge difference in helping people control their symptoms and manage their condition. With the continuing support of Western Park's thirsty denizens, the beer festivals have raised £20,000 for local causes since 2015. Charities and organisations can now apply for support from 2018's fundraising.

If interested, please contact:

[info@westernparkbeerfestival.org](mailto:info@westernparkbeerfestival.org).



From L-R: Adrian Walker, Lucy Eddowes, John Garrett, Gemma Langman, Matt Pearce



## CHRISTMAS CRACKER

Q: How will Christmas dinner be different after Brexit?

A: No Brussels...

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*Student Choir brings Christmas to the Trinity Hospital residents...*

## SING A SONG OF CHRISTMAS

Students from De Montfort University's (DMU) Student Choir entertained local residents at Trinity Hospital earlier this month singing classic Christmas carols as part of a #DMUlocal project.

As part of their module, second year Arts and Festival Management students invited the student choir to perform at Trinity Hospital to connect DMU students with the local community.

"As a choir we are used to performing at large events, but we love these little intimate moments as it just feels that little more special", the director of the student choir told #DMUlocal.

Steph Baker, a second year Arts and Festival management student who helped to put the event on said "the whole lead up to the event has been extremely exciting and building a relationship with the care home has been a phenomenal experience."



**CHRISTMAS  
CRACKER**

Q: What do you get when you cross Santa with a duck?

A: Christmas Quaker



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## SHAFTSBURY JUNIOR SCHOOL At KING RICHARD III VISITOR CENTRE

At the end of November a group of pupils from Shaftsbury Junior School were invited to the KRIII Visitor Centre to star in their new Education photoshoot!

Photographs of them exploring the Centre will be used across all KRIII educational material. You can spot some of their stars on the [www.kriii.com](http://www.kriii.com) website.



## GARDEN READY FOR WINTER

A big thank you to our gardening warriors who have worked hard this week to tidy the area and plant out our winter garlic, peas, beans and onions.

We look forward to eating them in the spring!



Info & Photos supplied by Shaftsbury Junior School



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## Dec Police Update

Our 'Darker Nights' campaign aims to prevent an increase in burglaries over the winter by reminding residents to lock their homes and leave a light on. The winter nights make it easier for burglars to hide and empty and unlit houses are easier to spot. An operation is running to target and arrest those who are committing the offences and extra patrols are in place in key areas - both high visibility and plain clothed. We also want to encourage homeowners and businesses to review their security and take a few simple, cheap precautions to protect themselves. I'm hoping to get people to think about their home security before it's too late.

You can buy light timers and security lights cheaply at most DIY stores. Other burglary crime prevention advice includes; keep doors, windows and gates locked at all times and remove keys, put valuables and presents out of sight in a safe place, don't keep large quantities of cash or jewellery at home, use a door spy hole or door chain, don't leave packaging from expensive items outside your home. If you're going away, don't advertise it on social media and ask a neighbour or relative to collect post and open and close curtains while you are away. Finally register your belongings with [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com)

There has been a number of local patch walks across the Fosse, Westcotes and New Parks areas over the past month by Police and Partners, including council, housing and street cleansing departments. These identify local issues, graffiti, hazards and general refuse affecting specific areas. Please engage with those conducting these walks and make sure your issues are highlighted.

There are street consultations and community events listed on the Force website to provide more chances to engage with your Local Neighbourhood teams. To find these details look under the 'local policing' section of the Leicestershire Police website and look for your own area.

We have identified a number of cannabis grows across the area. These pose a significant fire hazard and potential health issues to the occupants and neighbours. If you have concerns or suspicions about any address please contact 101 or speak to your local Neighbourhood officer in complete confidence. Signs to look for include; Strong pungent smells, plastic sheeting, condensation, unexpected fan noises, irregular visits to a previously vacant premises, seeing large numbers of lighting, reflectors, extractors and grow bags.

A new Facebook page covering the 3 policing Neighbourhood areas - 'Fosse, The West End and New Parks Police' has now been launched and will include things of interest and issues we wish to highlight to the Community.

Finally can we take this opportunity to wish everyone a peaceful and happy Christmas and New Year. **PS 1747 Dyer - Westcotes, PS 2233 Brennan - Fosse & PS 592 Walters - New Parks**

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## Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



**Christmas is coming and I'm preparing more space in the "cupboard of crap".**

It's a point of limbo between the bottom of Christmas tree and bin, (or next year's village raffle donation!). The cupboard is overflowing with balls of rustic strings, and pruning scissors that couldn't cut their way out from the wrapping they came in. It's had gardening toiletries, gardening socks, decorative hand forks and trowels that wilt on contact with the soil. There are wooden dibbers, wooden pencils made from a selection of native twigs, and a wooden tool to make plant pots from newspaper! And what's with all the fancy plant labels? "Luxury plastic" in portrait and landscape, copper, wood and even slate. But the winner of the Christ-



mas day cringe must go to a hideous shed plaque with its "amusing" gardening verse. If it wasn't a parental gift, it would have warmed itself with the yuletide log many Xmas's ago.

Gardening, and receiving presents are two things I really enjoy, but when friends and family combine the two I find myself reaching for the Christmas spirit that comes in a 75cl bottle.

Some things do pass the tat filter. A year's membership of the Royal Horticultural Society is a terrific gift and Eco-friends would surely love a year's membership to Garden Organic. Both also have good online shops. Plants as presents are always a gamble but National Gardening Vouchers are a sure fire hit as all keen gardeners love to peruse their local, or not so local, nursery.

We always look forward to a friend's mini hamper of garden produce. The blackberry jelly and damson vodka were previous favourites. And if you insist on buying someone gardening equipment then less and quality always wins over tat in quantity: I still proudly prune with the Felco secateurs my sister bought me many years ago.

So don't forget, a Christmas gardening gift may not be for life, but at least pick something that can make it through to the New Year.

Bah humbug and see you again then!

**Tony Huxley**

**More from Tony in the New Year**



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1		2		3		4
5						
6		7				
8				9		
10						
11		12		13		
14						
15						
16						

**1 Across:** Lemon-like **1 Down:** Against Control  
**2:** Snake-like fish **3:** A confused mixture of voices  
**4:** Principled-ness **5:** Muslim fundamentalists  
**6:** A paint made of acid **7:** Mr Stewart **8:** Baby frog  
**9:** Star Wars master **10:** Optician **11:** A blaze  
**12:** An adherer of a variety of passing beliefs  
**13:** Notoriety **14:** Kidnaps **15:** Impersonate  
**16:** Chats.

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