

winter walks in warwickshire book • dvd • talking book • reviews fostering
success early years childcare spot the scam real boys do sing what's on
guide family tree search from the USA win a great prize worth over £1000

get your coat

Winter 2004/5

WARWICKSHIRE

view

take a different view

So what's different?

Well, for a start, it looks different. But this is more than a facelift. This is about you, and what you really want from a County Council magazine.

We've genuinely tried to show you how County Council services affect real people just like you. As well as providing genuinely useful information.

If it doesn't tell you anything you need to know, or help with useful information – contact us and tell us why.

We're well aware of how confusing local government and local services can be in terms of who does what. So we haven't restricted ourselves. You'll find articles about local health issues alongside articles about County Council services like libraries.

And if we've got it wrong - if there's nothing useful here for you - we want you to tell us. In your own words. Don't pull your punches. And we'll publish your letters. Because listening and responding is the only way we can get it right.

So enjoy this first issue of the new-look Warwickshire View. It will continue to be published quarterly for now, so expect your next issue in the spring.

Email your views to:
vieweditor@warwickshire.gov.uk
or write to us at the address on the back page.

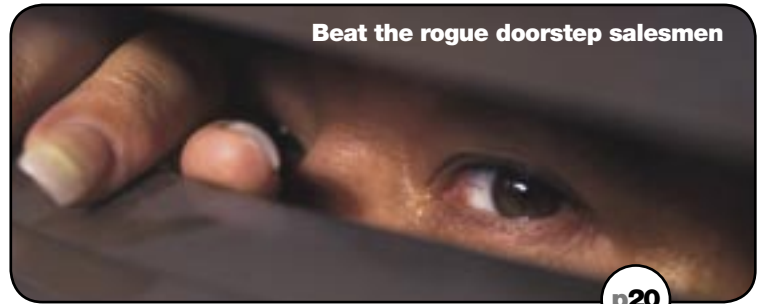


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Get your coat on for some great winter days out in Warwickshire - see p12.



Winter days out in Warwickshire

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Beat the rogue doorstep salesmen

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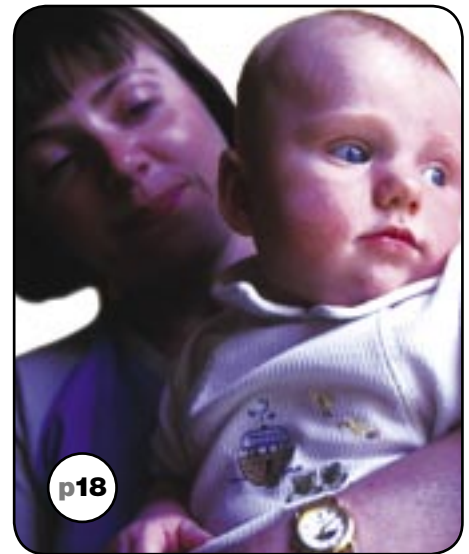
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Who said boys don't like singing? A new boys' group breaks the mould.



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It's all action down at your local library check out the latest reviews.

Taking on the loan sharks



Crime - the facts

Warwickshire residents have long had a fear of crime that bears no relation to the actual levels of crime in the County.

New figures for crimes such as domestic burglary and violent crime are showing large reductions all over the County. In North Warwickshire, for example, incidents of domestic burglary for the period April to October 2004 were down 21% on the same period in 2003.

Violent crime, similarly saw a 25% reduction in the Borough. Kathy Robinson, community safety policy manager for Warwickshire County Council, says: "I hope that our residents will be reassured by these figures and will not let crime and fear of crime spoil their quality of life. We continue to urge residents to be vigilant and to take sensible precautions whilst reassuring them that Warwickshire is a safe place to be."

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The scourge of loan sharks is being tackled head on by Warwickshire County Council as it invests in aiding local Credit Unions.

A Credit Union is similar to a bank, but it is owned and operated by its members. It offers members a permanently fixed low interest rate of one per cent a month, no matter how much is borrowed.

Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee has given the green light to £20,000 from the Social Inclusion Fund to aid local Credit Unions. £10,000 is going to Nuneaton Credit Union, £5,000 to Bedworth Credit Union and a further £5,000 to run a campaign to improve the uptake of benefits in Nuneaton and Bedworth to complement the work of the Credit Unions.

Cllr Barry Longden, Chairman of the area committee, said: "This time of year can put all of us under a great deal of financial pressure and I'm delighted that through the Social Inclusion Fund we can provide this support for the Credit Unions in both Nuneaton and Bedworth."

Problems with loan sharks? Call Trading Standards on 01926 414000. Your call will be confidential.

Excellent news



It's official - Warwickshire County Council has been classed as excellent. The Audit Commission has awarded WCC its highest rating in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) - placing it amongst the elite of UK local authorities.

WCC had previously been categorised as 'good' but moved into the top banding following 'clear improvements' in education, the environment, social services and economic development.

The County Education Service have had a double reason to celebrate with the news that Ofsted has given them a maximum three-star rating.

Cllr Ian Bottrill, Council Leader, said: "As councillors we can set the direction and provide resources but we do not do the hard bit - providing the services ourselves. We are enormously grateful to all of the staff of the County Council for helping to achieve this marvellous accolade."

A summary of the report

- Council priorities are clear and robust and most of the priority services are improving from an already strong base.
- There has been good progress in education with improved levels of pupil attainment.
- Overall progress in environment services is good, particularly in waste management, but there is mixed improvement in transport.
- The council provide good social services for children but more progress is needed in adult services.

It's not criminal

Love them or hate them – new parking rules are set to hit the streets of all town centres in the county by 2006 as Police gradually hand over enforcing on-street parking to Warwickshire County Council.

And as the Council takes over responsibility, it is taking the opportunity to make other changes to the way we park. New parking meters are already up and running in Stratford with visitors to the town now paying for on-street parking. More consultation is about to begin with residents in Nuneaton & Bedworth about introducing residents' parking zones in parts of the town.

County Councillor Ken Browne, Portfolio Holder for Transport, Environment and Rural Affairs, said:

“By introducing schemes such as on-street charging and new residents' parking zones, we hope to make our town centres better places to be. In Stratford, for instance, we are already seeing a faster turnover of cars parking near the shops.

“We know from similar schemes already running in Northampton and Winchester that by creating more short-stay parking opportunities near the shops, less people will be driving around looking for spaces – congestion and pollution will drop and our town centres



will be more attractive and safer for all road users.

“In Nuneaton, residents will find it easier to park near their homes, as others will have to comply with parking restrictions in their zones.

“The district or borough councils in each area are working in partnership with us to enforce the new parking restrictions. People will become used to seeing council employed parking attendants patrolling instead of police employed traffic wardens.”

briefly

New found freedom



From 1 January 2005, the Freedom of Information Act gives anyone the right to make a written request for information

that Warwickshire County Council owns, and the Council must respond within 20 working days. Usually the information will be released, but occasionally, we may need to explain why the law says it cannot be disclosed. The Council welcomes this opportunity to make available even more information about the way it works and the decisions it takes on behalf of the people of Warwickshire. For more information please see our Publication Scheme and the Freedom of Information pages on our website.

Let your views go to waste

The County and District Councils have been working together to produce a Waste Strategy for Warwickshire. It will set out how we are going to meet challenging recycling targets and divert as much waste as possible away from landfill.



Your views are important and we will be consulting on the Strategy in January. Copies of the consultation leaflet will be available in libraries and also on the Warwickshire Web.

For more information contact Kalen Wood on 01926 418064.

HGV relief on the way



New signs have been installed on a busy Coleshill road to help beat the jams. Notices have gone up on the A446 directing HGVs to Hams Hall.

The signs are intended to stop large vehicles using small town roads after they have missed their route to the industrial estate.

Peter Fowler a county, borough and town councillor began his crusade for better signs four years ago and now hopes to improve signage from the M6 to ease the problems even more.

feedback consultation feedback consultation...



“ Whilst we are pleased with our high scores we are not complacent. We still have work to do to improve our ratings. ”

Kushal Birla,
Head of Library & Information Service



Libraries 95.3% rated staff knowledge as 'good' or 'very good', 72.7% were able to find a book to borrow, 69.3% found the information they were looking for. People's network Computer facilities rated good or very good by 89%, helpfulness and knowledge of staff 90% and the library environment 85%. Heritage Education - St John's House Museum 93% of teachers questioned rated the 'Victorian Schoolroom' (above right) very good and 95% rated the 'Laundry' very good.

For more in-depth information visit: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/consultation

california dreaming

From sunny California to historic Warwickshire, via the Warwickshire Web. Lisa Earp-Lee gets on the trail of her family tree and unearths some fascinating facts along the way.

her home might be on the other side of the world, but part-time nurse Lisa Earp-Lee was able to start the long quest of tracing her family tree with a click of a button.

Having emigrated from Coventry to the United States more than 20 years ago, Lisa became interested in tracking her family's Warwickshire past.

After reading up on the basics of genealogy, she followed the advice to begin her hunt with someone she knew. Selecting her granddad James Earp, she thought she'd see if there was any reference to him on the internet.

A visit to the Warwickshire County Council website produced a quick result. Accessing the online certificate searching service, Lisa was able to type in her grandfather's name, and was able to find a reference to his marriage certificate.

Ordering a copy online, Lisa began the paper trail that has led her back to the 1850s as she finds out about her family's past from her home in Orange County, California.

"I was just looking to see if my granddad was listed anywhere on the internet. I knew he lived in Warwickshire so I typed it into a search engine and came up with the Warwickshire County

Council web site and then clicked on the certificates link and typed my granddad's name in.

"He happened to pop up under the heading of marriage certificates. It was thrilling to see his name on the computer as he was the first person I actually "searched" for on the Internet and that's how I came to order it.

"Since I have started doing genealogy I have traced my granddad's family back to the 1850's still in Warwickshire - Hockley, Wilnecote to be exact."

Lisa, who is 31 and emigrated from England in 1980, still visits Warwickshire occasionally, and is looking forward to sharing the details she has found with her grandmother Gladys, who now lives in Bedworth.

"My grandmother's side comes from Hartlepool. My grandparents met during WWII. My grandmother drove tanks and heavy equipment from the factories where they were made to different places all over England. I'm told that civilians used to let the men and women of the military stay in their homes when they made these deliveries and that's how she met my granddad, who lived in Atherstone at the time. She didn't actually stay at his house but stayed in the same town."

The link with the past has helped Lisa, a mother of one, reconnect with the country she left behind as a child. "We felt a little like aliens in this strange country - I do remember missing England and wanting to 'go

Register Office Facts

Warwickshire Register Offices hold birth, death and marriage records dating from 1st July 1837 to the present day in Atherstone, Nuneaton, Rugby, Stratford and Warwick.

There are currently 151,700 birth, 16,264 death and 68,171 marriage entries on the CAMDEX on-line search facility. Giving a total of 236,135 entries and growing!

Until 1994, couples could only get married in a Register Office or a religious building. It is now possible to get married in venues specially licensed for civil marriages (eg hotels, stately homes).

1033 marriages took place in Warwickshire's 70 licensed venues during 2003/04. 1176 marriages took place in religious buildings in Warwickshire.

The Registration Service also offers Naming Ceremonies and Renewal of Marriage Vows Ceremonies.



Lisa Earp-Lee and daughter Emma (above) and her Grandfather & Grandmother (right) on their wedding day in 1944.



home'. But we survived and now we're 'Americanized'.

"Even now I still get homesick for England, but I try and visit as often as I can. My husband and I will actually be making the trip in February to visit a cousin who's having a baby.

"My granddad passed away in 1991 in Bedworth but my grandmother still lives there. I also have an aunt and uncle, Janice and Malcolm Hill who also live in Bedworth with their children. I have an uncle who lives in Bahrain and a cousin who lives in South Africa. The Earp family has spread far from its roots in Warwickshire – but I'm really enjoying finding out about my ancestors!"

The online certificate search is free to use at:

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/certificates
or call **(01926) 410410**

Warwickshire County Council is indebted to a willing band of volunteers who are helping build up a database of all births, marriages and death certificates recorded in the county from 1837 to the present day.



lord of the rings

A 1000 year old ring was unearthed in a Warwickshire field, prompting the Warwickshire museum to invite people to speculate on how it got there.

an ancient ring over 1000 years old captured the imagination of the Warwickshire public when Warwickshire Museum invited people to solve the mystery of the ring and tell the story behind it.

From nearly 100 entries, ten year old Andrew Ballantyne from Dunnington Primary School, won the 11 years and under category with his imaginative story, Jordan Newby, aged 12, from Leamington Spa, stole the Judges' vote with his entry in the 12-15 years category (*read his entry, right*) and Mrs Anne Scotcher from Kenilworth won the 16 years and over category.

The 10th century gold ring was found recently near Warwick and is thought to have been made in Germany. It is beautifully decorated, with an enamelled flower in its centre.

Warwickshire Museum was able to acquire the ring through the

generous assistance of the National Art Collections Fund and the Warwick Charity of King Henry VIII. Trustees from the Charity are delighted to have played a part in bringing such an important find to the Museum and presented the winners with their prizes.

The winning stories are available for people to read in the Market Hall Museum gallery and on the Warwickshire Museum website www.warwickshire.gov.uk/museum. In addition they were recorded and broadcast on BBC Radio WM.

Warwickshire Museum runs a Portable Antiquities scheme to identify objects that people may find. It doesn't have to be gold or silver to be worth recording; objects such as pottery, glass and metalwork are all important for building up our picture of Warwickshire in the past. Contact Sara Wear for more information on 01926 412033.



The three winners are joined by Prof. Ives (At the back, of the King Henry VIII charity).

The Lost Ring

by Jordan Newby aged 12

Octa the thief was known widely over Germany as the most stealthy and devious thief. As a result he was the most wanted criminal in the entire country.

Octa knew he should not pull off any more robberies, but when word reached him about a valuable golden ring that was in the ownership of the lord in the next town he couldn't resist.

Within the next day Octa had returned back to his old town having stolen the ring. But as he was such a well known thief, he was a definite suspect for the crime. Also, this made it difficult to sell the ring.

So he decided to evade capture by fleeing to England. But while on the run, he made a stop at Warwick to visit a friend who could help him sell the ring.

He was riding along at quite a speed on his horse when the horse tripped up. Octa went flying off.

While hurtling through the air the ring fell out of his pocket under a nearby bush. He then saw soldiers coming towards him. Octa was cautious and walked off hastily.

When he realised the ring was gone, he searched frantically for it but he never found it. So Octa had to live the rest of his life on the run without the benefit of the money he would have got from the ring. As for the ring ...it lay where it fell for centuries.

boys keep singing

picture the scene. A typical activity weekend for boys aged between nine and 13. Away from home at a residential centre they are allowed to let off steam. There's climbing, football, kayaking. And singing.

Singing? Hardly a traditional boy's game. But boys do like to sing. The trick is getting them to do it.

"It is quite a challenge, but we may have found the answer," said Garry Jones, Head of Warwickshire County Council's County Music Service. "We've physically exhausted them, given them the environment that they feel comfortable in and then encouraged them to give singing a go.

"Boys want to sing, but they don't like formal choirs and they're reluctant to join groups that are predominantly female."

The result of the experiment has been 'Action Aloud' - a new singing group formed in Warwick following a residential activity weekend for youngsters in the area. Comprising boys from six primary schools, and funded by the County Music Service and St Mary's Trust in Warwick, it has proved a roaring success.

"If you want to picture how it looks and how it sounds, start with a traditional church choir with angelic



Forget frilly ruffs and angelic high pitched harmony. It's time to re-think your idea of a typical boys choir. Lots of boys want to get into singing, the trick is getting them started.

boys dressed in ruffs and singing in high-pitched harmony. Then go as far away from that point as you can," said Garry.

"It is a very distinctive sound. The group sings modern arrangements that are full of energy and result in a really scary sound."

Singing practice isn't restricted to singing alone. As well as rehearsing different numbers, the boys break off every now and then and give their voices a rest and switch to exercise.

And it has been a big success. Singing, among this group of lads, has become cool and their energy from the physical exercise carries over to the effort they put into their songs.

"There are very few boys' singing groups in the country but this one has flourished since we started it in November last year," Garry added.

"They have put on their first performance, at the Mayor's Christmas Concert at Leamington Town Hall, and the group is still flourishing."

If you live in Warwick and would like to get involved with Action Aloud, call the County Music Service on 01926 412803.

You can find out about more music opportunities for young people throughout Warwickshire at: www.musicforlife.net or write to:

Warwickshire County Music Service
22 Northgate Street
Warwick CV34 4SP
or call:
01926 412803



heroes of the hill

Husband and wife team Keith and Mary Fairburn are emergency duty foster carers, providing essential care when it is needed most.



“

Keith and Mary will look after all children, from babies through to 18 year olds

”



it takes a very special kind of person to be woken in the early hours of the morning, be presented with a child, only to see the youngster head elsewhere for longer-term care a few hours later.

This is the life that faces the select few Emergency Duty Foster Carers in Warwickshire. Of the 500,000 people living in the county there are just four couples providing this essential service in a youngster's true hour of need.

It is hard to imagine the trauma a child of any age faces when suddenly becoming homeless and torn from their normal routine.

It is crucial their needs are met in the most painless of ways. This is made possible by some very special people. And two of them are based at the heart of Nuneaton's Camp Hill estate. Husband and wife team Keith and Mary Fairbairn who live in Laburnham Grove, are Emergency Duty Foster Carers providing essential care when it is needed most.

“ **It's not unusual for us to look after a different child every night of the week.** ”

The success story of the duo has been further emphasised with their exam achievements.

Mary, who left school without a qualification to her name, and her husband Keith, have become the first Emergency Duty Foster Carers in Warwickshire to achieve an NVQ Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People.

Mary explained what their role often involves: “There are children who sometimes need a bed for a variety of reasons. For instance if a child has had a row at home and needs somewhere to

stay the Emergency Duty officer will get in touch and we will help.

“Things can vary an awful lot on who we have. It's not unusual for us to look after a different child every night of the week.”

Keith and Mary will take all children, from babies through to 18 year olds, and during the week will offer a night's accommodation, while at weekends the children are welcome until Monday.

Mary continued: “It wouldn't hurt a lot more people to think about foster caring. I've done it since 1994 and became an Emergency Duty Foster Carer in 2000, it's extremely fulfilling.

“The support you receive is just fantastic. There is always a help number, contact available with the link worker, and of course there is the training.”

The Emergency Duty Team has operated since July 1993 with the aim of handling those crises affecting children, which occur outside normal office hours and need to be dealt with urgently.

Anyone interested in becoming a foster carer can contact Sylvia Vickers, Foster Care Marketing and Training Manager on 01926 413262.

Fostering Facts

There are only four Emergency Duty Foster Carer couples in Warwickshire.

There are currently about 240 children in care in Warwickshire.

Foster carers get £183 per week for each child at Level 2 plus allowances.

NVQ qualifications are available to all foster carers.

An out of hours helpline is available to all foster carers.

Contact Info

Sylvia Vickers
tel. 01926 413262

we really should
get out more

If you're tired of lounging around on the sofa, Warwickshire has a host of great country parks where you can explore the countryside and join in some great events.



it's January and the season of good cheer has left many of us with a few extra pounds to shed. What better time of year to get out in the fresh air and discover Warwickshire's wonderful country parks?

There are country parks throughout the County, with Pooley Country Park & Heritage Centre, Kingsbury Water Park and Hartshill Hayes Country Park in the north, Ryton Pools Country Park in central Warwickshire, and Ufton Fields Nature Reserve, Burton Dassett Hills Country Park and The Stratford Greenway in the south.

Visitors can turn up any time in daylight hours to take advantage of the parks. (Entrance is free, but you will need change to pay to park your car.) Many have flat, surfaced footpaths and are ideal for walking or cycling for all the family. The Country Parks Rangers also offer a range of events designed to help bring the environment to life, ranging from guided walks to craft activities and kite-making.

"We all need to take some form of regular exercise – even a small amount is better than none and can help to keep your heart strong, help manage weight and reduce stress," says Sally Silk, Country Parks Visitor Manager.

"The Country Parks are a great place for children to bring their new bikes

“ We all need to take some form of regular exercise ”

after Christmas. And we offer mobility scooters on a free loan scheme at Kingsbury Water Park, Ryton Pools and Pooley Country Park, so the less able members of the family don't need to miss out on a trip into the countryside.

"We have a series of Walking and Cycling leaflets, as well as our popular Countryside for All pack of 12 walks, which offer suggested routes and information about the local area. These leaflets take the chore out of deciding where to go for an outing, and offer even more opportunities to get out into the countryside for some healthy exercise."

For more information, contact Kingsbury Water Park on 01827 872660, email parks@warwickshire.gov.uk, or see www.warwickshire.gov.uk/countryside. There is a small charge for most activities on the events programme and some, including the children's holiday activities, need to be pre-booked.

You can pick up a Winter Walks and Events in Warwickshire's Country Parks leaflet and Viewpoint magazine FREE from public libraries throughout the County. The Walking and Cycling information leaflets (50p each) and the Countryside for All pack (£2.50) can be bought by mail order from Kingsbury Water Park or from Country Park Visitor Centres.



The Country Parks Service's latest programme of walks and events contains over 100 walks and activities for you to choose from. For your FREE copy call: 01827 872660 or email: parks@warwickshire.gov.uk.

Get out and about

Kingsbury Water Park

**Sunday 6 February Scrub Clearance
FREE EVENT 10.30 am - 12.30 pm**

**Sunday 20 March Lambstails and
Pussy Willows Walk
10.30 am - 12.30 pm**

The Stratford Greenway

**Sunday 6 February Town to Country
Walk 2 pm - 4.30 pm**

**Sunday 6 March Snow and Soup
Walk 10.30 am - 12.30 pm**

Hartshill Hayes Country Park

**Sunday 13 February Snow and Soup
Walk 10.30 am - 12.30 pm**

Burton Dassett Hills

**Sunday 6 February Snow and Soup
Walk 10.30 am - 12.30 pm**

Ryton Pools Country Park

**Sunday 20 February Family Bike
Ride 1 pm - 3 pm**

**Sunday 13 March Wolston Wobble
Walk 10 am - 4 pm**

Pooley Fields Heritage Centre

**Friday 25 March Moonlight Walk
9 pm - 11 pm.**

For further details on the above events contact:
01827 872660

watch your waste

The festive season generates a vast amount of waste from Christmas trees and cards to mountains of packaging from shiny new Christmas stuff. Here's some ideas of what to do with it.



now that all the presents have been unwrapped and the cards taken down, you probably find yourself with a certain amount of excess waste to dispose of too.

Did you know that Royal Mail delivered around 150 million cards and packets during the pre-Christmas period? Estimates suggest that up to one billion Christmas cards – 17 for every man, woman and child – could end up in bins across the UK.

At the same time, the British public will throw away as much as 83 square km of wrapping paper – enough to cover an area larger than Guernsey.

Add to that 7.5 million Christmas trees, an extra 750 million bottles and 500 million drinks cans thrown away over the Christmas period, and you begin to understand the scale of the post-holiday rubbish pile.



The good news is that you can recycle much of your Christmas waste – and raise money for charity at the same time. WH Smith and Tesco are backing the Woodland Trust's new campaign, Tree For All, through their Christmas card recycling scheme, and funds raised through the project will help give every child in the UK the chance to plant trees.

And if you've had a new mobile phone for Christmas, don't forget to recycle your old one in one of the Freepost envelopes available from all public libraries in the County. Every mobile phone recycled this way will raise £3.50 for Guide Dogs for the Blind.

Again, if you've been given an unwanted gift, is there a way of tactfully passing it on to friends and family, or taking it to your nearest charity shop?

If you had one, you can chop up your Christmas tree and put it in your green wheelie bin, or add it to the green waste at any of Warwickshire's Household Recycling Centres. Either way, it will be composted and spread on farmland in the county. Don't forget that wrapping paper cannot be put in kerbside recycling boxes, though, so try to re-use wrapping paper wherever possible or compost it.

And if you still haven't made a New Year's Resolution for 2005, why not resolve to start recycling, or recycle more than you already do – or just to start making a list before you go shopping to cut down on the amount of food you throw away?

Recycling - the possibilities are endless. For more information, see www.warwickshire.gov.uk/wastewise www.woodland-trust.org.uk www.treeforall.org.uk



get the **DVD**
VIDEO
CD
WEB

Warwickshire County Council Libraries offer books, talking books, DVDs, videos and CDs as well as free broadband internet access.

Turn the page for reviews of the latest books, talking books and DVDs then pop along to your local library - you'll be surprised at the range of stuff on offer.

oh and BOOKS too...

at your local
LIBRARY

library focus

Nuneaton

**Staff
Choice**

Carla Tate, Senior Library Assistant from Nuneaton library offers her personal book choice and her colleagues give you a bit of help with what to look out for on your next visit.

Clear by Nicola Barker

For most of us, David Blaine's forty-four days suspended near Tower Bridge in a perspex box have faded into the dim recesses of memory. From 5th September to 19th October 2003 though, the press seemed to talk of little else, so it is no surprise that someone decided to write a book about it.

The novel *Clear*, by Nicola Barker, centres entirely on Blaine's stunt and its effects on her cast of idiosyncratic characters. The narrator, a twenty-something bloke called Adair Graham McKinney, does something clerical in the nearby London Assembly building and is thus confronted daily with Blaine and the furore his stunt causes. McKinney finds himself drawn back again and again, particularly in the small hours of the morning,

to observe both Blaine and the crowds milling about. McKinney is fascinated by Blaine and much of the book foregoes the traditional pleasures of plot and character development in favour of a lengthy chewing over of Blaine as cultural phenomenon. What led Blaine to do this stunt? What, if any, symbolic significance did he intend it to have? What meaning could be assigned to it by those astute enough to see beyond even Blaine's vision of it?

And what could account for the strident response of the British people? As Barker grapples with these questions, characters become mouthpieces for her own theories and speculations, and any nods in the direction of plot serve merely to lead us right back to Tower Bridge and the man in the box.

Barker is a self-aware, clever writer with an ear for the patterns of contemporary language. The use of frequent italics and bracketed asides might become off-putting to readers who prefer a more lyrical prose. That being said, the book remains highly readable and the ideas and characters are engaging, if not quite fully-formed.

Longlisted for the 2004 Man Booker Prize, *Clear*, is punchy, brisk, contemporary and thoughtful and a refreshing (if not entirely satisfying) departure from the norm.

Library Facts

Use our online catalogue to order books from across the county at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/libraries/wildaboutbooks. Web requests cost 50p per item.

Did you know that our main libraries in Leamington, Nuneaton, Rugby and Stratford now all open on Sundays.

All Warwickshire libraries now have fast broadband internet computers with free access email, and wide ranging information and learning opportunities.

Nuneaton Library was designed by the architect Sir Frederick Gibberd who also designed Liverpool Cathedral.

Contact Info

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/libraries
or call (01926) 410410

If you like this you'll like...

Always the Sun by Neil Cross

A Blade of Grass by Lewis DeSoto

**Becoming Strangers
by Louise Dean**

The Unnumbered by Sam North

**I'll Go to Bed at Noon
by Gerard Woodward**

**Purple Hibiscus
by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

**Electric Michelangelo
by Sarah Hall**



5 more books to look out for at the Library



Lemony Snicket The Bad Beginning

This is the story of three orphans who are placed in the care of their evil Uncle Count Olaf who tries to steal their inheritance.

Snicket has no happy ending in mind and the bad beginning is only the start of trouble for the orphans, and in the books that follow things get much worse.

This is one of those children's books which adults can enjoy equally as much.

Mark Griffin,
Library Assistant



Malorie Blackman Noughts and Crosses

In this sombre book, society is divided into white 'noughts' and black 'crosses'. The crosses rule society, and the author gives a bleak picture of the doomed love of two young people – Callum and Sephy.

The chapters are written by different characters which helps the reader to relate to them quickly. The book is not 'feel-good', but challenges the reader's assumptions and is profoundly moving.

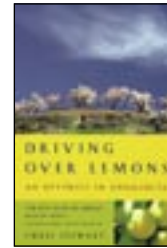
Stella Thebridge,
Children's Librarian



Harlan Coben Tell No One

An American doctor loses his wife under tragic circumstances, and his life falls apart. But things keep happening to make him think that she could be still alive. He sets out to find out the truth. He is told to 'tell no one'. As a captivated reader, 'I say tell everyone!'. The story grabs you on the very first page and you just can't put it down.

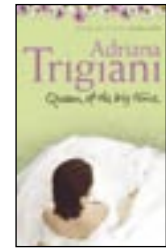
Gail Zur,
Library Assistant



Chris Stewart Driving over Lemons

I enjoyed this, it was easy to read and I could almost imagine myself in Andalucia up in the mountains. Oh if only! My only quibble is that it all seemed to be too easy. He certainly paints a tantalising picture of the alternative lifestyle in Spain. Nice work if you can get it.

Irene O'Neil,
Nuneaton Library
Reading Group



Adriana Trigiani Queen of the Big Time

Another slice of Italian American life which spans 50 years in the life of Nella Castellucca. At the start she is 14 and experiences the double joy of going to High School and of falling in love for the first time. Although I found this an enjoyable, easy to read novel, my only reservation is that it covers her early life much more closely than her later years. A longer book with more detail would have made a more interesting read.

Ruth Johnson,
Library Assistant

DVD & Video to look out for at the Library



Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind

This film is perhaps the most wonderfully comic and refreshingly real love story you will get to see this year. Jim Carrey and Kate Winslet play a couple that have drifted apart and, after a final argument, undergo a procedure to erase their memories of each other. During the process of loss they rediscover what they had to begin with, and have to fight to keep their invaluable memories. An awesome cast, and an opportunity to see the lead stars in their most original roles to date. Kaufman's screenplay is another intricate unique masterpiece that you will definitely want to watch again.

Libby Luscombe, Library Assistant

**New
Arrivals**

**Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban • Thunderbirds • Shrek 2 •
Garfield: the Movie • Troy • The Day After Tomorrow • The Ladykillers •
The Secret Window • The Stepford Wives • Spider-Man 2**

Talking Book Review

The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy - read by Carole Boyd

This is such a treat of a book to have read aloud, as it is so beautifully written. Set against a backdrop of rural India, it tells the story of Estha and Rahel, two egg twins and of their family's decline. Accelerated by bigotry, jealousy and betrayal, we follow their collective downfall. The instinctive and provocative use of language weaves the story for us as a beautiful sari, gossamer like the broken yellow moon, anchored to anguish but fuelled by wit and magic. And to see this all through the invincible innocence of children, the forbidden love, the pain that adults heap upon themselves. The joy of talking books can be heard in this excellent example, so wonderfully read by Carole Boyd, you can enjoy the story while driving, ironing or just relaxing.

Susan Gooding, a library customer



what now?

Excitement, bewilderment, worry and joy are amongst the emotions all parents experience. Help is out there - if you know where to look.





becoming

a new parent can be a bewildering time. As well as getting used to the latest addition to the family and all the challenges that brings at home, there is also a sea of information to swim through when looking for childcare.

Be it a childminder, day nursery, nursery school or crèche, there is a huge range of childcare options for a parent of a young baby.

In addition, there are nanny agencies, toddler groups, and for older children out of school clubs, holiday schemes and youth groups.

So, where to start? Mums and dads want to be sure that they are getting the best available provision for their children, but with all the other demands facing them, researching all the options can be an exhausting time.

Help is at hand through the Warwickshire Children's Information Service.

It brings together all the information on childcare options throughout the county.

Available to parents and carers

throughout Warwickshire, the service is free, impartial and confidential.

Staff can provide lists of childcare and nursery education provision in your area by post, email or fax.

They can also give general information and tips on how to make the choices as informed as possible, and parents who need any extra help can arrange to speak to an advisor face-to-face or over the phone.

As well as information about finding childcare provision, the Children's Information Service can also give advice on tax credits, financial support for parents and carers and free nursery and pre-school education for three and four-year-olds. Advice is also available for working parents as well as sign-posting to other family related services.

The aim of the service is to help parents find the information that is most relevant to them.

This service is not just for parents, it can also help if you would like to become a childminder, or would like advice on setting up a childcare business.

The Warwickshire Children's Information Service is funded by Warwickshire County Council and the

Government Sure Start unit. It can be contacted in the following ways:

Contact Points

Telephone: 0845 090 8044 (local rate)

Textphone: 01926 736327

email:
earlyyears@warwickshire.gov.uk

website:
www.warwickshire.gov.uk/earlyyears

In writing:
**Children's Information Service,
County Education Department,
Warwickshire County Council, 22
Northgate Street, Warwick CV34 4SP**

Other information

ChildcareLink is a national website with details of childcare provision in your area:
www.childcarelink.gov.uk

The Parent Centre:
www.parentcentre.gov.uk

Sure Start: www.surestart.gov.uk

Tax credits:
www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk

spot the scam

Doorstep salesmen can provide a valuable service, bringing shopping facilities and services to your home. Unfortunately, not all callers are genuine, some use pressure selling tactics to rush you into a decision.





A Warwickshire woman was approached by a group of men who falsely claimed to be highway maintenance workers. The men said they had some tarmac left over from a bridge maintenance job and offered to fill a pot hole in her driveway. The householder agreed, but the men then laid tarmac across half her driveway without her permission and demanded £680. Fortunately the woman refused to pay and reported the incident to Warwickshire Trading Standards.



Salesmen persuaded a Lancashire woman to sign a contract for a £3,000 burglar alarm after telling her that her dogs could be blinded or even poisoned by intruders. She later cancelled the contract when she realised the company had misled her. "They scared me into buying an alarm by making me feel unsafe in my own home. Thank goodness I checked up on them."



A 63-year-old Preston man signed a contract after more than four hours' high pressure selling from a double-glazing salesman. He was able to cancel the contract the next day, having obtained cheaper quotes from other glazing companies.... "It didn't matter how many times I refused to sign the contract, the salesman just wouldn't go. In the end I gave in because I was exhausted and it was the only way to get him out of my home."



A stranger knocked on the door of an 87 year old Hampshire man and told him his chimney looked dangerous, offering to give a price for the work he said was needed.... "I knew he was talking rubbish because I used to work in the building trade and I know my bungalow is well maintained. I told him, "You may frighten some people but you don't frighten me." I run the local Neighbourhood Watch scheme and often hear about conmen like this."



An 86 year old Warwickshire resident was conned out of £100 after a man unexpectedly called at his home and offered to prune the tree in his front garden. The owner was happy to have the tree pruned as it was obstructing the footpath but, before the job was finished the trader demanded money to complete the work. £100 was handed over and the man promptly disappeared. The householder was left with a badly pruned tree and all the garden waste.

Some sound advice

Here's some handy tips if you are approached on the doorstep by someone offering goods or services:

If you don't want to buy from the door – don't open your door.
If you do want to speak to the caller, put the doorchain on & make sure you check their identity.

Don't be forced into making a quick decision on the doorstep.

If you want work doing, get at least three quotes from local companies who have reputations to maintain.

If possible seek recommendations.

Only deal with local firms with genuine verifiable telephone numbers and addresses. Beware of companies that only use mobile phone numbers and accommodation addresses.

Fix a price and be specific about what you want done. Make sure you get everything in writing.

Cancellation rights apply to most contracts that you enter into resulting from an unsolicited visit by a trader provided the total cost of what you are agreeing to buy is over £35. Where you do have cancellation rights, you have seven days after you sign an agreement when you are able to cancel without any penalty. All cancellation rights must be provided in writing to the customer at the time the contract is agreed (usually on the doorstep). It is a criminal offence not to do so and any contract that is not accompanied by cancellation rights cannot be enforced.

Trading Standards Facts

Every year, Trading Standards helps over 10,000 people solve their consumer problems.

In 2004 thousands of pounds in compensation and refunds was obtained on behalf of Warwickshire consumers.

We also assist businesses to comply with trading standards laws.

For help and advice:
Consumers phone: 01926 414000
Businesses phone 01926 414044

Or, we're on the web, visit:
www.warwickshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards



luxury health club competition

**Prize
worth over
£1000**

▶▶ how to enter

Simply write to us or email, in no more than 200 words, telling us...

‘What is the best thing about living in Warwickshire?’

Send your entry to:
**Warwickshire View Competition
Communications Division
P.O. Box 9, Shire Hall
Warwick CV34 4RR**

or email:
viewcompetition@warwickshire.gov.uk

Closing date is **Friday 11 March** and the winner will be informed in writing. Please ensure you provide full name and address details on your email or postal entries.

We have teamed up with Esporta to offer a great prize competition as well as a free day pass at Esporta Warwickshire for every Warwickshire View reader over the age of 18*.

- The full prize is as follows:
- **1 year’s full membership of the Esporta Warwickshire Health Club**
 - **Personal training plan**
 - **Esporta tracksuit**
 - **Esporta sports bag**

**You need to be 18 or over to enter the competition or make use of the pass. But if you’re under 18 you don’t miss out completely as we’ll be running a new competition in our Spring issue, especially for under 18’s. Members of the WCC Communications Division and their immediate families are ineligible for this competition.*



Here’s what to do:

Simply call **024 7651 4840** to book your free day and bring this completed voucher with you.

FREE pass voucher to Esporta Warwickshire Club.

*Name

Address

Tel.

One voucher per person, for one single visit WCC/Esp. 01.05/V

* By entering this competition you agree that Warwickshire County Council may process your details in accordance with data protection principles. The data supplied will be used by Warwickshire County Council and Esporta only.

what's on

february

- 12** **All that Glitters**
Bedworth Library, 10.30am-12.30pm
- 14** **All that Glitters**
Activity Centre, St John's House Museum, Warwick,
10.30am-12.30pm
- 14** **A Practical Introduction** to the County Record Office
County Record Office, 10.30am-12pm
- 16** **Saxon Splendour**
Market Hall Museum, Warwick, 2pm-4pm
- 16** **Protecting the Past - Evening Talk**
Market Hall Museum, Warwick, 7.30pm-9.30pm
- 29 Jan-20 Feb**
Puzzles and Illusions - Interactive Exhibition
Nuneaton Museum and Art Gallery
10.30am-4.30pm
- 19 Feb-20 March**
Peter Blake Exhibition - 'Alphabet'
Nuneaton Museum and Art Gallery
10.30am-4.30pm
- 22 Feb-22 March***
Computing for Parents -beginners
Oakfield Centre, Oakfield Road, Rugby
Every Tuesday, 9.15am-11.15am
- 22 Feb-18 March***
First Aid for Babies and Young Children
Blue Windmill Nursery, Addison Road, Rugby
Every Friday, 9.15am-11.30am

march

- 9** **India's Malabar Coast - the wildlife and scenery** of Kerala and Goa Evening Talk at the Activity Centre, St John's House Museum, Warwick, 7.30pm-9.30pm
- 12** **Violent Volcanoes**
Market Hall Museum, Warwick, 10am-12pm
Part of National Science Week 11-20 March
- 16** **Finds Identification Day**
Rugby Museum and Art Gallery, 1.30pm-4pm
- 30** **Knights, Knaves and Nobles**
Market Hall Museum, Warwick, 2pm-4pm
- 31** **Creepy Critters**
Market Hall Museum, Warwick, 10am-12pm

*Courses are free, but booking is essential. Please call 01926 736500 to reserve your place.

april

- 1** **Dolly Mixtures**
St John's House Museum, Warwick,
10.30am-12.30pm
- 6** **Dolly Mixtures**
Southam Library
2pm-4pm
- 12** **A Practical Introduction** to the County Record Office
County Record Office, Priory Park, Warwick,
7.30pm-9pm
- 13 April-18 May***
Computing for the over 50's -beginners
Overslade Community Centre, Buchanan Rd, Rugby
Every Wednesday, 9.30am-11.30am
- 14 April-19 May***
Computing for Beginners
Newbold Village Hall, Main Street, Newbold, Rugby
Every Thursday, 10.00am-12 noon & 1.00pm-3.00pm
- 15 April-13 May***
In Step with your Child- Numeracy
Blue Windmill Nursery, Addison Road, Rugby
Every Friday, 9.15am -11.30am

Details of dates and times of Council meetings open to the public can be found at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/council or by calling 01926 410410.

farmers' markets

Warwickshire Farmers' Markets: 9am- 2pm.
Call 01608 664659 for more information.

- 5 & 19 Feb, 5 & 19 March** Stratford upon Avon, Rother Street
- 12 Feb, 12 March** Southam, Market Hill
- 12 Feb, 12 March** Kenilworth, Talisman Square
- 18 Feb, 18 March** Warwick, Market Square
- 26 Feb, 26 March** Leamington Spa, Pump Room Gardens
- 25 Feb, 25 March** Coleshill, Church Hill, 10am start
- 24 Feb, 31 March** Rugby, Clock Tower

Information is correct at time of going to press. Before making your journey, please check that the details have not changed. Some of the events require booking in advance and may incur a small charge. For more information on these events please contact Warwickshire County Council 01926 410410, Nuneaton Art Gallery & Museum 024 7635 0720, Heritage Education (St John's House) 01926 412034, Market Hall Museum 01926 412500, County Record Office 01926 738959, Rugby Museum & Art Gallery 01788 533201.



what your COUNTY COUNCIL does for you

Adult Education & ICT Learning Centres
 Archaeology
 Archives & Records
 Arts
 Births, Marriages & Deaths Registration
 Business Support
 Childcare Information Services
 Community Safety
 Construction
 Consumer & Business Advice
 Country Parks & Recreation
 County Council Property Maintenance
 County Highways
 County Record Office
 Disability Services
 Early Years' Centres
 Ecology
 Economic Development
 Education
 Emergency Planning
 Employment
 Environmental Design
 Farms & Forestry

Fire & Rescue
 Foster Care
 Grants
 Heritage Education
 Homecare
 Libraries
 Museums
 Nature Conservation
 Parents' Centres
 Planning
 Quality & Environmental Support Systems
 Regeneration Projects
 Residential Homes
 Roads, Footpaths & Rights of Way
 Road Safety
 School Meals
 Social Care & Policy
 Trading Standards
 Transport & Local Bus Services
 Tree Work
 Warwickshire Calibration Services
 Waste Management
 Youth Services



contact us

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write View Editor
 Communications Division
 Chief Executive's Department
 Warwickshire County Council
 P.O. Box 9, Shire Hall
 Warwick CV34 4RR

Our normal office hours are **9 - 5.30pm Monday to Thursday & 9 - 5pm on Friday**. However by calling the number on the left you can obtain advice, help or signposting to any of our services from **8am - 8pm weekdays & 9am - 4pm on Saturdays**.

If this information is difficult to understand we can provide it in another format, for example; in Braille, in large print, on audiotape, in another language or by talking with you. Please contact us on 01926 412758.