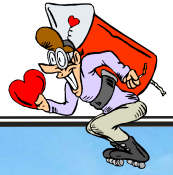


Western Park & Fosse Way Gazette

News-Views and Advertising for the Western Park Area
No 20 Feb 2011 www.westernparkgazette.co.uk



Fallen Arches



More inside

Greetings From The Editor

Welcome to our first issue of 2011!

This month, as the controversy over the proposed Western Park Special School development rumbles on, Sue Barton from the Leicester Civic Society reminds us of the buildings history. There's also another development planned, this time in Braunstone Gate which is causing a few rumbles of discontent. We also get to grips with Helen Knott as she discovers the best chips in West Leicester and our local historian, Roger Blackmore, takes us back to a time when Parliament actually sat in Leicester.

Do you remember the demolition of the old Co-op Diary chimney in 1993? In a blast from the past - we have the pictures! We also get up to date with the latest news from Hinckley Road Policing Unit, we find out about the greening of Nevanthor Road, Tony Huxley, gets busy in the garden and Richard Perry looks at this years must have techie toys.

We have a great competition where you can win a meal for two at Loaf on Braunstone Gate.

And don't forget, you can join us on line at www.westernparkgazette.co.uk

Sharon e: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

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The Western Park Gazette

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The Cerebra grant scheme, for example, makes direct and lasting improvements to the lives of thousands of children. Cerebra acts as a catalyst to provide interaction between professional research and the insights of parents so that they are working in partnership. For more information phone 01267 244 200 or visit the website www.Cerebra.org.uk



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. Term-time

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

7.15 - 9.00pm: Tai Chi with Rick.

2nd Tues: 2.00 - 4.00pm: Mothers' Union Speakers

3rd Tues: 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: Mothers' Union 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: 11.30 - 1.00pm: Lunch club.

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

Tuesdays 10.00am: Mums and Toddlers & 1.30 pm:

Over 60's Club. (**St. Paul's**)

At St. Paul's Worship Centre

Saturday 12th Feb -10 am to 12 noon: Coffee Morning for

Diocese of Mount Kilimanjaro. 10 am to 2 pm Table-top sale in aid of Church funds.

4th-6th March - "A Weekend Away At Home" with

The Rev'd Canon Mike Harrison

March 12: Spring Fayre 10-2pm.

Church OF THE MARTYRS EVENTS

Westcotes Drive Leicester

Sat 19th Feb: 10.00am - 10- 12.00. BREAKFAST in Church, 10.30am Lift Off in Church Hall

Tue 22nd Feb: 8.00am. Guide Thinking Day Service in Church followed by Breakfast in Hall.

Tue 1st March: Small Groups.

Thurs 3rd March: 10.00am - 11.30am. Shake, Rattle and Roll in Church.

Fri 4th March: 8.00pm - 9.30pm. Front Up Youth Club for 11-17 year olds at Robert Hall Baptist Church.

Sat 5th. 19th March: 10.00am - 12.00 noon, Tomatoes BREAKFAST in Church.

For more information visit www.martyrs.org.uk

Parish of St. Peter

21 Hinckley Road Leicester

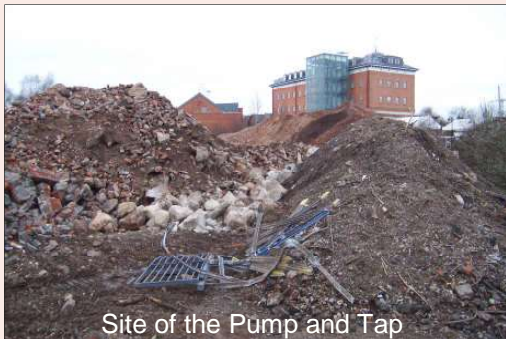
Saturday 5 March: 10:30am - 2.00pm. St Peter's Parish Bazaar, in the Parish Centre. Stalls, refreshments, raffle etc.

17th March-7th April: celebrating the Eucharist with Fr. Eddie Jaroz and Rev Chris Oxley at St. Anne's Church, Letchworth Road.

For more information contact St. Peter's Parish office on 0116 251 9802

FALLEN ARCHES

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



Site of the Pump and Tap

The section of the blue brick railway arches behind the rubble of the Pump and Tap were controversially demolished just before Christmas and work is continuing to prepare the ground.

Following a Planning Committee meeting on Jan 18th, permission for the DeMontfort University to build the complex was granted, but the committee also agreed to remind the University that the centre should also be open to the public and that local residents should receive a discount for using the facilities.

The two storey leisure centre and gym includes a café and six land swimming pool, which the University hopes will encourage more students to take courses in Leicester.



Part of the bridge still standing

HOLDING AN EVENT?

E: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

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Events Diary

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

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

Knitting Circle Meet every Thursday from 1pm at Mary Clare, 4 Shaftsbury Rd. Tel: 0116 255 1866.

Leicester Badminton Club New College Leicester Mixed abilities - all ages. Tues 7pm, term time, £3.00. Tel: Michael Cheung 07967 592 208.

Indoor Bowls Club: Fosse N'hood Centre. Mondays from 10.30am. Contact Centre.

Leicester Comedy Festival: Runs until 19th Feb. Details at www.comedy-festival.co.uk

Free Computer Courses: Westcotes Library: 0116 299 5510

J'taime Burlesque Show: 13th Feb at the Musician, Clyde St. 8.00pm - 1.30am.

Frosty Fun: 24th Feb. Frosty fun for kids in the Guild Hall. 11-3.00pm. £2.00 for activities.

Roman Bath time Rituals: 19th-27th Feb. Jewry Wall Mus. Find out about the Romans. Free

Hitchhiker's Guide to our Galaxy: 19th -27th Feb at the Space Centre. 10-5pm.

Evening of Mozart: 12th March. St. James the Greater. 7.30pm.

WP Ward Meeting: 28th March. Dovelands. 7.00pm

Farmers Market: 1st April. City Centre.

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We are used to seeing Parliamentary debate in the House of Commons in London, but not many of us know that Parliament used to sit in Leicester.

FIRE FAGGOTS AND BATS

The importance of Leicester during the first half of the Fifteenth Century is witnessed by the fact that parliament met in the city on no less than three occasions during the period.

In 1414, the year before the historic Battle of Agincourt, Parliament met here to discuss the suppression of the Lollards, who had thrived in the county for some years during the time of John Wycliffe.

Its proposal to burn the Lollards at the stake, led it to become known as the 'Fire and Faggots' Parliament.

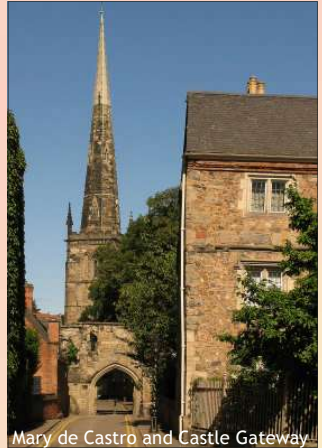
Wycliffe, a reformist vicar from Lutterworth, known for translating the Bible from Latin to English and his followers demanded the reform of Western Christianity. A very upsetting notion for the political elite of the day.

Twelve years later, 'The Parliament of Bats' met at Leicester Castle. This acquired its name, not from the little flying furry mammals, but from the clubs which Members carried with them for personal protection, as they were not allowed to carry swords at the sittings.

During this Parliament, Henry 6th, then a child of five was formally Knighted, along with forty other candidates, in one of the greatest displays of pomp and ceremony ever witnessed at the Church of St. Mary de Castro.

In 1540, Parliament met once again in the city. This time the venue was chosen because London was gripped by the plague and Leicester was suitably centrally located within the Kingdom.

What followed, of course, was the War of the Roses with Leicester declaring itself on the Yorkist side - not entirely surprising, since King Edward 4th was married to the widow of a Leicestershire man.
Roger Blackmore.



Mary de Castro and Castle Gateway
Picture by Rataedi

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TEACHING TEETH

Sponsored Article

Eastfield Road Dental practice has invited the children of Doveland's School to take part in their ORAL HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMME.

They are teaching children between 4 - 11 the importance of looking after their teeth and eating a healthy nutritious diet, in order to prevent tooth decay and gum disease.

Eastfield Road is striving to improve the awareness of good oral health and the importance of regular attendance at the practice to improve the dental health of the local children.

Eastfield Road is currently accepting new patients as the surgery has expanded and they have added another dentist to their experienced team.

The team consists of the principal dentist Dr Nick More, Dr G. Varma and experienced dental hygienist, Ms Sarah Cather. They are supported by a team of friendly and caring reception and nursing staff. TO ARRANGE FOR APPOINTMENTS CALL 0116 285 4188.



GET YOUR ROCKS HOT !

Restaurant Review - Hot Rock Grill

I like food. I've eaten a helluva lot of it, in a lot of restaurants. There was a place on Tunisia that served it off the back of a hairy dwarf, but enough about that.

I've tought back shark, alligator, emu, badger on a stick, even cauliflower occasionally and I've even ganneted back a few heaps of stuff off hot rocks in France or somewhere foreign. There was a fez involved and I was drunk, so it could have been anywhere.

Now, I don't have to pack up my passport or exotic headgear to do this - no, because there is a place right here in good old Leicester!

The Hot rock Grill on Braunstone Gate is a new concept in cuisine.

Okay, so the theory may be as old as man, but the idea of cooking your own food on a volcanically hot lump of igneous rock is technically still the best way to do it.

No longer do you have to send your steak back because it's under cooked. If it's still mooing, you only have yourself to blame.

Situated in the centre of Leicester's Braunstone Gate, the Hot Rock Grill offers the first chance to try food this way in the city.

A very helpful waitress explained the etiquette and dangers of using the square grey rock plates heated to over 440C in a special oven. I asked a pertinent question and she specifically told me not to lick the thing, because I looked like the sort of person who would, and it's down to me if I want to explain to a nurse in casualty why I have third degree burns to my tongue. Funny how she'd never met me but instinctively knew what I was thinking.

The menu is comprehensive, ranging from prime cuts of British beef, seafood and vegetarian options, which mercifully avoids the cardinally lazy sin of being cheese based monstrosities. The Portobello stuffed mushrooms looked like a winner and the pasta was begging for a good old chew. The Chorizo and Crayfish Gnocchi is on my 'to do' list.

I plumbed for the half cow sized lump of beef, situated dead centre in the plate, extremely tender and hissing wonderfully on the super heated rock. Cut it in pieces and the meat cooks in its own juices, maintaining and enhancing the flavour. Sharon went for the King Prawn Skewer with Salmon, a generous portion, which she said was the best she'd ever had. I believe her. She's way too fussy. Mark and Kanta went for the Tuna and the Holuummi Cheese and Peppers Skewers,

respectively, all accompanied by a selection of dips and a huge Greek Salad bigger than Corfu. 'Very nice,' they understated before vowing to come back the next day to attack the rest of the menu.

For a dining experience, this is unique in Leicester. It's simple, distinctive and not before time. It is far from being a one trick pony or a gimmick. The food is fresh and the staffs' enthusiasm and knowledge is impressive.

The Hot Rock Grill should add to Braunstone Gate's growing reputation as an area where fine dining can be experienced without breaking the bank.

Looks like you don't have to go to the High Cross to try something different any more... and there's free parking nearby. Winner!

You can view the menu on line at www.hotrockgrill.com

Richard Perry



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Western Park Open Air School

Designed by J.O. Thompson and opened in November 1930, this arts-and-crafts-style building, with separate chalet-block classrooms, was described by contemporaries as unique. "Quite unlike any ordinary school and a distinct addition to the amenities of the park as well as eminently suitable for its purpose ... harmonises admirably with its rural surroundings".

It was built following medical principles based on those of sanatoria: fresh air, rest, exercise and good food were keys to health. Pupils



spent as much time on outdoor activities as possible, even sleeping in the playground every afternoon. Glazed all around, the chalet-style classrooms, and the hall, could be opened up to the air and sunlight. Another novel feature of the school was a spray (shower) room, not just for cleanliness but as hydrotherapy, supposed to stimulate and strengthen the body. The school allowed pupils, with respiratory and other debilitating illnesses to access education.

The only way to secure long term protection for Western Park Open Air School is through the listing of this charming collection of buildings which are not only attractive and of architectural interest but also of social and medical historical interest, demonstrating the application of medical theories of the late Victorian and early twentieth centuries. Objections to the proposed over-development of the site through the creation of a care home there have focussed on the effect it would have on nearby property, failing to acknowledge the intrinsic value of the existing buildings. I suppose this is because most people are unfamiliar with the school buildings and know little of its history.

An application to English Heritage to give permanent protection to this fascinating group of buildings has just been submitted by Leicester Civic Society.

The story of the school I discovered while doing the research for the listing application was fascinating. I'm sure readers will agree the school is worthy of preservation and a suitable new use found compatible with its surroundings for future generations to enjoy, perhaps even as part of a future Western Park Conservation Area.

Dr. Sue Barton Leicester Civic Society

BRAIN TAZERS

1. You are driving down a road on a wild, wet and windy night, when you pass a bus stop and you see three people waiting. An old lady who looks as if she is about to die, your best friend and the perfect partner you've been dreaming about.

There's only space for one passenger in your car, so who would you give a lift to and why?

2. Acting on an anonymous tip off, the police raid a house to arrest a suspected murderer. They don't know what he looks like, but they know that he is inside and his name is Dave. The police burst in on a plumber, a taxi driver, an electrician and a fireman all playing cards. Without any hesitation or communication of any kind, they immediately arrest the fireman. How do they know?

3. A man lives at the top of a 20 storey block of flats. Every morning he takes the elevator down to the lobby and leaves the building. When he returns he can only travel halfway up in the lift and has to walk the rest of the way - unless it's raining. Why?

Answers at www.westernparkgazette.co.uk

How's the New year Diet going? Given up? Might as well, it's a long hard slog to drop the pounds to fit back into the jeans you wore as a teenager. As you'd expect, Helen Knott has her own thoughts on the matter.

KNOTT'S LANDING

Helen Knott

January and February are awful months. Austerity and meanness surround us as we beat a path towards summer.

Marco Pierre White is right. You should never diet in January, it is far too dark and dingy, and it is much too long. February is a much better bet for a diet. Shorter and slightly more hopeful, after all there are the first stirrings of spring in the garden. If you can bear to crush that hope with a diet then fine. I think its better in the long run not to diet at all as it only leads to weight gain and more misery and anyway, February is by far the best month of the year to eat chips.

When I say chips I mean chip shop chips, not those sad sorry excuses for chips that come in the

freezer section of the supermarket or the fatty little refried strips of starch from burger bars - Proper chips have the advantage of being chopped and cooked by someone else. No mess, no fuss. As fish and chips are near enough our national dish, it is surprisingly hard to find a decent chip. They should



be crispy on the outside and fluffy in the middle. Not too thin, I don't want a French frite, and soggy is definitely a no-no! A disappointing chip is one of the most depressing things in the world. Many a fish supper has been wrecked by a poor chip!

So in the name of science and to benefit from the anti-depressant qualities of starch and fat, I have been conducting a study of all the chips in the area. Having exhaustively tested most of the local chippies I can tell you that the best chips are to be found at Fat Fish on Fosse Road North. No question. Crisp on the outside, fluffy in the middle and divine with salt and vinegar, they are perfect. Eat them now and worry about your wobbly thighs in March.

More from Helen in the next issue.

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Tony Huxley's Garden Tidings



What a winter, and we're only half way through it! Long spells of sub-zero temperatures left garden plants with thick fleecy coats of frost.

My mother's once fabulous *Ceanothus* is now a brown cloud of cold scorched leaves. My 2 meter tall *Cordyline australis* has just about survived. It will need remedial surgery in the Spring but the patient should survive.

If your *Cordyline* has been cut down by frost, all is not lost. Remove dead stems in the Spring, then cross your fingers and see if they re-sprout from the base. Be patient, you may see nothing before mid-Summer. If you're successful you could get half a dozen new shoots. You can then divide the root-ball to create your own Cabbage Palm plantation. The same goes for other exotic perennials with suckering habits, like the so-called Hardy Banana plant. This name covers several species of the *Musa* family. Often called "root-hardy", they should receive winter protection as a matter of course, but can reshoot if the luxurious top growth is killed off.

Even if your *Cordyline* has survived so far, don't be complacent, plants are often more vulnerable

to Spring frosts. You can protect them from further damage easily. Pull the blades upwards into a ponytail and tie with soft gardening string that won't cut or bruise the leaves. You could further insulate plants with hay, straw or a hessian sack. I don't like using plastic, it stops beneficial air flow and water evaporation.

Traditionally gardeners went to great lengths to insulate and protect rare specimens. We've got out of the habit of putting the garden "to bed" for the winter. Don't let a few losses put you off trying more exotic or challenging plants that will look fantastic in the long blistering summer we are going to have - fingers crossed again!

You can view Tony's previous gardening tips by visiting www.westernparkgazette.co.uk



Stag Horn Sumac

February Update

From Hinckley Road Policing Unit

Officers investigating a sexual assault have released an E-fit of the suspect that they want to trace.

The incident happened at around 8.30am on Saturday January 8th when a woman in her fifties was walking along a footpath in the Rally parkland near to Tudor Road. A man approached her from behind and assaulted her causing her to fall to the ground. During the incident she managed to call for help, and as a member of the public came to her aid, the man ran off in the direction of Tudor Road. The victim was uninjured during the incident.

The suspect is described as white, over 6' tall, brown hair, slim, in his mid-twenties, and wearing a dark hooded top, white T-shirt and dark jeans. Anyone with any information please contact D.S 4307 Nikki Forrest in the Signal Team on Leicestershire 222 2222 and quote incident 211:8



Officers are appealing for information after a motorcycle was stolen from a garden on Hinckley Road.

The Benelli Tornado 1100 cc motorcycle was stolen sometime between 6.30pm and 8.30pm on Sunday January 2.

The distinctive silver and green motorcycle has the registration number PO58 WOC.

Anyone with any information is asked to contact PC 4190 Rowena Summers on 222 2222, or Crimestoppers, which is anonymous, on 0800 555 111

Local police have been given space in the Fosse Neighbourhood Centre on Mantle Road and the Housing Office on Gutheridge Crescent in the Braunstone Estate.

The offices will be used during the day by the Neighbourhood Policing Teams.

Inspector Siobhan Ashford, Commander of Hinckley Road Local Policing unit, said, "We have got these offices in two wards, and we are looking for similar facilities in Westcotes and Western Park."



Last year was a good one for gadget fans. There was Apple's iPad and Microsoft's gestures control for the Xbox 360, and the Sony Move Controller, doing away with those pesky hand held controllers. But what's in the magic box for us this year?

Nice Box - What's in it? Richard Perry

If you've got a grand or more to spend there's 3D TV. It's pricy, there's not much 3D content to watch and it needs those damn glasses. Get rid of the cost and the glasses and it has a future, but as it is... no chance. By the way, around 10% of us can't see the 3D effect!

The iPad 2 is on the way with speculation that new features will include a couple of cameras, including a rear facing one and more memory. It may have USB ports so you can pop movies on it, better internet connectivity and it may be thinner as well. Some even suggest it may come with a choice of screen sizes.

Gamers are drooling at the possibility that their favourite PSP will be upgraded to the mythical PSP2 with

features that could include touch screen interface, Bluetooth support, an integrated hard drive, GPS, and nationwide wireless networking. Sony who makes them are saying nothing, but gaming experts think that if the PSP2 does exist, then there may be official news in the spring. My guess is they're chasing their tails trying to beat this...

The Nintendo 3DS - which should be in the shops in March. The big selling point here is, you can play games and watch films in 3D without the special glasses. It got good reviews when unveiled and there are over 70 3D games in development, so this is the one to watch. No idea on the UK price, but it will sell for £188.00 in Japan. Fed up with soap operas and naff talent shows? Google TV is the answer to that! The major manufacturers will start shipping their HD Google TVs later in the year. With the Android operating system and using the Google Chrome web browser, you'll be able to surf the web, download content and watch the telly at the same time. Another reason not to get off the sofa.



A Blast from the Past!

Back in 1993, hundreds of sightseers gathered outside the old Glenfield Road Co-op Dairy to witness demolition legend Fred Dibnah pull down the chimney stack.



Fred Dibnah, on the right, supervising his gang as they weaken the chimney base ahead of setting it alight.

The base was partly cut away and reinforced with wooden blocks, so when the wood burned through the structure would topple in the right direction.



Many thanks to William Nottman who supplied the photos.

It's a Green Life on Nevanthon Road

Members of a Western Park Area Watch celebrated after success in a major environmental competition.

The Letchworth Area Watch were 1st. Runner up in the Leicester Green Life Award 2010 for their Nevanthon Road Project in the category of Best Environmental Contribution by a Community Group..

During the summer of 2009, the Area Watch group became concerned about deterioration and neglect of the green spaces in the centre of the Nevanthon Road and Dennis Close area.

Anti social behaviour and fly tipping were blighting the neighbourhood. The land was overgrown, graffiti was scrawled on the walls, fences needed repairing and slabs relaying.

With the help of The Leicester City Council and their persistence, permission was eventually granted by the land owner for work to start.

Working under the Royal Horticultural Society's 'It's your Neighbourhood' scheme meant that funding from the Western Park Ward budget matched by the Parks and Services Department, could kick start the project. Donations from local business and residents also helped pay for tools, skips, wood, paint, compost and plants.



Work started in the Winter of 2009/10 with the removal of 100 bags of green waste, massive root systems and general repair and maintenance, but planting could not be done until the Autumn when the land was ready.

Two large beds are now planted with trees, almost 150 daffodil bulbs, with herbs and berry bushes due to be planted this year.

The Judges of the Green Life Awards said, "The anti social behaviour and fly tipping are gone and the area has been totally transformed. This was a good example of local community action".

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