

# Western Park Gazette

Information and advertising for the Western Park Area  
January 2009 [www.westernparkgazette.co.uk](http://www.westernparkgazette.co.uk)



## Welcome to the Western Park Gazette!

A new year and a new magazine, distributed to homes and business around Western Park every month. We're picking up the torch and carrying on the tradition of local news, views and advertising for the best place to live in Leicester!

There may be a little recession at the moment and even though it hasn't caught up with us too much so far in Leicester, it's still important to weather the storm by watching the pennies, so we're encouraging you to leave the car at home and shop locally to support the many business based within Western Park.

We can't put this masterpiece together without your contributions, so any ideas, articles, or comments you'd like to contribute, please email: [editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk](mailto:editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk)

If you're in business, why not give us a try!  
Have a healthy, safe and prosperous 2009!

### Greetings from the Editor

I'm Sharon and let me introduce you to the first edition of the Western Park Gazette!

It's been a while since we've had a community magazine connecting residents with local news, views, personalities and businesses.

We hope you enjoy our debut!

In this issue we take a look at banishing spam from your in-box, City Councillor and historian Roger Blackmore examines the local legend of Black Annis and there's the chance to win a basket of fresh veg from Nene Organic.

While you're browsing through the Gazette, remember to take a look on the new web site [www.westernparkgazette.co.uk](http://www.westernparkgazette.co.uk).

And don't forget to email me with your stories, ideas, comments or letters. It would be great to hear from you.

[editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk](mailto:editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk)

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The Parade....very quiet. Is the recession biting?

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**City Councilor and local historian Roger Blackmore goes in search of a sinister local legend...**

## BLACK ANNIS

Of all the characters associated with our Western Park area none is more wreathed in mystery, myth and legend than Black Annis



Described by past writers as an ogress or a witch, Black Annis lived in a cave close to what is now Westfield Road. A cave which she is reputed to have clawed out of the sandstone rock with her bare talons. The floor was said to be stained with the blood of lambs and children.

The tales told of this cave, or Black Annis's Bower, are legion. In 1874 a writer in the Leicester Chronicle claimed that little children off to play in the Dane Hills area were warned... "That Black Annis lay in wait to snatch them away to her bower and that many were scratched to death with her claws. She sucked their blood and hung their skins up to dry."

It was also believed she scurried through a tunnel linking Western Park to the centre of old Leicester where her unearthly spirit still lingers.

According to research by the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Leicestershire historian, John Nichols, there was an anchoress, Agnes Scott, who was supposed to have lived in a cave in the west of Leicester called Black Agnes's Bower. Black Annis herself has been described as having a livid blue face with one deranged eye and there is no doubt that tales of her comings and goings were widespread in the nineteenth Century when she was sometimes known as Cat Anna, who also spent her time in the cellars of Leicester Castle.

Today Morris dancers still skip in and around one or two local pubs in memory of Black Annis and there are those

who still regard her as one of the city's historical witches, who practiced her rites and rituals in the cave which still bears her name.

The fact is we shall probably never know. One nineteenth century cleric even suggested that Annis was in fact the Celtic goddess Anu.

However the story of Black Annis will live on in the annals of Western Park's interesting local history.



### MOVING WITH THE TIMES

Actual picture of Black Annis robbing cars in Western Park

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## Webby *Weirdness*

If like us you doodle your time away on the net in search of hidden gems, here's a couple for you.

For those with an interest in the esoteric and the just plain weird, how about [www.anomalist.com](http://www.anomalist.com).

Clearly people with too much time on their hands, they scour the web for all manner of high and low strangeness from UFO's to Yetis.

Catalogued every day, you can get your fill of the unusual and the strange from across the world.

It's been a while since the Simpsons Movie, but for the kids...and grown ups alike, [www.simpsonsmovie.com](http://www.simpsonsmovie.com) is still going strong. You can create your own Simpson style avatar or even help Homer wreck an armoured truck with a large metal ball.

Destructive fun!

If you have a favourite site, send us the link and we'll take a look.

Email it to..

[editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk](mailto:editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk)

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*Sometimes we're lax in keeping the anti virus software up to date on our home PCs. If that's you, read on because the Hackers are on the march and they want your details!*

*Western Park's Andrzej Miarkowski is a Microsoft Certified Professional Developer and he offers this advice.*

## Nice Box – What's In It?

**Don't drop your guard in the battle against malicious computer software!**

On 17<sup>th</sup> November, last year a virus infected the networks of three London hospitals, resulting in considerable disruption to patient care. This virus identified as Mytob carries a Trojan horse that is capable of putting confidential personal data at risk and spreads via e-mail. Surprisingly, this virus, identified in 2005 is now categorised as "low risk" by anti-virus software suppliers. But this can affect home and business computer users across Western Park, and here's how.

Malicious Software or malware writers are developing code for profit rather than simply to cause mischief. The malware is also becoming sneakier in concealing its existence from detection. One anti-virus software supplier claims to be finding almost 20,000 new infected web pages every day,

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or about one every four seconds. High profile web sites that became victims last year included Sony Playstation, ITV.com, Adobe and The World Bank, and you could be next.

Experts agree that organisations should never connect computers to any networks that are not running the latest anti-malware applications. Home computers users are in a different position because weakness in your computer's defence is not immediately obvious before personal information is gathered or attacks launched onto other systems.

The advice is: Don't use old operating systems. If you're a Microsoft user, always enable windows automatic updates. Always install and enable anti-malware software, which is not expensive and generally, works well with the default setting. Daily updates are vital, so don't let your subscriptions lapse. Make sure also that your firewall is never disabled. Make sure you understand the reasons for changing any anti-malware software configuration settings.

Otherwise do not do it!



## Calling All Budding Writers

### We'd like you to write for us.

Are you into gardening, finance or DIY? Perhaps you have a skill or advice you'd like to pass onto others in Western Park, if so, then get in touch. You could be holding an event or you could have something to say about the Westcotes Church fire, it's up to you.

We'll publish as many of your thoughts and feelings as we can both in print and on the website. The Gazette is your contact forum for Western Park and will be regularly updated on line.

You can contact us and submit items through the web site [www.westernparkgazette.co.uk](http://www.westernparkgazette.co.uk) or by post to

**Western Park Gazette**  
C/O 62 Ainsdale Road  
Leicester LE3 0UA

## Special Olympics 2009

**The Special Olympics GB National Summer Games will be held in Leicester between the 25th and 31st July.**

Over 2,700 athletes representing 19 Special Olympic regions across the UK will visit the city over the seven day period along with 1200 coaches and 1500 volunteers.

The 2,700 athletes will compete in a range of Olympic style sports competitions across the city. Leicestershire County Cricket Club, Leicester City Football Club and Rutland Water are just some of the 21 sporting venues confirmed to host the 2009 Games.

Organisers are looking to recruit 1500 volunteers to support the games.

If you'd like to help, download an information pack from [www.sol12009.com](http://www.sol12009.com)

## WESTCOTES CHURCH UP IN FLAMES

**The big news in the Western Park area was the recent fire that ravaged the Westcotes United Reformed Church at the corner of Hinckley Road and Westcotes Drive at around 1.30 in the morning of December 8<sup>th</sup>.**

Over 30 firefighters fought overnight to battle a blaze that eventually destroyed the Church's annex room, with firefighting efforts leaving water damage throughout the rest of the of the building and flooding the cellar.

The blaze was so severe, that residents of the neighbouring flats and houses were roused from their beds, asked to leave and not allowed back until the afternoon.



Nobody was injured, and the cause of the blaze, which is thought to have started on the second floor, is still under investigation. Sniffer dogs were brought in to check for the cause. The fire comes shortly after a recent

£20,000 renovation and a £12,000 repair bill caused by the theft of lead from the roof.

The building, is an important local landmark and is run by "New Life International" an evangelical congregation, as well as being the location for Ward meetings held by Western Park and Westcotes Councilors.

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**Are you creative and imaginative? Do you have artistic talent? Would you like to work with a local artist to produce art for public exhibition?**

**A unique opportunity for local people to create artwork and exhibit it!**

The WEA and New Walk Museum & Art Gallery have teamed up to organise an exciting exhibition that will be on display at the museum from 25 July to 27 September next year.

The **Celebrating New Walk** exhibition will mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of New Walk's status as a Conservation Area.

There are several arts courses starting in January or thereafter in the West End and beyond.

And if you are on benefits or low income the courses are free!

The arts projects include: digital art (photography), drawing, watercolour painting, silk painting, creative writing and textile crafts.

This is a great opportunity to work with a local artist and to develop high quality artwork for a public exhibition. Each arts course will produce a collective piece of work for the exhibition, and there will be opportunities to create individual and small group artwork too. There will be a special launch event in late July, and the best artwork will win a £100 prize. Who knows, it could be you!

The exhibition will attract large crowds during the summer, and will be advertised in the museum and Leicester tourist office publicity.

**If you are interested in joining one of these projects, contact Martin at WEA, 101 Hinckley Road (near Narborough Road), phone 0116 255 6614 or email [mhyams@wea.org.uk](mailto:mhyams@wea.org.uk)**

Holding an event near Western Park?

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