

The silent killer on your boat

"I would have said I knew it all. I've boated



for years, lived aboard, know all the gas and fire safety requirements. I'm certificated in fire prevention and I've taught it. Yet, here I am (thankfully!), still not fully recovered from a not far off lethal dose of Carbon Monoxide

poisoning four weeks ago. If it could happen to me, it could happen to any of you. Indeed, Pat Filler who moors just along from me came to see me to say she also had a touch of CO poisoning recently after spending the night on the sofa in the salon with the solid fuel stove. If telling my story starts people on the Marina regularly checking and their alarms, ventilation, fire and gas appliances, then some good has come out of it. And spend a bit of time reading the chart of the signs and symptoms – I can tell you, in all seriousness, that's exactly what happens. It was only thanks to very good neighbours and luck that I didn't get into the 'very high levels' section which often ends in death." says Maurice Steeles.

Feeling dizzy

Maurice's CO exposure went on over four days from the day his stove was lit for the first time this Autumn. The CO alarm sounded its warning repeatedly and he felt increasingly ill. But he thought of reasons: he'd emptied the fire ash into the bucket in the salon; the alarm needed cleaning from dust and cobwebs built up during the last months; the batteries might be failing; he needed some breakfast (when he woke feeling dizzy and lightheaded); he was coming down with flu. And everything calmed down because he was off the boat for work or to meet a friend for a meal, so the fire was out and he was in the fresh air. The alarm went back to zero and he put his dizziness down to the flu.

By the second evening he was really poorly so the meal was cancelled and he came back to the boat coughing badly and being sick. The morning of Day Three had the CO alarm reading level 14, so he phoned Sue Hicks who, with the assistance of Dave Pinkney, Mick Johnson and a wheelchair, got him to the doctor. A touch of pneumonia was diagnosed (which Maurice thinks was right) and he was sent home with antibiotics.

"It was only thanks to very good neighbours and luck that I didn't get into the 'very high levels' section that often ends in death".

Maurice came back, cleaned the fire out completely, left it out and used a Dyson heater for warmth that evening. On the morning of Day Four he felt a bit better so lit the fire and settled in for a cosy morning. The CO alarm shrieked its warning shortly after so this time Dave Pinkney came in with his CO alarm and when they'd opened and shut doors and hatches and tested the alarms together and Maurice had googled "CO poisoning", he knew what was happening.

Door problems

Nigel Hunt came to inspect and found that the door of the fire was not shutting completely. The fire bricks had been replaced during the summer and one of

these was wedged and stopping the door catch locking properly. And the rope around the glass confirmed the leak—it was still white at the top but dirty black around the bottom. Needless to say, everything has been sorted and an extra CO alarm purchased – one that has voice warnings (different for smoke and CO) and red/green warning lights. He's recovering too – though still a bit wobbly. Maurice did not ignore what was going on. He looked for causes but the fire was not always lit, the CO alarm was a zero a lot of the time and there was no smell or smoke in the salon.

Take it seriously

Now you've finished reading, go to your alarms (smoke and CO) and test them. Think about where they are. Do you need additional alarms? Do they need replacing? Nigel Hunt is your go-to advisor on the Marina so if you have any doubts on Fire & Safety ask him for help. And if one of your alarms should go off, take it seriously – very seriously. Maurice wants to give his heartfelt thanks to the First Aiders, friends and neighbours for the care, help, support and advice that brought him through this experience. And his thanks, too, to all those who have been to visit, checked on him over the following days and offered assistance of many kinds.

What to watch out for

If you are asleep, you may not notice any symptoms as they develop.

Even if you awake, early symptoms of CO poisoning can easily be mistaken for the flu, food poisoning, a hangover or general tiredness. Here is a list of common symptoms, but not everyone suffering CO poisoning will have all of them.

- Common symptoms include:
- Headache and bad temper
- Feeling sick and dizzy
- Feeling tired and confused
- Stomach pains and being sick

The greater the amount of CO there is in air or the longer you are breathing in CO, the worse your symptoms may get.

Drowsiness, lethargy, extreme tiredness, difficult concentrating

A feeling of general weakness, difficulty in walking or moving.

Loss of balance and sight and memory problems

...and with very high CO levels

- Chest pains
- Increased heart rate
- Difficulty breathing, breathlessness
- Seizures
- Collapse, unconsciousness and death



December Post and Parcels



The Marina has a large residential community and, at this time of year, there is a significant increase in the number of items of post and the number and size of parcels. Although there is now more space in the Office, it will fill up so please could people check for post on a regular basis and collect parcels promptly. Parcels must also be kept a reasonable size (if large items are expected, then delivery will need to be direct to the person or arranged some other way). There is a weight limit of 17Kg for any parcel.

Christmas Fuddle

Saturday 14 December, Willow Tree

This is a ticket-only evening because of limitations on space. It is for moorers and lodge owners only and tickets (first-come, first-served) are available from the Office from the 30 November. The Fuddle is a 'bring and share' meal, so channel your creativity and plan your savoury or sweet contribution! There will be a food list in the Office to keep a check on what people are bringing, so please consult this and sign up for your contribution. But please only bring enough food for two to four people (perhaps combine your contribution with a friend/boating neighbour?); everyone is always hugely generous and there is then far too much food for us all to

consume! And please label your food in terms of vegetarian or meat, dairy-free or gluten-free if it is, nuts or no nuts etc. It's a 'BYO drinks' evening and there will probably be music, raffle and games. But the main aim is to get everyone together to have a good evening with each other. Get those tickets - they'll go quickly!

Santa Paws

Sunday 8 December at mid-day.

Dress your four-legged friend in its best Christmas outfit and join



everyone else for a mass Santa Paws walk around the marina, starting and finishing at the Bandstand from mid-day.

There will be a £1 charge for each dog, all monies going to

local animal charities and you can have your photo taken with your pooch as well for a similar fee.

There will be a prize for the best turned-out dog so start thinking about how your hound can make an impression.

Hub of Hope

Supporting friends and neighbours on the Marina is an important part of the community. That support might involve using the resources, guidance and involvement of outside agencies, particularly when it comes to Mental Health. Sue Hicks, in her profes-



sional work, has a lot of dealings with clients about recognising and supporting people in the workplace with Mental Health issues. One of the things she has found is a great website which can be filtered to the local area offering lots of information and contact details. It might be of help to anyone of us or we can offer it to others. It's called the Hub of Hope. Have a look and maybe jot the URL down - you never know when it might be useful <https://hubofhope.co.uk/>

Update on The Community Hall

Following the discussion on the Community Facebook Page, the Hall lay-



out and facilities have been rethought. The plans are now almost finalised with the builder for the construction of this purpose-designed one-off building. This will begin at the end of January. As a partly modular building, much of the work will be done off site. The external exercise machines will be installed later. To those that complain the facilities are not yet ready despite the charge being in place, the Marina has already spent in excess of the amount raised to date on the inevitable costs of any significant building project.



Our thanks to
Midland Chandelers
for their support with this
newsletter

Christmas & New Year Opening Hours

Marina Office

23 December - 9am - 5.30pm
24 December - 9am-2pm
Closed on
25 & 26 December
27 December - 9am-5.30pm
28 December - 9am-5.30pm
29 December - 9am-5.30pm
30 December - 9am-5.30pm
31 December - 9-2pm
Closed 1 January
2 January - 9-5.30pm

Please sort Electricity
Cards, credit on smart
Cards, pump out and diesel
requirements in plenty of time

Willow Tree
Tea Rooms

24 December - 8am-3pm
Closed 25 December
26 December - 10am-4pm
27 December - 8.30am-4.30pm
28 December - 8.30am-4.30pm
29 December - 8.30am-4.30pm
30 December - 8.30am-4.30pm
31 December - 8.30am-3pm
1 January - 10am-4pm
2 January - Open as normal

Remember to have a BIG
Boater's Breakfast on Christmas
Eve because we won't be open
on Christmas Day!

Still Waters
Shop

24 December - 9am-2pm
25 December - Closed
26 December - Closed
27 December - 9am-5pm
28 December - 9am-5pm
29 December - 9am-5pm
30 December - 9am-5pm
31 December - 9am-2pm
Closed 1 January
2 January - Open as normal
Remember to get your coal,
gas and logs in advance.

The Beetroot
Tree

24 December - 8.30am-3pm
25 December - Closed
26 December - Closed
27 December - 8.30am-4.30pm
28 December - 8.30am-4.30pm
29 December - 8.30am-4.30pm
30 December - 8.30am-4.30pm
31 December - 8.30am-3pm
Closed 1 January
2 January - Open as normal

Midland
Chandelers

24 December - 9am-1pm
25 December - Closed
26 December - Closed
27 December - 10am-4pm
28 December - 10am-4pm
29 December - Closed
30 December - 10am-4pm
31 December - Closed
1 January - Closed
2 January - Open as normal

Christmas Recycling

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas and each year, over six million 'real' UK **Christmas Trees** are bought and discarded.

There are ways of extending their life after twelfth night! Swap the Christmas decorations for bird food and put it where the birds can get to it in safety. How about creating ornaments? Your toolbox and a chunk of decent, fresh wood can be turned into ornaments for next year's tree or furniture! And it can, of course, go for chipping at the local recycling centre (see below).

When it comes to wrapping paper, how about using tissue paper or brown paper. If you are using printed paper the big recycling question is "Does it scrunch?" If it doesn't the chances are its metallised plastic film and not recyclable. And the extras – ribbons, glitter or bows – can't be recycled. So, to be green go brown. Brown paper, brown labels – dare to be different!!

Tinsel and glass baubles can't be recycled. If you're not keeping them for future years, then please wrap these up and throw these away responsibly into your bin. Usually glass can be recycled but glass baubles are typically made with mixed materials and can contaminate the recycling process.

Recycle Runs

We hope to have Recycle Runs this year. Volunteers with cars will take your (clean and sorted) paper, cardboard and Christ-

mas Cards away to the appropriate collection points – charity collections where possible. No glass or tins though – they can go in the normal recycling bins. If you'd like to help, have a car to offer, get in touch through the office.

Food Waste

Postscript from Jude Boynton

I was at the recycling bins on the corner

to put my recyclables in a bin. A very well tied up black rubbish bag was in one of the recycling bins so me being me I took it out to check the contents.

I now have bananas, grapes, onions and cheese and yoghurt that I can use. BUT if I had not gone to the trouble

to check the contents then the perishables would have rotted and Veolia (our recycling company) would have had every right to "kick up a stink".

If those perishables had been put on one of the upcycling tables in the Facilities' Block then at least someone else could have used them so PLEASE think about how best to deal with your waste.

Be safe and seen

The morning and early evenings are dark so please drive slowly around the Marina. Other vehicles, dog walkers,



cyclists and pedestrians are on the move and with the new poles protecting the grass verges, you need to be ready to stop in one of the many wider 'passing' areas. It's easy to

be taken unawares with people or pets suddenly looming up through the gloom. And for those walking, cycling or with their dogs, equip yourselves with good reflective gear: body straps, jackets and coats for you; jackets, collars or leg bracelets for your dogs. There is a huge range of good products on the market and most of them are just a few pounds.

Whopping, Great, Huge, Ginormous Xmas Quiz Night Extravaganza

Friday 27 December,
Willow Tree

To finish off the Quiz Season for 2019 we will be holding this special event



over the festive season. So dig out your best Christmas Jumper and hat,

grab some crackers and mulled wine and join us to see who knows the most about what makes this time of year so special around the world.

Look out on the Mercia Community Facebook page for more information, for this promises to be a definite date for your diary.

For comment and contributions,
please contact
Jo on 07973 711431 or at
jojames46@gmail.com

December Calendar

Watercolour Group

Monday 2 December
Monday 9 December
Monday 16 December

Music Group

Tuesday 3 December
(Everyone welcome)

Craft Club

Wednesday 4 December
Tuesday 10 December
Tuesday 17 December

Book Club (at Rose Lodge)

Tuesday 17 December

Choir Practice

Wednesday 4 December
Tuesday 10 December

Ukulele Group

Thursday 5 December
Thursday 12 December
Thursday 19 December



OTHER EVENTS

Saturday 7 December
Wynne On Wine

Saturday 17 December
Christmas Fuddle

Sunday 18 December

Santa Paws walk

Starting at The Bandstand at mid-day

Wednesday 18 December

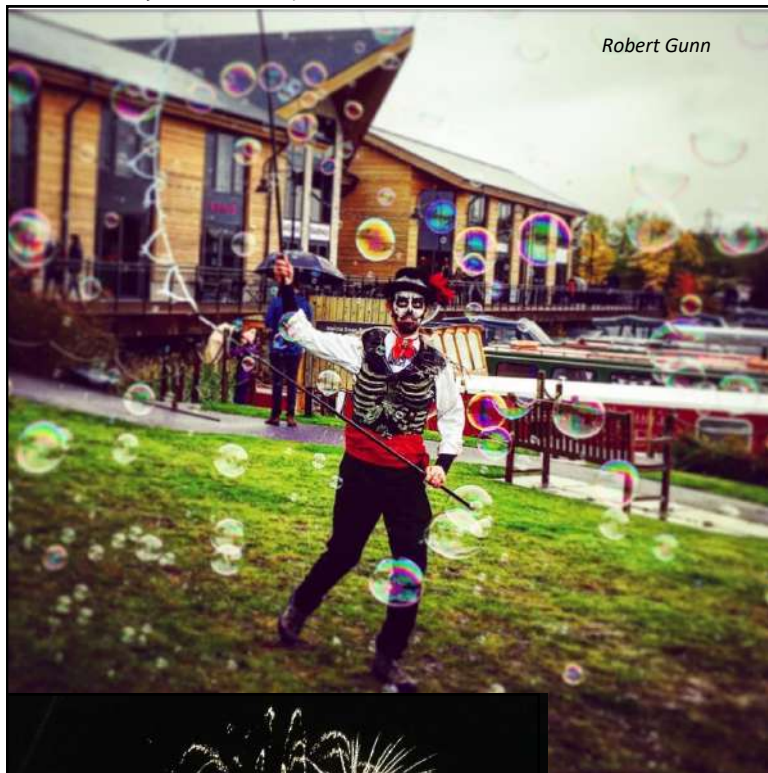
Bingo

Friday 27 December

Whopping, Great, Huge, Ginormous, Christmas Quiz Night



Most events start at 7pm and are either in The Willow Tree Tea Rooms or Marina Office.



Robert Gunn



Sheila Napier



Thea Ellis

October Photography Winners

Autumnal scenes featured in many of last month's entries and the three winners were Robert Gunn, Sheila Napier and Thea Ellis.

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 send a copy to tony@merciamarina.co.uk and you might see it on the back page of the *Mercury* next month.

MERCIA MARINA
SHOP • EAT • STAY • EXPLORE • EXPERIENCE

Christmas Shows

Sunday Dec 1 Darley Dance Christmas show Noon to 3pm
 Sunday Dec 1 Four Churches choir 3pm
 Saturday Dec 7 Kato & Jo 1pm to 4pm
 Sunday Dec 8 Saxophonix 1pm to 3.30pm
 Saturday Dec 14 The Panda Suspects 1pm to 4pm
 Sunday Dec 22 Clarismatic 1pm to 3.30pm

Mercia Marina Findern Lane Willington Derbyshire DE65 6DW

MERCIA MARINA
SHOP • EAT • STAY • EXPLORE • EXPERIENCE

SANTA'S FLOATING GROTTO

Nov 30th - Dec 1st, 7th - 8th, 14th - 15th, 21st - 22nd
 Aboard the Mercia Swan
 2019

Children £7
 Parents and Guardians £1
 11am - 4pm

VISIT SANTA, ENJOY A SHORT CRUISE & A PRESENT

No pre-booking required
 Please turn up on any of the available days
 Price includes a present and a short trip around the marina.**
 ** Subject to weather conditions