



## POISON ON THE PARK



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## Hello From The Editor

**Welcome to the latest issue of the Western Park Gazette!**

This month, bags of poisonous asbestos have been dumped on Western Park. Not much to say about it at the moment, but City Council Environment Enforcement Officers are on the trail and there's been a particularly nasty robbery on Narborough Road.

But on the plus side: Roger Blackmore tells us about one of Leicester's most famous divas, probably the first operatic Lady Gaga... Helen Knott rejoices now that peace and quiet has descended onto Hinckley Road following the roadworks. And she has an explanation as to why it's gone quiet.

Our friends at DMU's Square Mile Project have their bi-monthly update, Rod Smart from Hinckley Road Policing Unit has his hand firmly on the collar of local crime and our Garden God, Tony Huxley has some good advice as the colder weather edges in. And the Sudoku and crossword are lurking on the inside back cover.

If you have a local story or event to publicise drop a line to: [editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk](mailto:editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk)  
Visit [www.westernparkgazette.co](http://www.westernparkgazette.co)  
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**To Contact - Call 07939 115 724**

e: [editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk](mailto:editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk)

e: [sales@westernparkgazette.co.uk](mailto:sales@westernparkgazette.co.uk)

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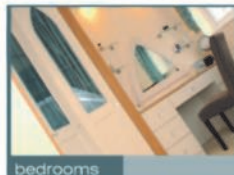
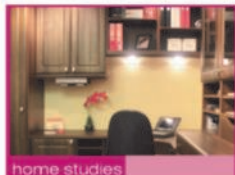


# Events Diary

**Fosse Singers:** Fosse N'hood Centre. Weds. 7pm.  
**International Folk Dancing:** Monthly 2nd & 4th Fri. St. Anne's Hall. 2-4pm. T: Geoff on 0116 285 8352.  
**Peter Crebbin's Cool Swing Band:** 1st Sun Monthly. Café Chino at Hilton Hotel, Meridian. 1-3.30pm.  
**23<sup>rd</sup> Oct: Diwali Day.** Belgrave Rd & Cossington St Rec Ground. Free.  
**25<sup>th</sup> Oct: Jewry Wall Museum Tour.** 2pm. Free.  
**25th Oct: 50/50 Auction in aid of St. Anne's Hall.** Viewing -11.30-1.30. Auction 2.00pm.  
**26<sup>th</sup> Oct. Museum Heritage Tours.** 11am. Leic Castle & Magazine. Book 0116 225 4980.  
**26<sup>th</sup> Oct: Horrors at the Haunted Hall.** Guildhall. 11-3pm. Activities - £2.50.  
**27<sup>th</sup> Oct: Ghostly Engineer.** Abbey Pumping St. 7pm. £3. 0116 299 5111.  
**1<sup>st</sup> Nov: Firework Display.** Abbey Park. Tickets from Visit Leic.  
**8<sup>th</sup> Nov: Canoeing Down the Soar:** Leic Outdoor Pursuit centre. 9.30am. w.lopc.co.uk  
**9<sup>th</sup> Nov: Remembrance Day Parade.** Victoria Park. 10.55am.  
**21<sup>st</sup> Nov: Highly Strung Acoustic Guitars.** Polonez Bar, 56 Hinckley Rd. 8.00pm. FREE.  
**22nd Nov: Craft Fair & Coffee Morn.** St. Anne's Hall, Letchworth Rd. 10-12noon.  
*Email events to: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk*

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# Poison on the Park

**Bags of Asbestos were found dumped on Western Park Road, off Hinckley Road at the beginning of October.**

Several black bin liners stuffed with, what appeared to be, broken down ceiling panels of the toxic material were left just inside Western Park next to the cut-through entrance.

City Council Environmental Enforcement Officer Steve Lally said: "The suspected asbestos was taped off and removed for testing within 24 hours; investigations are ongoing".

Due to asbestos's highly poisonous nature, Freemans Common is the only recycling centre in Leicester that will accept it, but only in cement bonded form and as long as it is double wrapped in plastic.

Fly-tipping clearance costs the Council over £300, 000 a year to clear with fly-tippers facing a fine of up to £50,000 and five years in prison when



convicted.

Instances of fly-tipping can be reported via the One Clean Leicester app for smartphones, on line or by calling 0116 454 1001.

## Western Parking...

**The controversial Western Park Resident's Parking scheme has been given the go-ahead and comes into effect on 17th Nov.**

Temporary traffic orders are being rolled out in stages affecting streets between Fosse Rd South and Sykefield Av.

Following consultations, a small majority of residents were in favour of the plan but on some of the more affected roads this rose to over 70%. It is these streets that are the main focus of the new scheme.

Councillor Susan Barton was aware the plan remained contentious and said: "I instigated a second door-to-door consultation in the adjacent area to explain the ideas to residents but broadly they were in favour".



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## Leicester's First Prima Donna

**It's surprising what you learn about a famous nineteenth century Leicester-born opera singer on a visit to Berkeley Castle in Gloucestershire.**

Earlier this year, during a visit to this impressive 12th century edifice, I came across the story of opera singer Elizabeth Austin and Francis Henry Fitzhardinge Berkeley.

Francis was the fourth son of the ninth Earl of Berkeley. After a contested court action about the legality of his father's marriage, Francis was in fact, found to be illegitimate. Nevertheless he was destined to go on to lead a remarkable life with a Leicester born soprano who became one of the most renowned opera singers of her time.

Born Elizabeth Clarke in 1798, the future operatic star married John Austin at the age of 15. She had voice training under William Gardiner, the Director of Music at Great Meeting Chapel and by 1821 was singing at the Dublin Opera House. Her popularity as a singer in the Italian style rapidly grew and she performed back in her home town at the Leicester Music Festival of 1827.

It's not known exactly when and where the dashing young aristocrat, F.H.F Berkeley met the already famous Elizabeth Austin but he went on to

become both her lover and her manager. This was quickly followed by several years in the United States of America where she played to packed houses for a number of years. She gained a tremendous reputation as an operatic prima donna and be-

came a wealthy woman in her own right. Francis accompanied her to the USA and acted as her agent as well as her companion. She gave her last performance in New York in 1835.

Elizabeth and Francis went on to have two children, Elizabeth and Francis Junior, both born out of wedlock as the couple did not marry until 1856, some time after the death of Elizabeth's husband, John.

In 1837 Francis was elected as MP for Bristol and he became a strong supporter of the idea of a secret ballot. This was finally introduced in 1872, two years after his death at the age of seventy five.

Elizabeth outlived Francis by a few years and died in London.

© Roger Blackmore



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## KNOTT'S LANDING

I don't often welcome road works. For the most part they are noisy and inconvenient in the extreme, especially when they are near your home and cause tailbacks. However, I find myself feeling the love for the road works that have been on Hinckley Road for the last month or two. It isn't the queue that's giving me the warm fuzzies, it's the unintentional consequences. Have you noticed how much quieter Hinckley Road is in the mornings? We walk to school every day and wonder at how few cars there are coming into town along our road, even when the traffic lights aren't there. Coming home at night is a joy because there aren't so many cars roaring past. It's like all the people who previously used it have forgotten it's there. The only big lorries we get at the moment are the ones slavishly following a sat-nav to get through town.

It's all to do with patterns of behaviour. In the world of radio where I work from time to time (Have you listened to Smooth Radio on a Sunday afternoon recently... that's me!) you are rarely allowed to have holidays in September because that's when people's patterns are set for the year. The summer holidays mean the flow of daily life for many is disrupted and our roads are clear of school traffic. Then September comes and we fall into a routine. We use the same roads every day and the pattern is set. If something disrupts that for at least 15 days in a row, we find a new route, we change our behaviour. The result is quiet roads.



I was in a shop in town the other day and the lady cashier suddenly let out a moan and said her husband had texted her to say the road works were back on Hinckley Road. Her journey home would be over an hour and she was going to have to find a new route. Inside my head, I did a little happy dance. She won't be coming down our road any time soon. So raise a glass to road-works on Hinckley Road, in fact, lets invite them back next September. © Helen Knott



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# Narborough Rd Robbery

**A middle-aged man and woman were brutally attacked and robbed in broad daylight by two masked men as they headed to a Narborough Road Jewellers.**

The two were attacked with an iron bar opposite Arti Jewellers and had a bag, containing a large amount of 22-carat gold Indian jewelry, snatched at around 1.45pm on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> of October.

The robbers escaped towards Upperton Road in a car driven by an accomplice.

The couple were taken to hospital for treatment to head injuries and bruising.

Bhasen Pattni who owns Arti Jewellers knows the victims: "It's Diwali soon and they were bringing us some samples. He's a jewellery dealer and family friend from London. I was serving a customer and I didn't see what happened but suddenly his wife was banging on the door, crying and shaking. "He's in shock and I'm trembling just thinking that this happened on a major road in broad daylight."

Detective Constable Jenny Tattersall, said: "We would like to speak to anyone who witnessed the incident or saw either of the men fitting the descriptions of the suspects acting suspiciously in the area around the time of the incident.

"We would like to speak to anyone who has any

information about the gold jewellery or is offered the items for sale in suspicious circumstances."

One of the two suspects is described as a 5' 8" slim white man wearing black clothes. A second man is described as slim, 5' 11" and also wearing black. A third suspect is thought to have been waiting across the road in a black Skoda Fabia with tinted windows and alloy wheels, which was seen driving off at the time of the incident.

Police carried out two warrants at addresses in Leicestershire on 8th October and arrested a 27 year old man in Barrow-upon-Soar on suspicion of robbery. Enquiries are ongoing.



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# **DMU SQUARE MILE**

## **Share your experiences of asthma**

Academics at DMU are studying the experiences of asthma in sports men and women and serious exercisers and looking at implications for self-care and healthcare.

We are looking for non-elite sports men and women to take part in interviews that could lead to findings which will help contribute to improving health and wellbeing of asthma sufferers.

If you are interested in taking part, please email  
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## **Fancy a sing song?**

Then join the DMU Square Mile Community Choir!

Rehearsals take place every Thursday from 11am-1pm and the group welcomes anyone with a love of singing.

You do not need any experience to join and it is completely free!

Please contact the DMU Square Mile team for more information:

T: (0116) 257 7135

E: [squaremile@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:squaremile@dmu.ac.uk)

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## **Could you be Leicester's next comedy star?**

Ever fancied giving comedy a go and want to be thrown into the spotlight?

For the third year running, DMU Square Mile is offering you the chance to become a comedy star with training from two Leicestershire comedy coaches.

With two sell-out shows last February, we want to make our contribution to Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival 2015 bigger and better!

If you fancy trying improvised comedy or stand-up, training starts mid October 2014 - so get in touch today!



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# Newfoundpool Forum

**Have your say about what is happening in your community!**

**DMU Square Mile is working with residents to establish a forum where people can highlight some of the issues they face in the community and work towards solutions with the help of DMU, Leicester City Council, Leicestershire Police and Leicestershire NHS Partnership.**

**DMU Square Mile will help residents grow ideas and establish projects for the community; with the support of the city council, local NHS and the Police.**

**Anyone wishing to join the forum should contact Square Mile [squaremile@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:squaremile@dmu.ac.uk), or by phone - (0116) 257 7135.**

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## COUNCILLORS' SURGERIES

**Fosse Cllrs' Surgery:** Monthly, 2nd Sat, 10.30-11.30 at Woodgate Residents Association.  
**Westcotes Cllrs' Surgeries:** Westcotes Library, 1st Sat each month, 10.30 - 11.30am and 4th Fri each month, 10am-11am. 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.

## COMMUNITY MEETINGS

*Meet your local councillors and find out what's going on in our area.*

### Western Park

**Tues 13th Jan & Tues 24th March 2015.** Location to be announced.

### Westcotes

**Tues 16th Dec & 17th March 2015** at 7pm. Location to be announced.

### Fosse

**Weds 3rd Dec & Weds 18th March 2015** from 6.00pm. Venue To be announced.

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## October Police Update

*The Smart View with Sgt. Rod Smart*

**On 23 August a burglary took place at an address on Luther Street where the door had been left unlocked overnight.** A 36 year old man from the City Centre has been arrested and charged with the burglary. On 30 September a further two burglaries took place (one on Bonchurch Street and one on Eastleigh Road) where the burglar had entered through an insecure window or door. We have seen a reduction in burglaries recently but residents are reminded to make sure that they lock their doors and windows, especially at night.

On 4 September, a young lady had her mobile phone snatched from her hand by a passing cyclist on Narborough Road. The offence was witnessed by plain clothed Police officers who detained a twenty 28 old Beaumont Leys man who has been charged with theft.

On the evening on 27 September, several of officers, including armed officers, attended the Hinckley Road entrance to Western Park, following the report of a male waving a Samurai sword around. A 17 year old youth was located but it transpired that he had actually been waving a stick around which was mistaken for a sword. The youth, who was found to be in possession of a knife, was arrested and later bailed pending intervention by Youth Intervention Officers.

Over recent weeks, we have seen an increase in cars being broken into overnight around the area, with door locks being drilled or windows smashed. Peugeot 206s' seem to have been particularly targeted by the offenders. Additional patrolling is taking place and car owners are advised to remove valuables from their vehicles over night, to park them in a well-lit and secure area (ideally in a garage) and to consider fitting an alarm. For crime prevention advice, please contact your local Police.

Hallowe'en will be upon us very soon and, although a fun time for many young people, it can be a troublesome time for others (especially older people). Local residents are asked to keep an eye out for older residents around them. The Police do not advocate practices such as 'Trick or Treating' but if considering it we would encourage parents to educate their offspring on how to do it whilst causing as little disruption to local residents as possible. Additionally, parents should be mindful of the safety of their children if out 'Trick or Treating', should give suitable safety advice and ideally should accompany their children. Your local Police have a supply of double sided *Trick or Treat* posters for residents to put in their windows. One side advertises that householders welcome *Trick or Treaters* and the other sides states *Trick or Treat – No Thanks*.



## Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



**It took a while but eventually the seasons have caught up with us and the hard winter frosts are only a few clear nights away.**

Now is the time adventurous plant lovers start to worry about the exotic purchases they made during sunnier times. But all is not lost. Last winter was so mild that all the pelargoniums in my hanging baskets survived outside to see another summer. You can give pots of tender plants extra protection by simply moving them closer to a southerly wall.

On colder evenings, drape horticultural fleece over less hardy plants. I remember marvelling at how an Agave enthusiast had carefully fleece-wrapped his prized spiky succulents. Judging by their maturity it was a successful technique. With larger specimens like hardy banana *Musa basjoo* and tree ferns, pack the plants



Horticultural Fleece

with dry straw first. This stops the fleece trapping moisture against the plant when it gets damp.

Some plants can benefit from a mulch of leaf litter, but be aware you could be providing a winter home for slugs and their buddies.

Leave the old foliage on herbaceous perennials, like penstemons and verbenas, to deflect the frost. Some evergreen shrubs like *Choisya* can get scorched by the cold, so leave shoots longer than you need them in the Autumn as a sacrifice to Jack Frost.

But there are some plants it isn't worth taking a risk with, like the beautiful *Salvia* "Amistad" my wife got me in June and the ginger lily from our Cornish holiday. They'll be carefully lifted, potted and placed in an unheated greenhouse. Don't be tempted to keep your garden refugees any warmer than necessary. This will lead to weak leggy growth. Remove damaged foliage and keep watering to a minimum to reduce the chance of rot.

Talking of rot, more garden mumbblings next month!

Tony Huxley



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## West End Meets Downton Abbey

Local writer, Melissa Lawrence, is planning a book on the life of Ethel North based on an inherited collection of letters written by Ethel, between 1919 and 1933, to Melissa's grandmother.

Ethel was the eldest daughter of butcher Harry North whose original shop sign can still be seen on the corner of Hinckley Road and Ridley Street in the West End.



She was the close companion of Lady Burghclere, sister of the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Carnarvon who funded the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb. Ethel travelled all over the world with "Lady B" as she called her, visiting exotic locations and meeting the rich and famous of the day including Rudyard Kipling and Howard Carter.

Fans of the hit television series *Downton Abbey* will know that the fictional Earl of Grantham and his family are based on the Carnarvons. Much of it is filmed at Highclere Castle in Berkshire where Ethel and Lady B stayed on several occasions and also at Lady Carnarvon's villa in Portofino.

Ethel eventually went on to work for the Leicester-shire Branch of the British Red Cross until her death in 1960 when she was living on Wynfield Road.

Melissa is in the process of putting together a book based on Ethel's life and wants to get in touch with any descendants of the North's family or anyone who has any recollections of Ethel or any of her six sisters.

If you think you can help in any way, please call Melissa Lawrence 0116 285 8718 or email: [mel@melissalawrence.co.uk](mailto:mel@melissalawrence.co.uk)

## Tin Annie Fundraising Events

**Volunteer fundraisers continue to chip away at the £250,000 target to rebuild the 100 year old Tin Annie community hall on Letchworth Road.**

Originally the first St. Anne's Church, the corrugated hall needs drastic work to bring it up to date. Michael Johnson; one of the organisers said: "Fund raising continues to go well and thanks go to all who have organised and supported the events so far".

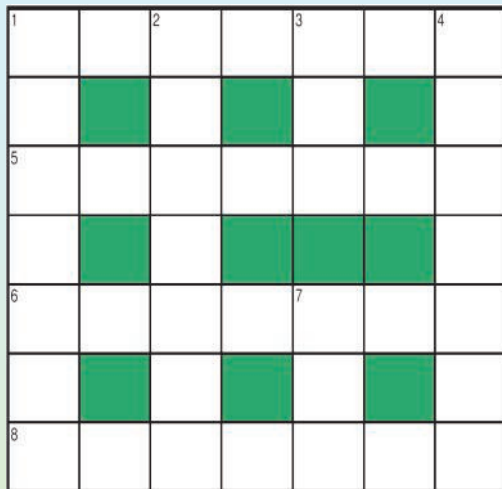
**Sat 8<sup>th</sup> Nov: The Tudor Choir 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert.** St. Anne's Church from 7.30pm. Tickets £7.00, including a glass of wine from Judy & Philip Dodd 0116 285 6217 or at the door.

**Sat 15<sup>th</sup> Nov: 1914-18: In Words & Music.** Hot supper evening with period music from the Tudor Choir. Songs & poetry from WW1 at St. Anne's Church Hall, Letchworth Rd 7.30pm. .

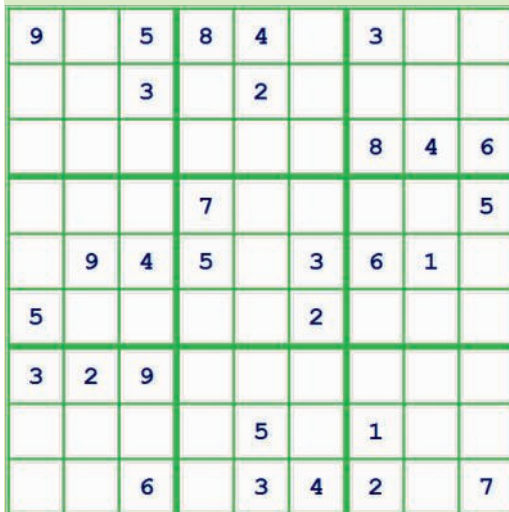
Tickets £10.00 from Judy & Philip Dodd - 0116 285 6217 or from the churchwardens.

**29<sup>th</sup> Nov: Casino Night.** Tickets £12.50, booked & paid for before 22.11.14 from 0116 225 8048

# BRAIN *TAZERS*



1 across: Leicester park 1 down: Serving at Downton 2: Germanic Switzerland 3: An evasive person 4: Tell a tale 5: A breather 6: Laziness 7: Great blue bird 8: Locally august publication © Paul Towers



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