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No. 99 Jan 2018 www.westernparkgazette.co.uk
News & Views for Western Park • Westcotes • The Fosse



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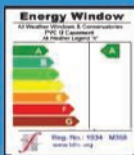
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Hello From The Editor

So this is 2018 then. Welcome to the first Gazette of the year.

Traditionally it's a struggle to fill the January magazine with local news mainly because there's square root of nothing by the time we go to press and this year is no exception.

We did try. We did look and came to the conclusion that West Leicester is suffering a giant 30 day hang-over along with credit card shock. We almost put a picture of a kitten on the front - it's that quiet.

However, Helen Knott was roused from her pit for a take on active tracking, Roger Blackmore woke up momentarily to write about Leicester's great houses, Tony Huxley eventually found his laptop in the compost and bashed out something New Year Gardening resolutions and our Theatre bod, Paul Towers, meets David Bell from Upstairs at the Western to discuss their first year under new management, while Spencer Dyer and colleagues at Hinckley Road Policing Unit had their work cut out over the festivities too.

We have the crossword and sudoku on the inside back page which might help you get the grey matter back in shape for 2018... Or not.

Find 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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Published by Rapsallion Media

62 Ainsdale Rd
Leicester LE3 0UA

Printed by **Flexpress Ltd**
6 Coal Cart Road, Interchange,
Birstall, Leicester, LE4 3YB



Events Diary

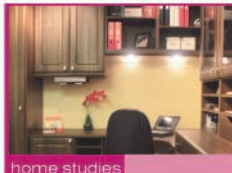
Fosse Coop Camera Club: Fri. St Peter's Ch Centre, Westholme St. 7.30pm. fossecoopcameraclub.co.uk
Peter Crebbin's Cool Swing Band: 1st Sun Monthly. at the Hilton Hotel, Meridian. 1-3.30pm
Thursday Club: 2-4pm. Robert Hall, 147 Narb' Rd.
West End Pay As You Feel Café: Thurs 7-8.30pm. Tues, Fri & Sat 11-3pm. WE Centre. Andrewes St.
Coffee Mornings: Fridays 10-12 noon. St Anne's Hall.
Relaxed Dru Yoga Sessions with Emma: Sunday's 7.15 - 8.30pm. St Anne's Hall. 07393 811150.
Knitting Group: 14th Jan. Blk Horse, B-Gate 6pm.
Upstairs At The Western: Uncle Armando (Comedy) - Jan 15, **Find the Right Words (Poetry)** - 17 Jan, **Live From the Dining Room** - 19 Jan, **Choir Night** - 24 Jan, **Being Julie Andrews** - 26/27 Jan, **The Girl & The Moon** - 29 Jan, **Silent Movie Night** - Feb 1.
George's Marvellous Medicine: Until 20th Jan. Curve Th.
Burns Night Ceilidh: 26 Jan. Guildhall. 7.00pm
Jeeves & Wooster: 22-27 Jan. Little Th. 7.30pm.
Greg Davis: 28 Jan. DM Hall. 8.00pm.
UniSlam (Poetry): 27/28 Jan. Curve Th.
Evening with Carol Leeming: 29 Jan. Curve Th.
Anne Frank & You Exhibit: Daily until 31st Jan. New Walk Mus & Gallery. Free.
Sylvia: 3rd Feb. Guildhall. 7.30pm.
Rise & Fall of Little Voice: 5-10 Feb. Little Th. 7.30pm.

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CITY OF MANSIONS

Many readers will be delighted that **Braunstone Hall**, having been left near derelict for so many years, has at last gained a new lease of life as a restaurant, hotel and wedding venue.

Originally completed in 1776, designed and built by Leicester architect William Oldman, the building has now been re-named Winstanley House. This was name of the family that lived there for so many years, before the hall and park were compulsorily purchased by the City Council in 1925.

The hall is only one of the impressive big houses situated in various parts of the city, each of which was at one time a posh private residence.



Well known to many is Belgrave Hall in the north of the city. This was built in the reign of Queen

Anne by a member of the Craddock family. It is, of course today, one of the City's most popular museums. In recent years it has acted as host to a whole variety of cultural activities.

Knighton Hall in the south of the city is an early eighteenth century building, close to the heart of the leafy suburb of Knighton. It serves today as the official residence of the Vice Chancellor of Leicester University. It was also lived in for a time by another of the Craddock family - hence the name of the pub (The Craddock Arms) which stands near the gates to the Hall.

Evington Hall was built by Henry Coleman between 1840 and 1845. After becoming a private residence it went through various incarnations as a convent and a school. Interestingly at the time of the Spanish Civil War in the 1930's it was, for a while, to become a home for Basque refugee children. Some of these children, now in their 80's, indeed re-visited their old home when they returned to Leicester for a nostalgic journey. They found the city much changed!

Thus each of these former splendid city residences have each gone on to find widely different uses in later years. Each has gone through periods of doubt and uncertainty about its future but each has now thankfully found a new role.

© Roger Blackmore

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KNOTT'S LANDING

Hello January, the dullest month of the year. When people stop drinking, at least one person will bore you with how they've gone vegan and we all pay for the fitness industry in one way or another.

I have to confess, I'm now a member of the activity tracker community. Santa Claus kindly dropped off a small silicon band that can measure my heart rate, step count and sleep hours and I love it. My plastic joy-bangle came from China because you can't wear the well-known ones in the water. Not great if you teach swimming to babies and need a watch in the pool to do something retro like tell the time. My enthusiasm for my gadget was vast but it has been tempered by events.

Christmas day there was a lot of trauma because the app on my phone wouldn't hook up to the wristband and Mr Helen was engaged in a lengthy battle to fight the hordes of people all trying to log on at once.

Clearly it was a popular Christmas gift. We finally managed it at about 9pm and I finished the day with precisely no steps recorded. It's all uphill from there!

I instantly became addicted to checking up on my



heart rate (I vowed to lower it) and my step count (we shall not speak of my sedentary lifestyle). Mr Helen then started expressing a hereto unseen level of interest in my data, I thought it sweet of him to be interested in my health and wellbeing but it quickly became apparent that his interest was because it was insupportable to him that I should have a level of tech in my life superior to his. Two days later a package from China arrived. He was hooked up within seconds and lo, we could count our steps together darling!

In a magazine fairy-tale we would use our gadgets for good, hook up our accounts and have a daily, sunshine filled competition to see who can do the most steps and how low we can get our heart rates through meditation. Well we don't live in fairyland! We appear to have turned to the dark side. In the last few weeks we have been watching to see how badly a bottle of red affects us; how high we can get our respective heart rates on a quiet evening when the child is on a playdate (Oh come on, you remember Desperate Housewives? Gabriella Solis used play-date's for nothing else!); whether we can increase our step count by clapping; whether having a poo is visible on your heart rate monitor and how much eating a spicy curry can push that spike. A good hot one can send you into the workout zone for a good few hours it turns out!

As a result, January has not been dull at all!

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UPSTAIRS @ THE WESTERN

A year ago Upstairs at The Western had a change of management. The old guard 'Off The Fence' moved on to other things and David Bell and his team stepped in to take over running the venue. I met up with David to see how he thought the first 12 months had gone.

He said: "We were told we'd taken over the theatre after the end of October 2016, so we had two months basically to get ready for the spring 2017 season. Because Off The Fence knew they were leaving they hadn't booked anything. So, we had a manic run around to try find touring companies at the last minute. Thankfully we inherited people like Jess Green for Find The Right Words. I think in our first six months we managed to get about 25 shows and by and large they weren't too bad. Artistically, there were a couple in there that probably weren't as good as we'd hoped but on the whole we managed to attract quality shows from the off."

Paul Towers: The first season was quite heavy on spoken words and poetry because it was easy to book in at short notice?

David Bell: I think our first season was a bit of a



scramble, we didn't really get to the printers with a good brochure because we didn't have time. So we just had to get a pamphlet. It was just really getting used to running the business and all the behind the scene stuff, but I think, yeah, it's got a lot easier. Autumn '17 has been a lot easier.

PT: There was a very broad line-up in autumn. Was it deliberate - trying to cater for everybody or is it a question of working out what brings the punters in?

DB: Off The Fence were a larger drama-based (production) company who created their own shows and toured with them. But our bid was all about turning Upstairs at The Western into a multi-genre arts venue for the West End of Leicester. So it's a case of widening the genres, branching out more into music, comedy, a bit more poetry, film, those kind of things, but also increasing the volume. So the previous owners did about 50 shows a year and our business plan aims for about 150 shows a year. Because we are closed in July and August, that's about fifteen a month or three a week.

We're widening the type of shows we're doing. The type of thing we've gotten here is a lot broader than it has been before, but we are expanding it in what can be a crowded marketplaces. There is loads of comedy coming in. We're coming back big time in the Leicester Comedy Festival this year.

© Paul Towers

Full article: www.westernparkgazette.co.uk

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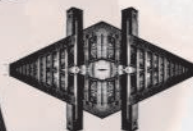
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It's all very mysterious. Western Park based poet and film maker Mark Cooper has been dragged into a 70's Twilight Zone. Read on...

So Who Was Ray Marlow?

Beer mats have appeared in bars in Leicester teasing: "Want to know how Ray Marlow died in 1979?". So who was Ray Marlow? We don't know either but we did ask his brother Carl and this was the email we got back:

Back in June 2017 I was approached by a chap called Mark Cooper. I was a bit suspicious at first as he seemed to be claiming he knew my brother Ray, who died many years ago, but it turned out Mark lives in the house Ray used to own. For reasons I still don't fully understand Mark was trying to reconstruct Ray's bedroom as it was in 1979. He seemed enthusiastic to the point of mania so I decided to help.

So who is Ray Marlow? Well he's my younger sibling though I can't say there was much brotherly love. I have no idea why Mark thinks Ray is an appropriate person to make a film about or why anyone might be remotely interested in how he died. Apparently though he got actress, Samantha Hindman down from York to co-star alongside local unknown Kevin Morgan.

I don't know who's playing me, I don't even know if I'm even in it. I stole a glimpse of the script when Mark nipped to the toilet at our final interview. It seemed true to the year albeit with a faint aroma of misanthropy.

I think I'll probably go and see it though, out of interest. I've just realised I've not told you anything about Ray so I guess you'll just have to go and see the film.

The short film 1979 is showing FREE at Duffy's Bar, Pocklington's Walk, Leicester on Saturday 24th February 2018. Screening starts at 8.00 p.m. prompt with at least three other short films.

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A PAIN IN THE NECK?

Aches and pains made worse by the winter?

80% of us are likely to suffer from back, neck and shoulder pain during our life time. Musculoskeletal problems is one of third highest cause of sickness absence and account for 22.4% of sickness from work in 2016. Such problems not only impacts on our work but on our overall quality of life.

NHS NICE guidelines suggest that keeping mobile and undertaking regular appropriate exercise can significantly help reduce the issue.

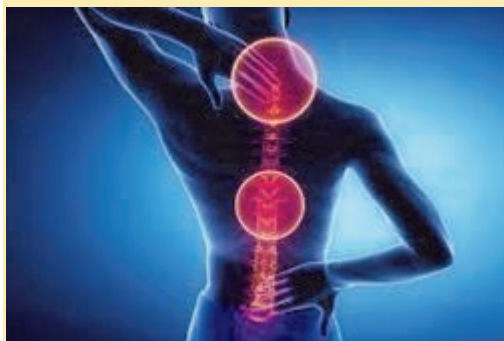
Clinical trials found participants in the DRU BACKCARE PROGRAMME dramatically reduced their sick days and reported feeling more flexible and mobile as a result of the course.

Having completed the Post Graduate Back Care Course, our local Dru yoga teacher Emma Harrison-Thompson who runs regular Sunday evening Dru yoga sessions at St Anne's Hall, plans to co-host a **workshop on caring for the back, neck and shoulders. This workshop is at St Anne's Hall in Western Park on Sunday 28th January from 12.30 -4.30pm.** This event incorporates many of the movement and exercises from the programme that can easily be practiced at home and a Sports Therapist/Lecturer Chelcie Galway will explore anatomy and muscle care whilst a local Emotional Freedom Technique (Tapping) Practitioner Carmen Gilfillan will facilitate a session using EFT for pain management.

This should be great workshop for anyone suffering with non specific back pain/reduced flexibility of the back, neck, shoulders and prove an interesting insight for everyone keen to learn more about keeping these areas mobile.

Emma is planning more co-hosted events at St Anne's Hall, including a session exploring ways to increase confidence in the workplace/ relationships scheduled for March with input from an experienced Executive Coach. See diary events in the gazette for updates.

For more information, costs and to book a place please contact Emma by phone/text 07393 811150 or email druyogawithemma@gmail.com



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Jan Police Update

The Christmas and New Year period across West Leicester was the usual mix. During the build up to the 25th there were a number of sporadic burglaries targeting presents left out on view. Overall the trend of fewer reported burglaries has continued, especially in the West End areas so please remain vigilant and help to prevent crime by continuing to close and lock side gates, windows and doors and use timers for lighting if leaving your premises unattended for any longer periods of time.

There has been a continued flow of reports of theft from motor vehicles on the Westcotes and Fosse areas which have included some trades vans being targeted for tools. Please remove any valuables you can overnight, including where possible tools.

'Operation Items' which was a Police knife crime initiative run across the New Parks area, concluded in December. This saw a number of individuals arrested for carrying offensive weapons and the removal from the streets of a large number of knives. Please ensure your children / teens are aware of the risks and dangers of carrying weapons. There's more information on the Leicestershire Police website under Knife Crime. #livesNotKnives

The New Year will see a number of new Police led consultations in your local area so please ensure any issues or concerns you have are notified to your own local Police team. Without your help, support and co-operation it is much harder to identify these issues and ensure your Neighbourhoods are peaceful and pleasant places to live and work. We will be conducting a number of traffic operations in the coming month around Tudor Rd / Narborough Rd to target driving offences, including driving using mobile phones, speeding and no documents. This is an early warning!

As always please call 999 in an emergency or 101 for any non-urgent matters. Alternatively you can find details of your local Neighbourhood team on the Leicestershire Police website, under the local policing tab.

Street consultations: We are out and about meeting members of the public to discuss issues you may have. Jan 27th, Bisley Street from 2.30pm to 4.00pm; Jan 30th, Courtenhay Road from 4.00-6.00pm; Feb 4th on Andrewes Close between 1.00 & 3.00pm.

We're on Facebook so search for Fosse, The West End or New Parks Police.

Keep up to date: twitter.com/LPFossePolice;

twitter.com/LPNewParks.

twitter.com/WestcotesCops.

Sgt Brennan / Sgt Dyer / Sgt Walters.

Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



A new year in the garden beckons. Another four seasons to do all the things that never happened last year.

That greenhouse still isn't finished, and I will eventually build that path through the vegetable patch. And Lord knows I will eventually empty and relocate the old compost bin. We've all got a neglected garden list so take of advantage of the season and make a few New Year gardening resolution.

Here are a few things I'm sure we can all resolve to do in the garden.

1: Get shifting. That Triffid like plant or shrub that always looks out of place. The one that dominates, never flowers, always reverts, is destined to grow into a monster. For whatever reason we all have a cuckoo plant that has outstayed its welcome. Now is the time to say sayonara. Sometimes removing one overbearing shrub can transform a garden. If you want to relocate any plants, doing it



Tony's Triffid

now while the roots are dormant will give you your best chance of success.

2: Get that mower serviced. The poor old grass-cutter thrashes up and down our lawns tirelessly for an ever-lengthening growing season. It's then shoved in the shed until the spring, when we drag out and expect it to hack back the sward we should have mown a month earlier. It's then we discover the grass box was never emptied, the contents are now silage and the rest of the cuttings are welded to the mowing deck. Treat your gardening buddy to a decent service. Get that blade sharpened or replaced. It'll love you for it.

3: Be adventurous. Grow something completely different. Even if you don't think it'll fit in, just do it. Those hardy banana plants that always caught your eye, that Ginkgo with its weird looking leaves and great autumn colour. Or those gaudy orange *Fritillaria imperialis* that just don't go with anything else in the garden. And if it doesn't work, then just refer back to resolution 1. So, stop procrastinating and start cultivating! Happy New Year.

© Tony Huxley



Fritillaria imperialis



Martin Page

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Fri prior to Sat Auction: 10am-6pm

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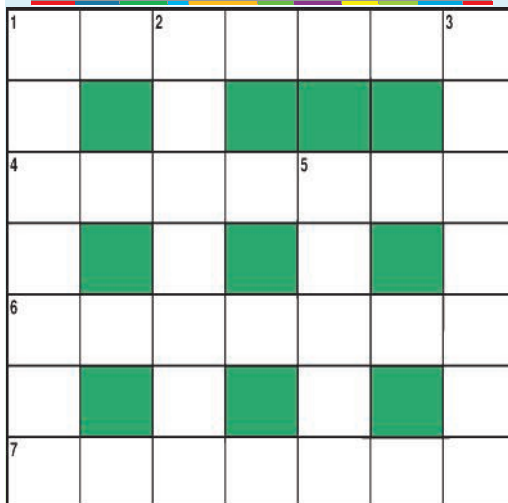
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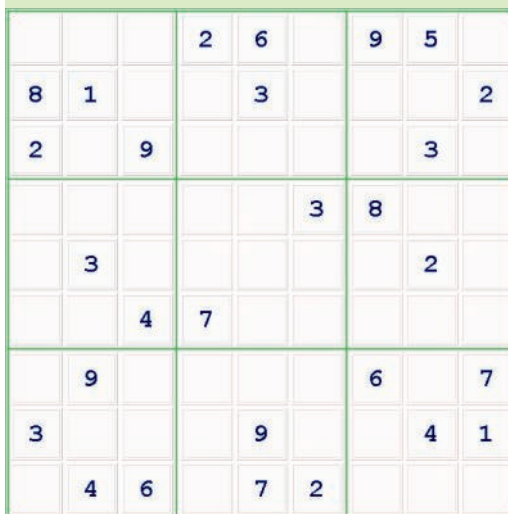
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4: Pistol cord **5:** Have the same view **6:** Gets on
board **7:** Siblings © Paul Towers



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Got a local story or a great picture?
Are you holding an event?

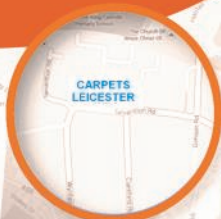
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