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Hello From The Editor

Welcome to the April edition of the **Western Park Gazette**.

A bit of a quiet month in West Leicester so far but the plan to move the Great Hole of Leicester from West Bridge to another part of the city did pique our interest as did the staff at Santander on Narborough Road who are busily raising money for two local charities.

Nina De Salis Young looks back at the history of The Church of the Martyrs, Helen Knott goes Zumbering, also in a church, Tony Huxley looks at ways of sonically enhancing your garden and the local police are out and about tackling antisocial behaviour on mopeds, bikes and quads.

And our traditionally frustrating Crossword and Sudoku are still sitting on the inside pack page.

We also have a great competition for you as the legendary Glastonbudget Tribute Band Festival approaches. You can win a pair of tickets, including camping, for the whole thing!

Please like our Facebook and Twitter pages where we also keep you up to date with local news and anything else that piques our interest.

Follow us on Twitter @mygazette & Facebook by searching for the Western Park Gazette.

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

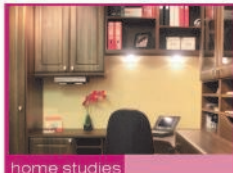
Fosse Singers: Fosse N'hood Centre. Weds. 7pm.
Peter Crebbin's Cool Swing Band: 1st Sun Monthly. Café Chino at Hilton Hotel, Meridian. 1-3.30pm
Thursday Club: Thursdays. 2-4pm. Robert Hall, 147 Narborough Rd.
West End Pay As You Feel Café: Thursdays 6-8.30pm. West End Centre. Andrewes St. LE3 5PA.
Heritage Sundays: Monthly last Sun. Mediaeval city open days/tours. 11-3pm. goleicestershire.com
Westfield Gallery: Mon-Sat. 81 Westfield Rd. Call 0116 285 8548 to view.
Full Monty-The Musical: 19-13rd April. Little Theatre.
Graeme of Thrones: 22nd April. De Mont Hall.
Wipers: Until 23rd April. Curve Theatre.
St. George's Festival: 23rd April. Orton Square. Free.
Stand-up Comedy Night: 24th April, **Find The Right Words:** 27th April & **Melody:** 29th April. Upstairs At The Western. upstairsatthewestern.com
Secret Beer Club: 30th April. Westgates Sch. Glenfield Rd. 7pm. Tickets: westernparkbeerfestival.org
Citizen Kahn: 3rd May. De Mont Hall.
Treasure Island: 29-30th April. Little Theater.
Wizard of Oz: 4 - 6th May. All Nations Centre, Frog Island. Tickets 0116 2622 544 or visit: www.leicestertheatregroup.co.uk
Glastonbudget: 27th-29th May. Turnpost Farm Wymswold. www.glastonbudget.org
Western Park Fest: 9th July. Western Park. 11-8pm. Email your event to: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

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HOLE THING TO MOVE

It has been a prominent West Leicester landmark for thirty five years but now "The Great Hole of Leicester", as it's known, will soon be moved.

The Mermaid's Arch relief is the terracotta and brick circle which stands by West Bridge. The upper mermaid panels originally highlighted the entrance to the old wholesale fruit and veg market in Rutland Street before its demolition in 1972.

The hand moulded Doultton and Co panels were regarded as too good to be just throw out and were put in storage. In 1981, they were set into a red brick circle and re-erected at West Bridge as a feature and talking point.

There are no actual records as to why West Bridge was chosen but now, as part of a scheme to improve and beautify the route from the train station to the Cultural Quarter and surrounding area, the council plan to move the Mermaid's Arch back to its former spot by the Curve theatre.

The aim of the change, along with other improvements to Orton Square and St. George's Church yard, is to make the whole area more user friendly and safer following a series of muggings and petty crime on the route from the London Road station.

The council are currently in consultation and expect to start the 14 week project in the autumn.



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BUILDING WESTCOTES

In the 1880s, the Mile Straight of the Grand Union Canal was created, now the site of the Riverside Festival, reducing the flood risk from the surrounding marshy land. At the same time, the Westcotes Estate, covering the area between Westcotes Drive, Hinckley Road and Narborough Road, was sold for development.

Westcotes Drive was previously known as Manor Road; the road leading to the manor of Westcotes. Joseph Harris of Westcotes House (now demolished) gave generous donations to fund the building of the Church of the Martyrs on Westcotes Drive, the Dispensary on Hinckley Road, the Schoolroom and the Library, both on Narborough Road. All these buildings may still be seen today, and the church in particular is thriving. A condition of the gift was the library should not open on Sundays, and that the racing pages should be removed from the newspapers on display there.

Rows of houses sprang up, often built by small local firms who would build a few at a time and then use the money from the sale to build the next batch.

The Church of the Martyrs was dedicated to three Anglican bishops: Ridley, Latimer and Cranmer, who were burnt at the stake between 1555 and 1556 for their Protestant beliefs. They are commemorated in the names of three streets between Shaftesbury Rd

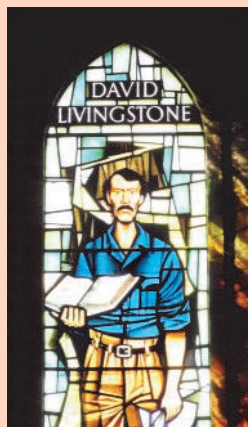
and Hinckley Rd.

Two of the other streets, Livingstone Street, named after the explorer and missionary, and Tyndale Street, named after the printer of the first Bible in English, have corresponding stained glass windows inside the church.

The cover of the Martyrs Parish Magazine from January 1906 pictures the church standing almost on its own with very little yet built around it. But shops on Hinckley Road were already busy, and their advertisements in the magazine show the boots, hosiery, clothing, sewing machines, furniture and general ironmongery for sale.

If you'd like to know more about the history of the area, particularly with reference to the church and the social activism in the parish, you can buy a copy of 'Church of the Martyrs: 125 Years in the Community of West Leicester', written by Dr Susan Barton, and available from the Martyrs Church Office on 0116 255 5921.

Nina de Salis Young



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KNOTT'S LANDING

Change happens. It happens all the time. It doesn't mean I have to like it. Things are changing in my world. St. Anne's Church Hall is being dismantled, taken to pieces, redesigned. I have no idea what it's going to look like but I've contributed to its rebirth in cash and sweat and tears.

It will be brilliant when it's finished. Well at the very least it won't fall down with age and it's not going to leak. While this happens we obviously can't use it for all the things we normally do there, like birthday parties, Pram Club on a Thursday (off until September) and Zumba. We will find somewhere to have the parties in the meantime and Pram Club is taking a hiatus but fitness will always find a way. Zumba is not off, it is moving. We are going to be shaking what God gave us in his house!

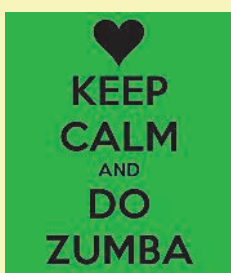
Now I'm all for buildings that multitask but Sir Norman Foster was right when he said: 'As an architect, you design for the present, with an



awareness of the past, for a future which is essentially unknown.' Who could have known that St Anne's Church was destined to have a Zumba class take place beneath it's soaring wooden roof? How could they possibly have prepared for the eventuality that 20ish women wearing lycra would be gyrating to some Latin pop classics on a Wednesday evening while a blond haired dance goddess shouts encouragement at them. How could they possibly have designed for that!

They didn't. There is only one toilet in there and no kitchen. There are pews. There are images of Jesus looking down at you. I'm not sure I'm philosophically ready to shake my booty in front of the Good Lord. I know he's supposed to know what I look like when I'm sweaty and pink and that he loves me in spite of this knowledge but.... On the other hand, if I am not going to meet my maker earlier than anticipated, a girl has got to exercise, to music and in a way she enjoys, if she's going to keep it up. So I guess I'm going to have to try and embrace the change.

Helen Knott



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Banking on Charity

Santander's chosen charities are Age UK Leicestershire and Rutland and Barnado's. We are committed to raising lots of much needed money for these charities for the next three years.

I and the staff at Santander, Narborough Road, had our charity launch event on Friday 18th March where we held a Vintage Tea Party themed event with refreshments and cakes, some of which were generously donated from Bluebell cakes of Leicester. We also had some fantastic prizes donated by our very generous local businesses for the raffle and tombola.



Emma Huggins
& Jade Jackson

Our staff were dressed in 50s/vintage inspired clothes where we had a very successful FUNdraising day and with Santander's charity donation matching, we raised a whopping £436!

In April, we also took part in a 4 mile sponsored walk around the perimeter of Bradgate Park. We joined the Coping with Cancer Leicestershire & Rutland walk to help them celebrate 35 years of local care. Once again, Santander will match our sponsorship.

There will be other themed fundraising event days throughout the year for age UK and Barnado's at Santander Narborough Road.

Santander has also introduced its new community investment strategy called The Discovery Project which was officially launched in March. Over the course of the next five years the bank aims to benefit one million people through the programme in local communities close to Santander's branches, banking centres and offices.

Emma Huggins

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PURSUIT OF HOPPINESS

The only brewpub in Leicester is proving to be a huge success in its opening few weeks. Based in Braunstone Gate, The West End Brewery, at the site of the old Looking Glass bar, is the first of its kind in Leicester, actually brewing and selling their own beer on the premises.

Father and son owners Josh & John would like to thank everyone who has visited The West End Brewery since the Easter weekend opening. Josh said: "The support has been fantastic and in the first seven days our customers enjoyed a staggering 2,000 pints".

He adds: "Our craft brewing program continues with new Copper ale at 4.3%, made with pale ale & Cara malts and Northern Brewer hops. Our IPA at 6.3% is also proving to be very popular, made with the lovely American Amarillo hop.

"Come along and join us for our 'Pint & Pizza night' every Tuesday in May. We look forward to welcoming you".

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT!

A local café that uses only donated food is proving so popular that it has had to extended its opening times.

The Real Junk Food Project Café, at the LCiL West End Neighbourhood Centre on Andrewes Street, operates on a "pay as you feel" basis on Thursday evenings and Friday lunchtimes. Now the café has to open Saturday lunch to cope with the increased amount of food they're receiving.



The café which started in August has extended its hours to appeal to working families who miss out during the week. It's open to everyone but diners don't have to pay with cash, they can offer services like clearing up in exchange for a meal.

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Tickets to Glastonbudget!

Leicestershire's biggest music festival returns over the May Bank Holiday for its 12th year with another classic line up of top tribute bands and breaking Leicester acts.

Glastonbudget, the three day boogie-fest, between 27th and 29th May, is simply the biggest and best tribute group festival in the world with 160 bands, including 100 original artists, doing what they do best across seven stages.



Once again, the fields of Turnpost Farm near Wymeswold, host over 30 top tribute acts. From Bowie to Bruno Mars and from Thin Lizzy to Elvis, the cream of the worlds tribute acts will entertain you like never before!

Some of the best and brightest local bands and artists get their chance to shine in a non-stop menu of music across the massive three field site. There's also a huge beer tent and dozens of stalls and fairground rides if you fancy a break from the vast variety of music echoing across the arenas.

Scan the QR code above into your device to read last year's Glastonbudget review:



THE COMPETITION

We have a pair of tickets valid for the entire festival, including camping, for one lucky winner.

This is an email only competition and your answers must be in by 15th of May.

THE QUESTION

What is the name of David Bowie's last album?

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HISTORICAL PARK WANDER

The Leicester Civic Society are offering the chance to discover some of the history of Western Park during a summer ramble.

Join them on Saturday 18th June for a stroll around the Western Park area and find out what led it to become the beautiful place it is today.

Peter Jones and Leigh Picciano Moss will be leading a circular walk starting at Western Park gates at 10.30am. From there, a meander through the park while stopping to admire some of the interesting architecture which characterises the area.

The cost is £4.00 per person and advance booking is essential as numbers are limited.

Send a cheque made payable to 'Leicester Civic Society' to Leigh Picciano Moss, 105 Letchworth Road, Leicester LE3 6FN.



COUNCILLORS' SURGERIES CANCELLED

The Western Ward councillors, Susan Barton, George Cole and Malcolm Unsworth have had to cancel their monthly surgery at St Anne's Hall until further notice.

This is because the current building, Tin Annie, is undergoing extensive rebuilding work over the next few months.

Residents can still meet councillors at New Parks Customer Service Centre on the first Friday of each month or at Braunstone Frith Neighbourhood Centre on the third Saturday of each month.

If you cannot get to the alternative venues, councillors are almost always available by email and telephone.

CLlr Dr Susan Barton
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April Police Update

As we move into the Spring season, officers have been springing into action in tackling the nuisance caused by motorbikes and mopeds being ridden in an anti-social manner across our public spaces such as The Rally and Western Park. We are taking action from all departments of the West Leicester Neighbourhood Policing Area including Dedicated Neighbourhood Officers and officers from our Neighbourhood Priority Team, who are reacting to the reports received of vehicles being ridden on public spaces. We are also looking at where these vehicles are coming from and regularly find that they are actually stolen vehicles. Therefore we monitor the reports of what vehicles have been taking from where and noting descriptions and recognisable features. I encourage those, like myself, who own motorbikes or mopeds to make sure that they are well secured. Preferable locations are inside bricked garages, with anchor points to the floors or walls; where a reputable branded lock is used to secure it. Please mark protectively mark your vehicles with your postcode or register them with tracking services.

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A service we recommend is 'Immobilise', which is an online system that you can register your valuables or personal property. If officers at a later date come across any stolen items, we conduct checks on any serial numbers or details found. If they are registered it dramatically increases the chances of you being reunited with your items.

A recent entertaining seasonal incident of note, involved PS 783 Stevens from the New Parks team, PCSO 6644 Dudman from the Fosse team and myself. PCSO Dudman successfully located a stolen vehicle in the Newfloodpool area. Upon arranging for it to be recovered, an individual has approached PCSO Dudman claiming to be the owner of the car. PS Stevens and I have gone to assist PCSO Dudman; whereupon said male has run away upon our arrival. After a short foot chase by both Sergeants, the male has promptly found himself restrained against a fence. Following a search of the male, in his pockets were located a large amount of Class A drugs hidden in numerous Kinder Egg capsules!

An appropriately Happy Easter awaited him in custody!

Remember to make www.leics.police.uk a destination when your on-line

Mike Hooper

Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



In an event as rare as a solar eclipse, I recently enjoyed a few blissful hours on my own, in the garden, on a beautiful spring day. With eyes closed and warmed by the April sun, I found myself experiencing the garden in a way I never consciously had before; with my ears. The sound of Spring was more calming and joyous than any Zen CD or mindfulness class. In an ornamental garden the aim is to stimulate or pleasure the senses - but how often do we consider the soundscape we create?

Many of the noises in the garden are produced externally and are beyond our control. I find the sound of life going on beyond the walls of my garden comforting. Even the sound of traffic can be intriguing and interesting. To block it out is a near futile task. Hedges have little effect in absorbing noise. Tall solid walls or special acoustic fencing are expensive solutions, only for the desperate. An easier solution would be to mask intrusive noise with the sound of a water feature. This doesn't have to require a pond as there are many stand-alone water features that provide the soothing sounds of splashing, gurgling and dripping water.

Animal sounds add another dimension. Birdsong instantly brings the sound of nature to the ears. Birds

are habitual so providing all year round food and the protection of large shrubs will bring a loyal feathered following. With the internet it's relatively easy to identify different bird-song which can add to your enjoyment. The industrious sound of bees going about their pollinating business is another comforting sound, and we should all be trying to stop the decline of our native bumble bees.



I have mixed feelings about wind chimes. Some impart a gentle arrhythmic sound, clanking tunelessly in the breeze. Others produce a relentless metallic off-key tinkling like aural water torture that can slowly chip away at a gardener's sanity. Much more comforting is the sound of the breeze brushing through foliage. Poplar trees, like Aspen, sound amazing, assuming you own a park! In smaller gardens Bamboo is effective, as are grasses like *miscanthus*. On a miniature scale, *Briza maxima* or Quaking Oats is a little gem with pretty heart-shaped rattling seedheads. There are many other plants with foliage that rustles and seed pods that rattle. The art of enjoying the sounds of your garden is not simply to drown out all unwanted noise but to be able to focus in on the natural sounds that go unnoticed. Mindfulness gardening - I bet there's a few quid in that!

Tony Huxley



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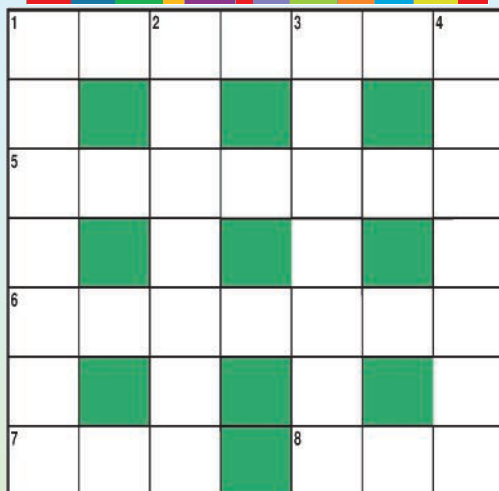
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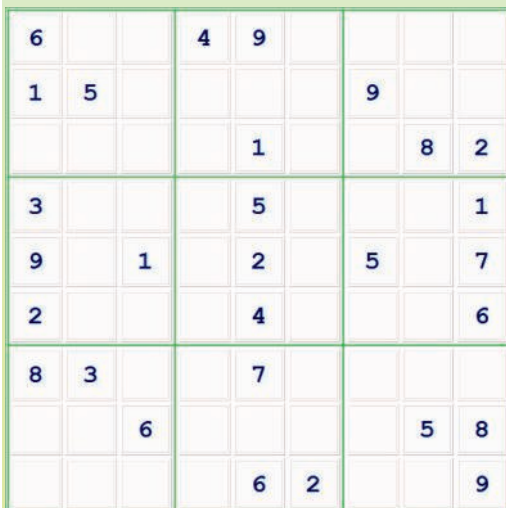
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A version of something **4:** Capital of Iran **5:** Un-
wise **6:** Artisan's studio **7:** Female sibling in short
8: Holy sister. © Paul Towers



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