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Hello From The Editor

Welcome to the July edition of the Western Park Gazette.

In this edition: Thousands descended on the Western Park Festival to enjoy the summer music, fun activities and crisp sandwiches! The Western Park Open Gardens fundraising event also proved a popular draw with hundreds of people visiting local gardens and contributing to the St. Anne's community hall rebuilding project.

Kev Sharkey and colleagues from Hinckley Road Policing unit are taking on illegal motorbike and quad riders in our open spaces, Helen Knott deals with "Beemageddon" and Roger Blackmore looks back at the life of one of Leicester's political troublemakers. Green Goblin, Tony Huxley, goes big and bold in the garden and we find out what's in store for us theatre wise at Upstairs at the Western.

And there's the Brain Tazers, Crossword and Sudoku waiting to puree your little grey cells on the inside back page!

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

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To Contact - Call 07939 115 724

e:editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

e:sales@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
Mediaeval Mayhem Fun Day: 23rd July. Guildhall. 11-3pm. Activities £2.50.
Say No To Code St Party: 24 July. Britton St. 2pm.
Simon Say's Weekender: 25th & 26th July. De Montfort Hall. 12 noon. www.demontforthall.co.uk
Festival of Archeology: Until 26th July. Jewry Wall Museum.
Family Challenge Day: 28th July. Fosse Library. 10-6pm. Free event.
Animal Carnival Railway Day: 1st Aug. Abbey Pumping Station. 11-4.30pm. Free event.
Caribbean Carnival: 1st August. From Vic Park.
Table Top Sales & Coffee Morn: Sat Aug 8th. 10-2.00pm. St. Paul's & St. Augustine's Ctr. Kirby Rd.
Grenadier Guards Assn Garden Party: Sun 23rd Aug. WLCC, 55 Westcotes Dr. 1-3pm.
Western Park Beer Festival: 11&12th Sept St. Anne's Church Hall. Letchworth Road.

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Western Park Open Gardens

Over 300 garden enthusiasts made their way to June's Western Park Open Gardens event.

18 local gardens were proudly on display as part of fundraising efforts to rebuild the century old corrugated iron part of St. Anne's Church Hall in the spring of 2016.

This year five new gardens were opened up for exploration as well as the Westfield Tennis club.

Local artist Peter Bunny's work was on display in his Westfield Gallery and live music was provided by the LOROS singers whilst gallons of Pimm's and summer cakes were laid on by hosts.

One of the organisers, Cathy Harrell, said: "The community atmosphere was brilliant. Many people met up with neighbours they hadn't seen for a while. It felt as though Western Park Village is alive and well!! Each garden had its different character and those who took the plunge to open their gardens had obviously put hours of work into making them so interesting and welcoming".

The 'Tin Annie' community hall on Letchworth Road was the centre of activity. Visitors could pick up their tour maps, a cup of tea, browse the various stalls and put their name down for the 'Buy A Brick Scheme' to support the £400,000 rebuilding project.



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Our city has a long history of rebellious individuals and the 19th Century Leicester Chartists were no exception. For a while they even had a charismatic leader, as Roger Blackmore discovered...

Troublemaker, Poet & Preacher

At the recently displayed Magna Carta exhibition in Leicester's Guildhall, it was interesting to see that a section was devoted to that other great charter promoted by the Chartists in the nineteenth century.

The Chartists, with their calls for universal suffrage and democratic reforms, attracted a lot of support in Leicester. One of their most prominent leaders, for a time, was one Thomas Cooper who was born in the city in March 1805.

Cooper's father died when he was only four years old and the young lad, although born in Leicester, grew up in various places including Gainsborough in Lincolnshire. Eventually he became apprenticed as a shoemaker. He also went on to be a self taught schoolmaster, a powerful orator and in later years gained a not inconsiderable reputation as a poet.

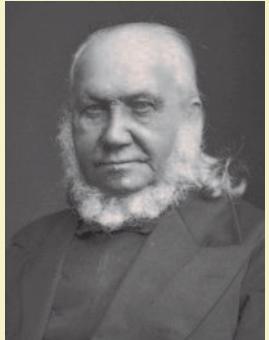
He worked as a journalist in both Lincoln and London before joining the staff of the Leicester Mercury in 1840. Partly as a result of his political activism he soon lost his job at the "Merc" and

became a vociferous supporter of the Peoples Charter and for a time the accepted leader of Chartism in Leicester. In 1842 he was jailed for two years in Stafford Gaol as a result of his initial support for violence in pursuit of the movement's aims.

Over the years Thomas Cooper dropped his support for political violence and became a Baptist. He was thereafter to deploy his considerable oratorical skills as a Baptist lay preacher. He also developed his writing which seems to have started around about his time in prison. His written work included a wide variety of poetry and prose added to which, in later life, was his autobiography "The Life of Thomas Cooper" published in 1872. This work sold remarkably well. In 1885 he produced his collected poetry under the title "Thoughts at Four Score".

Thomas Cooper died at Lincoln in July 1892 at the age of 87

© Roger Blackmore



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KNOTT'S LANDING

It was a normal summer day. A hot one, steamy, there was breakfast to make and eat, a child to dress, a husband to get off to work, a totally normal day. We were getting ready to go to school and going around closing all the windows when I noticed that it seemed to be getting darker outside. I looked again to see if it was about to rain. Rain means a whole round of putting on coats, different shoes, umbrellas and it takes time and is a pain. It wasn't rain, but I could hear a noise, like rain on the roof... A buzzing noise.

A closer look out of the window revealed BEEMAGEDDON! A swarm of bees. A dark cloud of insects. A whirling vortex of tiny bodies. They really were flying in circles, presumably around the queen, and she was in my garden! The noise was loud. There were a lot of bees and they were excited.

The swarm rotated around and around and went up and down a bit. It was mesmerising... and it was making us late for school, although a swarm of bees in the garden is a pretty good excuse for being late. Finally the bees seemed to settle a bit

and we took our opportunity to leg it to school. I got back to find that the bees had calmed down but they were now sitting on the fence and it was not clear which side they had decided on.

I searched the web for the British Bee Keepers Association and found a number for a swarm collector but this would be useless if the swarm was next door. I went and knocked on the door but no-one was home. The bees however had decided next door's bird box was the perfect home.

I could have taken action. I went outside to check what was happening but there were still too many bees. It was one of the hottest days of the year and I couldn't open my windows because of the Bee Menace next door. In the end I left a note for the neighbours and went shopping. When I got back it was sorted.

It should happen like that in the movies.

Helen Knott

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FESTIVAL FUN IN THE SUN!

Western Park Festival returned for its fourth year, appropriately enough on the 4th of July.

After a night of fierce electrical storms and lashing rain, the sun arrived with a vengeance and temperatures soared to 26C as more than 10,000 revellers made their way to the day long free festival.

Organiser Adrian Alexander said: "I think it was bigger than ever, bigger than 2013, with a good natured crowd enjoying the sunshine and music and a great community spirit.

"Special thanks to the bands who played for free and the council for the litter pickers who worked so hard in that sunshine... And the traders; the event wouldn't go ahead without them. Our volunteers were excellent and would do it again-thanks to them as well - so again next year is possible".



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Residents Say No To New Flats

The CODE Company, which builds and manages student flats, has sold its building on Upperton Road and the one on Eastern Boulevard. It has bought the old factory behind the Western and the buildings between the Western garden and the river and also the building housing Baby Planet.

CODE has issued planning applications

20151144 and

20151143 for a 14 story tower with its facade on Britain Street and an extension to the smaller of their two existing buildings on Western Road. The work will include the demolition of the stables behind the Western pub gardens. (Pictured)



Westcotes residents held a meeting at which local councillors were present, including Patrick Kitterick who is councillor for Castle ward and approved all of CODE's previous applications in his then role of Chair of the Planning Committee.

The general feeling of the meeting was that Westcotes already has more than its fair share of student housing and does not need any more.

The last day to object to the proposals was 24th July, the date also chosen by residents to host a street party on Briton Street to highlight the issue.

Val Smally

BIG CASH SPLASH ON THE RIVER

£1.5 Million will be spent improving Leicester's waterways including the West End section of the river Soar and canal. It is part of a programme which includes creating better access to the riverside at Sock Island, environmental improvements around Willow Brook, restoration of the old, redundant mill race at Frog Island, and new boat mooring alongside Friars Mill.

Leicester City Council has teamed up with the Environment Agency and the Canal & River Trust to help enhance the river corridor through the city, as part of a wider programme of work to reduce flood risk.

Simon Papprill from the Canal & River Trust, said: "Leicester's waterways are a real gem running right through the heart of the city."

"This major project will bring real benefits for all those people and help to ensure that the river continues to play an important part in daily life."



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Upstairs, Downstairs

It's all happening downstairs and Upstairs at the Western. No, this isn't Leicester's version of Downton Abbey but if you've not been down to the pub for a while you're maybe in for a surprise; the popular West End pub has had a makeover and very spruce it looks too. And so it must be time for a new season of performances at Leicester's one and only pub theatre, Upstairs at the Western!

KW Productions, who brought the sell out A Slice of Saturday Night last year, return 24th August with Stephen Sondheim's dark, musical classic Company. The one man, one musician phenomenon Bane returns on 22nd September with a special double bill of comedy monologues featuring the hard-boiled anti hero Bruce Bane.

During late September and early October we are featuring four events in the Everybody's Reading Festival. Renowned poets Jean Binta Breeze MBE, Lydia Towsey and Shruti Chauhan launch a new tour of their spoken word spectacular Three the Hard Way - Part Two on 1st October. Performance poet Andrew 'Mulletproof' Graves gives his take on starry-eyed punks and disappearing goths in his new show God Save the Teen on 2nd October and Leicester legend and Upstairs favourite Rob Gee performs his new show Icarus Dancing

on 3rd October (book early, folks, Rob sells out pretty quickly).

Acclaimed actor Cathy Tyson, will be performing the original drama She Called Me Mother on 17th October as part of Black History Month.

Anyone who experienced Darwin, The Origin of Species earlier this year will know you're guaranteed warm-hearted laughs, silly songs, a bit of knowledge with Tangram Theatre. They're back Upstairs on 1st November with a new show The Element in the Room featuring the incredible story of Marie Curie.

As an antidote to Curie's pioneering scientific discovery, 2 Magpies' The Litvinenko Project on 4th November takes an imaginative look at the day Russian dissident Alexander Litvinenko drank a deadly cup of poisoned tea in London. 2Magpies will be brewing up a blend of possibility and actuality in the downstairs back bar of The Western.

For more details: www.upstairsatthewestern.com or follow us on Twitter at @UpstairsWestern and Facebook.

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July Police Update

SHARK WATCH with Sgt. Kev Sharkey

This month I want to concentrate on the use of motorbikes & quad bikes in public spaces and particularly on public parks. We know we have a mixture of legitimate bike owners and also stolen bikes being used. Drivers need to have a valid license and insurance to ride on a road and may only ride off road with the permission of the landowner as road insurance is usually invalid. The public parks such as Western Park DOES NOT GIVE ANY PERMISSION TO USE ANY MOTORBIKES & QUADBIKES 'OFF ROAD' ON THE PARK.

There is a BMX cycle track which gets ripped up when motorbikes use it and so motorbikes and quads are banned. Illegal riders on the parks will have their vehicle seized under the Road Traffic Act 1988 and will be prosecuted for riding without insurance which results in typical fines of £200 and 6 penalty points. Depending on the circumstances, riders may be arrested in order for this to happen.

Riding without due care and attention means prosecution and typically a £100 fine and 3 penalty points. Dangerous drivers can face up to 2 years in prison along with an unlimited fine. Passengers and cheering onlookers also face aid & abet prosecutions. Obviously those using stolen motorbikes face prosecution for theft and/or taking without consent [TWOC] which can be up to 7 years in prison and a fine. If a rider collides with someone and they suffer serious injury or death then they face up to 14 years in prison.

Officers are regularly out on the beat to engage with vehicle owners and to tackle unlawful driving. Officers have been deliberately rammed, on a few occasions, while doing this causing serious injuries once even snapping a police cycle in half. Arrests have been made and vehicles seized and destroyed.

We are committed to dealing with this problem and will be employing new tactics this year to enable more vehicle seizures and prosecutions. I encourage motorbike owners to use ground anchors and robust locks coupled with an alarm system to deter thefts. Fitting a tracker is effective, allowing swift recovery should it be stolen.

As ever, we rely on information from the community as to who the drivers are and where they keep their vehicles. You can give information in as much detail as possible to any officer you see, or by calling 101, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



Horticulturally I'm as metro

-sexual as the next gardener. I've no problem with pretty little flowers or delicate blooms with girlie names. I don't even mind pink as a colour. But sometimes a red blooded gardener wants big, bold plants with a bit of muscle that can handle themselves at the back of a border. It's worth having some prominent perennials in any reasonable sized planting area to give structure through the summer. Now is the time macho herbaceous perennials start to perform.

Architecturally you can't beat the artichokes. Remove the flowers if you just want to admire the silver green foliage. The edible blooms may match those of any exotic Protea but sap the plants strength.

The cardoon (*Cynara Cardunculus*), it's cousin, is also spectacular. The stems are



edible if blanched like celery. Two plants that mix business and pleasure. Both prefer fertile, moist but free draining soil. Aphids can be a problem, but nothing a quick spray with some soapy water won't fix.

Echinops or Globe Thistles are another manly favourite with handsome foliage. Bees and butterflies love the vivid blue spheres of blooms. This plant tolerates poorer, drier soils but can be prone to mildew. Excessive shade, dampness and crowding can contribute to this. Remove and dispose of infected foliage in the autumn to stop spores spreading.

As macho flowers go you can't beat *Verbascum olympicum*. This yellow flowered brute has already reached over 2 meters height in my garden, and looks capable of wrestling a Triffid.

Now that's what I call a man's plant!

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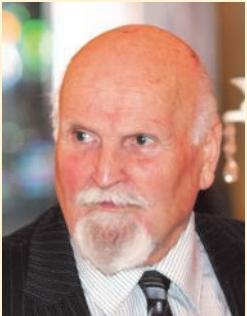
"Your first stop for full, part house, garage or loft clearance, distribution of estate or simply downsizing"

FUN RUN TO SCOOT ALONG

Tony Thorpe is organising a Fun Run with a difference - he's using Mobility Scooters!

Tony, who is 81 years young and lives in Braunstone, would like other people with electric scooters to join him between 2 and 5pm on Saturday August 8th for a Fun Run around Braunstone Park.

There will be prizes for the person who makes the most runs around the park (on one battery charge), prizes for the fastest times around the park and a prize for the best decorated scooter. It's hoped that people joining in will raise funds from their family and friends and then donate some of that money to Tony's two chosen causes, local Dementia/Alzheimer groups and Community Action Partnership.



Then at 4am on Sunday 9th August, Tony is setting off around the park on a 24 hour or 100 Miles Sponsored Ride. He will be using a relay of four scooters, again raising money for the two charities. Four times around the park is ten miles so that's 40 trips!

If you'd like to join in on the fun ride or help to marshal the event, or to donate, please get in touch with Tony on 0116 289 9327 or Lin on 299 2192.

Flower Theft

Thieves have made off with flowers from the hanging baskets on the Hinckley Road Parade.

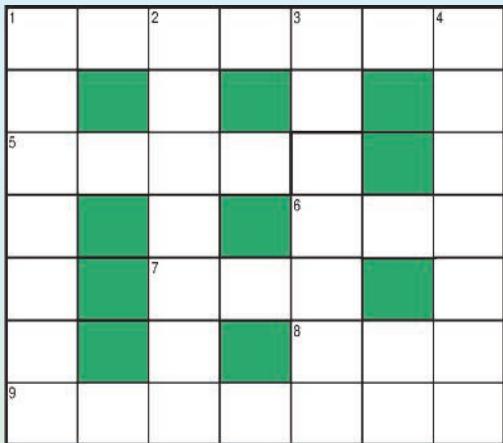
The baskets were put up by local traders and the city council to improve the look of the shop row in the summer and to make it a more attractive place to shop.

The theft was noticed when a gardener from Plantscape UK arrived to water the planters and realised some of the flowers were missing.

Livid local business owner Tracy Coleman said: "I went out of my way to get funding for flowers again for the shopping row and the community and some thief has stolen all the begonias out of the pots".



BRAIN TAZERS



Across: 1. What July is supposed to be 5. Motor cars 6. A small measure 7. Tonal 8. A nice steak
Down: 1. Mablethorpe or Skegness 2. Pair together 3. Sunrise direction 4. Source of videos.

© Paul Towers

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

- Which five letter word can be placed ahead of struggle, less, room, mate?
 - Which four letter word connects the following? boiled, cell, drink, Jazz.
 - What number appears next in this sequence? 8, 10, 14, 20, 28 ___?
 - Which letter is missing from this sequence? T, Y, U, ?, O, P
 - Decode this rebus puzzle: XQQMEE
 - HITS UNFOCUSSED MO is an anagram of which famous stage and screen musical?
- Answers at www.westernparkgazette.co.uk

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