



Boaters'/Lodgers' Forum

The Forum met on the 29th October and the full notes are available in hard copy in the Office or, if you give the Office your email address they can be sent to you by email. A Forum Headlines note was also left around for people to pick up. Have you read the Notes? Do you have a response to make? If so, tell the Office.

The next meeting of the Forum is on the 17th of December. Want to come? Got something for the Agenda? Tell yourRep or let the Office know.

This is your Forum Your Rep attends for You

- Nigel Hunt** (NB Mary Ann) Finch, Grebe, Heron
- Steve Frost** (WB Donovan) Nuthatch, Owl, Peregrine, Quail
- Nick Adams** (nb Enterprise) Redshank, Sandpiper, Teal
- Richard Tandy** (NB Mystic River) Up-land Goose, Veery, Woodcock, Xantus
- Mike Coates** (NB Aphrodite) Yellow-hammer, Zebra Dove, Avocet, Black-bird, Albatross, Bullfinch
- Ian Cowlshaw** (NB Thomas) Ibis, Jay, Kingfisher, Lapwing, Moorhen
- Martin Stirling** (Beech Lodge and NB Aurora on Zebra Dove) The Lodges

Headlines from 29th October:

- Bar/Bistro/Shops development – latest news
- Residential Moorings – recent developments
- Fire Wardens – call for Volunteers
- Defibrillators now on site and First Aiders trained
- Pontoon and Jetty Washing
- Requirements for any Contractor on Site
- New Recycling Point
- Abandoned Bike Yours? – Use it or Lose it!
- The “Golden Windlass” Award
- Police Community Support Officers base at the Marina
- Christmas Event
- Report from each Rep on things raised by Moorers and Lodgers
- New Speed Bumps
- Paths and Steps
- Lever Action taps for new Elsan

Our thanks to Midland Chandlers for their continued support of the Mercia Mercury . In particular, this month, for printing this extra special Bumper Christmas Issue! Many hundreds of Newsletters go out by email but there is still demand for a hard print copy, so thank you Midland Chandlers!



Policy Community Support Officers

Two Police Community Support Officers are using the Marina as their outlying post. They were based in Melbourne but Robert was asked if the Marina could provide facilities for them so that they could be in the Willington area on a more regular basis. They keep their bikes in one of the storage sheds and use the Facilities' Blocks as needed. Moorers and Lodgers could do a lot to make them feel welcome, so if you see them about how about doing just that!



Defibrillators

The defibrillator training has been done and, when the scheme is fully operational, there will always be a named individual on the Marina (one of three) available to be contacted as a first responder – though this must not take the place of calling the emergency services. A specific phone number will be well publicised and this will go straight to the volunteer on call.

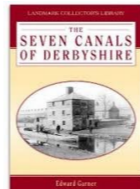
The defibrillators are straightforward and easy to use. But having one of the Marina's trained volunteers in attendance will help. One defibrillator will be available generally in Block 2; the other one will be kept in the Office during the daytime and, at night, be with the volunteer on call. A short note is being prepared which describes the full emergency procedures for this type of medical emergency and for the procedure in the event of fire. This will be given to all moorers and lodgers to be kept for easy and instant reference.

If you would like to be help as a volunteer (First Aid or Fire), talk to the Office.



Did You Know?

A thoroughly enjoyable book by Edward Garner yielding countless fascinating facts and bits of history. **The Seven Canals of Derbyshire** tells the story of “our” canals.



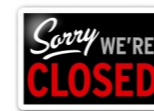
Life on the Canals

What were the canal people like 140 years ago? Where did they come from and what sort of world did they inhabit? A leading social reformer of the time reckoned there were some 116,800 men, women and children living on boats - probably slightly less than 30 years before when the canal traffic and business was at its height. The population may have grown up from the navvies who worked on the canals and some gypsy families but there is no one satisfactory answer with research to back it up. What is certain is that canal people acquired a certain reputation and they were marginalized by society at large. Garner quotes from an editorial published in the Derby Mercury in September 1875: “Do our readers know what sort of being comprise our canal population? It may be taken for granted that they are human, because they can swear and get drunk; two accomplishments which are seldom to be found united in any member of the lower orders of creation. Well then, they are ‘floating gipsies’, a sort of race of human beings apart from the rest of the world. Swearing and drunkenness seem to be their two ruling passions Public houses of the lowest kind are along the sides of the canals. There the men, women and children are to be seen all hours of the day, and by them fighting, ruffianism, and blackguardism of the worst kind are indulged in. Swearing is taught to the children before anything else; for nearly every sentence begins with an oath, and finishes with a blasphemy, and the children can do as much of it as their parents. The boys, as a rule, take up their fathers’ occupation when they grown old enough, and, as the daughters of the boaters grow up, they go to live with other boaters, the marriage-tie being very lightly considered ... manners, they have non; and their customs are beastly.”

!!Leaves you a bit speechless, doesn't it!!



Marina Office



Christmas Closure

From 5.30pm on 23rd December
To 9.00am on 28th December

New Year Closure

From 5.30pm on 29th December
To 9.00am on 2nd January.

Please make sure you sort queries, electricity cards and diesel requirements in plenty of time.



A Packed Christmas Diary!!

Tuesday, 3rd December: Make sure you keep your eyes peeled about 10.00 a.m. for



some white bearded and black booted visitors. Children and adults from Findern Primary will be holding their annual stroll to

Mercia Marina and back to raise money for the school. It won't be hard to miss - just watch out for fifty Santas strolling to the marquee near the Marina Office.

Saturday, 21st December, 7pm: “Oh Come All Ye Faithful” to the Willow Tree Tea Rooms and join your fellow moorers and lodgers for a **Christmas Fuddle***. There will be a bar, music, and probably the odd surprise or two! With the marquee and patio heaters there will be plenty of room and shelter whatever the weather!

Sunday, 22nd December, 3pm: Come and join the choirs from our local group of churches. Enjoy a singalong, with fellow moorers/lodgers, friends and family. Bring a plate of mince pies or sausage rolls to share with our visitors. Spiced wine and soft drink will be served.

***The Fuddle:** You bring the food to make up a buffet - sweet or savoury. Sandwiches or cobs, cheese or pate, crisps, sausage rolls, little sausages, pasta, fruit, cake or mince pies, etc. Please let Lucy know what you'd like to bring.

Best Decorated Boat/Lodge Competition

It's that time of year again... time to deck your hulls with holly and dress up your boats for the Best Decorated Boat or Lodge Competition. To enter all you need do is take a snap of your boat and upload it with the boat's name onto the Marina's Facebook page. The winner will be announced in the week running up to Christmas.



Boardwalk Development



Construction began in November and is due to finish July 2014. A Grand opening planned for September 2014.

The main contractors, designers and structural engineers are all local:

- Davlyn Construction of Derby
- Bi Design of Repton
- SA Consulting of Burton.



Soil will be used to increase bund height in north field to reduce road noise.

The pontoon at the front of The Boardwalk, as well as the visitor pontoon, should remain open through-

out the build.

All marina users are asked to exercise extra caution during the build as heavy equipment is used on site.

The Marina will provide regular updates on the progress and, in time, introduce the businesses that will be joining all of us at Mercia. So far, we have a 2 storey bar bistro forming the centre-piece of the development, a farm shop to one side and a clothing store to the other. All the units will open out onto a raised wooden boardwalk running the length of the building, giving access to the end of the promontory. Each of the local and independent businesses will have its own identity and this will hopefully transcend into the goods and services it produces, each one proving in

its own way why it is a true local independent worthy of your support and custom.

A time-lapse camera overlooking the development has been installed. This will, in the fullness of time, provide the full story of the build.

The Boardwalk Bar and Bistro

Hillary and Scott are the tenants of the Bar and Bistro. There will be opportunities in the new year for the Mercia community to meet Daryl Cockerill (the Managing Director) and Shane Holland (his business partner). They can talk about their plans, listen to ideas and suggestions from the Mercia community and start to build a relationship.

Daryl writes as follows about their partnership with the Marina:

“We think it is a fabulous marina and we wish to deliver a quality bar restaurant in such fabulous surroundings. I know the area very well as I lived in and around Burton for 17 years and worked for Bass and Marstons in the town.

“We are just in the design stage for the site but will be offering something fresh and new without forgetting what it is that customers want, I am hoping to deliver a wow !!

“Hillary & Scott is independently owned by myself and my business partner Shane Holland. We operate a number of sites in and around The East Midlands and love the idea of adding this property to our business.

“The bar bistro itself will be offering excellent, fresh, locally supplied food and a quality liquor range including national and locally brewed real ales. We hope to offer a quality wine list and intend to provide wine tuition for staff and customers. We hope to offer some low key music at the bar and plan to include jazz, folk and perhaps even some classical.”

There will be plenty of time over the coming months for people to ask questions, find out more, raise points on the whole development. If you do wish to talk about anything, the Marina Office door is always open.

A Boardwalk :

A promenade, especially of wooden planks, along a beach or waterfront.



Marina Calendars now on sale



Get your Calendars at £4.25 (cost price) from the Marina Office or Stillwaters. Great photographs taken by Mercia folk through the year. Dean Jameson's October picture is also the cover photograph. Perfect Christmas present for friends and family who wish they could be boating too!!

Josh Fitzsimons joins the Marina

Many people have now met the new Sales and Marketing Co-Ordinator member of the Marina team. Josh's first day was on the 1st of November and his feet haven't touched the ground since! Born and raised in Lichfield of an Irish family, he went to Nottingham Trent to do a degree in English. Rugby and Basketball are his sports and he's no stranger to adventure, having gone travelling for six months in the US and Europe. He has been working in Sales and Marketing for the creative industries and was attracted to the Marina because of its openness to new ideas, the sense of community and the general ethos. Josh had no prior experience with narrowboats but is learning fast!



Bird Walk and Litter Pick Sunday 8th December

The monthly Wetland Bird Survey walk will be at about 9.00 am. It takes about 90 minutes, taking in the Marina by going round the perimeter road and then down into South Field. John and Paul, the WeBS official volunteers, do the counting; we go along to look and learn. Anyone interested is more than welcome to join us. We meet at the Willows. Tell the Office if you'd like to come and you'll get final details.

After the walk, at about 11.00 am, the Volunteer Group will be litter picking on the Towpath. Gloves, bags, picker-uppers etc. all provided. Just turn up dressed for whatever the weather is that morning. The Group is informal and everyone and anyone is welcome to join in. The more the merrier and the more can then get done.

Two good ways to work off the Christmas excess in advance!!

Bonfire Night

The Marina's Bonfire Night was a popular evening with the local community coming to enjoy the fireworks, the BBQ and fun. Some boaters stayed on their boats for the fireworks, creating a fanfare with their horns in appreciation at the end of the show.



Recycling

The Recycling Bins have been moved to a new site at the entrance to the Compound. When they were part of each bin store at the Facilities' Blocks they were not being used properly and the contractors who came to empty them couldn't because of all the inappropriate rubbish. So the decision was made to resite the Recycling Bins but keep the glass bins at each bins store (since these are used properly). It take a little bit more of an effort to recycle now but it was thought that it wouldn't put off those folk who want to recycle and to do it properly. This change was discussed at the Boaters & Lodgers Forum in October and all the Marina Reps were fully supportive of the new deal.



Residential Moorings - An Update

The Marina has applied to South Derbyshire District Council for a maximum of 30% of the Marina moorings to be residential. No final decision has been reached but the negotiations look promising.

This is not a money-making opportunity for the Marina but more (a) a way of offering some facilities as part of a residential mooring; (b) regularising the status of the Marina's moorings and (c) maintaining the Marina's competitive position. Sawley now have approval for 120 fully residential berths.

The Council would levy an overall tax on the Marina and this will be divided amongst the 180 residential berths. The likely uplift for these moorings will be a maximum of £150 which includes council tax. When final agreement has been reached with the Council, full details will be shared with everyone. The Partners intend an implementation of residential moorings to start from September 2014 - the time when mooring contracts need to be renewed. At that point, all moorers will have to complete a short questionnaire to allow a proper classification of each moorer's status - e.g. leisure, short term, winter moorer, residential.

The Marina Office has a list of those who want a residential mooring when/if these become available. The demand will outstrip supply and Robert urges any current moorer interested to get their name down now. Once the new scheme is in place, it has to be properly implemented to ensure mooring fees are fair and an appropriate reflection of useage.

The Golden Windlass Award

The Boaters' and Lodgers' Forum had a discussion in October and agreed on one-way to recognise individuals within Mercia who have done something out of the ordinary to help another member of our community. There have already been a couple or three such occasions of exceptional kindness and the plan is to award a Golden Windlass (not real gold!) to that person. It won't be regular, it won't always be publicised (if the recipient doesn't want it). The Office or your Rep will be happy to receive nominations at any time.



Christmas Quiz

With no Marina Quiz in December, Bruce and Sheila (nb Sanity Again) responded to the Editor's cry for help and have come up with a mini Quiz to keep your brains active! See how many you can get right without resorting to the internet or reference books! Do it with friends or family and see if anybody gets all the answers!!

Christmas General Knowledge

- 1 Which company first put Santa Claus in red in its adverts?
2 "Good King Wenceslas looked out/On the Feast of Stephen" What do we call the Feast of Stephen these days?
3 In the classic children's story, whose father was the first man in the dog house?
4 In which year did New Year's Day come before Christmas Day?
5 Whose consort introduced the Christmas tree to England?



Boaters not Floaters

- 1 What is unusual about Aston and Weston Locks on the Trent and Mersey?
2 What is an uxtter plate?
3 A wide beam boat sets off from Mercia Marina. How far south can it get by staying on the inland waterways?
4 Which tunnel is the longest, deepest and highest on the connected system?
5 If you boat from Bull's Bridge on the Grand Union to the Basingstoke canal, how many navigation fees must you pay (including your current licence)?



Those Classic Christmas Films

- 1 "Major Strasse has been shot." What does Captain Renault say next?
2 Which Hitchcock film begins with the line "Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again"?
3 "If you go, where shall I go, what shall I do?" What was the memorable answer?
4 Sean, George, Roger, Timothy, Daniel. What's the connection?
5 What musical was based on The Story of the Trapp Family Singers?

Cathedrals on the Cut

Name the cathedral city:
1 A city at the end of a canal that carries its name. Here you will find Paddy's Wig-wam.
2 A city at the end of a canal that carries its name. Here you will find a large transport museum and a 20th century cathedral dedicated to reconciliation.
3 A city where the canal that carries its name meets a river navigation. You can moor by the racecourse.
4 A mediaeval city with many half timbered buildings. You can shop in the Rows.
5 The canal terminates in this city in Lochrin Basin. The city is famous for its tattoos and fringes.



Marina Quiz: Lucy says thank you to everyone for coming to the Quiz nights over the year and also to John, Susi and Roy for their help in clearing up afterwards. See you in 2014!

David Bellamy Conservation Award 2013/14

The Marina has been given - for the third year running - a Gold Award for its approach to "all things green" (David Bellamy). This Award is thanks to the commitment and environmental focus of the three Partners, the expertise and devotion of huge amounts of time from David Boddy, the boundless energy and constant care from Stuart - backed up by Pete and Sven, our local experts on Birds and Bats (Michael, Rose and Steve) and - significantly - all the contributions from the Marina volunteers and individuals who



have turned out to help when help was needed. And to Jules for her co-ordination of activities, her own interest and the liaison with Canal & River Trust. Well Done All!!!

Boaters Christmas Fayre Thursday 19th December at 7.30pm

There's a truly wonderful and bespoke boaters' spread waiting for you at The Green Man! Traditional fayre, vegetarian options and a selections of desserts if you still have room. It's just £13 per Adult for two courses (Children under twelve £8.95). Desserts £2.50. Book your place quickly! That night kicks off their "12 Days of Christmas" with Live Entertainment, Open Mics, Festive Quiz, Classical Guitar and New Year celebrations. Every day there will be a Christmas Fayre Lunchtime Special and, on Christmas Day, the big meal itself. Call by and pick up a flyer or check the Facebook Page! Finally they also have a "2 Meals for £9.99" Monday to Friday Special from 12-3pm and 5-6pm. Good value with lots of choice. Please Note: No moorers' discount on the special prices!



The Gambler

Award winning comedian-author-adventurer, Tim FitzHigham recreates a series of bizarre bets from the 18th and 19th centuries. There's a Radio 4 programme being recorded in front of a live audience on Friday, 29 November. In this recording, Tim must shear a sheep at dawn, process the wool, spin it, weave it and tailor it into a jacket to be worn to dinner that same evening using only the means that would have been available to a gentleman in 1811. We can't say more now and you will get to hear the programme in the Spring but there is a very close Mercia Marina connection here! Oooooo - a mystery!!



PAUL HOBSON ...

... gave an outstanding talk on Wildlife Photography in The Willow Tea Room on the 7th of November. He used his portfolio of photographs from this last year. Local photographic society members joined members of the Marina and other friends for a truly captivating evening. The key to his success was not the photography so much as his meticulous planning, enormous patience and preparation.

