

The Gazette



No.74 Dec 2015 www.westernparkgazette.co.uk
News and Views for Western Park • Westcotes • The Fosse



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Hello From The Editor

Welcome to the Christmas edition of the Western Park Gazette.

You might be wondering why there's a photo of the big 110 feet tall Wheel of Light on Jubilee Square on the front. Well, it's basically because we couldn't think of anything else... And it's big, it's bright, it's near and we wanted a ride.

So on that cavalier note, in this festive issue we have Roger Blackmore who's happy that Leicester has become a holiday destination, Helen Knott experiences the delights of the run-up to Christmas in Australia and Tony Huxley uncovers the secrets of the humble sprout.

There's also our regular local policing news from new boy Mike Hooper, The Square Mile Project have a ton of things to tell us, Upstairs At The Western prepares for their new season and there's a massive Yuletide Crossword and quiz on the inside back page. And you're in with the of winning a top Christmas stocking filler!

We also keep you up to date with West Leicester news and activities on Facebook and Twitter.

If you've got a local news story then email:

editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

Visit www.westernparkgazette.co.uk

Have a Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year!

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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.

West End Pay As You Feel Café: Thursdays 6-8.30pm. West End Centre. Andrewes St. LE3 5PA.

Heritage Sundays: Monthly 1st Sun. Mediaeval city open days/tours. 11-3pm. goleicestershire.com

Xmas Farmer's Market: 16th-18th Dec. Gallowtree Gate.

A Victorian Christmas: 18th Dec. Guildhall. 8pm.

The Nose That Nobody Picked: 22nd Dec. Attentborough Arts Centre. 11am & 1pm. 01162 522 455.

Santa's Little Helper: Dec 21st. Y Theatre. Leicestersymca.co.uk

Sing Christmas: 21st Dec at St. Paul's / St. Augustine's Worship Centre & The Crows Nest. 7pm.

Beer & Carols: 17th & 21st Dec. The Western. 9pm.

Open Mic Sessions: Mon 21st Dec. **Beer & Carols:** 22nd Dec. **Xmas Eve Live Rock Out:** 24th Dec. All at Pi Bar, Narborough Road. (Norman Street corner)

A Christmas Carol: 23rd Dec. Guildhall. 1pm & 7pm.

Oliver: Until 23rd Jan. **Road Dahl's Witches** until Jan 10th. both at Curve. curveonline.co.uk

Snow White: Until 4th Jan. De Montfort Hall.

Aladdin: Until Jan 3rd. Little Th. TheLittleTheatre.net

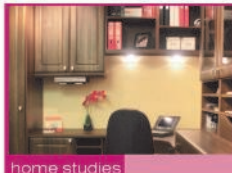
Fun Fair: Until Jan 4th Humberstone Gate West.

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The Western Park Gazette is helping adults with learning difficulties get to grips with the world of work.

The group from the Supported Learning Department at Leicester College's Freeman's Park Campus, are on the Learning for Living course and have already been out in Westcotes delivering the Gazette under the supervision of course tutors.



As part of the work skills module, the learners volunteer as cleaners, litter pickers and once a month deliver some of the Western Park Gazettes. This gives them the opportunity to develop employability skills and prepare them for work.

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Holiday brochures will be pouring through letterboxes in the New Year. Indeed, several have arrived well before Christmas.

This year, however, a new destination features in many travel booklets, including those from several well established holiday firms.

As I write I am looking at an advert for a three day tour of our part of the Midlands, entitled "Richard 3rd - Destiny, Death and Discovery". With two nights, based in a local hotel, the package includes a trip to the new Richard Third Visitor Centre in Peacock Lane, together with visits to the Bosworth Battlefield Centre, Kirby Muxloe Castle and the site of the Battle of Stoke, which lies just south of Newarke beside the River Trent.

There is absolutely no doubt, that the discovery in that famous carpark of the body of the last Plantagenet King, sparked tremendous and widespread interest all over the UK and beyond. Coverage of the reburial was widespread and many people flocked into the city at the time.

They were obviously impressed by what they

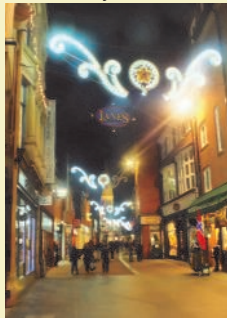


saw. Besides visiting obvious landmarks such as the Guildhall and the Cathedral (where Richard's tomb is situated), tourists also called at the historic churches of St Nicholas and St Mary de Castro, and all the city museums, which reported an increase in visitor numbers. In addition, a whole range of other sites, from the Castle, to William Wyggeston's House, to the new museum, housing the remains of the Church of the Annunciation, beneath De Montfort University, were able to introduce themselves to locals and tourists alike.

Now we are seeing continuing interest in the story of the closing stages of the Wars of the Roses. Leicester is clearly a significant place to explore.

And visitors can be certain that they will be well catered for during their stay in Leicester. There is little doubt that the city enjoys an enviable reputation as the food capital of the East Midlands. The range of restaurants bars and curry houses offer a famed variety of fare and excellent value for money. These all contribute to the tourists' experience of Leicester.

Roger Blackmore



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KNOTT'S LANDING

I'm freezing cold. I sit here with my feet in sheepskin boots, two jumpers and the heating up on full all because I decided to go on holiday to Australia for a couple of weeks.

It's summer there and it's amazing how quickly your body can get used to nice warm weather. I say warm weather, we had two days where the temperature was over 40 degrees C, which was weird, although not as weird as seeing Christmas trees, baubles and sprigs of holly and fir everywhere you looked as you applied sun tan lotion.

The idea of Christmas in the middle of summer is a strange one. I just didn't feel Christmassy, even when I stood under the giant tree in the Queen Victoria Building in Sydney as carols played and crystal decorations swayed in the breeze from the air-conditioning, even when I stood staring into the David Jones department store Christmas windows, when I drove along counting giant red Christmas bows



on the trees in the street, even as I ate a mince pie with a glass of cold prosecco on the terrace. There was something very wrong with it being hot at Christmas, my useless northern hemisphere brain could not compute.

The Aussies also seem to be split into two camps. Those who stick strictly to traditional Christmas behaviour and those who go with the heat. My relatives are traditionalists. They eat Christmas cake, have a full roast dinner on the big day and pretend the heat is happening to someone else. Others ditch the roast for a giant seafood salad or a bbq and embrace the heat with picnics in the country and beach trips. I'm not sure which is right but I can guarantee you that whichever camp you fall into, you will have ham. It's the one unifying thing Aussies have at Christmas. Everywhere you look there are adverts for Christmas hams. Like giant pink bums they glisten on billboards. Adverts entreat you to buy a car, get a free Christmas ham! Supermarkets line them up, ready cooked, cook it yourself, however you like it so long as it's ham. It made me smile because it was sooo Monty Python. Australia, Australia, Australia, we love you, we love you, we love you, Spam, Spam, Spam, Spam...

Helen Knott



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You're Having A Laugh?

If laughter is the best medicine, how about a cure for post-Christmas excess and getting through the cold grip of Winter? Yes, it's time to reach for the comedy pills at Leicester's one and only pub theatre, Upstairs at the Western.

Last Spring we were nominated for a Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival award for Best Venue (under 200 capacity). Maybe 2016 will be our year for the win as one of our visitors, HRH Henry VIII, should be able to pull a few strings ...

From the comedy team who brought *Big Daddy vs Giant Haystacks* and *Those Magnificent Men* to Leicester in previous seasons, they return with *An Audience with Henry VIII* (11 Feb), guaranteeing that heads will roll. There is also top sketch comedy from *Mixed Doubles* (13 Feb) and *Revan and Fennell* (19 and 20 Feb).

Food and comedy make surprising companions with *George Egg - Anarchist Cook* (5 and 6 Feb) who cooks a 3 course meal during his stand up routine, using items found only in a hotel room. And you can eat what he cooks! With the return of Upstairs' favourites *Conversation Garden* (6 and 20 Feb) as well as the baffling and brilliant psychic comedian *Peter Antoniou* (18 Feb) that would seem laughing is pretty much covered.

Or is it? Maybe you've always fancied doing comedy yourself? Good news is our successful Stand Up Comedy workshops return for a third season, providing support, expert feedback and the opportunity to write, develop and perform your own five minute stand up routine. Workshops culminate with a special performance night (24 Apr) for all participants, live on stage at Upstairs at the Western complete with compere and headline comedian.

The workshops run over six sessions this season from 6 March to 24 April, giving plenty of opportunity to really work on your material and polish your performance. Places are limited though so if you would like to take part, you'll find all the booking and ticket info you need on our website at

www.upstairsatthewestern.com and look out for printed programmes, available in January.

Sally Jack



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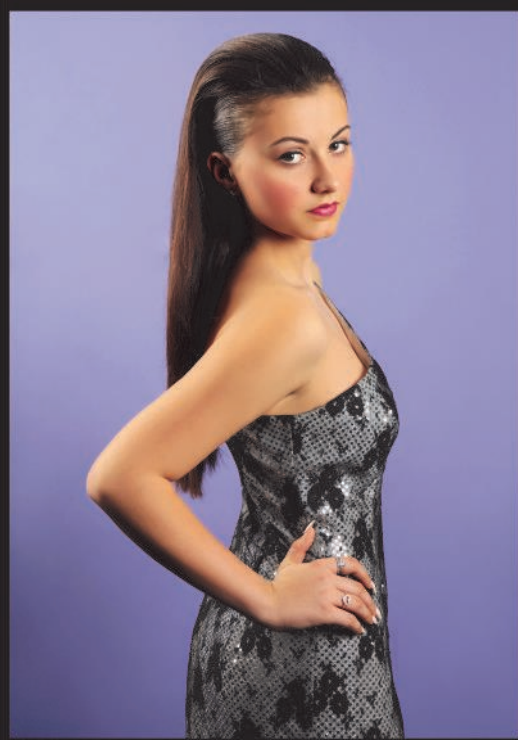
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Be A Brick - Buy A Brick!

As we approach the Christmas holidays and the end of 2015, we wanted to spread the good news and further information regarding the rebuild of the St Anne's Community Church Hall, Western Park.

Since the centenary year in 2014, members of the church congregation and members of the Western Park community have been fund raising tirelessly to generate the money needed to renovate our beloved church hall – the epicentre of community gatherings and events. Over the course of this time £375,000 has been raised through tremendous events such as a Pop-up Tea Room, Beer Festivals, storytelling sessions and the Western Park's Got Talent! Thanks to everyone who helped to organise these events and to those who attended. Without your support, this would not have been so easily reachable!

The church has also been extremely lucky to be granted £100,000 by the local Diocese which has propelled us even closer to the target!



With all this in mind, we have one last initiative that we would love the community to be involved in – The Buy a Brick Scheme! This scheme was originally set up so that members of the community could purchase a brick in memory of someone special, as a family Christmas present or simply to mark their association with St Anne's Community Church Hall, supporting further fund-raising for the rebuild. To mark members of the community's purchases we will be having a commemorative display within the new building as a sign of gratitude for those who bought a brick! As this will be the neighbourhood's continued future hub, we would love more members of the community to come forward and purchase a brick. Each brick costs just £20! If you are interested in this initiative, we would love to hear from you - there are several people you could contact regarding this:

Anna McAuley e: forevermcauley@hotmail.com
Jan Gough - jangough@hotmail.com
Cathy Harrell – harrellcathy28@gmail.com



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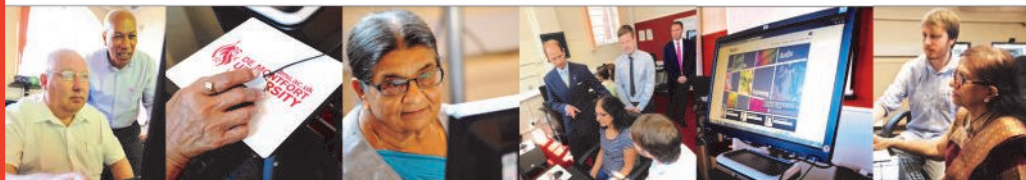
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HIGHLY STRUNG AT 50!

Highly Strung, an acoustic guitar duo based in West Leicester have completed a marathon 50 gigs in less than a year.

When Darren Potter and Steve Perry both hit their half century they decided to celebrate by doing fifty live performances. Darren said: "We thought we could squeeze fifty gigs into a year. So we started in January and carried on/ The big final 50th is at The Green Place in Sileby just before Christmas".

Playing a mixture of their own compositions and popular classics they have been described as "probably the finest guitar duo in Leicester". Their music has elements of flamenco, pop, rock and jazz and their extensive repertoire ranges from Blue Moon through to Moves Like Jagger.

Darren and Steve, as Highly Strung, have been playing together for over twenty years and have gigged all over the UK and in Leicester at venues including the De Montfort Hall, the Criterion, The Donkey, The Western Park Beer Festival and regularly at Polonez, and Yesim Bar and Grill.

They have released two albums, The Big Deal and Sky High and are currently working on their third.

Search for Highly Strung Guitar Duo on Facebook or give them a listen on Soundcloud.

Email: highlystrunginfo@yahoo.co.uk



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EGGNOGING

It may be more of a tradition in the US, but there's nothing wrong with having a stab at making this Yuletide treat yourself. If you can pour a snowball, you can make eggnog too.

Ingredients: 1150ml or 2 pints of whole milk (Or 1x3/4 pints and a 1/4 of single cream), 6 large eggs, 50g/2oz of caster sugar, 1 spit vanilla pod or 1 full teaspoon of vanilla extract, optional punnet of fresh cherries (de-stoned) 200ml of brandy/cognac or bourbon and cocoa / cinnamon or nutmeg powder for dusting.

Method: Heat in a saucepan. Combine the milk/cream mixture with the eggs, sugar and vanilla until thoroughly blended and thick enough to coat the back of a wooden spoon. Do not bring to the boil.

Then, if you're chilling it, stir in the brandy, pour eggnog into a serving bowl and place in the fridge. If serving warm, place the cherries in the bottom of the glasses along with equal amounts of brandy and pour the mixture over the top and sprinkle with cocoa powder or nutmeg. Add a cinnamon stick for that extra festive look!



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CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

Here's your chance to win a first rate stocking filler!

Ant Man was one of the big box office successes of the year and we're giving you the chance to own this rollicking movie on DVD in time for Christmas.

Armed with a super-suit with the astonishing ability to shrink in scale but increase in strength, cat burglar Scott Lang must embrace his inner hero and help his mentor, Dr. Hank Pym, plan and pull off a heist that will save the world!

To be in with the chance of winning Ant Man on DVD, just answer the question below.

Ant Man, Thor, The Hulk, Spiderman, Captain America and Iron Man are all part of a comic and cinematic superhero universe created by Stan Lee. What is the name of this Universe?

1. The DC Universe
2. The Marvel Universe
3. Star Wars Universe

Email your answer before 20th December to editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk and include your contact details.

Terms & conditions: 1 entry per person. 1 winner chosen at random. No cash alternative. Judges decision is final.



Beavers & Food Poverty

43rd St Peters Leicester Beavers invited Tim from Leicester Charity Link to come and talk about the real issue of poverty within Leicester. This evening went towards one of the children's challenge badges.

Tim talked about the extent of poverty in Leicester and what we can do to help. The children all bought in items that could be donated to help those in need and this having a positive impact on our local community.



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MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

Western Ward Councillors Surgeries

Councillors: Dr Susan Barton, George Cole and Malcolm Unsworth.

First Friday of the month 3-4pm at New Parks Customer Service Centre, Aikman Av, LE3 9PW

Second Weds of the month 7-8pm at St. Anne's Church Hall, Letchworth Road, LE3 6FN,
Third Sat of the month 11-12 noon at Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre, Sharman Crescent, LE3 6NW.

Fosse Councillors Surgeries

Councillors: Ted Cassidy MBE and Dawn Alfonso.

Second Sat of the month 10.30-11.30am, Fosse Neighbourhood Centre, Mantle Road, LE3 5GH.

Last Sat of the month 10.30 -11.30am, Woodgate Residents' Association, Woodgate, LE3 5GE.

Westcotes Councillors Surgeries

Councillors: Sarah Russell & Andy Connelly.

Westcotes Library, Narborough Road, LE3 0BQ

First Sat of every month, 10.30 -11.30am and
Third Friday, 10.00am - 11.00am.

More info at: www.leicester.gov.uk

Community meetings take place every three months with the aim of bringing the council and communities together.

The meetings give residents the opportunity to work with the council and other agencies like the police and NHS to identify issues and improve neighbourhoods.

Each ward has a small amount of money available to support projects that benefit the local area.

All ward residents are welcome to attend.

Western Ward Community Meeting: Tues 15th March 7.00pm.

Fosse Ward Community Meeting: Weds 16th March. Details to follow.

Westcotes Ward Community Meeting: 9th Feb & 10th May at 7.00pm. Details to follow.



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December Police Update

Firstly, hello to you all. I am Mike Hooper, the new Dedicated Neighbourhood Team (DNT) Sergeant for the Western Park and Fosse Wards. Prior to this I was a Neighbourhood Priority Team officer at Beaumont Leys covering West Leicester focusing on neighbourhood concerns and conducting rapid entry warrants; and before that I was a Response Officer in the city reacting to 999 emergency incidents. I would describe my policing style as proactive and engaging; therefore I look forward to being out in the area addressing your concerns. I've already stumbled across our Gazette Editor enjoying a drink at his local! (*It was a business meeting... sort of. Ed*)

Secondly, as many of you may be aware, Leicester City Council have changed their boundaries in order to align their areas geographically. Therefore the likelihood is that the police DNT for Western Park will cease to exist and be distributed between the Westcotes, Fosse and New Parks DNTs. As many of you are aware PCSO Sally Morgan has done a fantastic job integrating with the communities of Western Park. In order to continue this engagement I have recommended she should be moved under the banner of New Parks DNT in order to cover the same areas. Therefore anticipate some changes in the next few months as we move into 2016.

As Kev highlighted in the last edition, as we approach the winter months we do experience a spike in burglaries. With the night's drawing in early, it quickly becomes apparent who is still out or at work during the early evenings with a lack of lighting. It becomes easier for our clientele to operate under the cover of darkness. Please utilise light timers to come on in the evening for both lights and televisions or radios. I would suggest a reputable brand to prevent malfunctions. Can I also encourage you to keep all doors and windows locked WITH THE KEYS REMOVED AND HIDDEN. I have visited a couple of local properties recently where the modus operandi was to smash a nearby window and turn the key left in the windows. Do not make it easy for them. Other good deterrents include CCTV cameras, keeping valuables obscured and the presence of a large furry German Shepherd Dog seems to work quite well for me!

In a recent ward surgery at the Fosse Community Centre with MP Liz Kendall, concerns over drug use were highlighted. Well I'd like to report that in the following month we have conducted a number of drugs warrants and located three cannabis factories in the area, which have been dismantled and the cultivation of drugs disrupted. Please make us aware of any concerns you have by contacting us directly on 101 or anonymously utilising Crime Stoppers on 0800555111.

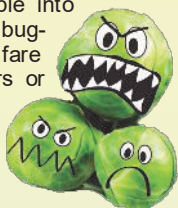
Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



Forget the Norway Spruce, the plant that truly symbolises Christmas has to be *Brassica oleracea*... The Brussel sprout.

Just as Christmas divides people into Festive junkies or the Bah Humbuggers, so this ball of Yuletide fare divides the population into lovers or loathers. Ask "What did the Romans ever do so for us?" and the answer should have been- they gave us the sprout. Of course history didn't credit them with the discovery, otherwise children will be refusing to eat Roman sprouts.

Nature gave the humble sprout, basically a cultivated wild cabbage, more Vitamin C than oranges, along with many other valuable nutrients. They contain sulforaphane, thought to include anticancer properties, and they're low in sodium and fat. If this super food was steamed for six minutes its fresh crunchy texture and nutty flavour would be enjoyed, rather than endured after being boiled for six hours until reduced to a bitter-tasting, foul-smelling grey abscess!



Although sweeter versions are on the market, dyed in the wool sprout haters can blame global warming if they're forced to eat golf ball-sized Brussels this Christmas. An exceptionally mild autumn has led to crops of king-size sprouts. But these have some way to go to match the record-breaking 8.3kg monster grown in 1992.

If you want to grow monster sprouts for 2016, then now is the time to get going. Start them off in modules in an unheated greenhouse or cold frame. Transplant into fertile soil in the spring. A covering of fine nylon netting will keep off the pigeons and the cabbage white caterpillars. Don't plant where brassicas have previously grown, to reduce the chance of club root. In exposed sites, stake the plants as they can easily blow over. They can grow surprisingly high, one plant in California reached over 9 feet tall.

I recommend sprout fans hunt out the vibrantly-coloured "Red Ball" because, even if you don't like the taste, they'd look terrific dipped in glitter and hung on the tree. So, with over 110 varieties, surely there's a sprout for everyone this Christmas.

Seasons greetings.

Tony Huxley



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BIG XMAS QUIZ

- Who starred in the 1996 film Jingle All The Way?
- Which British monarch started the custom of giving away Christmas puddings to staff?
- In German alpine legends, what is the name of the mythological horned creature that punishes naughty children at Christmas?
- Who composed the music for the Nutcracker Suite?
- In the 12 Days of Christmas, how many maids were a-milking?
- In which country is 'HOHO' Father Christmas's postcode?
- What non-edible Yuletide item was invented by baker Tom Smith in 1847?
- Who is credited with writing the words to 'Auld Lang Syne'?
- How many points does a snowflake have?
- According to Doctor Seuss, who stole Christmas?
- Christmas Day is called Bada Din or The Big Day in which country?
- What is the English name for the carol Stille Nacht?
- What is the principal alcoholic content of a snowball cocktail?
- What happened for the last time on the River Thames during the winter of 1813-14?
- What is Wassailing?
- Kala Christouyenna means Happy Christmas in which language?
- In 1971, the UK Christmas Number 1 hit featured the fastest milkman in the west. What was his name?
- Which 1988 film takes place in the Nakatomi Plaza on Christmas Eve?
- What creature delivers presents on New Year's Day to Syrian children?
- How is Father Christmas known in Russia?
- Eels are traditional Christmas Eve snacks in which European capital city?
- 'Does your granny always tell you that the old songs are the best', is a line from which perennial Christmas hit?
- Who sat in the corner eating his Christmas pie?
- In 1990 who was Home Alone at Christmas?
- What country does Stollen come from?
- In the Simpsons, what kind of pet is Santa's Little Helper?
- What was the biggest selling DVD of 2014?
- What is a Picea abies?
- What Christmas present did Harry Potter receive during his first year at Hogwarts?
- 'Geezer Bores Once' is an anagram of which Victorian Christmas character?



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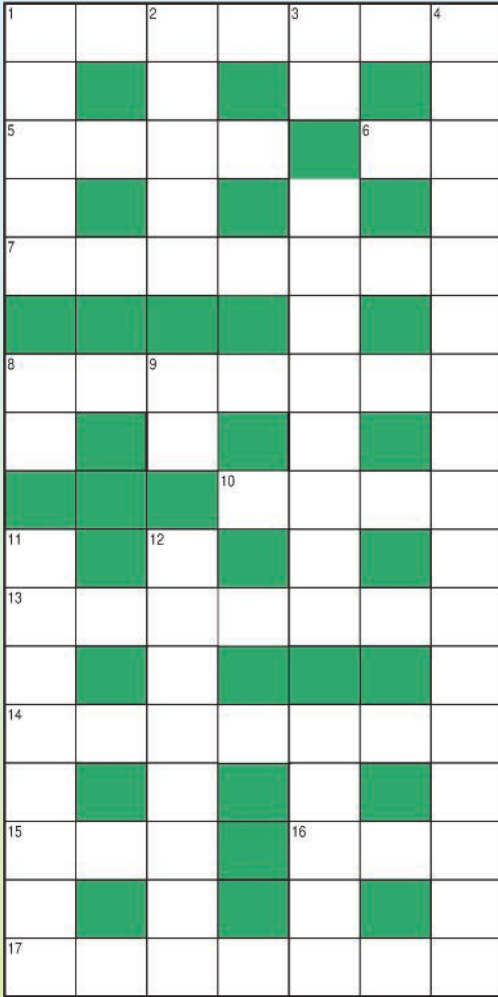
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XMAS XWORD



Crossword © Paul Towers

1 Across, PC pirating **1 Down**, **8 Down** & **11 Down**: Antipodean Christmas Greeting **2**: Hints **3**: Not a but **4**: Christmas Carol **5**: Pudding **6**: A get-together **7**: Face covering **8 Across**: Everyone's got one! **8 Down**: See 1 down. **9**: Not out **10**: Yuletide covering **11**: See 1 down **12**: Harry Potter collective **13**: Innumerable **14**: Lunar obscuration **15**: Comes with 10 across **16**: Cockney Christmas alternative? **17**: No end to soapy festivals.

Answers for the quiz and crossword are online at:
www.westernparkgazette.co.uk



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