

A RIGHT ROYAL KNEES UP!

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!



Kingswood



Danehills



Finch Close

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Hello From The Editor

Hello and welcome to the June issue of the Gazette.

This month we have a few pictures of the partying that occurred across West Leicester as the Royal Wedding took place. You can find more on line on our website.

All the normal features this month, including Helen Knott - still chewing bricks over the proposed redevelopment of the Western Park Open School into an old peoples home; she has a better idea. Roger Blackmore, newly retired from the City Council continues his look at Leicester's vibrant history and the god of the garden, Tony Huxley, reckons there are some tasty weeds out there.

We have the latest from Hinckley Road Policing Unit, an idiot's guide to buying a new PC and a look at how the political landscape has changed around us after the Local Election .

Contributions are always welcome, so if you've ever fancied writing for a magazine or you have some local news, please get in touch.

We can't do it without you!

And if you're new to the Gazette, visit the back issues at www.westernparkgazette.co.uk.

Sharon e: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

Events Diary

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

Free Computer Courses: Westcotes Library: 0116 299 5510.

Mumday Mondays: Free children's craft activities, John Lewis, High Cross. Weekly.

Sparks Children's Festival: Until Sunday 12th June. www.sparksfestival.co.uk

Western Park Open Gardens: 11-12th June. Tickets on the day from St. Anne's Church Hall.

Wimbledon: 3rd June-3rd July. Big Screen Humberstone Gate West.

Summer Holiday (Musical): 14th-18th June. Curve

Italian Market: 16th-18th June. 9-6pm. City Centre.

That'll be the Day: 25th June. DeMontfort Hall.

Urban Steam Rally: 25th-26th June. Abbey Pumping Station.

Ken Dodd: 26th June. DeMontfort Hall.

Dylan Moran: 29th-30th June. DeMontfort Hall.

Leicester's Cinemas (Talk): 1st July. 11am. Fosse Library. Mantle Road. 225 4995.

Syston Scout and Guide Band: 3rd July. Western Park Band Stand.

Fosse Singers Summer Concert: 9th July. Fraser Noble Building, London Road. 07814 935 049.

Race for Life: 9th-10th July. Western Park. Details at www.raceforlife.org

Events in the Parish

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.

2nd Tue: 2.00 - 4.00pm: MU Speakers

3rd Tue: 7.30 - 9.30pm: W.P. Gardening Club.

Wed: 5.00 - 8.00pm: Weightwatchers.

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

1st Wed: 2.30 - 4.00pm: Wednesday Club.

4th 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.

1st 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**)

Sat 11th June: Summer fair at St. Paul's. 10-2pm.

Sat 18th June: Children for Children Concert: 7pm at St. Anne's Church Hall.

Sun 3rd July: Youth Group Barbecue at the vicarage from 4pm

Church *OF THE MARTYRS*

MAY EVENTS Westcotes Drive Leicester

Tomatoes Cafe Church with live music Sat June 11th and Sat 25th 10am-12pm

Shake Rattle & Roll for babies toddlers & carers every Thursday.

9.30-11.30am.

Craft Group 8pm 9th June in the Hall.

Martyrs Football training every Weds eve at Nelson Mandela Park.

Service details at www.martyrs.org.uk

Parish of St. Peter

21 Hinckley Road Leicester

Tues 7th June: 7-9pm. Youth Club

Sat 11th June & 2nd July: 5-6pm. Sandwich making for the homeless.

Tues 14th June: 7-9pm. Youth Club

Details of events and services can be found on line at www.stpetersleicester.org.uk

BANDS IN WESTERN PARK

3rd July- Syston Scout and Guide Band. **17th**

July - Hathern Brass Band. **31st July** - Peter

Crebbin's Cool Trad' Band. (Afternoon Performances)

Local Historian, Roger Blackmore looks back at some of the famous figures that have visited Leicester.

HOW OTHERS SEE US

Looking back over the history of our city, it's always interesting to look at what some earlier visitors thought about Leicester.

One famous traveller around the UK was Daniel Defoe, best known as the author of *Robinson Crusoe*. He was certainly impressed with the potential of framework knitting in the town, expressing amazement at how many people were employed locally in the industry. He was also struck by the importance of the woollen industry to the county as well as its importance in the rearing of stock, especially horses.



Defoe visited Leicester roundabout 1720. Some twenty years earlier that, the redoubtable female traveller, Celia Fiennes, had a lot to say about Leicester not least in deploring the state of the roads as she sought to make her way across from the Peterborough area. She describes the approach to Leicester as "full of sloughs" and claimed to have taken 11 hours to cover the last 25 miles into the town.

One of my favourite travel writers of olden times, William Cobbett, was the author of a famous and fiercely polemical travelogue "Rural Rides". As a political eccentric (or at least so he was widely regarded in his day!) he held strong views on both the condition of the cities and the welfare of the poor. He arrived in Leicester in April 1830 and described the town in remarkably flattering terms. He referred to it as "a very fine town" with "spacious streets, fine inns, fine shops and containing some thirty or forty thousand people." He also remarked that it was "well stocked with gaols" of which a new one had just been built. Cobbett was, however, horrified at some of the living conditions he saw amongst the poor in the neighbouring villages of Knighton and Aylestone. Here he found hovels made of mud and straw with only pathetic pieces of furniture and "rags on the backs of the wretched inhabitants". He went on to ask if it was any wonder that the need for new gaols existed presumably as a result of poor social conditions forcing people into a life of crime. Bad housing and starvation wages, Cobbett also knew, were not just the lot of town and city dwellers.

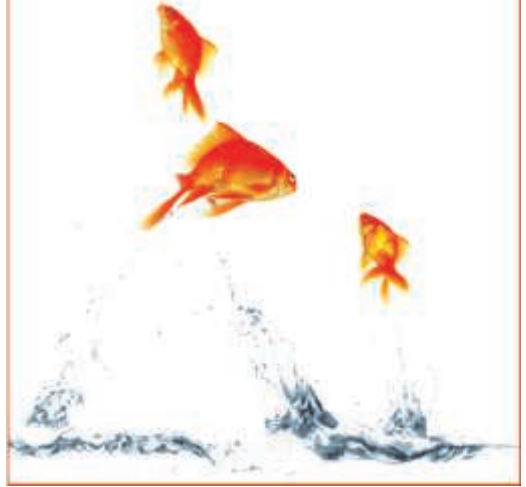
I often wonder what those three famed travellers would make of the Leicester of today, if they were to be transported in time into the age of the Curve Theatre and the National Space Centre.

Make a Splash!

The Western Park Gazette

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END OF AN ERA

After 8 years and 9 months, Shirley and Mick Walsh have left the Sir Charles Napier pub on Glenfield Road and headed for retirement in Skegness.

Shirley and Mick have been in the pub trade for over 34 years, but decided to call an end to 18 hour days and enjoy a quieter life on the East Coast.



Shirley says: " We've had a great time; it's the people who make the Napier special, they're very friendly. And it's a good pub for charity, we've raised over £1500 for local causes in the last 6 months. We're going to miss the staff, but everyone's going off to pastures new. Now we're looking forward to long walks on the beach with the dog!"

KNOTT'S LANDING

Helen Knott

Why does common sense never prevail? What part of the right thing is hard to do? The Western Park School building on Western Park is causing me a certain amount of council based rage at the moment. Some things are facts. The buildings are listed and so need to be preserved. The park is not a suitable environment for a 24/7 business like a care home. There is not the infrastructure to support such a business and any potential purchaser is unlikely to get planning permission to put in the infrastructure because they couldn't do it without wrecking the park.



If only there was an alternative. A better fit with the needs of the park and the local environment. An alternative that kept the buildings and used them for the purpose they were intended for. Something like a school. Oh wait... something like

the Steiner Primary School that a group of determined parents are trying to set up? Like the Steiner Primary school in an application for one of the Government's free schools that is being submitted as we speak? Like the Steiner School Group who have been told by council officials that yes it would be better than a care home but the site has been sold and they can't do anything about it. Oh hang on. The site has been sold SUBJECT TO PLANNING PERMISSION. Who is in control of the planning permission? Would that be the Council? I'm no lawyer but I would imagine that as one set of plans has been rejected then that could be grounds for pulling out of the sale.

Maybe our new Mayor can help? I guess we'll see if he really is committed to the historic buildings and the green spaces in our fair city, although I suspect that it all boils down to money. If it rakes in loads of cash then sell and to hell with the consequences! After all, the councillors and council workers don't live here and their children won't reap the rewards of a beautiful park laid waste in the name of cash.

You can find out more about the Steiner School here www.steinerschoolleicester.info

You can reach the Mayor at themayor@leicester.gov.uk

SKYRIDE RETURNS

Sky, British Cycling and the City Council, announced the return of Sky Ride Leicester – a free family-oriented mass participation cycling event taking place across the city on Sunday, 29 August.

The Sky Ride event will take in the city's most iconic landmarks and sites with traffic-free streets, enabling cyclists to enjoy a day of bike-based entertainment and to explore their city on two wheels with family and friends. The free event aims to encourage thousands of people, of all ages and abilities, to get on their bikes.

COUNCILLOR'S SURGERIES

Fosse Cllrs Surgery Monthly, last Mon (6-7pm) and 2nd Wed (5.30-6.30pm) Fosse Neighborhood Centre.

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

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

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Election Report

Pin a red rosette on a potato and it could have won a seat on Leicester City Council on the May 5th Local Elections... and in some case actually did.

Such was the displeasure with Nick Clegg and the coalition government, that 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 have been swept aside by a red tide as national whinges overshadowed local issues.

The biggest West Leicester upset was Western Park's veteran of 19 years, Liberal Democrat Councillor, Peter Coley and running mate Stuart Emmerson, losing out to Labour's Susan Barton and George Cole. This was partly due to the loss of the personal vote for Roger Blackmore who retired at the election, some aggressive canvassing from Labour and a split vote for the Conservatives, allowing Labour to triumph in a previously safe constituency.

Labour maintained their presence in Westcotes with Andy Connolly and Sarah Russell, whilst in Fosse ward, Former MEP Sue Waddington with

Ted Cassidy, kept the constituency for Labour. It remained the same in New Parks, with three Councillors returned for Labour; Stephen Corral, Dawn Alfonso and Malcolm Unsworth.

Such was the rout, that there are now only two opposition voices in Leicester City Council; one Liberal Democrat and one Conservative.

Along with the new Labour Mayor, Sir Peter Soulsby, comfortably winning his place, and a potentially fractious Labour administration with no effective opposition, the people of Leicester may have cause to regret a knee jerk reaction to Nick Clegg and his battered coalition agreement.

Richard Perry

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DARK WATER

A quarter of a million litres of water used to douse a huge factory fire in North Mills, Frog Island on May 12th, became contaminated as it flowed through the unused burning building.

The polluted water pooled in a natural dip next to the canal, but did not run off into the watercourse. The Environment Agency advised the owners of the best way to safely remove the contamination.

FENCED OFF

Developers of the new £15m Braunstone Gate supermarket have put up fencing to prevent fly tipping.

The site used to house MFI and Allied Carpets, but with Carpetright leaving, the site has become a dumping ground, in spite of being cleared several times.

Owners, Fairgate Investments erected hoarding around the site at the beginning of the month ahead of demolition work beginning.

The new supermarket will provide 150 jobs with parking for 200 shoppers, but local traders are unhappy with the impact the store could have on trade and customer parking on Braunstone Gate.

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Gazette Competition

Harry Potter mania begins on July 15th as the seventh and final instalment kicks off in the cinemas.

If you'd like to win a DVD copy of Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part One, just correctly answer the question below and you could be another Gazette winner!

What is the main type of communication method used in the world of Harry Potter?

1. Crows
2. Sparrows
3. Eagles
4. Owls



Closing date June 20th 2011.

Answers to editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk or by post to Editor c/o RapsCallion Media, 62 Ainsdale Road, Leicester, LE3 0UA.

You can also enter on line.

One correct answer picked at random, no cash alternative, prize cannot be used with another offer, Editor's decision is final.

June Police Update

Police are appealing for witnesses after a couple were robbed on the Western Boulevard canal towpath on the 18th May at around 4pm.

The two victims, a 20 year old man and an 18 year old woman, were approached by a group of six men wearing hooded tops and bandanas who assaulted them, pushed the woman into the canal, then stole Motorola and Ericsson phones and a wallet before running off.

One of the men has been described as being black or Asian, between 5'7" and 6ft tall, of slim build and in his early twenties with wispy facial hair. Another from the group has been described as being between 5'6" and 5'9" tall, of slim build, in his late teens with a gaunt appearance.

A 16 year old boy has been arrested and released on police bail, pending further inquiries.

Police from Hinckley Road Police Station have traced and dealt with six children, aged 11 and 12, who frightened and intimidated a worker at Leicester's Eco House.

The incident happened last month, when one of the children spat at the 18-year-old worker, and another threatened to hit her.

Four other children joined in jeering and laughing at the worker.

The two most seriously involved, agreed to write an apology to the worker. All six have been warned about their future conduct in front of their parents and are banned from the immediate area of the Eco House in Western Park.

The offenders were dealt with through the Restorative Justice Scheme, where offenders are invited to make amends in a way that the victim is happy with and which fits the offence. They do not have to go to court or receive a criminal record, but the incident is recorded and could be referred to in future proceedings if further offences occurred.

Valuable equipment in garden sheds and outhouses are once again the target of thieves as summer arrives.

To cut down the risk, ensure, gates and garages are properly locked and secure. A selection of plant protection like thorny bushes can also add as a deterrent and physical barrier.

Also try to make the front and back of your house as visible as possible to cut down the chance of thieves working unseen.

Your old computer takes an age to start, it's slow, won't load all those sparkly new programmes and doesn't do half of what you want, so its time to get a new one, but where to start?

Nice Box - What's in it? Richard Perry

First decide what you want it for; will it be for playing the latest games and high end programmes or for just a bit of surfing and the odd email? And how much do you spend?

The good news is, prices have dropped and even the most basic new computer is now light years ahead of one only three years old.

Think about space. Do you want a PC or a laptop? With a PC in a tower you're tied to a desk, but the power can be greater, you can add a bigger screen and they're physically much larger than a laptop. They're more comfortable to use as a work tool or for high end gaming. Their storage capacity can be greater; they can be faster and are generally good value for money. If you're running lots of power hungry programmes, an entry level PC



for around £300 is probably not for you. Look for one with a dual, triple or quad-core processor and 3-4GB of RAM or higher, this should have enough grunt to run most programmes and can cost from £350 upwards.

A laptop can offer similar computer power with flexibility- wireless networking gives you the freedom to move around. The screen can be smaller but they are fiddly to use if you're into desktop publishing or complicated movie or music editing jobs. However, they can be folded neatly away. For many home users, they are the computer of choice, but look for one with an optical DVD or BluRay drive, otherwise you won't be able to watch DVDs or load in programmes from a disc. Look for a laptop with a 3 or 4 GB of RAM, dual-core processor or better and as much memory as possible, around 500 GB of storage if the family all use it. Best prices - if you don't want to spend a fortune are between £350 and £500.

You could always go for a net book, which is a small stripped down laptop with a cut down operating system. They are cheaper, light weight, highly portable but low spec. If all you want to do is surf the net, email and type; that's pretty much all they're good for. They don't come with DVD drives either, but prices start at around £200.

Tony Huxley's Garden Tidings



Since moving house I've been trying find time to do some serious gardening.

Strangely, my wife feels it's more important to make the house a place where we can eat, sleep and live! But this weekend I finally planted the hundreds of plants brought from our old address. Previously I'd reshaped beds and in March began the task of removing swathes of ground elder from the beds, after harvesting the young leaves. Steamed, it tastes a little like spinach, which is why the Romans brought it here. It's a member of the carrot family and was once used as a treatment for gout and arthritis. Ground elder's roots look like white spaghetti and rarely go deep. With the soil in my new garden being quite sandy and weather so dry, it was easy to hook out great tangles of the stuff. But it's very tenacious; the



Ground Elder

smallest root fragment will sprout and spread. While I'd like to keep the garden as organic as possible I may have to spot-treat stubborn clumps with a glyphosate weed-killer.

Other "weeds" proved more acceptable. A mass of broad-leaved weed in the lawn turned out to be *Salvia sclarea* or Clary Sage, which will make great free bedding. What I thought were common yellow Mullein turned out to be very pretty peachy-purple Verbascum, and we have a glut of self sown flat leaf Italian Parsley.



Clary Sage

The extreme winter had quite an impact on my plant stock. Being in pots made matters worse, allowing frost to attack the roots from the side. Obviously, more tender species fell foul: *Acanthus*; *Cardoon*; *Euphorbia mellifera* and my *Agapanthus* - except for a tough little variety called Palmers Hybrid. Surprisingly others, like half hardy *Salvia microphylla*, exotic *Sarracenia* and the little Olive tree I rescued from my sister's neglect, came through unscathed - The next big task is a well-needed summer prune, more of which next time.

SODUKU

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BRAIN *TAZERS*

1. Which is the odd word out?

- A. Forthcoming.
- B. Approaching.
- C. Recent.
- D. Imminent.
- E. Impending.

2. Rearrange these letters to give the name of a famous film series

tibonacrifes betaphera

3. Take one letter away from the name of a nocturnal animal to turn it into a type of identification.

4. How would you connect meteor and the word isolated?

5. Peter ran half way into a wood in half an hour. His friend Mike said he'd run two thirds of the way into the wood in the same time. But that is impossible. How do you know?

6. What happens once in July, once in June and twice in August? (Answers at www.westernparkgazette.co.uk)

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