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News and Views for Western Park • Westcotes • The Fosse

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Hello From The Editor

Welcome to the March edition of the Western
 Park Gazette.

This month: Western Park's PUP - The Pop-up
 Pub Beer Festival at St. Anne's Church Hall
 proved to be a magnificent highlight along with
 the equally successful Western Park's Got Talent
 show. We were at both but only sober at one...

Helen Knott's gloves are off as she prepares for
 a baking war, Roger Blackmore examines the
 city's theatrical past and Paul Towers has his
 thoughts on Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival.

In our Police Update Mike Hooper explains why
 shop break-ins have suddenly gone right down
 and Tony Huxley has some ideas about getting
 the garden ready for spring. Along similar lines
 The Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust en-
 courage us to avoid newly laid wild bird eggs
 during the garden clean-up.

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

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 news and anything else that piques our interest.

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Events Diary

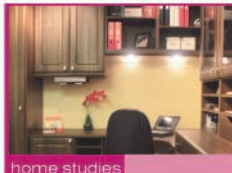
Fosse Singers: Fosse N'hood Centre, Weds. 7pm.
International Folk Dancing: Monthly 2nd & 4th Fri. St. Anne's Hall. 2-4pm. Tel: Geoff on 0116 285 8352.
Peter Crebbin's Cool Swing Band: 1st Sun Monthly. Café Chino at Hilton Hotel, Meridian. 1-3.30pm
Thursday Club: Thursdays. 2-4pm. Robert Hall, 147 Narborough 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
Talk Parks: 24th March. Western Park Pavilion. 5.30pm. Free. Email: storyofparks@leicester.gov.uk
March Of The Mods Charity Event: 25th March. Music café Braunstone Gate. From 7.30pm £10
Easter Mediaeval Merriment: 31st March. Guildhall. £2.50.
Easter Fun: 25th-30th March. Gorse Hill City Farm.
American Idiot: 19-27th March. Curve Theatre.
Cat In The Hat: 28th March-2nd April. Curve Theatre.
The Mousetrap: 18-20th April. De Montfort Hall.
Loud & Live at the Pi Bar: 27th-31st March. Narborough Rd/Norman St. Various bands & support.
Legally Blonde: 11th April-4th May. Curve
Dan Nightingale & Harriet Dyer Previews: 15th April. Upstairs At The Western.
Calling for Help: 16th April. Upstairs At The Western.
The Full Monty Musical: 19-23rd April. Little Theatre.
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We Got Talent!

Thank you to everyone who attended this year's show – a packed house once again; in fact, extra chairs were needed! It was absolutely wonderful to see so many faces: some familiar and some new, but all most welcome! This year saw a number of talented singers; musicians and dancers perform for our enjoyment, in our very own community church hall! Generous donations for our raffle flew off the table, delicious cakes and refreshments, plus the 'bring and share', were devoured and the buzz from the many acts and audience members was electric!

The judges had another incredibly difficult decision choosing a shortlist of acts that will go on to perform at this year's Western Park Festival! Keep an eye out for further information regarding this as I will contact you for performance times closer to the time!

In total, the event raised £441 which will go towards the remaining monies left to raise for the imminent church hall rebuild in April. As one of the last events to take place in the church hall before the 'big build', I am sure you will agree that we gave it a great send off! If you enjoyed watching this year's show, start thinking of what your act could be and get involved next time – details will be out in the New Year. Well done, once again, to all the fabulous acts that took part – Western Park is extremely proud of you! See you next time for more!

Anna McAuley



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Leicester's Old Time Theatres

By the 1960's, the most notable venue for live theatre in our city was the Little Theatre which had been founded by amateur enthusiasts a few years after the First World War. Happily, the Little Theatre is still very much with us and regularly puts on plays of superb quality. For a short time we also had the Living Theatre, which was the forerunner of the Phoenix. In the 1970's the Haymarket Theatre was established but this, of course, is now closed

Leicester's first professional theatre, established in Horsefair Street in 1836, was the Theatre Royal. This playhouse fell on hard times in the twentieth century and at one time there were suggestions that the City Council should take it over. These came to nothing and the Theatre Royal finally closed its doors in 1956.

The Royal Opera House in Silver Street was also founded in the nineteenth century and for a time became hugely popular. Gilbert and Sullivan operas were regularly performed to packed audiences and so were plays by George Bernard Shaw. In 1901, the Palace Theatre of Varieties opened



Theatre Royal ccr

in Belgrave Gate.

Throughout the Edwardian Years and in the twenties it attracted the likes of Marie Lloyd, Charlie Chaplin and Harry Lauder. In the thirties films were shown there but until the mid-1950's it kept on facing difficulties despite trying out different types of show, before shutting down for good.

The Prince of Wales Theatre, also in Belgrave Gate, attracted many star performers in its day. These included Lily Langtry, Gracie Fields and Bud Flanagan. It was re-named The Pavilion but it folded in 1930 and was shortly afterwards demolished.

Many predicted that the cinema, and later television, would destroy live theatre, but these days Leicester has rather more to offer than in the 1960's, with Curve, the Little Theatre and the Peepul Centre as well as other smaller venues, including the Western, the Y, Upstairs At The Western and the Attenborough Centre.

Roger Blackmore



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KNOTT'S LANDING

I've got my game face on. I'm in for the long haul here. I've got to plan, to prep, to buy cake stuff for a competition. I give good cake. I am a dab hand with a piping bag. For goodness sake I got through to the auditions of the Great British Bake Off but it seems easy when compared to the down and dirty face off at the St Anne's Fundraising Cake Sale and Bake Off, Saturday 23 April, 10.30am -1pm, for the Tin Annie appeal.

It's all very well baking for the Silver Fox, Mrs Berry and competing against strangers, I know personally the people I'm up against in this one and they are good. Very good.

Bake off competitions, the small ones not run by the baking nazis at the WI, tend to be all about looks, as is so much in this world. So long as you haven't subbed salt for sugar and used a recipe you are familiar with, you can pretty much guarantee the cake will taste OK. All that palaver about getting the flavour balance right is a sneaky way of saying you don't like their cake without actually having to say 'I don't like your cake' to someone's face. Judges in little cake competitions tend to be



respected members of the community, people who would probably rather cut off their own little toe rather than judge between cakes baked by people they know. They are judges who probably couldn't tell you if your passion fruit was over powering or the sugar in your Italian meringue icing hadn't caramelised if their lives depended on it. So they use the only sense they can trust, the only yardstick they can reliably agree on, their eyes and the look of the beast.

Looks are everything in cake contests. Like Donald Trump at a rally it's all glitter and frosting with some crowd pleasing cake-bites but little actual substance. You can win them with a fairly average sponge but if it looks like the Christmas fairy has barfed glitter onto your icing you are probably on for a winner. Make it big, use icing in acid bright psychedelic colours, turn it into a construction project with rotating bits, pillars and an impressive castellated roof line and victory can be yours.

Insight is important. Does the vicar like Star Wars? Is there a secret stash of My Little Ponies in the living room of the woman from the Mother's Union? Does one or any of them hate fondant icing? So as well as getting my stuff together, my spies will be out watching to see who likes marzipan and who leaves the icing from the birthday cake on the side of their plate.

Knowledge is power and victory will be mine!

Helen Knott

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IN THE MEANTIME: A FEW TIPS

- ▶ Don't let bailiffs in. If they get in, don't sign anything.
- ▶ Pay the rent and the gas / electric and council tax first, and the doorstep lenders second. Doorstep lenders don't have many powers, whatever they may say. Not paying the rent, however, could leave you homeless.
- ▶ Don't take out more credit without doing a budget check with us. We can usually help reduce expenditure and often we can help you to identify extra sources of income.
- ▶ Don't ignore the letters: bring them to us. Once you are working with us, you can refer all creditors to us instead of being hassled yourself. (Sponsored Article)

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West End Brewpub Opens

Drinkers will soon be able to have their say on what they would like their beer to taste like at the new West End Brewpub opening in Braunstone Gate on Friday 25th March.

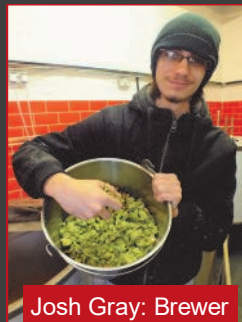
A very Good Friday to open a very unique Leicester pub. One that will enthuse many local real ale and craft beer fans!

The brewery, situated to the rear of the bar, will be able to produce up to 800 litres of beer a week, all of which will be sold on the premises

A wide selection of pale ales, bitters and IPA beers on sale will be colour-coded with drinkers also being able to offer their suggestions for other exciting craft ales and taste preferences to the West End Brewery owner, Josh Gray.

Josh says: "There are no brewpubs in Leicester city where beer is actually brewed on site. The West End brewpub has a capacity for 100 people. It's not a massive venue, just two rooms. The bar area where one can enjoy the feel of a traditional pub with old style wooden tables or if customers prefer they will also be able to sit and enjoy their drinks in the atmosphere of the brewery and watch the brewing in progress".

The West End Brewery will also be featuring Jazz music nights, pub quizzes and traditional pub games so why not come along and enjoy the company of Josh and his staff. (Sponsored article)



Josh Gray: Brewer



West End Brewery During Installation

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Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival

Once again Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival has drawn to a close. While both the city, and to some extent the county, has been awash with comedic performances in every corner, our very own contribution to the festival here in the city's West End has more than made its mark.

While there has been a dramatic reduction in the local venues that have got involved with the Festival it has been left to the ever remarkable Upstairs at The Western to make sure that the West End has spent February laughing.

This wonderfully intimate theatre-over-a-pub gave us a wide range of entertainment to tickle our funny bones. The month started off in cracking style with George Egg, anarchist cook. This belter of a show gave us an hour of inspired lunacy ending with a three course meal cooked on stage! A very welcome return was made by the equally lunatic Conversation Garden does a Panel Show, Leicester's very own anarchic love child of Shooting Stars and Blankety Blank.



As the month wore on we had a couple of very talented sketch show nights and an hilarious Audience With Henry VIII, seeing as how Leicester has been in a right royal mood since Richard III was re-interred. Upstairs at The Western book-ended their comedy season with a final return visit from Conversation Garden. This wonderfully local theatre has a packed season of events running right up the middle of June including their renowned Comedy Workshops from the middle of March.

Although, as I said, many local venues dropped out of the Festival this year a couple of new places have dipped their toes in the waters and it is to be hoped they will carry on providing us with entertainment.

An unlikely venue for comedy was the Church of The Martyrs in Westcotes Drive who hosted An Evening With Paul Kerensa, a script writer for BBC's Miranda. Almost as unexpected was the Feed Bellies Not Bins Comedy Club at The West End Centre on Andrews Street.

Paul Towers

www.ptheatre.blogspot.co.uk



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EXPLORING BOTANICAL DRAWING & PAINTING	WEDNESDAY 10.15 am – 12.15 pm	STARTING 20 APRIL 2016
EXPLORING BOTANICAL DRAWING & PAINTING	WEDNESDAY 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm	STARTING 20 APRIL 2016
MAKE YOUR OWN GREETING CARDS	THURSDAY 12.30 pm – 2.30 pm	STARTING 28 APRIL 2016
DRAWING & PAINTING SUMMER PLANTS	SATURDAY 10.00 am – 5.00 pm	14 AND 21 MAY 2016
CREATIVE CARD MAKING	SATURDAY 9.30 am – 4.30 pm	14 AND 21 MAY 2016
GENERAL INTEREST		
PHILOSOPHERS ON GOOD GOVERNMENT- FROM HOBBS TO THE PRESENT	MONDAY 10.15 pm – 12.30 pm	STARTING 4 APRIL 2016
LEICESTERSHIRE-THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE IN-BETWEEN	MONDAY 1.30 pm – 3.00 pm	STARTING 11 APRIL 201
ITS TURNED OUT NICE AGAIN -THE SEASONS IN LITERATURE	MONDAY 1.30 pm – 3.30 pm	STARTING 9 MAY 2016
YOGA & RELAXATION (1)	TUESDAY 9.45 am – 11.15 am	STARTING 12 APRIL 2016
ONCE UPON A TIME IN PHILOSOPHY	TUESDAY 10.00 am – 12.00 pm	STARTING 12 APRIL 2016
SPANISH: POST BEGINNERS	TUESDAY 6.30 pm – 8.30 pm	STARTING 12 APRIL 2016
CREATIVE WRITING	WEDNESDAY 10.00 am – 12.00 pm	STARTING 20 APRIL 2016
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & CURRENT AFFAIRS	WEDNESDAY 10.30 am – 12.30 pm	STARTING 13 APRIL 2016
UKELELE WORKSHOPS FOR THOSE WITH SOME EXPERIENCE	WEDNESDAY 1.30 pm – 3.30 pm	STARTING 13 APRIL 2016
FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOP	THURSDAY 10.00 am – 12.00 pm	STARTING 14 APRIL 2016
YOGA AND RELAXATION (2)	THURSDAY 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm	STARTING 14 APRIL 2016
GONNA RISE UP SINGING	FRIDAY 10.30 am – 12.30 pm	STARTING 15 APRIL 2016

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Drunk Dry!

You came, you saw and you drank a frankly incredible amount of beer.

We'd like to say thank you to the thirsty patrons of the Pop-Up Pub at Tin Annie on Friday 4th March.

We exceeded our hoped for drinking speed of 1.8 firkins per hour. In the end we got closer to four firkins per hour. Which meant we were so busy refilling glasses that by 8.45pm a lot of the barrels were bare. The wine was decimated. So too the cider. Even the perry, believe it or not, took a surprise battering.



When we put on the first Western Park Beer Festival in September we got through 500 pints on the first evening. So we thought we'd be brave and double that amount this time around. It wasn't enough...

This summer, over August 19th and 20th, we will be holding the second Western Park Beer Festival at Dovelands Primary School. It will be around twice the size of the first festival, with four times the capacity. There will be much more beer and in greater variety. There will be also likely be a



prosecco stand and a gin bar. There will be wood-fired pizzas, cobs filled with excellent cheese and an assortment of food stalls.

Your support of this event will help the children and young people at Menphys and their families. The event will also raise funds for Dovelands Primary School.

We, on the beer committee, thank you for Friday's largesse and good humour and look forward to sinking a brew with you in the summer. Thank you, thank you thank you. Until next time.

Western Park Beer Fest Committee

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Look out for Real Eggs this Easter
The Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust is asking you to be on the look out for real 'Easter' Eggs this coming Easter. Traditionally, this is a time when people give their garden a spring clean. However, this is also often the time that many garden birds start to lay their first clutch of eggs.

Neil Pilcher, Senior Conservation Officer, said "Easter is early this year and the winter weather has been remarkably mild which means that birds will also be nesting early. I would urge people to be careful. The Trust has already had reports of blackbirds building nests in gardens. It only takes a moment for a nest to be accidentally destroyed or exposed to predators".



Linnet's Nest

The Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust recommends that you check your garden before starting work. Hedges are the most likely places to find nests, especially dense evergreen hedges such as Leylandii. However, working in the same area for long periods can also cause birds to abandon their nests. People should spend just a few minutes looking through their hedges and shrubs for signs of nests before starting work.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act all birds are protected whilst nesting. This protection starts from the moment they start building the nest until the young have fledged. The Trust recommends that if there is any doubt then the work should be postponed until the nesting season is over, which is generally accepted as 31st July.

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March Police Update

Hello all, I can start with good news to say that we have identified, arrested and charged the individual we believe to be responsible for the series of burglaries to local shops and businesses across the West Leicester policing area. Through the collation of CCTV images from a number of shops we were able to identify who he was and local officers were tasked with bringing him in.

On the day of arrest, officers had attended an address the suspect was known to frequent and as they were surrounding the property a taxi pulled up outside. Who should be in said taxi but the individual we were after. Despite telling the driver to carry on, our very own Sgt Chris Schofield heroically chased the taxi



along three streets before it finally pulled over allowing the Sergeant to detain him. Since he has been in custody we have seen no similar offences and are therefore certain he has been responsible. He remains remanded in custody and we are looking at putting further offences to the courts for consideration of further charges.

Meanwhile, our local officers have also been doing fantastic work with retrieving a number of stolen motor vehicles; in particular mopeds and motorbikes. We received a number of reports of motorbikes being ridden on The Rally off Tudor Road. Therefore, patrols were stepped up in that particular area. Consequently in the last two weeks our PCSOs have spotted and recovered five motorbikes; with a number of arrests being made of the riders who often try to run away but are swiftly detained.

We have also had a bit of an upheaval with regard to beat boundaries and team members. As I previously mentioned our teams would be moving around and this has now happened. This is in order to align the police beat boundaries with the new council boundaries. This will allow us to work more cohesively with our partner agencies; as the same staff from all departments will be working on the same area. Otherwise we found we were having to approach different city wardens or housing officers for different streets only metres apart. The changes involve the dissolving of Western Park beat team to the neighbouring beat teams of Fosse, Westcotes and New Parks. These will be updated on the Leicestershire Police website, so please take the time to see if there are any changes for your street. *Mike Hooper*

Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



Gardeners have been complaining about the lack of a proper winter for the last couple of years.

This winter, apart from the odd frost, has been a mild and dreary one, which gardeners and media alike love to blame for impending plagues of garden pests. If the weather gods are to be believed we're in for a late cold snap over Easter which should de-bug us of a few. If not, take advantage of the upcoming holiday to launch a pre-emptive strike and get the garden in order.

Hunt down those pesky molluscs hibernating under compost bags, pots and garden ornaments. Check greenhouses and cold frames before you prepare them a salad patter of veg seedlings and bedding plants. Look out for snail and slug eggs which look like little translucent pearls. Carefully knock out suspect plants and inspect the compost. There you may discover Vine Weevil grubs, white "C" shape maggots driven to the bottom of pots by the cold. These unwelcome guests need dispatching with extreme prejudice. Chemical and biological controls are less effective this time of the year so you'll have to close your eyes and do this manually!

Annoying jobs like cleaning out and disinfecting your greenhouse, will pay dividends in the long run, reducing fungal infections like mildew and the "damping off" of seedlings. Make sure your gardening tools are clean and serviceable. A good scrub with a disinfectant solution can prevent the spread of diseases. Most garden tools break through neglect, a little lubrication on your secateurs or linseed oil on your spade handle can give you with extra years of service.

Winter can also take its toll on garden woodwork, so using up your Easter break to fix up and preserve, sheds, fences and trellises pays dividends.

Don't forget to finish any late winter pruning. If the buds haven't started to break then it's still not too late cut back apples, pears, and currant bushes.

As an antidote to all your hard work, try some horticultural retail therapy. Easter is the time when garden centres are at their busiest so don't miss out on the latest vegetable seeds and bedding plugs which you can pot up in your now clean and pest free greenhouse. As a suggestion the whites and oranges of *Arum lily* and *Lilium regale* could be two to look for since they bloom in late spring and early summer.

Tony Huxley



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1 Across: Unopened Rose 1 Down: Thief 2: Cleans saucepans 3: Public transport 4: Devil 5: Flowers of a tree 6: Mobile home 7: Visual display unit 8: Smallest, hottest world. © Paul Towers

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