



*More on Page 4*

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## Hello From The Editor

Welcome to the June edition of the Western Park Gazette.

Summer kicked off with the annual Riverside Festival so we headed there with a camera, Roger Blackmore looks back at the history of Braunstone Hall, Tony Huxley says it's OK to be 'bright and brash' in the garden and Helen Knott relives her childhood as the reboot of Thunderbirds Are Go! excites her six year old.

KeV Sharkey from Hinckley Road Policing unit has the low down on local crime and a petition has been launched to keep the old Open Air School in Western Park safe from demolition.

De Montfort University's Square Mile Project have a few interesting things going on, Mel Gordon, a local charity shop manager, gets splatted in a good cause and how about a unique way of seeing our part of the city... from a canoe?

If you're feeling smarter than the average bear, the Brain Tazers, Crossword and Sudoku lie in ambush on the inside back page!

If you've got a local news story then email  
editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

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# Events Diary

**Fosse Singers:** Fosse N'hood Centre. Weds. 7pm.

**International Folk Dancing:** Monthly 2nd & 4th Fri. St. Anne's Hall. 2-4pm. Tel: Geoff on 0116 285 8352.

**Peter Crebbin's Cool Swing Band:** 1st Sun Monthly. Café Chino at Hilton Hotel, Meridian. 1-3.30pm

**Thursday Club:** Thursdays. 2-4pm. Robert Hall, 147 Narborough Rd.

**Heritage Sundays:** Monthly last Sun. Mediaeval city open days/tours. 11-3pm. w:goleicestershire.com

**Indian Summer 2015:** 19-28 June. Cultural Quarter. 12noon-11pm. Free.

**Fosse Singers & The Chanterelders Summer Concert:** 27th June. Fraser Noble Building. 7.30pm

**Bath House Tour:** 27 June. Jewry Wall Mus. 2pm.

**Leic Vintage Fest:** 27/28th June. Abbey Pumping St. 12-5pm. Accompanied children free.

**Western Park Open Gardens:** 28th June. Tickets & info from St. Anne's Church Hall on the day.

**Out Of Order (Comedy):** 29th June-4th July. Little Theatre. w.littletheatre.net

**Western Park Festival:** Sat 4th July.

**Armed Forces Day Parade:** 4th July. City Centre. Cathedral 11.45. Free event.

**Showcase Music Festival:** 11 July. Crows Nest. 12 noon. Bands call 0116 262 8826 to book spot. Free.

**Record Breakers Pledge Day:** 11 July. Sign up at Westcotes, New Parks, Brite & Fosse Libraries.

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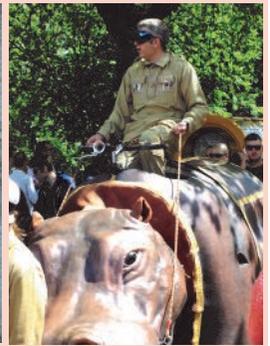
## MESSING ABOUT ON THE RIVER

Over twenty thousand people attended this year's annual Riverside Festival.

The festival which is held along the banks of the River Soar, Castle Gardens, Bede Park and Western Boulevard is Leicester's biggest free event.

This year the ever popular Dragon Boat challenge dominated Saturday whilst the Sea cadets, diving and rescue demonstrations along with a floating jazz band all proved to be crowd pullers.

The Arts Street Market was crammed as crowds made their way through to the music stage for the local bands or on to the packed food area or the arts and crafts entertainment in Bede Park.



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# BRAUNSTONE HALL

During the past few years there have been numerous attempts to find new users for Braunstone Hall. Let us hope that current £2 million renovation plans bear fruit.

Over the centuries there were various owners of the manor of Braunstone including, for a time, the famous Hastings family. Ownership having passed to the Winstanley family at the time of the English Civil War, it was they who decided to build the current Braunstone Hall in 1776.

Interestingly the family decided to use a local Leicester builder, William Oldham, who worked using local Leicestershire brick and Swithland slates. This was remarkable at a time when the employment of London based architects and designers was all the rage. The famed walled garden became the family kitchen garden with its attendant fruit trees.

Faced with the need for new homes in the aftermath of the First World War, Leicester City Council cast its eyes on the Winstanley estate at Braunstone as a location for new housing and began to consider compulsory purchase. Eventually in the 1920's the Winstanleys agreed to sell. Houses were built on large swathes of the estate and

Braunstone Hall opened as a school in 1932.

During World War Two the Hall and its surrounds found several wartime uses including as a base for the local Home Guard. Trenches were dug for air raid protection and in February 1944 American troops arrived in preparation for the D Day landings.

Braunstone Hall continued to be used as a school right up to 1996. Inevitably in such historic surroundings legends of local ghosts began to appear. Frequent sightings were reported of a young girl called May who died of tuberculosis at the age of eighteen. It is not quite clear whether May was in service at the Hall or a member of the Winstanley family.

Other stories are told of a ghostly horse drawn carriage clattering down the drive to the Hall.

So today the Grade Two listed building contemplates its future, standing at the centre of one of our City's largest parks. It certainly has an historic past.

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## KNOTT'S LANDING

5... 4... 3.... 2.... 1.... **Thunderbirds are Go!** Never before has a countdown been so exciting. Thunderbirds is proof, should it be needed, that you can't keep a good idea down. Suddenly Saturday teatime TV had something more than just endless talent shows to keep us interested. Until ITV decided to move it to 8am... losing a massive grown up audience and presumably bowing to the power of the talent show and its advertisers.



When you hear that they have remade Thunderbirds, part of you jumps for joy. Thunderbirds was good, it was not too scary but scary enough, there were good guys and bad guys, glamour and grunt. It was wobbly and puppety but it was good enough to keep being shown way into the 1980s and beyond.

I enjoyed the new version even after they shunted it to 8am and then off to CITV. Yep, lets keep those kids shows on the endless loop of the kiddie ghetto channels. How can we possibly keep kids safe if their programmes are on a mainstream family channel before 6pm? Oh.. you mean the advertisers don't like it? They think grown ups can't cope with a half hour kids tv show between talent and murder mystery shows? Oh well, that's alright then.

As mother to a small boy I am acutely aware that a lot of the stuff marketed at him is from films and games that he will not be able to watch or play for a good few years yet! Call of Duty has an 18 certificate for a reason, it's not suitable for children and yet there are plastic COD toys in the supermarket toy aisle. Guardians of the Galaxy, Ninja Turtles and Iron Man have all been turned into franchises by the movie studios and then suddenly, as an afterthought, they bring out a cartoon because most of their audience is too young to actually go to the cinema to watch the film they have made. So

Thunderbirds was welcome relief on several levels, most importantly they didn't know if it would work so it is still too early for there to be merchandise. No nagging, no adverts selling Tracy Island, no Thunderbird 4 to track down in a supermarket in Clitheroe because it's the last one left in the nation.

We can just watch it because we like it, although I did look on YouTube for the Blue Peter episodes where Anthea Turner made Tracy Island... Just in case!  
*Helen Knott*

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## NO CARS - BETTER ATMOSPHERE

As I sit here on Braunstone Gate, I'm enjoying the emerging local 'cafe culture' which some local shop owners, according to your article, 'Braunstone Gate Facelift', seem to think is not possible here. The one thing that would significantly improve my experience would be the absence of traffic. If it weren't for the noise of the traffic passing, and the smell of the fumes, I would definitely be sitting outside.

Some shop owners seem to be under the impression that they would lose business if the street were pedestrianised. Yet evidence shows that people arriving by foot on average visit more businesses in a shopping district than people arriving by car.

Like the bar owners mentioned in your article, I think pedestrianisation would be good for local shops and businesses, good for promoting a community atmosphere, and have health benefits in getting people more active and improving air quality in the area (which I've read is atrocious). I'm all for it!  
*Mel Gould*

## WESTERN PARK GOLF COURSE - UPDATE

At a Council meeting in January Western Park Golf Course received a stay of execution when many local councillors spoke out in support of keeping the course open. One by one they spoke of the benefits the course brings to the community and what a shame it would be to waste this asset without at least exploring every possible way of keeping it open.

Following this, a decision was made to delay rubber stamping the closure of the course and a motion (raised by Councillor Susan Barton) to "refer the decision back to the executive to allow further business plans to be considered" was unanimously backed by the whole Council. It was decided that there would be no deadline to this and business plans would be considered right up to the proposed closure at the end of October 2015.

The committee at Western Park Golf Course is now putting the finishing touches to a business plan that we hope will convince Sir Peter Soulsby to keep the course open. Key objectives are to remove the financial burden on the Council, to demonstrate a self-sustainable financial plan to allow the course to continue, to maintain the course as an asset of the people of Leicester.

In order to sway the decision of the Mayor we will require the backing of local councillors and the community. Whatever happens the course will be open until the end of October but we hope to keep it open for many years to come.

*Martin Cobb*

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# DMU Square Mile

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# REACH OUT LEICESTER

*A new community network for cancer patients and their families in Leicester*

De Montfort University's Square Mile and Macmillan Cancer Support have created a new project that will connect people affected by cancer.

By getting involved in Reach Out Leicester, cancer patients and their families will be invited to regular public meetings to shape the project and the opportunities available.

Join our first meeting and shape the ideas for Reach Out Leicester:

**Reach Out Leicester Forum  
Monday June 29th  
De Montfort University**

Two sessions from:  
**2pm to 4pm and 6pm to 8pm**

Anyone wishing to book a space or join the Reach Out Network database please contact:

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**DMU  
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# Newfoundpool Forum

**Have your say about what is happening in your community!**

**DMU Square Mile is working with residents to establish a forum where people can highlight some of the issues they face in the community and work towards solutions with the help of DMU, Leicester City Council, Leicestershire Police and Leicestershire NHS Partnership.**

**DMU Square Mile will help residents grow ideas and establish projects for the community; with the support of the city council, local NHS and the Police.**

**Anyone wishing to join the forum should contact Square Mile [squaremile@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:squaremile@dmu.ac.uk), or by phone - (0116) 257 7135.**

# DIABETES EXERCISE RESEARCH PROJECT



**We would like to invite you to take part in our diabetes exercise research project.**

Our research involves a combination of cycling and resistance exercises. By using a cardio and resistance exercise program we will be able to assess immunological and physiological parameters in Diabetes mellitus volunteers.

## What is the purpose of the study?

As part of the growing research into Diabetes Mellitus the School of Pharmacy at De Montfort University are working to investigate the effects of a combined exercise program (cardio and resistance) on blood glucose, metabolic and immunological parameters that could help you with the management of diabetes and increase your insulin sensitivity. This research involves a combination of two types of exercises and this is where we need your help. We would like to invite you to take part in this study which will help us to understand the role of exercise and how it can help people with diabetes to maintain a healthy body weight, to possibly manage your blood glucose level more effectively and increase insulin sensitivity.

## What are the possible benefits of taking part?

As a result of being involved in this study you will receive health and fitness information about yourself including fitness tests and body measurement. You may also witness a decrease in your Hba1c levels and an increase in your insulin sensitivity as well as other general improvements to your health.

If you are interested in the Diabetes Exercise Research Project and would like to volunteer you can come down to De Montfort University and speak to one of the research members in person, located at the **Hawthorn Building, Room HB1.29**.

Alternatively, please contact Leicester School of Pharmacy:

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## ALBUM LAUNCHED INTO ORBIT

West Leicester musical sisters Laura and Mary-Anne Radcliffe successfully achieved orbit as they launched their debut studio album at a special festival.

250 attended the sell out gig held outdoors at The Green Place in Silbey at the end of May, as Mia and the Moon and their musical guests entertained a packed and enthusiastic audience.

The girls are currently promoting their album on a 14 date tour.

Fall Awake by Mia and the Moon can be ordered online at [www.miaandthemoon.com](http://www.miaandthemoon.com)



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## OPEN AIR SCHOOL PETITION

An online petition to prevent the demolition of a severely vandalised but historic West Leicester landmark has been launched.

The Western Park Open Air School in Western Park could eventually face demolition if nobody comes forward with a successful business proposal to use the buildings.

The school was built between 1928 and 1930 with the original aim of helping children and young people with complex medical issues and severe breathing problems. It was based on the assumption, that clean, fresh air and a well ventilated school could help treat TB and other respiratory conditions.

The school finally closed its doors in 2005 after nearly 75 years and has been boarded up ever since. The buildings have become the target of at least two arson attacks and regular vandalism in spite of beefed up security patrols. The site has fallen into disrepair and although buyers have been sought, planning permission has, so far, not been granted due to access problems in Western Park.

The school is a grade 2 listed building but if it becomes a danger to the public the Council may have no option but to demolish it. This month they are taking steps to remove asbestos which has been loosened due to deliberate damage. Vandals have even set fire to the asbestos warning signs in the buildings.

An online petition to save the buildings has been launched with the aim of persuading the council to preserve the buildings and turn them into a community asset. Suggestions from the website included: "It would be ideal to open this as a cafe as currently there are no facilities at the park, it could become a museum for education within the city". *Jane Gambol*. "...could perfectly house a gallery, craft shop, cafe, youth club and could provide a shot in the arm for rebuilding notions of community". *Marco Scalotti*.

City Mayor Sir Peter Soulsby says there is no realistic prospect of the council developing the site themselves but they are actively seeking an outside organisation with a sustainable plan for the buildings.

To sign the petition search [www.change.org](http://www.change.org)



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## PADDLING THROUGH THE CITY

Now is the time to dip your oar in the waters of the River Soar as a new 27 mile canoe trail meanders its way through West Leicester.

Running from Trent Lock, near Long Eaton through to Narborough, the Canal and River Trust worked with British Canoeing to create the £12,000 trail which includes a range of access improvements on the river such as special platforms making it easier for canoes to be lowered into the water.

Canoeists say there are many attractions to paddling on the Soar such as the mix of rural and Victorian industrial landscapes and many backwaters as they paddle through St Margaret's or under St Augustine Rd bridge.

Andy Oughton, a member of the Trust's Central Shires waterway partnership said: "There's something very special about canoeing on the River Soar, it's a great opportunity to see Leicester from a completely different perspective. This trail will enable more people to



do just that – making it easier and more appealing for them to head into the city and beyond".

More information at [www.canalrivertrust.org](http://www.canalrivertrust.org)

## THE SCARE THAT WASN'T

Police closed Westfield Road down near St. Anne's Church for two hours on June 5th after builders found a suspicious object in the garden of the house they were working on.

Police feared the object might be an unexploded bomb and called in experts from the Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team from RAF Wittering.

The object was confirmed to be harmless and the road opened at 6pm.



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## June Police Update

**SHARK WATCH** with Sgt. Kev Sharkey  
This month has seen an Operation Tiger week of action in which several local addresses were searched and persons arrested for drug offences. Drugs, weapons, cash and stolen property have been recovered including a significant number of power tools believed to have been taken from van thefts in the area. These tools can be viewed online at [www.leics.police.uk](http://www.leics.police.uk) so please take a look and see if they are yours. This is an important part of our work which disrupts, prevents and detects crime in our community.

The Riverside Festival was well attended no doubt helped by the glorious sunny weather. It was good to see everyone using Bede Park and surrounding area in a hugely positive way. There were a few incidents of alcohol related disorder after the event closed each day and arrests were made accordingly. In response to the two previous knife related incidents, a patch walk was completed by Leicester City Council, park & city wardens, community safety, councillors, police and youth workers. The views of local people were also canvassed to improve the park for all users. We will look to be improve lighting & CCTV, clearing undergrowth, cleaning up graffiti and we will work with the city traffic wardens on Tarragon road for parking problems. You can still add your views for the West Leicester NPA Westcotes ward via the force website.

The derelict school on Western Park has suffered from a spate of vandalism and has recently been discovered to be an asbestos risk. Western park police have raised this at the Joint Action Group with the city council to ensure better signage to warn of the dangers. The asbestos will shortly be removed by the council. We have also raised that the fencing needs improvements to stop young people from entering the grounds. Please ensure that you speak to your children to warn them of the dangers of going into the fenced off grounds of Western Park School.

Fosse ward held a health & wellbeing event along with Leicester Riders and Leicester Tigers as well as LCFC which was a great way to build links with the kids. About 75 kids attended in all which was followed a few days later by the Big Lunch event on the Rally park. This saw about 600 people come out and have a mass picnic in the sunshine and even saw the Lord Mayor come along to give his support.

# Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



**June is when gardens long to explode with incendiary colour.** But in recent years gardeners and designers have lost their nerve, opting for safe pastel shades or mono-colour beds of insipid blue or virginal white. Now garden pundits, and exhibitors at flower shows like Chelsea have, once again, decided it's ok to be bright and brash. It's also no longer a sin to use the Marmite of the designers palette, orange! So let's celebrate this often maligned colour and Tango our gardens.

Some of the most vibrant oranges are old favourites like marigolds. Forget those weedy mildew prone pot marigolds your Granny grew and try "Pacific Flame Beauty". Their two tone petals marry orange with shades of lemon and red.



Pacific Flame Beauty

For more pizzazz try *Gazania* "Sunbathers" in borders or planters. Another old South African

worth rediscovering is *Kniphofia* or Red Hot Poker. *K. rooperi* has a deep orange firework of a flower that adds height to the middle of a border. It'll grow in most spots that aren't waterlogged, but they can be a haven for snails that are partial to their flower buds.

For something even more exotic try canna lilies. There are dozens of cultivars to choose from, many with multi coloured and patterned flowers - how about the delicious "Orange Chocolate". But the orange crown should probably go to the *Gerbera* with cultivars like "Revolution Orange". Like Cannas this half hardy perennial will only survive the mildest of winters but is well worth the effort of lifting and storing over the winter.



Orange Chocolate

Hardier but no less beautiful are *Alstroemeria*. These clump forming perennials don't like having their roots disturbed, but do make great cut flowers. The variety "Orange Glory" would steal the show from those dull pastel shades we've grown too comfy with. Go on, embrace your inner orange this Summer.

© Tony Huxley



# Martin Page

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## MEL GETS SPLATTED!

Menphys shop manager Mel Gordon was nominated by trustee Jim Matthews to 'get splatted' for Menphys. This is the latest social media trend to raise funds and awareness for the local charity.

Menphys supports local children, their families and young people with disabilities and complex learning needs. When Mel found out she had been nominated she saw it as a great way to fundraise.

On Friday Morning, 15th May, crowds gathered outside the Menphys shop on Carlisle Street pledging sums of money to splat Mel. She says: "Anything for Menphys!". Mel was then covered in a mixture of cream and eggs.

Anyone wishing to sponsor Mel, visit her in at the well stocked Menphys Shop in Carlisle Street, alternatively if you would like to get involved in Fundraising please call the Fundraising office on 01455 323 012.

To learn more about Menphys please visit [www.menphys.org.uk](http://www.menphys.org.uk)  
Tracey Morris.



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# BRAIN *TAZERS*

1		2		3		4
5						
6						
7						

**1 Across:** Palladium bill **1 Down:** Bradgate Park Butchery **2:** Rolling musically **3:** Self image **4:** Online video sharing **5:** Tortilla **6:** Japanese massage **7:** Nightwear © *Paul Towers*

		6		2	
3			1		5
	9		8	7	6
	3				8
	7	5	3		2
6					9
1		3	9	7	
8			6		4
	2		1		

- Which word can be placed after these words to make 2 fruits? **CUSTARD** and **PINE**.
- '**Horseplay pub pair**' is an anagram of which 3 precious stones?
- Which two letters should appear next? **A, B, E, F, I, J, O, P** --?
- Which number should appear next? **6, 14, 10, 18, 14, 22, 18, 26, 22** ?
- What word connects the following? **Top, Centre Focus, Target**.
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