



END OF THE EMPIRE?



More on Page 4

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Hello From The Editor

This month the big local story is Lidl's proposed demolition of the Empire Hotel to make way for a new supermarket. We went along to the public meeting to find out more about it and the divided local reaction.

Roger Blackmore delves into Leicester's general stropiness when it came to inoculating the population against smallpox, Helen Knott is prepping for the Zombie invasion which is surely coming our way and our Gardening God, Tony Huxley, has a way of kick starting your runner beans.

St. Anne's Church on Letchworth Road celebrates it's centenary this year alongside a huge fundraising effort to rebuild the community centre and our friends at De Montfort University's Square Mile Project are looking for men with Type 2 Diabetes to take part in a new study. We also offer them our congratulations on gaining a national community contribution award for their work.

Rod Smart from Hinckley Road Police Station has his latest update, the parking permit problems rumble on in the letters page and as always the Brain Tazers squat on the inside back cover, like an evil frog with a machine gun... or something like that.

If you have a local story, please drop us a line at: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

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Events Diary

Zumba Class Tues. 7.15 - 8.15 at New College. Call Sarah - 07810 307 113.

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

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

International Folk Dancing: Monthly 2nd & 4th Fri. St. Anne's Hall. 2-4pm. T: Geoff on 0116 285 8352.

Peter Crebbin & his Cool Swing Band: Café Cino at Hilton Hotel Meridian. 6th & 27th April. 1pm-3:30pm.

Leic Farmers Market: 1st Thurs of the month. C-Centre.

Tea & History - Going to the Shops: 4th April. Newark Houses Mus. From 1.30pm. Free.

The Bricks of Burstan: April 2nd. Upstairs at the Western. 7.30pm. w: upstearsatthewestern.co.uk

Jane Eyre: April 4th. Upstairs at the Western.

Hairspray: Until 5th April. Curve Theatre.

Grease: 3-5th April. Peepul Centre. 7.00pm.

Superhero Fun Run: 6th April. Abbey Park. Starts 11.00am. w: superherofunrun.co.uk

Hobby & Pastimes Steam Day: 13th April. Abbey Pumping Station. From £2.50.

Hoppy Easter Events: 17th April. Guildhall. 11.am.

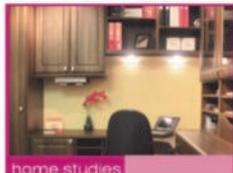
St. George's Festival: 26th April. Noon. Cultural Quarter. Free.

The Frog & the Princess: 26th April. Curve. 11am & 1.00pm.

St. Anne's Centenary Events: Back page.

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END OF THE EMPIRE?

An historic West Leicester landmark will be demolished if plans by a supermarket giant get the go-ahead.

Cut price supermarket chain Lidl hope to "put a spade in the ground before Christmas" in their bid to build a new superstore on Fosse Road North.

The plans include knocking down the Empire Hotel and the St. Augustine's church ruins, replacing them with an ultra modern 1063msq store and creating 40 local jobs in the process.



Lidl failed to get planning permission for a store in Woodgate in 2006 on the old Premier Screw site, but now they are back with a new project..

Lidl's property director, Robert Beaumont, said: "We spent eighteen months looking at this area and are about to submit 'remove and replace' plans for a purpose built unit and 67 car parking spaces. The application should take thirteen weeks."

The site plans and building specifications were on show at the Fosse Neighbourhood Centre in March as part of a campaign by Lidl to gain local support.

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Many of those attending were in favour of the development and signed a petition endorsing the project; however concerns were raised by several local people about the demolition of the Empire Hotel.

Michaela Butler who lives behind the proposed development said: "It will affect the surrounding property prices. If I knew there was a planning application I wouldn't have bought my house. The Empire's a beautiful building, nearly two hundred years old, of historical importance – too important to be built upon. How many supermarkets do we need?"



Michaela Butler

Stuart Bailey the Chairman of the Leicester Civic Society, said on their website: "There is plenty of land, so Lidl could incorporate the hotel building but not destroy it..." The Society is running a campaign to stop the plans in their current form but still keep the Empire as part of Lidl's development.

The Empire was built in the 1830's as a bath house before being converted into a family home,

later becoming the Empire Hotel. Over recent years it has fallen into disrepair following failed attempts to convert it into a restaurant and a hotel.

St. Augustine's Church, which shut in 2001, was severely damaged following an arson attack in 2004 and has been on the market until recently. Lidl acknowledges the local historical importance of the Empire building and intend to have a prominent display of the site's history in the entrance of the proposed store.



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Even today, for some, vaccinations are a contentious subject. But 150 years ago, in Leicester, it was even more controversial...

The Anti Vaccinations League

When vaccination against the dreaded disease of smallpox was made compulsory in 1853 there was initially little controversy and, in any event, the law was not all that widely enforced.

Some ten years later however much medical opinion pushed for stricter enforcement and, in Leicester in particular, opposition to compulsory vaccination began to mount. This activity increased when an act of 1867 gave magistrates the right to fine and imprison parents who refused to have their children vaccinated. Even stronger enforcement legislation was passed in 1871.

Leicester was noted for the strength of opposition to vaccination during this period with over 6,000 prosecutions reputedly taking place in the 1870's and 1880's. A number of these cases provoked demonstrations in the streets and there were numerous local "martyrs" to the cause.



The widow of a local doctor, Mrs Wrigley, wrote to the mayor informing him that she refused to obey the law and was subsequently sent to prison. The Leicester Mercury of the day reported "a numerous crowd in Gallowtree Gate" protesting as two men and a woman were carted off to the police cells.

The Radical Liberal MP for Leicester, Peter Alfred Taylor, first elected to represent the city in 1862, was initially in favour of compulsory vaccination but was to change his mind and become a staunch opponent of compulsion. In 1885, Leicester hosted a massive demonstration which included members of the Anti-Vaccination league from many other towns and cities throughout the country.

It is interesting that largely as a result of all this agitation a Royal Commission was set up which eventually resulted in the end of compulsion and the acceptance of the idea of exemption on the grounds of conscience.

Thus the first conscientious objectors came to be recognized in our laws.

It was this same principle that came to be applied to those who objected to conscription when it was introduced some years later during the First World War.

Roger Blackmore

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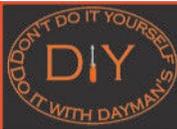


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KNOTT'S LANDING

I have a problem. I have become too good at preservation. Somewhere inside me there is a gene that urges me to preserve food. I used to be a Girl Guide and our motto was 'Be Prepared' but this is ridiculous. Does my DNA think, as they say in Game of Thrones, Winter is coming, or is it for famine, nuclear attack or the zombie invasion? Whatever it is it drives me to pick blackberries, to strip elderberries from trees, to grow green tomatoes on my allotment along with misshaped cucumbers which I then turn into preserves of various sorts.



The trouble is it's getting out of hand. Storage has become an issue. First I got him indoors to put a shelf up. It's quite a long shelf. Then another one went up, then another. Now I have a wall of preserves! Not only will there be food for the coming climate catastrophe but it will provide insulation too! People walk in there and look dazed at the bizarre mixture of things. Long time friends look slightly twitchy and run out the door if I ask them if they like chutney with their cheese. They know what's coming. Another pot of the Hugh Fearnly Whittingstall chutney from a couple of years ago. Or maybe you'll be lucky enough to get offered a jar of gooseberry jam from last year!

There are still over 10lbs of gooseberries in the freezer. We are sick of them, and the jam. I am alone in loving the Mirabelle plum jam I have up there and marmalade appears to have fallen out of favour too. On the plus side I cannot make enough blackcurrant or raspberry jam for my small child and his Daddy is particularly fond of the bread and butter pickles in there.

Just occasionally I find something lurking, something that has been in there for some time, forgotten, lost, alone. Sometimes it's a brick of dried out brown jam of indeterminate nature. Not nice. The most recent find was the rumtopf I started a couple of years ago. At the bottom was a brown sludge of fruit based stuff which was not pretty. It was, however, all floating in what has become the best fruity rum I have ever tasted and there is a giant jar full of it hic.....

So if the zombie invasion happens come over to mine and we can throw pots of chutney at them, use strawberry jam to pretend we've already been zombified and in the worst case scenario use the rum to make a flame thrower! Girl Guides are always prepared. *Helen Knott*

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PARKING SCHEME COMMENT:

I am a resident who has lived on Barclay Street for over 17 years on the section that hasn't been included in the recent parking permit scheme. I must point out I am actually in favour of the scheme.

What I cannot understand is why the local council have only introduced the scheme to part of the area.

I am also having major problems now with parking on my street due to other residents who haven't purchased permits and commuters now parking their cars at this end.

I have contacted the council about the issue but was just asked to email them about my concerns.

I was interested to see if you have any updates or further information following on from your article?

Michelle Twigger



COUNCILLOR'S RESPONSE

The consultation on residents' parking on the Western Park end of the streets off Fosse Road South should begin during April and the results compiled the following month. It's really important that everyone responds so that the Council has an accurate gauge of local opinion and need.

What happens next will depend on the outcome of the survey which will show what the majority of residents want. If it's decided to have a residents' parking scheme it will take a few months to go through the legal process of issuing Traffic Regulation Orders, ordering and installing parking ticket machines and so on. If it's what local residents' want, then a residents' parking scheme could be up and running from December.

Cllr Dr Susan Barton

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CIMA

Are you a male type 2 diabetic using insulin?

Male type 2 diabetics who use insulin are being invited to take part in an exercise study that will deliver health benefits while contributing to world-class research.

De Montfort University is hoping to recruit volunteers in a project which looks at how exercise impacts on diabetes. The study will go towards the long-term aim of creating an artificial pancreas that will benefit diabetics worldwide.

Leicester resident Julian Wright, 50, who has Type 1 diabetes, has been through the six-week study. He said: "I lost more than a stone in weight over the six weeks with DMU. Taking part in the study also gave me a real sense of achievement that I'm doing something positive and giving something back. I realise how important this is. I've got kids and the chances them becoming type 1 is high. Hopefully this study will work towards something that will benefit them and others in the long run."



The project consists of exercise on a static bike and levers and weights training, twice a week for 6 weeks. Volunteers are also paid £120 for a completed study. Volunteers have to pass a health check to participate and lots of measurements and a small number of blood samples are taken as part of the study.

Julian added: "You take the study seriously but working with the team at DMU is real good laugh, they make you feel part of family.

"I have learned so much about my condition and made me confident enough to question what's best for me I'm terms of treatment. Diabetes will never be reversed for me but what I've learned has benefitted me and the researchers and improved my mental health.

"I've managed to keep off the weight I have lost, I'm more diet conscious and my blood pressure and Cholesterol have improved significantly."

The exercise in the study is moderate and low risk. The project aims to compare Type 2 insulin users with type 1 insulin users and type 2 tablet takers. The only group DMU is short of is type 2 insulin users.

Anyone interested in getting involved should email: mcharlton@dmu.ac.uk

Learn how to tackle homophobia in sport

DMU Square Mile is delighted to announce that we can offer sports coaches in the area of FREE training to tackle homophobia in sport.



Leicester LGBT Centre was successful in obtaining funding to run this project with the Ben Cohen Stand Up Foundation and DMU Square Mile. The Tackling Homophobia in Sport (THIS) project's main aim is to work towards eliminating homophobia from sports. All teachers who teach sports, head teachers, and sports coaches who teach youth sports are invited in order to raise awareness of LGBT bullying in sport (e.g. the negative use of the word gay) and its long-term and damaging effects.

Many coaches want to do the right thing by lesbian and gay young people, but they feel they lack the tools to do it, or worry that they won't get the support of colleagues if they try. In sports clubs where children are explicitly taught that homophobic bullying is wrong, rates of such bullying are reduced dramatically. Given the publicity that some gay athletes have been receiving about 'coming out' in sport, it is timely for sports clubs to act now and enhance the ways that bullying is tackled. If you are interested in taking part please book your place as soon as possible by emailing squaremile@dmu.ac.uk

Please visit the website here for more information: <https://helenowton.wix.com/thisproject>



Share your experiences of asthma

Academics at DMU are studying the experiences of asthma in sports men and women and serious exercisers and looking at implications for self-care and healthcare.

We are looking for non-elite sports men and women to take part in interviews that could lead to findings which will help contribute to improving health and wellbeing of asthma sufferers.

If you are interested in taking part, please email squaremile@dmu.ac.uk

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DMU Square Mile wins national award



An unswerving commitment to using its knowledge and resources to benefit the public good has earned the De Montfort University (DMU) Square Mile project a Guardian University Award for outstanding positive contribution to the local community.

The awards recognise and reward projects in universities that have the potential to inspire others and demonstrate genuine innovation

in higher education as well as meaningful impact inside their institutions.

DMU Square Mile utilises a network of student volunteers and academic experts to run projects that have a positive effect on the lives of people in the west of Leicester.

At a glittering award ceremony in London judges presented the "Community Contribution" award to DMU Square Mile for its record-breaking work with The Rik Basra Leukaemia Campaign to encourage people to sign up to the UK stem cell register.

Underlining the exceptional nature of its work, DMU Square Mile had also been shortlisted in the same category for its Homework Club, which mobilises 200 DMU students in 17 schools, mainly in the west of the city, to provide one-to-one mentoring and learning support for pupils.

DMU Square Mile is the brainchild of the university's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dominic Shellard, who said: "Students and staff at DMU come to DMU to make a difference. DMU Square Mile exemplifies this. This award – and our other shortlisted entry – is testament to DMU's dedication to ensuring higher education is

fundamental to bringing about positive change for the public good."



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March Police Update

The Smart View with Sgt. Rod Smart

On 31st January a burglary took place at an address on Vaughan Street where a small quantity of tobacco was stolen. A 23 year old man of no fixed abode has been arrested and charged with the burglary and other offences. He has been remanded in custody.

On the evening of 8th February an incident took place on Rowan Street at a house party. A number of males entered the address uninvited and using force. As a result of the scuffle that took place, two men (not connected with the address) received quite serious injuries. 6 people have been arrested and interviewed. Extensive enquiries have been conducted by Detectives, however, there has been insufficient independent evidence to prosecute anyone. We would like to reassure local residents such incidents are rare and that Newfoundpool is normally a quiet and safe area.

Between the 8 and 9th February several cars were scratched on Warren Street. A 23 year old local man has been charged with criminal damage to three cars.

On 14th February, a warrant was executed under the Misuse of Drugs Act on Latimer Street. Cannabis was found to be growing there and a forty eight year old local man was arrested. The man is currently on bail pending further enquiries.

For a considerable amount of time, the residents of Battenberg Road have suffered from antisocial and criminal behaviour around one of the houses, caused by the occupants and visitors to the address. The local beat team have invested a considerable amount of effort into tackling the behaviour and have worked closely with the housing association to resolve the problems that they were causing. We are pleased to report that both occupants are currently remanded in custody awaiting trial and they have now been evicted from the address. We would like to thank the local residents for their assistance and patience.

Recently, with the improved weather, we have noticed an increase in the number of motorcycles or mopeds being stolen around the area. Owners are urged to take suitable crime prevention measures, such as locking them inside a garage or shed (if available) and securing them with a quality chain to an immovable object in a well lit area. Local police stations have locks and ground anchors for sale at heavily discounted rates and can offer crime prevention advice.

Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



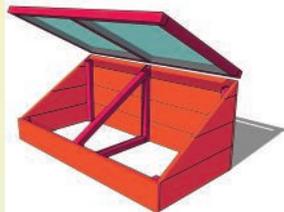
You don't need a greenhouse to start growing from seed this spring. Yesterday my six year old excitedly showed me a runner bean seed he'd germinated at school. They'd grown the seeds in plastic wallets taped to the classroom window so the leaves and roots could be seen developing. This leguminous lab rat will hopefully survive to adulthood as it gets potted and added to the contents of the kitchen window sill, or what my wife has dubbed the "nature shelf".

Seeing a plant germinate still gives me the same thrill my son got. And thrills don't come much cheaper than a few seeds and some compost. A couple of pots and a packet of basil seed can keep a kitchen stocked with a years worth of fresh herbs. Just sprinkle a dozen seeds on top of a 4" pot of moistened compost,



cover with a fine dusting of compost (I like to use a garden sieve for this bit, but then I'm fussy). Secure a polythene bag over the top and let nature take its course. Remove the bag when the first leaves come through and away you go. Coriander is just as easy.

In the absence of a heated greenhouse a well lit windowsill is more than adequate to germinate a host of half hardy, tender annual flowers and veg. Tomatoes, peppers, gazanias, pelargonium, tagetes and impatiens are all ideal candidates for a windowsill start. Once the plants are large enough to prick out they need to be grown on and hardened off in a cold frame. These are both cheap to buy or easy to make. I've found my old wooden crate topped with an old pane of secondary glazing works as well as the aluminium and Perspex frames I'd purchased.



So if a six year old can do it - what's stopping you?

Tony Huxley



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1		2		3		4
5						
6						
7						

Across: 1. Forceful and extreme 5. Officer 6. Territorial jurisdiction of a bishop 7. Idiom **Down:** 1. Resolved 2. Ancient jar 3. Circus swing 4. Permission.

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

1. Decode these ciphers: 360 D in a Y, 26 L of the A, 206 B in the H S.
2. "Floral Soya Dip" is an anagram of which notable day?
3. The next sentence is false. The previous sentence is true. Are these sentences true or false?
4. Add one word to make three new phrases. Ground, Fan, Strip
5. Why is this series correct? A, B, C, D, E, K (Answers at www.westernparkgazette.co.uk)

The Tale of Tin Annie

St. Anne's at 100

On the 25th April 1914 a newly erected building, which had been moved from Evington to Letchworth Road, held its first church service and was dedicated as St. Anne's Church.

The building became known as Tin Annie and whilst a new brick built church was dedicated 20 years later "Tin Annie" became the Church Hall.



Over the years changes have been made to the Hall but the central part is still the original tin building. After 100 years it is falling apart but despite this the building is now very much a Community Centre and in constant use. With this in mind a Fund Raising Campaign has been launched to rebuild the central part of the Hall.

As a starter there is £90,000 already towards the £250,000 target. Hopefully West Leicester will give full support to the events and back this campaign to make these much needed improvements to this local Community facility.

When applying for outside funding it is always advisable to be able to put forward as much as possible towards the project. This will be an ongoing programme throughout this year and regular Programmes of Events will be published with contact details.

Michael T J Walker

Community Hall Fund Raising

April 25th: 6.00pm. Centenary Celebration Service of our original Church, now the Community Church Hall followed by refreshments. All Welcome.

May 3rd: Mothers' Union Spring Fair and from 7.00pm to 7.30pm enjoy a little Old Time Music Hall. Hot food followed by an hour of musical fun and frivolity from the Tudor Choir. Ticket entrance: £10

4th May: 3.00pm. Bishop Tim celebrates the

launch of our Centenary with a Special Service in St Anne's Church followed by refreshments. All Welcome.

June 7th: 7.45pm: 'Pop Up' Restaurant in the Community Hall. Three course meal plus one bottle of wine per couple.

Admission by ticket only. Cost: £25.00 per ticket. Enquiries from Cathy Harrell. Tel: 078 9112 7481 For more information contact Cathy: Tel: 0789 1127 481 or Michael Walker: Tel: 0116 224 6047.

Getting Battered!

The fundraising has already started as dozens of children from local schools and their mums and dads descended on the community centre to get stuck into hundreds of pancakes.

The Shrove Tuesday event has been running for many years raising money for charity. This year the funds are going towards the community centre restoration appeal.



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