



*Two new members have joined the Marina Forum recently. Along with the four other elected Mercians, they meet monthly with the marina management to exchange views, opinions and wishes*



**Jane Crafts** represents the Lodges, Veery, Woodcock, Xantus and Yellowhammer. Jane came to Mercia as a residential boater last year, having been off the water for four years. Before that she was a liveaboard for over fifteen years – first on *Helen Maria* a 43' narrowboat and then on *Me & Mrs Jones* a 70' narrowboat. Her first moorings were in London – St Katharine Docks and Chelsea Harbour before moving to Mapledurham and then to Sawley. Mercia was an easy choice for Jane – local family and – as she says – easily the best marina in the area. She made her mark with us early on as the 2018 Conker Champion – a title she will be defending on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October – and as a member of a Quiz team or two!



**John Lousvet**, the new Forum Rep for Redshank, Sandpiper, Teal and Upland Goose pontoons, has been a resident (with his wife Jo) at Mercia for the last five years. They came first to Peregrine pontoon with a 35' narrowboat *Free Spirit* and then, with the purchase of their 58' *No More Mondays* in 2015, they moved to Redshank. But he has an honourable boating pedigree – back some 45 years to the days when he sailed and raced dinghies (and was an RYA Instructor). Apprenticed as a Commercial Vehicle Mechanic with British Leyland, he always been working in and around engines apart from his 14 years on the front line with the Ambulance Service. John values the Marina's community and wants to encourage the generosity of spirit that he has seen in action in different ways, large and small, in his time here. He believes in the Forum as a place where ideas and issues can be aired and discussed to the benefit of all. He wants moorers to know who he is and that he's happy to be contacted for any reason.

## New faces and new spaces

The past few weeks has seen new faces on the Marina Forum and in the Marina Office; a new home for New and Used Boats, and a brand new, very welcoming reception area and office.



The relocation of New & Used Boats, at the end of the Sales Pontoon, released the space to expand the Marina Office and now features an improved reception area, a larger meeting room office space, and improved postal services. New & Used are now established in their brand new floating wooden office that was swung into position early in September (more of that in the next *Mercury*).

The new face in the Marina Office is Sylvia Mumby who joined the marina after moving back to the area after 21 years in Cornwall and Devon. Her time down there, working in both a garden centre and a holiday letting company, made applying for the job at Mercia an

easy decision even though the very first time she visited the Marina was the day before her interview. She grew up in Etwell and Acresford and since her



return (for family reasons) eleven months ago, has moved twice, and had back surgery before settling in Rolleston-on-Dove. Sylvia works Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday which is perfect for her and fits in well with her commitments. The biggest shock she's had since she started with us was the steepness of the learning curve. Although she lived near a boatyard at one point she knew nothing about boats. And here is a huge population to get to know! But she is thoroughly enjoying the job and, even though she has had no time yet to explore the Marina, is delighted at coming to work in such a great environment. So say 'hi' to Sylvia when you're in the Office and help her to help you by introducing yourself.



## It's going to be Spooktacular

Friday 25 October

Tickets for the Halloween event are now available from the marina office either in person or by phone (for those that are not here very often). The ticket includes hot food, themed music, games and a fancy dress competition. Bring a carved pumpkin and be in with a chance to win ....prizes galore!! Don't forget to choose your food option when you book.....This is looking like being the biggest and best Halloween Party we have had.....

## Could you be a Marina First Aider?



*We are very lucky to have some lovely people on the marina who are happy to give some of their time to be First Aiders for us. The volunteers cover the hours when the office is closed. If you feel encouraged to join us, let the office know and we can arrange a time to have a chat.*

### Yvonne tells us about her experience....

I have been a first aider for about 18 months. I was never worried about becoming a first aider as I was a first aider at work several years ago so had undergone training previously, including use of the defibrillator. The phone has rung around 8 or 9 times while I have been on duty, but only about half of these have been at night or very early morning. If you were to ask why I volunteer as a first aider it is very simple; when I joined the marina I wanted to feel like I was joining a community. That being the case I wanted a way of contributing to that community and this is my way of doing so. It has also helped me make friends within the group and across the marina. People have always been very friendly when I have turned up at their boat. It has also



made for some interesting times on the Boardwalk when the person needing help has been a member of the public out with their family for a meal. I would encourage anyone that is interested to join up. You get free training which could be valuable in many circumstances when out on the canal, it only takes up around four nights a month and the more people we have on the rota the less nights you will need to cover.

## Bonkers for Conkers



The second Annual World Speed Conkers Championship takes place in The Willow Tree on Wednesday 23rd. Current champion Jane Crafts will be back to defend her crown, so if you fancy an evening of madness and mayhem, make a date in your diary. It's a knockout tournament of quick three minute games, where you draw a conker at random from a bag and have three minutes to inflict as much damage as possible on your opponent.



## Streethay People Part II



**Tom Holmes** - the Manager of the Streethay main site - has been at Streethay for nearly eight years – having started

with a couple of days a week during the summer vacation from his Bio-chemistry degree at University. Within a year this had turned into a full-time job – and career. He was in Scotland on Loch Lomond for a time and is a qualified skipper. His eight years at Streethay have given him enormous experience and a broad and invaluable set of qualifications and skills across all aspects of the Boatyard's work. He most enjoys solving/fixing technical problems, loves the variety of the work he does and working outdoors. He is Gas Safe Registered (boat-competent).



**Robin (Rob) Smith** joined Streethay two years ago and, under Tom's supervision, has a wide remit underpinned with a formal

training structure. From a University background in Illustration for Animation, he is now involved in maintenance, welding, woodwork, Gas and Electric work, refitting boats after repair or repainting and general yard work. He and Emma (see below) now both live in Derby; it keeps his motorbike undercover and although they loved the boat they just found they needed more space once there were two of them!



**Emma Middleton** is Office Manager at Streethay looking after administration, recruitment, credit control,

invoicing and other SAGE processes. She grew up in Lincoln, did her Law Degree and was working at the Guildford College of Law in Surrey before relocating work with EMBS IT Recruitment in Derby. She is very pleased with her new role at Streethay and, like Robin, only comes to Mercia once in a while though they both drive past on the way home in the evenings.



## Swans and Bread

### A Statement from the Swan Sanctuary:

As many of you know, there has been a lot of debate about feeding swans and other waterfowl bread. We have always maintained that feeding them bread is fine.

The Mercury recently received this statement from The Queen's Swan Marker, David Barber, MVO, endorsed by Professor Christopher Perrins of the Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology at Oxford University.

"There has been a great deal of press coverage in recent months regarding the 'Ban the Bread' campaign which is confusing many members of the public who like to feed swans.

Supporters of the campaign claim that bread should not be fed to swans on the grounds that it is bad for them. This is not correct. Swans have been fed bread for many hundreds of years without causing any ill effects. While bread may not be the best dietary option for swans compared to their natural food such as river weed, it has become a very important source of energy for them, supplementing their natural diet and helping them to survive the cold winter months when vegetation is very scarce.

There is no good reason not to feed bread to swans, provided it is not

mouldy. Most households have surplus bread and children have always enjoyed feeding swans with their parents. The 'Ban the Bread' campaign is already having a deleterious impact upon the swan population; I am receiving reports of underweight cygnets and adult birds, and a number of swans from large flocks have begun to wander into roads in search of food. This poses the further risk of swans being hit by vehicles. Malnutrition also increases their vulnerability to fatal diseases like avian-flu which has caused the deaths of many mute swans and other waterfowl in the past.

Furthermore, there have been statements made in the media claiming that feeding bread causes angel-wing in swans. Angel-wing is a condition where a cygnet develops a deformed wing. Professor

Christopher Perrins, LVO, FRS of the Department of Zoology at Oxford University stated, 'There is no evidence of a connection between feeding bread and angel-wing; at least some cygnets develop this condition without ever having seen any bread'.

I therefore encourage members of the public to continue feeding swans to help improve their chances of survival, especially through the winter."

We'd like to thank everyone for their support and we hope that this will help these beautiful birds.



## October Calendar

All events are at The Willow Tree Tea Room, starting at 7pm, unless otherwise stated.

Tuesday 1 October  
Music Group

Wednesday 2 October  
Craft Group

Thursday 3 October  
Ukulele Group

Monday 7 October  
Watercolour Group

Tuesday 8 October  
Craft Group

Thursday 10 October  
Ukulele Group

Saturday 12 October  
Boat Maintenance and Handling

Monday 14 October  
Watercolour Group

Tuesday 15 October  
Craft Group

Wednesday 16 October  
Bingo Night

Thursday 17 October  
Ukulele Group

Saturday 19 October  
70s Night

Monday 21 October  
Watercolour Group

Wednesday 23 October  
Speed Conkers Tournament

Thursday 24 October  
Ukulele Group

Friday 25 October  
Halloween Party

Saturday 26 October  
Marina Halloween and Fireworks

Monday 28 October  
Watercolour Group

Tuesday 29 October  
Book Group

Wednesday 30 October  
Marina Quiz

Thursday 31 October  
Ukulele Group

15TH OCTOBER  
7PM TILL LATE

WILLOW TREE TEA ROOMS

# 70's PARTY

LIMITED TICKETS  
AVAILABLE - £2 EACH  
MOORERS & LODGE  
OWNERS ONLY

GET READY TO BOOGIES - THE 70'S ARE BACK

Prize for best costume  
Buffet  
Where are they now  
Dance competitions  
Featuring music by...  
Will & Bing

## GROOVY BABY!

Saturday 19 October

Tickets for the 70's party night are available in the Office. But they are strictly limited so get there quickly if you want to join in the fun.

£2 each, please pay when picking your ticket up. Remember moorers and lodge owners only.

It is a fuddle type buffet, a list of recommended food is also in the office. It is optional so if you are unable to bring any that is fine. Prizes and competitions galore.



Our thanks to  
Midland Chenders  
for their support with this  
newsletter





Francesca Derrick



Andy Parker



Rebecca Westwood

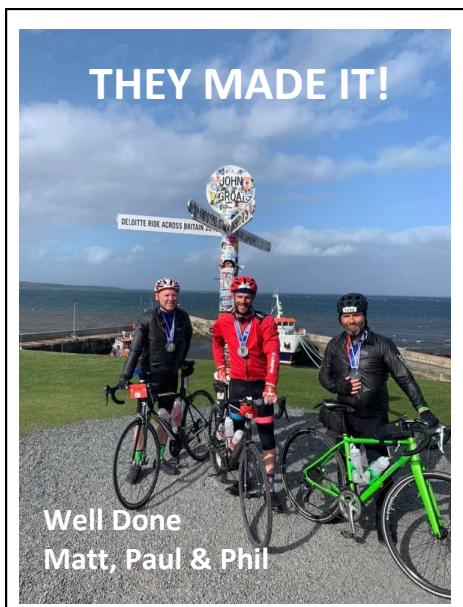
## Photography Winners

Summer in full-swing proved a popular subject for entries in August with winning photographs from Francesca Derrick, Andy Parker and Rebecca Westwood.

All monthly winners receive either a bottle of Prosecco or box of chocolates from the Marina Office.

If you have a photograph of the Marina you think is worthy of entry then let the office have a copy and you might see it on the back page of the *Mercia Mercury* next month.

To enter the monthly competition, send your 'Mercia Marina' photographs to [tony@merciamarina.co.uk](mailto:tony@merciamarina.co.uk)



THEY MADE IT!

Well Done  
Matt, Paul & Phil

## Fallen, but not forgotten

The 12 black nameplates that lined the Boardwalk last November were the inspiration behind the recent visit to the Ypres/Salient region in Belgium for a group of Mercian moorers. Of the twelve men who enlisted from the village and never came back, five fell in the region around Ypres and that is where the group based themselves. "Thanks must go to Nigel and Jane Hunt for all their preparative work in finding out where these lads fell, and where they were commemorated", said Roger Filler, who led the group. "It made the task of visiting them a lot easier." A personal commemorative cross was



laid on each of their resting places – most serving with the Sherwood Foresters, Notts & Derby Regiment.

"It was a moving experience," said Irene Lea, who was one of the party of eight with her husband Peter, Simon & Debs Few, Maisie Trotman, her friend and ex-moorer Doreen Mullen and Roger & Pat Filler.

"When you walk through the rows and rows of crosses, and see the ages of those who fell, many still in their teens, it's pretty overwhelming. It was a privilege to remember these local lads and spend some time with them."

