

Western Park Gazette

Information and advertising for the Western Park Area
No 8 September 2009 www.westernparkgazette.co.uk



A BRIDGE TOO LATE – END OF AN ERA

The historic West Leicester landmark, Bowstring Bridge, which spans Braunstone Gate, is being demolished to allow redevelopment of the DeMontfort University sports facilities.

Originally part of the Great Central Railway, which opened in 1899, Bowstring Bridge is one of the last surviving steel girder structures of its type from Great Central's London Extension which linked the Capital to the Midlands.

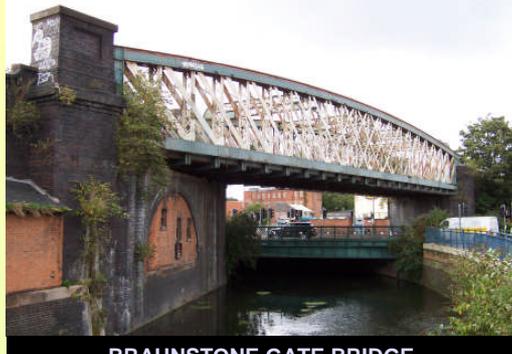
Weighing in at 400 tons and 175 feet in length, demolition was due to begin on September 21st and take four months in spite of strong opposition from local conservation groups and rail enthusiasts. The start date has been put back due to engineering checks.

According to a 2005 structural report from Leicester City Council who bought the Bridge for a peppercorn payment in the 1970's full restoration would cost over £2.5 million. A lack of funding and the end of that section of the railway lead to the current condition whereby the bridge can now only support its own weight. English Heritage refused to grant listed status to the bridge, following Leicester Civic Society's last ditch

rescue attempt which meant the £472, 000 demolition project got the go-ahead last month.

An independent wildlife survey commissioned by the City Council found no protected species living on the bridge or in the arches which could delay the work.

The effected land which includes the blue stone viaduct and the adjacent Pump and Tap pub on Dunns Lane will be sold on to DeMontfort University for a nominal £1.00, with another £750, 000 to follow making way for the development of a £6 million swimming pool and sports complex. Work is expected to start in 2011.



BRAUNSTONE GATE BRIDGE

WIN A MEAL FOR 4 AT THE
CROWS NEST (Magazine Only)

Greetings from the Editor

In this issue, we welcome a whole lot of new readers! We have expanded the coverage of the magazine by 800 copies.

If you live near Park Rise, or around parts of Westcotes, you're now part of the Western Park Gazette's ever increasing readership.

This month we mark the demolition of Braunstone Gate Bridge. 110 years not out until now! Helen Knott gets frazzled (*nothing new there!*) and Roger Blackmore tells us about an unusual man of letters.

Gardening expert Tony Huxley picks up his clippers and gets busy pruning, whilst Andy Mirakowski, our computer expert, ponders over new legislation which could mean dodgy computer programmes are a thing of the past.

We also welcome our youngest contributor 11 year old Alex Tunstall, with her story of the record-breaking Michael Jackson Danceathon!

And once again there's the chance to win stuff. This month, Ray and Yvette at The Crow's Nest offer you the chance for four to feast for free!

And under 16's can enter our Christmas Picture competition to win family tickets to see Peter Pan at Curve!

Sharon editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk



Events Diary

Diwali Lights Switch On 4th Oct - Cossington Street.

Leicester City Marathon - Sun 11th Oct details at www.leicester.gov.uk

Halloween Horrors - 20th October At Abbey Pumping Station. £1.70 per child. Fancy Dress.

Here Comes the Aliens - 21st Oct Fosse Library Mantle Road. 2.00-3.30pm. Free.

Craft Exhibition in aid of Friedreichs Ataxia and Church of the Martyrs - 20th-22nd November 10.00-6.00pm (Sun 1.00-4.00pm) Ad: £1.00.

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

Chatterboxes - Fridays 9.30-11.30am at New Park's Community Centre. (Confidence building social group) Sally - 07850 021 639.

West End Dance Academy - Wednesdays. Children, 8-11. From 5.30pm. Diana 07949 495081.

Fosse Singers - Weds 7.00-8.45pm at Fosse Neighbourhood Centre. Hanna 07814 935049.

Stay and Play - Wed 1.00-3pm & Fri 09.15-11.15 at West End Children's Centre Catesby Street. Jackie 0116 255 22255.

Business Start up Advice at Westcotes library on Weds 10.15-12.45pm.

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

Friends of Western Park

Are you a user of Western Park? If so, we need you to become a member of our group.

When things need improving at the park, a group run by local people is better served than the council.

The Friends of Western Park are able to apply for various grants, such as National Lottery funding, whereas the council are not.

As a member, you will receive regular newsletters to which you can contribute. There will be a number of meetings held throughout the year, which will provide members with the opportunity to develop the needs of Western Park.

Being a member does not mean that you have to attend meetings, but we will be asking for your views on issues relating to the park.

The Friends of Western Park Group has initially been set up to improve play facilities but if you would like to see another area improved please get in touch.

Any amount of time or experience you are able to offer will be greatly received.

Contact Ady on ady@amsoft.co.uk



Christmas Panto Competition

How would you like to be the first to see Leicester's Christmas pantomime? Oh Yes You Would!



We've go together with **Curve** to offer tickets for a family of four to the preview show of Peter Pan on Tuesday 8th of December at 7.30. To win this wonderful prize we'd like you to paint or photograph a Christmas Scene.

The competition is open to anyone under 16 and you can use whatever technology you like. Anything from crayons to digital media, the choice is yours!

Our team of expert judges are all artists and photographers in their own right and are lead by The Lord Mayor, Roger Blackmore, who's no slouch with a camera himself.

In addition, the winning picture will be on the front page of the December issue of the Gazette.

Email your entry by November 25th 2009 to editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk or by post - Editor, C/O Rapscaillon Media, 62 Ainsdale Road, LE3 0UA.

Entries are non returnable, tickets are non transferable, there is no cash alternative and Judges decision is final.



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Tom Barclay is a name you probably haven't heard of. His autobiography should be required reading for anybody interested in Leicester's Victorian past. Roger Blackmore looks at this man of letters.

TOM BARCLAY

Leicester's Unsung Writer

Born in the shadow of St. Margaret's Church on Burleys Lane in 1852, the son of Irish immigrants, Tom Barclay was a remarkable man.

Brought up in grinding poverty, he went to work at the age of eight at Browetts Rope-walk for the princely sum of one shilling and sixpence a week. Tom spent his whole life working in lowly paid menial jobs in various hosiery factories and dye works in Leicester. That was not enough - he took to books and became entirely self educated. He was an avid reader and determined to improve himself, attending classes run by Dr. Vaughan who later gave his name to Vaughan Collage. Much later on Tom wrote his own life story called "Memories and Melodies: The Autobiography of a Bottle Washer" in which he recounted life in the Victorian slums of Leicester.

Throughout his long life, he busied himself with reading, political discussion, social agitation and

became an active member and speaker at the Secular Society. He met and corresponded at length with fellow Irishman George Bernard Shaw and studied all manner of subjects from poetry to geology as well as learning a number of foreign languages. Up to the First World War he would regularly contribute to Leicester's magazines and papers like "The Wyvern".

Tom seems to have spent a part of his life in London, where he again engaged in various intellectual pursuits and continued his interest in Irish and Gaelic culture and language.

He died on New Year's Day 1933.

This remarkable renaissance man deserves to be better known. I often wonder if Barclay Street was

named after him and I would be interested to know if any reader can shed light on the matter.

Email: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk



Maths + Maths = Everything!

Penny Palmer

Whether we think about maths consciously or subconsciously, maths is part of our daily lives.

Maths allows us to do 4 main activities: count, measure, label and estimate. For example in sport, including racquet sports, counting or measuring is crucial. Maths underlies other areas of life such as: architecture, technology, consumer activities like shopping, utility equipment or domestic appliances (gas meter readings even washing machine settings). Not forgetting the world of finance which encompasses the ability to talk about approximate or exact amounts via the developed money system which we often refer to on a daily basis whether we have plenty cash or not!

So how good is your maths?

Brain Teaser

What number comes next?

1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21,—?

We'll print the answer in the next edition, but if you can't wait you'll find it on the website.

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Western Park's resident journalist, broadcaster and writer Helen Knott gets in a tizzy about being totally disorganised!

KNOTT'S LANDING

Helen Knott

Being organised is not my strong point. I am, it has become apparent, a slummy mummy.

I have answered the door to the postman in my pyjamas more than once, I have chased the milkman up the street with my dressing gown on to pay him and I have failed to sign up for various classes for my little one on time. Organised people scare me. I would love to be one but it hasn't happened this far and I'm not sure I can change. My VERY organized friend has tried to help. She bought me a fabulous diary with things to do lists, tear out shopping lists, pages for organizing Christmas that start about now, budget sheets and STICKERS (it was these that sold me on the idea). I have used it diligently and still failed to take action. It's not sloth, it's just that my brain is full of other things. Some useful, some not – did you know Methode Champenoise was invented by an English guy called Christopher Merret in 1662 – see what I mean?

Unfortunately having a baby means you have to be very organized. You are surrounded by the uber-organised who book their children in for Mandarin lessons as soon as they are conceived, which only goes to make you feel bad when you think, two years later – that's a great idea, only to be told that the class is full. This summer I have enquired about a play group that has a two year waiting list, been told to hammer on the gates of a local school on my little one's second birthday to help get him in and been turned away from guitar lessons at night school because it was full from September 1. Can a leopard change its spots? Can I become organized mum? Do I want to be like the uber-mums? Is it wrong to say "not really"?



More from Helen next month. It'll be Halloween and she's got a pumpkin, so watch out trick or treaters!

**To comment email
editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk**

GAZETTE COMPETITION

Congratulations to the winner of August's Gazette competition. Reader Amanda Ward has won a basket of Monty's Deli's home made jams and pickles. She correctly worked out, that the word "chutney" comes from India.

This month, Ray and Yvette from Western Park's biggest family pub, the Crows Nest, give you the chance to win a fantastic meal for four, excluding drinks. Just answer the question!

What is a crow's nest?

- A. Look-out platform on a sailing ship
- B. Japanese soup and noodles
- C. A glider cockpit seat

Email your answers to

editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

or by post to

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

Closing Date is 20.10.09.

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

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Tony Huxley's Garden Tidings



Having told you in June to prepare for a biblical drought we end up having a summer that would have Noah dusting off his saw and plane!

The warm wet weather allowed plants, that didn't drown, to grow rapidly. So now it's time to do the late summer pruning many gardens badly need.

I get more questions about pruning than any other gardening subject. Though daunting to some, it can also be very rewarding. Do remember- stay safe! Never tackle anything too big or dangerous.

Most people think all shrubs and trees should be pruned during winter dormancy, but many prefer being cut back while in leaf. The Prunus family, plums, damsons, cherries etc, are a good example. Winter pruning makes them susceptible to infections like Silver Leaf, which discolours and disfigures the foliage. A simple rule of thumb is fruits with stones-prune in summer, fruits with pips (apple, pears etc) prune in winter.

Now you've picked all the plums and damsons you can eat, jam and bake, take out the saw, secateurs and loppers and get to work. Start by removing dead or diseased sections. Next cut out crossing branches. Then tackle any congestion and size issues. It's worth reducing long thin branches on heavy cropping specimens to reduce breaking when laden with fruit. Finally, sit back; admire your handy work before starting the hardest task, cleaning up!

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A-Kay – Okay!

A Western Park video producer is helping launch the career of an up and coming star on the Indian music scene.

Jonathan Edgerton from Dream Pictures on Hinckley Road was called upon by A-Kay to produce his debut music video and trailer.

A-Kay, who is also studying medicine in Wales, commissioned Jonathan's company to make the three minute video called "Dhire Dhire" after meeting him at a wedding last year.

The video which was directed by House of Sungum, is the first track to be released from A-Kay's debut album, A-Kay 24/7.

It has already been play listed on the Sky TV station Brit Asia, with more viewers getting the chance to see it on other stations in the future.

You can see the video at www.a-kayonline.com

And at www.dreampictures.biz



GAZETTE LETTER BOX

email: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

Reading in the Western Park Gazette of a sparrowhawk seen in Wynfield Road, reminds me of a sighting of one a few weeks ago in mid August.

The sparrowhawk sat brazenly in a tree plucking its prey, scattering feathers far and wide, which on closer examination, appeared to have been a pigeon.

Soon it was mobbed by the blackbirds and eventually after landing briefly on the lawn, it flew off taking it's prize with it.

Margaret Western Park



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THE CROW'S NEST

Advertising Feature

The Crow's Nest pub has to be the busiest pub close to Western Park. The reason is simple; Ray Cooper and Yvette Jayes.

When they took over the Crow's Nest exactly two years ago, things were looking grim. "When we got here the pub only had 20 seats and 9 tables" said Ray. "Now we seat over 150 inside and out. We've invested heavily in a new kitchen, new décor, new light and sound system and as a result we're very busy".

Ray and Yvette have gone all out to create a safe atmosphere at the pub. Although Ray is steering the Crow's Nest, his partner Yvette is the engine. She says, "We're both from big families and family values are very important to us. We hold special events days regularly including a bouncy castle for the kids and a huge amount of live entertainment". The entertainment is pretty much non stop in the evenings, from quiz nights and open mike sessions to karaoke and from live cabaret to top local and national artists, all performing live.

Where the Crow's nest has really succeeded beyond their expectations is with the food. They serve meals 7 days a week and they have be-

come famous for their Sunday lunches. "It's incredibly popular because it's excellent value for money". Ray continues, "I've spent 30 years as a DJ around Leicester and I've always wanted a pub. Two years ago we took over this place and we haven't looked back, but it's taken a lot of hard work".



Ray Cooper and Yvette Jayes

The Crow's Nest is now one of Everards top pubs, winning 8 awards. Ray has just taken and passed The Golden Cellar Course which means this October customers can look forward to Ray's personally brewed real ale. Cooper's Ambition!

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Events in the Parish

**St. Anne's St. Paul's and St. Augustine's
Events at St. Anne's Church Hall**

Mondays: 5.30 -7pm WEA Yoga 0116 255 6614
7.15 - 9pm Tai Chi with Rick.
Tues: 7.30 - 9.00pm Women's Yoga.
2nd Tues: 2.00 - 4.00pm Mother's Union visiting speakers. (or 4th Wednesday)
3rd Tues: 7.30 - 9.30pm Western Park Gardening Club.
Tues: 10 am Mums and Toddlers and at 2 pm: Over 60's Group. **At St. Paul's.**
Wed: 5 -7.30pm Weightwatchers.
1st Wed: 2.30 - 4pm Wednesday Club with visiting Speakers and 7.15 - 8.15pm Tai Chi with Rick.
4th Wed: 7.00 - 9.00pm Mother's Union visiting speakers.
Thurs: 09.00 - 10.00pm Pilates.
Thurs: 2.00 Pram Club.
Thurs: Re-bouncer Aerobics Club.
Fri: 10.30 - 11.30 am - Elevenses.
1st Fri: 11.30 am Light Lunches.
2nd & 4th Fri: 2.30 - 4.30pm International Barn Dance.

To book St Anne's Community Hall for your event:

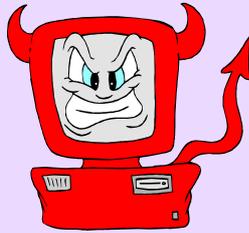
Call Nick Butler - 07792 123 630

Western Park's many home computer users will have downloaded and installed programmes off the internet only to find that their computer has thrown a wobbly. Duff software is a problem, but perhaps not for much longer.

Nice Box - What's in it? Andrzej Miarkowski

Buy a faulty toaster from the shops and we have the Sale of Goods Act to fall back on and we can demand a replacement. This doesn't necessarily apply to software you have bought or downloaded.

The computer industry has achieved a massive impact on society, yet remains largely unregulated. This can be seen in virtually all end user license agreements. This is the bit you click when you agree to download a programme where it is forbidden by the manufacturer to work around limitations in the software or that the software is licensed "as-is". If you don't click "accept" you bear the risk of using it illegally or liability is limited to \$1.00 otherwise you can't download it.



With increasing reports of attacks on computer systems, there is a fear, bordering on terror that an IT failure could cause a serious catastrophe.

Currently the onus is on you and I to use our PC's, laptops and networks correctly and safely but the US and the EU are now waking up to the need for regulation and increased liability for suppliers and products. Organizations that produce consumer products and services that have the potential to harm public health, welfare or finances will be obliged to disclose limitations and accurately specify recommended use in addition to producing higher quality products. Like canned sardines they will have to be fit to eat and be what it says on the tin.

However, with increased regulation, software products are likely to be issued at a lower rate and less reliant on regular updates, because higher quality must be built-in at the outset. Also fewer IT companies will supply directly to consumers but the supply-chain of smaller technology suppliers should increase.

As always, there is no doubt that the cost of IT products will increase.

Andrzej Miarkowski is a Microsoft Certified Professional Developer.

It may not quite be Halloween just yet, but our youngest contributor, 11 year old Alex Tunstell got into the mood early!

WHAT A THRILLER!

Zombies of every age from all around Leicester, including the Western Park area and the undead from Doveland's Primary School, gathered at Orton Square for late August's thrilling record breaking attempt.



They were there to beat the Guinness World Record for the most people dancing to Michael Jackson's 1983 hit Thriller.

The attempt was the centrepiece of a weekend of Jackson shows at Curve Theatre. These were originally to celebrate the star's 51st birthday, but after his unexpected death, became a tribute.

6 weeks of rehearsals were put to good use as over 500 dancers, many in spooky costumes and scary face paint, smashed the previous record of 242.



The producer of the show, Anand Bhatt was very proud of everyone's achievements, although the day's events ended in with slight disappointment as the record was broken again 9 hours later in Mexico. But Leicester still holds the British record and everyone had a "Thriller" of a time.

Next year they'll try and.... "BEAT IT"!

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