

Western Park Gazette

Information and advertising for the Western Park Area
No 7 August 2009 www.westernparkgazette.co.uk



LOCAL AUTHOR SCORES BOOK GOAL

Did you know we could have a famous author living in the Western Park area? No it's not J.K. Rowling and he's not famous yet but watch this space.

Dan Tunstall has just had his first novel published. Big and Clever tells the story of two teenage boys, Tom and Raks, who find themselves caught up in the murky world of football hooliganism. Dan is keen to stress that the book is not just about football violence, however. He said: "Big and Clever is also about being left out, about bonding and finding ways of fitting in. It doesn't glamorise violence. It shows its effects and consequences."

It had always been a lifetime ambition of Dan's to be a writer and he had given himself until he was 40 to make his dream come true. Previous novels had almost made it into print but just as he was beginning to think he might not make his deadline, the offer came to publish Big and Clever, just one year away from his fortieth birthday. He can hardly believe that he's a real writer at last. He said: "I'm still going into shops and taking pictures of the book on my phone!"

Dan has been a keen Leicester City supporter since 1978. As well as football, his interests include horror movies, music and



boxing. He's lived in the West End of Leicester since 1992 and had several jobs before becoming a writer including journalist, gardener and teacher.

His advice to other budding authors is to read and write as much as possible, be prepared to accept criticism and persevere. He said: "If I can do it, anyone can. I'm just a scruffy bloke from Leicester who has never done anything really exciting before in my life". Big and Clever, published by Five Leaves Publications, is available in all good bookshops, priced £6.99. Find out more from www.dantunstall.com

Melissa Lawrence



Dan Tunstall – Newly Published

Greetings from the Editor

Hello and welcome to August's issue of the Western Park Gazette.

This month, Melissa Lawrence meets local author Dan Tunstall to talk about his book publishing deal, Roger Blackmore, unearths the history of Leicester legend William Wyggeston and Helen Knott on why we should have a party with our neighbours.

Gardening expert Tony Huxley takes on the scourge of Himalayan Balsam, whilst Andy Miarkowski, our computer bod, gets very nerdy about Google Chrome.

Richard Perry went off to Leicester's Summer Sundae Festival. Great atmosphere, great music but terrible cocktails he says!

And once again there's the chance to win stuff. This month, Trina at Monty's Deli gives you the opportunity to get your hands on her own brand of Leicestershire's finest jams and preserves. And Curve have a pair of tickets to see Arthur Miller's

All of My Sons for you to win as well.

We've also beefed up the website, so take a nosey around or join us on Facebook.

And as always if you'd like to contribute to the Gazette, get in touch - we want to hear from you!

Sharon

editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

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Events Diary

Knitting Circle Meet every Thursday from 1pm at Mary Clare, 4 Shaftsbury Av. Tel: 0116 2551866

Castle Park Festival Mon 24th 31st August with lively events, activities and performances.

September 2009 Keep Fit Summer Classes At Holy Apostles Church Hall Fosse Road. 19:30 to 21:30.

Mind Your Own Business Sept 3rd from 10.00 am. Free new business event for women - Brite Centre, Braunstone Avenue.

Western Park Users Next Meeting 23rd Sept at 1.30pm in the Bowls Pavilion.

Autumn Fair and Coffee Morning Sat 26th Sept. St Anne's Community Hall. 10am-12pm.

Love Sport Activities and information at New Walk Museum and Art Gallery until 4th October.

Summer in the Park Family Fun Day at Victoria Park. Sunday 6th Sept.

Fosse Park Clean Up - Sat 26th Sept 10am- 12pm. Meet at the park gates on Wentworth Road at 6pm

Leicester International Music Festival 17th- 20th September. New Walk Museum and Cathedral. Call 0116 225 4916 for details.

Gorse Hill City Farm Anstey Lane. Open 7 days.
E: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

To Contact us Call 0116 299 7953
email sales@westernparkgazette.co.uk

The Gazette on line!

Take a look at our website because we have loaded lots of useful content onto it.

You can now download versions of previous Gazette's as PDF's , read past and current stories , view the photo archive, contribute articles and letters on line - even keep up to date with the view from the Hinckley Road traffic camera and the Western Park weather!

There is also over 120 links to local and Leicester-shire based organisations for you to brows thorough. If you're holding any event across the Western Park area, email the details across and we will put it on line and into the magazine.

The website will continually evolve but we're particularly interested in increasing the photo archive section to better reflect the changes to the area. If you have old pictures of Hinckley Road or Fosse Road, perhaps you remember Nevanthon Road being cleared and built in the 70's and have photos, please get in touch.

We want to make the website as interactive as possible so it becomes the first port of call for surfers looking for information and businesses across Western Park. Any suggestions or links you have will be gratefully received.

You might have walked past the entrance on Hinckley Road a hundred times and not given it a second thought. But the Wyggeston Retirement Home is quietly connected to the city's past, as Roger Blackmore explains.

The Life and Times of William Wyggeston

William Wyggeston or William of Wigston, one of the four figures featured on our clock tower, was a wool merchant who rose to prominence in Leicester in the early sixteenth century. By the time King Henry the Eighth ascended the throne, exactly five hundred years ago, he had represented the City in Parliament and was twice Lord Mayor of Leicester. Having made his fortune, he was by far the wealthiest man in Leicester in his day. He and his wife, Agnes, engaged in a number of charitable works within the city. In 1514 he founded a hospital near St. Martin's, now the Cathedral. In 1869 the hospital moved to it's present site and was rebuilt.

The Wyggeston Hospital still stands as a retirement home on Hinckley Road, To this day it's two main houses are called William House and Agnes House in memory of their founders.



William Wyggeston on the Clock Tower

It is still home to a hundred or so of our fellow citizens.

In five years time there will no doubt be major celebrations as the Master and residents celebrate the five hundredth anniversary of the foundation.

It was actually William's brother Thomas who used part of the Wyggeston Trust money to establish a grammar school in the town and the name is still perpetuated in the Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth 1st College. But it is William who figures on the clock tower.

Get noticed with a new web site - email: sales@westernparkgazette.co.uk

Western Park Writer and Broadcaster Helen Knott wonders why so few of us took part in July's Big Lunch?

KNOTT'S LANDING

Helen Knott

The Big Lunch, promoted by the Eden Project, was supposed to be an event where whole streets got together - had a street party and got to know each other.

I saw it on a TV news channel and thought it sounded like a great, hippy dippy idea, right up my street if you'll pardon the pun.

A friend in London told me his street was really going for it. They had jugglers and a huge party planned. I felt left out. So I went onto the website and had a look at what was going on in Western Park. There were two people around here who had expressed an interest. I couldn't get over it, just two people!

My friend called me on the day of The Big Lunch and sounded like he was having a blast. He had some bloke who was food critic for the Observer who lives in the next street declaring the thing open, there was barbecued food, juggling and fire

eaters and lots of music. I, on the other hand, waved at my neighbours across the fence and said a cheery hello. There was no big lunch for us, although to be fair I doubt that the council would approve of us closing Hinckley Road to have a knees-up.

I'm pretty sure people around here are friendlier than those in London but it was a bit disheartening to find so few people interested in having a party and extending the hand of friendship. I guess it is incumbent on all of us to be nice to our neighbours, and not just because mine have got a lovely apple tree in their garden and I'm hoping for some of their excess, but because it makes the world a better place if people are nice to each other – and in an emergency you can get help to get that stubborn lid off the Calpol bottle.



If there's a Big Lunch Next Year, who would like to turn Western Park into a giant street party? We'll keep you up to date with that one! Editor.

WIN TICKETS TO SEE ALL MY SONS AT CURVE

Arthur Miller's play, set just after the Second World War explores the limits of loyalty to your children, spouse, friends and even your country. A wartime betrayal threatens the American dream, exposing the risks a man will take when he is doing the best for his family. For your chance to win a pair of tickets to see All My Sons on Friday 9 October, 7.30pm just complete the form below and return to

Communications Team, Curve, Rutland Street, Leicester, LE1 1SB

Closing date: Thursday 1 October.

Terms and conditions: One entry per person. The tickets are non-transferable and there is no cash alternative.



Which of the following is a national ethos of the United States?

- A. American Dream
- B. United States Glory
- C. U.S.A ambition

Name _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

If you would not like to join our free mailing list please tick WPG



GAZETTE LETTER BOX

email: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

Would anyone else like to join me in a "Clean Up Our Local Shops" campaign? I'm referring to the state of The Parade, Hinckley Road. The atmosphere around some of shops has become intimidating. There is too much litter, vehicles are parked right up to the junction with Hinckley Road and some parts of The Parade have become, in my opinion, a complete eyesore. I am sure many of the traders are aware of this and do their best to keep the Parade tidy, but are they content to continue to lose customers such as myself? *Name and address supplied.*

Autumn Craft Fair and Coffee Morning

Letchworth Area Watch have organised a Craft Fair and Coffee morning on Saturday 26th September at St. Anne's Community Hall on Letchworth Road, from 10am to 12 noon.

Stalls will include various crafts, food, plants, cards and more.

Book a stall for only £5.00 by calling Pat Abraham on 0116 285 7795 or Brenda Cavers on 0116 285 6314.

They will be holding their traditional Raffle and Tombola so any donations will be gratefully received.

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Tony Huxley's

Garden Tidings



It was great to visit other Western Parks Open Gardens in July. There is something quintessentially English about nosing around other people's gardens, then having a cream tea at half time.

I took my toddler around as many gardens as possible and tried to make sure he didn't rampage through any flowerbeds which reminds me...

We gardeners sometimes need to be wary of what we grow. Take *Impatiens glandulifera* or Himalayan Balsam. I was surprised to see this in several gardens. With its reddish square sided stems, attractive leaves and pretty bell shaped flowers in various shades of pink and white, you can see why people allow it into their garden, but beware! The Environment Agency labels it an "Invasive Species". Although an annual it can grow over 2mtrs tall (6'6"). Each seed pod can fire 800 seeds 7mtrs (22') away. Think of it like a Busy Lizzie on steroids, and with attitude!



Himalayan Balsam - Friend or Foe?

Though the law doesn't ban you from growing it, you have a duty of care, and may be liable for its spread. The problem is that it smothers out other plant life, and is particularly a problem on water courses where it kills off the perennial plants whose roots hold the banks together. In the winter the balsam dies off and the banks get washed away.

Luckily it's easy to control, with systemic weed-killer like a Glyphosate based product, or, if you're organic like me, good old fashioned weeding works a treat. Just be sure to control before it sets seed and don't compost any pods.

...anyway, it was a very enjoyable day. When I got back to St. Anne's for refreshments, Gabriel was fast asleep in his pram so I didn't even have to share my scone with him - result! Now was that Giant Hogweed I saw on Letchworth Road...

LE3 Burglary Capital of Leicester

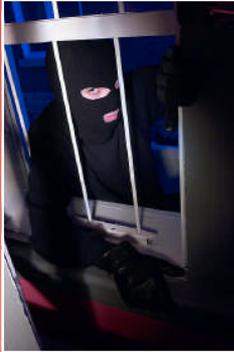
In Western Park we're right in the middle of the burglary capital of Leicester.

But it's worse than that, in LE3, we occupy the second most burgled post code in the UK according to a survey from the comparison website moneysupermarket.com.

They analysed 2.6 million insurance quotes and found that our area falls just behind Britain's most burgled borough, West Bridgford in Nottingham.

In the first three months of this year, £100 million worth of insurance claims were made because of burglary, making it the most expensive quarter for five years.

The study suggests that the economic downturn is creating a crime wave which is pushing up insurance premiums. Claims have soared as a result and if you live in a black spot, home and content insurance can cost 20 per cent more than elsewhere.



Congratulations to the winner of July's Gazette competition. Reader Gill Osborne has won a slap up meal for 4 at Leicester's historic Globe pub. She correctly worked out, that the Globe was built in 1720. This was the most popular quiz so far!

GAZETTE COMPETITION

This month, we've got together with Trina at **Monty's Deli** on Hinckley Road so you can win a collection of Leicestershire's finest jams, preserves and chutneys.

Just answer this question.

Where does the word "chutney" originate?

(A clue. It's the same place as snooker!)

- A. France
- B. India
- C. Italy

Email your answers to

editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

or by post to

Editor C/O 62 Ainsdale Road
Leicester LE3 0UA.

Closing Date is 10th September 09.

No cash alternative. One correct answer chosen at random, Editor's decision is final.

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AS SEEN IN WESTERN PARK

Oh the wonderful things in Western Park. If you look really carefully you may see some too!

Like birds of prey on Wynfield Road.

If you have eagle eyes you may have spotted the feathered hunter that stalks our streets. Last Monday a grey shape alighted on a resident's garden fence. It was too sleek and menacing to be a pigeon. Our reader recalls seeing a similar creature devouring a bullfinch in a neighbour's garden several years ago.

As if sighting prey, it pounced on something among the undergrowth before returning to the fence empty taloned, before aloofly preening itself. "The vantage point in the conservatory was no more than a few feet away. I stealthily sneaked off to get my camera but by when I returned it had moved on. Maybe the hunter sensed she was being hunted.

By visiting the RSPB website (www.rspb.org.uk) and using their Bird Identifier I discovered I had seen a female sparrowhawk".

What other weird, rare or wonderful things have you seen in our area? Let us know, be they animal, vegetable, mineral, even extra-terrestrial or supernatural.

Email: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

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In some TV adverts they said "The Future is Orange". In the world of Western Park's home computer users it could be Chrome.

Nice Box - What's in it? Andrzej Miarkowski

I'm sure there are many of us using a computer at home, who only run an internet web browser, and no other applications like Word or a media player. But for those of us who find the whole "going onto the internet thing" confusing, there is possibly a simpler alternative in the pipeline.

The massive search engine, Google, have announced their intention to produce a new operating system, known as Chrome OS. This is an alternative to the Windows operating system loaded onto nearly all home PCs and Laptops. Chrome OS seems to be essentially a version of a Linux Kernel hosting the Google Chrome web browser. Basically the kernel is the important controlling bit of a computer operating system, so it will probably handle differently to Windows. Their aim is to produce a netbook (*small laptop*) version in about a year's time with desktop ver-

sions following later.

The simplicity will no doubt be hugely attractive to many – no more worries about hardware configuration or software updates. All of your data must be stored in 'the cloud' and all your applications too. This simply means all your content and most of your programmes will be kept on line and not on your computer.

But it is a work in progress and there are many issues to consider, will it be possible to upload photographs and print documents etc? Will there be a way to shield against virus and malware attacks? What about privacy, will Google collect your usage data and end up knowing even more about you than Tesco do? Will it be possible to use this system and avoid being subject to an uninterrupted stream of advertising? Will the European Commission impose financial penalties on Google for bundling a browser with an operating system?

Whatever happens, it is an indication of things to come. One day we may be storing all our important documents on line, and just using the PC as a door to it. Chrome OS is a step in that direction.

Andrzej Miarkowski is certified Microsoft Developer



Google Chrome

SUMMER SUNDAE

Richard Perry

It's been called "The hippest music festival in the Midlands" and so it is! This was loudly proclaimed as top national and local bands entertained over 20,000 fans at the Summer Sundae weekender in the grounds of the DeMontfort Hall. The first Summer Sundae in 2001 was a modest one-day affair by comparison, held over two stages, featuring 14 bands.

Eight years later, five stages hosted a jam packed weekend of live music and entertainment with 100 acts giving it their best.

Summer Sundae is always more than music. It's a throbbing family festival with a chill out area, if the constant bopping got too much for you, a kids zone where children could learn circus skills and a comedy venue. If your legs finally gave out, you could enjoy a film in the new cinema tent. I'm a fan of the Rocky Horror Picture Show and This is Spinal Tap, so it was a pleasure to sit down and turn the knob up to 11! (Spinal Tap fans will understand!)

This Summer Sundae, the biggest so far, was like a very noisy, trendy bazaar. Thousands lounged on the grass; busy stalls sold food and goods from

the four corners of the world all helped along by the sunshine! The only downside was a mohito cocktail I had that was, in fact, liquid compost.



But what the fans came to see was the non stop live music. The Charlatans, The Zutons and The Lightning Seeds to name just three of the top bands performing. The Streets couldn't make it, they had swine flu, but Idlewild stood in and carried Friday night with them. Local bands Minnaars and The Heroes also kicked up a storm, flying the flag for Leicester.

Summer Sundae is like a mini Glastonbury on our doorstep.... miss next years at your peril!

Send us your photos and we'll post the best on line at www.westernparkgazette.co.uk

What did you think? Email us.

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OLD BOW BRIDGE GETS A MAKEOVER

The final stage of work is about to finish on Leicester's historic Old Bow Bridge. The bridge which has been widened, repaired, strengthened and painted over the years, carries St Augustine Road over the River Soar. The work was needed to ensure the bridge, which dates from the early 1900's, stays safe to use. Work began last month to refurbish the Grade II listed bridge because the protective coating on the steelwork had failed and the old waterproofing system needed renewing. The repairs included the complete removal of the existing tarmac road and footway surfaces, shot blasting the steel structure back to clean bare metal, repairing and strengthening the steel and protecting it with high quality paint. A new concrete deck was built over the footways to tie in with the existing reinforced concrete main bridge deck. The work is expected to be complete by the end of August.

Events in the Parish

St. Anne's St. Paul's and St. Augustine's

Tuesdays 10 am: Mums and Toddlers at St. Paul's. At 2 pm: Over 60's Group at St. Paul's.
Thursdays: 1.30 pm - Pram Club at St. Anne's
Fridays: 10 am - Coffee Drop-in at St. Anne's
1st Friday of each month - light lunches from 11.30 am)
Coffee and tea are served after the 10 am and 10.15 am Sunday services each week
Saturday 12th September - Ride and Stride Day and Table - Top Sale at St. Paul's Worship Centre. 10-12pm. Both Churches open.
Sunday 13th Sept Local Heritage Walk ending up with a tour of St. Anne's. 3-4.30 pm
Monday 14th Sept St. Paul's & St. Augustine's PCC in lounge at St. Paul's 7.45 pm.
Saturday 19th Sept Indian Weekend celebrating links with the Trichy Diocese in South India. St. Anne's Church from 7pm.
More details from The Rev'ds Chris and Paula Oxley. 0116 2858452.

Holding an event near Western Park?

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The editor c/o 62 Ainsdale Road
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