



£500 IF YOU TAG GRAFFITI VANDALS!



Hello From The Editor

Welcome to the January issue of the Western Park Gazette

With Christmas and the New Year celebrations now done and dusted, we turn our attention to 2013 and it's back to business as usual!

This month Roger Blackmore tells the tale of the man who brought water to Leicester, Helen Knott managed to get an even bigger audience to talk to, this time on BBC Radio Leicester over Christmas and Tony Huxley, our gardening guru has a thing or two to say about bringing wildlife into the garden.

The main story this month is of the Council's determination to stamp out the swathes of unedifying graffiti that's splashed across the West End and other areas of Leicester. There's a particular horrifying example at the old Empire pub.

We have the latest from the local policing unit, Aarti Thobhani follows the story of three connected burglaries at local business which caused misery for their owners and Peter Coley has a warning over an internet and phone scam still targeting people in the West of Leicester.

We would also like to say thanks to the many local businesses which support the Gazette and we ask you to use them as much as possible.

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Virtual Venture



squaring the circle

£500 Anti Graffiti Reward

Graffiti vandals have scrawled 2500 tags across Leicester and the city council badly wants to catch those responsible.

In October, the Square Mile Project cleaned up graffiti that had appeared across business fronts and street furniture in Woodgate but shortly afterwards, the nearby former Empire pub on Fosse Road North was defaced with spray paint.



The city's clean up bill could hit £200,000 by the end of the summer. The problem is so serious that the council has taken the unusual step of offering £500 reward leading to the successful conviction of the graffiti vandals.

The council has repeatedly mounted operations targeting the prolific taggers "Kase" which appeared in Woodgate and "SO.12" but, when as many as 100 examples appeared overnight, this proved difficult.

It's thought the taggers are in gangs, rather than individuals, but the council hope that the public will come forward with information to stop, what has been described, as "an onslaught" and secure successful convictions of those responsible.

If you can help, contact The City Wardens in confidence on 0116 252 6430 or email: city.wardens@leicester.gov.uk

Local Band?
Local singer?
Local Artist?



GOT A GIG PLANNED?

If you're based in West Leicester and you're performing in the city, drop us a line!
And we'll give you a mention!

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A Ripping Yarn!



A local bobby is appealing for help in improving the look of the West End of Leicester.

Simon Barnes who is the Safer Neighbourhood Sergeant for Westcotes wants to Yarn Bomb the Great Central Way!

Simon said: "I want to get community groups, clubs, and schools to make pom-poms, or knitting that can be used to decorate the Great Central Way, from the city to the county boundary."

"It relies on a lot of donations of wool, and the local community making the items we need, but the aim is to run a day of action when we can put the items up to transform the tree's and street furniture."

"I'd like any knitters to get in touch, if they're interested in making squares of knitting for decoration and volunteers to help put it all up on the day."

Any donations of wool can be handed in at Hinckley Road Police station between 10:00am and 6:00pm Mon- Fri.

To volunteer and to find out more, call Simon on 0116 248 5675 entering 1011 at the prompt or email him directly:

simon.barnes@leicestershire.ppn.police.uk

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Leicester's Water God!

Earlier this month I visited Swithland Reservoir on a bright and sunny New Years Day, enjoying the sight of the Great Central trains steaming away across the water. As I watched, I reflected on how the work of Victorian engineers, in catering for the need for clean and fresh drinking water, had also led to the creation of some beautiful landscapes.

As the population of the City of Leicester grew throughout the nineteenth century, one of the key issues to be faced was the need for clean water and decent sanitation.

As a result there were furious discussions, both within the city council and beyond, about the best ways of meeting these needs.

Luckily for Leicester, Thomas Hawksley was born in 1807 and went on to become one of the greatest water and sanitary engineer of the Victorian Age. His services were to be called upon by towns and cities up and down the land and his association with our city began around 1845.

There were initially fierce arguments between Hawksley and others about the feasibility of piping water from reservoirs some distance away from the city. In the end, Hawksley's view that such schemes were possible won and in the 1850's he successfully developed Thornton Reservoir some eight miles from Leicester.

Interestingly, the first piped water supply to be connected in the city was to the Temperance Hall!



A succession of very dry summers in the early 1860's led Hawksley to push for a new source of supply. His preference was for what was initially called the Bradgate Site, which we now know as Cropston Reservoir. This new work, opened in 1868, was to add 500 million gallons to the existing water supply. Yet the demand for water continued at such a rate that not only was the capacity at Thornton and Cropston increased but plans were later developed to construct a new reservoir between Swithland and Quorn.

Thomas Hawksley himself went on to become President of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and died in London in 1893 at the age of eighty six. Leicester, and many other cities, owe him a great deal. *Roger Blackmore*

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Letter Box



In May 2012 my husband Steve was diagnosed with lung cancer.

It came as a bolt out of the blue and hit us and our family hard.

Steve was given the chance to take part in a clinical trial which he accepted. Fortunately he was receptive to it and is now doing well.

We are all so grateful to the LRI oncology unit, and particularly to Steve's consultant who is involved in a lot of research.



We felt that we wanted to be of help in some way and in November our daughter Becci Zanker-Allen

decided to hold a coffee morning at her home on Wyngate Drive to raise money for the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation which funds research into this disease. It was a great morning and the support from friends and family was overwhelming and beyond all our expectations and Becci raised the fantastic amount of £555.00 for this good cause!

Well Done Becci! (Jan Zanker)

COUNCILLORS' SURGERIES

Fosse Cllrs Surgery: Monthly, 2nd Sat, 10.30-11.30, Fosse Neighbourhood Centre & last Sat 10.30 - 11.30am Woodgate Residents Association

Westcotes Cllrs Surgeries: Westcotes Library, 1st Sat each month, 10.30 - 11.30am and 3rd Fri each month, 5.30 - 6.30pm. West End Neighbourhood Centre, 4th Fri each month 9.30 - 10.30am.

Manor House Neighbourhood Centre, 2nd Friday every month, 10-11am.

Western Park Cllrs Surgery: Monthly-2nd Weds St. Paul's Church Rooms, Kirby Road. 7-8.00pm.

The Western Park Gazette

10,000 Homes and Businesses

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After years of ranting in the Gazette, local journalist and broadcaster, Helen Knott, returns to her first love, where she can shout at even more people!

KNOTT'S LANDING

Four years ago I hung up my radio DJ headphones and plunged into being a Mummy because you can't do a day shift on the wireless with a new-born.

Some people just have to communicate, to get all the things whirling around their heads out and into the public domain. I am one of those people and having a baby didn't change it.

Mostly now, I vent my spleen in writing but, just occasionally, I get to do it on the radio and over Christmas, BBC Radio Leicester gave me that opportunity.

Radio presenting is a lot of fun, there are so many interesting people to talk to, so much news to talk about, songs to play, opinions to share and radio is the best place to do it.

You become a friend, a confidante and sometimes a lifeline to the people who listen.

It is not a glamorous profession, anyone who has worked in radio will tell you tales of meeting stars and turning on Christmas lights, but mostly it's

about long hours in lonely studios in remote and unlovely buildings on industrial estates. I wouldn't change it for the world.

The BBC, it turns out, buck the trend. They have a very lovely building in Leicester near St Nicholas Place.

Unlike the last radio station I worked at, it is not next to a 24 hour snooker club, accessed via a stinky underpass and just opposite a grassy knoll where a man was murdered. Richard III is a much better class of body to have near to work!

Anyway, they have lots of lovely shiny equipment, producers happy to help when you get stuck and a stream of guests including Paul Bacon from Western Park, builder of the great Cosmotron!

It was fascinating listening to how he imported pearlescent vinyl from Texas for his car seats and was able to source an optically clear dome for his car from right here in our city.

The two hour show, the bosses at the station let me present, flew by in a blur of Cosmotron, post-codes, the dark arts of chicken keeping and cycling round the world.

If I'm lucky, they might let me do it all again.

I'm keeping my fingers crossed.



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New Musical Director

Fosse Singers, numbering over 60 local members, have a new Musical Director.

Emma Goddard is currently a Leicester Cathedral Choral Director and Musical Director of the Redland Green Community Chorus,

Fosse Singers is a mixed adult choir (over 18s) and performs a wide variety of music from popular, soul, jazz, rock, classical, folk, choral, musicals as well as carols and festive music at Christmas time.

The choir rehearses at 7pm, on Wednesday evenings (during term times), at the Fosse Neighbourhood Centre, Mantle Road, Leicester LE3 5HG.

The choir always welcome new members but especially at this exciting time of a new Director who has produced a very exciting and inspiring repertoire which has something for all tastes.

More info at www.fossesingers.co.uk



Tony Huxley's Garden Tidings



Our feather brained gardener has got himself into a flap this month after a close tweet from avian flu. It was quite a birden!

Encouraging nature into the garden, especially this time of year, can be a great entertainment. And bird watching from the kitchen window can be far more interesting and rewarding than staring at the usual drivel on the TV!

As food in their natural habitats dwindles, migratory and rural birds may visit our homes in search of a meal. This can have practical benefits. Birds are an excellent natural pest control. Any pest disposed of during the winter could save your plants from hundreds of their hungry leaf munching offspring in the spring.

Fat-balls and feeders hung in trees will encourage the flocks of tits that gang together in winter. They also love to peck all the hibernating aphid eggs and troublesome grubs from your fruit tree bark.



Old windfall apples will attract blackbirds and thrushes. Apple cores and over ripe fruit you wish to add will also be appreciated. They'll also scour the leaf litter for tasty morsels like slugs, snails and cutworms. If you're lucky fieldfares may join in. Leaving the seed heads on herbaceous plants will encourage finches. Try not to prune berry bearing plants and hedges till early spring, as well as ivy, which is a larder of bugs for tits and sparrows.

In cat infested areas, place bird tables in open sites, then birds can see the pesky felines coming. Feed regularly during the winter then birds will make a habit of visiting your garden. Wasting energy on a fruitless trip can prove fatal when food is scarce. With a little luck you may encounter less common visitors such as woodpeckers, nuthatches and goldcrests. Your new guests maybe a tempting sight for a sparrowhawk. It may prove a shocking spectacle but it's a million times more dramatic than watching your neighbour's fat moggy doing the same-or watching EastEnders!

More from Tony in the next issue.



January Police Update

The Smart View with Sgt Rod Smart

I am pleased to report that we have seen a reduction in burglaries since Christmas but residents are still reminded to take precautions and be vigilant. It is important to ensure that doors and windows are securely locked, along with alley and garden gates. If you are out during the evening it is a good idea to leave a security light on a timer to give the impression that someone is in. Security marking or registering valuables such as laptops, TVs and mobile phones for free on www.immobilise.com will assist us to return recovered property to victims.

If you have a smart phone you can also download a 'find my phone' app. This will help to track your phone in the unfortunate event that it is stolen. This really paid off for a victim of burglary in the Tudor Road area in December. As a result of the victim having a 'find my phone' app on his mobile phone, a search warrant was executed at a nearby address. A 22-year-old local man has since been charged with this offence and another burglary which happened in the area on an earlier date.

Any local residents interested in crime prevention advice or wishing to report anything suspicious can contact their safer neighbourhood team on 101 or via 999 in an emergency.

Just before Christmas a vigilant local resident called the police after spotting a man siphoning fuel from a van parked at a business on Fosse Road North. Thanks to the quick thinking resident, a 42-year-old man has since been charged with theft.

BEAT SURGERIES

Feb 12th. Western Park Beat Surgery. The Mencap Centre Western Park. 19:30 and **March 12th** at St. Paul's Kirby Rd at 19:30.

Feb 15th and 22nd March Mantle Road Beat Surgery, Mantle Rd Library from 10:00am.

Feb 5th Manor House Beat Surgery, Manor House Community Centre Haddenham Road, 12:00 and **March 3rd** Westcotes Library Beat Surgery, Westcotes Library, Narborough Road at 11:00am.

FIND US ONLINE:

www.leics.police.uk/local-policing

www.facebook.com/leicestercitypolice or Twitter @LPWesternPark, LPFossePolice or LPWestcotesCops Email us at hinckleyrd.lpu@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk

There was no happy start to the New Year in West Leicester for three local businesses as burglars raided their premises, causing thousands in damage and making off with a large amount of cash.

NEW YEAR BURGLARIES

At around 6am on the 2nd of January thieves ransacked, Angels Gentlemen's Club, the Music Café bar and the Vinee Spice Restaurant.



Restaurant owner Vinee Singh of Vinee Spice restaurant in New Park Street, off Braunstone Gate, had left the cash in the restaurant as he did not want to carry it home when he finished work in the early hours of the morning. Mr Vinee said he started his business from nothing three years ago and had worked very hard to build it up - there were no words to describe how he felt.

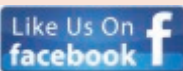
The restaurant's CCTV showed two hooded men carrying a metal pole or hammer smashing tills and fridges; stealing up to £6,000 in cash and taking bottles of spirits. The pair then broke into an adjoining gentlemen's club, Angels, followed by the Music Cafe Bar.

Anthony Overend, who owns and opened the Music Café bar 18 months ago, was the first to discover the shared building had been burgled when he arrived at his property and found tills, gaming machines and a pool table had been emptied.

Burglars made off with about £500 in cash but caused more than £1,000 of damage to the café bar.

Anyone who saw any suspicious activity in the area at the time is asked to call 101.

Aarti C Thobhani



Twitter @mygazette

More and more people are being contacted by scammers offering to save their computer from a nasty virus. Peter Coley says - don't get take in!



If you have a phone then you probably will have had calls from people offering you help to claim something, get something or trying to sell you something. Most are just trying to generate business and are often irritating but not usually criminal.

Occasionally you may get a call from people who are out to cheat you and here is one international scam which catches many people and can cost a lot of money.

Windows Virus Scam

It works like this: You receive a call, usually from a man, claiming to be from Microsoft or your windows company who will say they are calling you because of all the viruses on your computer.

They will claim your computer has notified them that it is infected. They will then try and persuade you to search for error messages on your computer (in the event viewer), falsely claiming these are caused by dangerous viruses which must be removed.

Next they will direct you to their web site on the internet and try to persuade you to let them take control of your computer and purchase very expensive and completely BOGUS software to "fix" the alleged problem. Their software does not fix anything but will actually install a Trojan virus giving the criminals the ability to monitor for any bank details, contact lists etc. that you may store on the machine. They will also have your card details!!

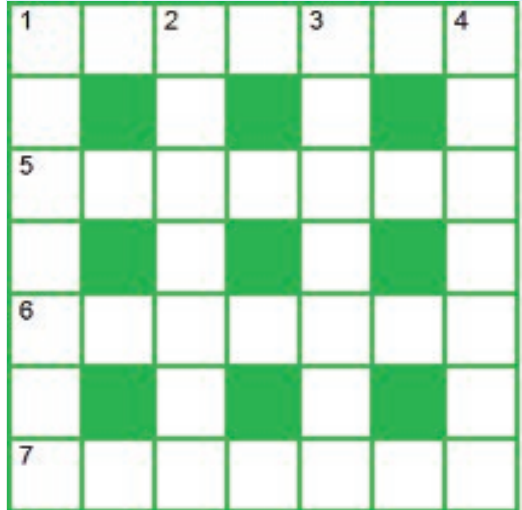
For clarification Microsoft say "Microsoft will never cold call users asking for personal information or access to your PC. Whenever possible these calls should be reported to your local consumer protection agency".

It is believed these criminals operate from India, they sound plausible and can be quite insistent but don't be taken in. Tell them you do not have a computer or just put the phone down as they are trying to steal from you!

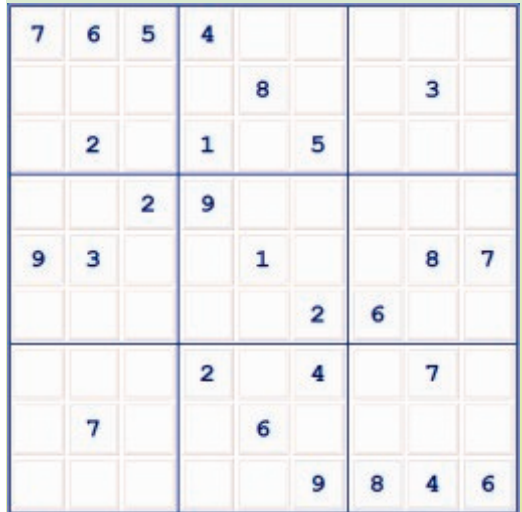
Stay safe and have a Happy New Year.



BRAIN *TAZERS*



Across: 1. Terse 5. Other than plant or animal 6. Japanese art of paper folding 7. Lack of care and attention. **Down:** 1. Parody 2. Craftiness 3. Recount 4. Stringed instrument player



1. I am the beginning of the end, and the end of time and space. I am essential to creation, and I surround every place. What am I?

3. Rearrange the letters in the words "new door" to make one word.

4. As quickly as you can, first, think of the color of clouds. Next think of the color of snow. Lastly, think of the color of the moon. Now, what do cows drink?

Answers on line: www.westernparkgazette.co.uk