



Would you like to set up a group or an activity that could take place in The Willow Tree Tea Rooms on a Wednesday evening? Or would you be interested in taking part?

Mercia Marina already has a very successful monthly quiz night but in response to several moorers asking for other Wednesday night social events a new committee has been set up. Louise Davies, Sue Hicks & Sue Eales have been asked to arrange evenings where we can

all get together and learn something new, enjoy a particular hobby or just gather for a social evening.

Suggestions so far have been for a craft evening, a games night (cards, dominoes etc.), a musical evening where moorers who play instruments or who want to learn can get together, computer & iPad training, cookery night... The list goes on. Some of these will be a regular monthly feature and others will happen a few times a year.

We would like your ideas and views on what kind of events you would like to see and whether you would be interested in helping to arrange these evenings.

Please contact [merciaevents@hotmail.com](mailto:merciaevents@hotmail.com) with any questions or suggestions you have. We would also like to have a few more Event Committee Members so if you would like to join us please let us know.

The Marina hosts an increasing number of events through the year and you will have



noticed that the numbers attending are also increasing. That has a knock-on effect on the Marina staff whose workload then increases. Volunteers can do a lot - help with car parking, do an early morning litter pick, act as guides where needed, help with Charity collections, help with

the stall for the Lodges, etc.

We would like to have a group of people who would be happy to offer some time to help during these events, even an hour can be very useful. If you would like to join the Volunteers group please either pop into the office or email [merciavolunteers@hotmail.com](mailto:merciavolunteers@hotmail.com) with your contact details.

## Wildlife @ The Marina

The Wildlife Committee met on Monday, November 24th to pull together all the events and activity from the year to go into David Boddy's Annual Report. And to make plans for 2015 - such as adding another wildflower meadow, planting more fruit trees, filling the zig-zag bank with bulbs.

Through the year the bird and butterfly surveys have continued, with nestlings ringed and the WeBS monthly count of wetland birds now having run for over two years. In amongst all the building work and increased busy-ness of the Marina, it was very good news to hear we'd been given - for the third year running - a Gold David Bellamy Conservation Award. All this work and its successes are down to the enormous contribution from David Boddy, Stewart, Sven and Pete and volunteers around the Marina. Thank you all very much for creating such a delightful place for the wildlife and for the humans to enjoy too!



## THANKYOU TO KATH & Co

Huge thanks are due to Kath and Co who do such an amazing job across the whole Marina. We all benefit daily and are very aware of your hard work whatever the weather but don't always remember, or aren't around, to say thanks.

There will be no Mercia Mercury in January - this issue is covering two months and I'm on holiday!



## Christmas & New Year Closures

### Marina Office

23rd December - open till 5.30 p.m.

**Closed on 24th, 25th, 26th December**

27th December - 9.00 a.m. till 5.30 p.m.

28th December - 10.00 a.m. till 4.30 p.m.

**Closed on 29th, 30th, 31st December**

**Closed on 1st January**

2nd January - open as normal

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

### Willow Tea Rooms

24th December - open till 3.00 p.m.

**Closed on 25th December**

26th December - 10.00 a.m. till 4.00 p.m.

Normal hours 27th - 30th December

31st December - 8.30 p.m. till 3.00 p.m.

1st January - 10 a.m. till 4.00 p.m.

2nd January - open as normal

**Closed to finish the refurbishment**

**Monday 12th - Friday 16th January**

### Still Waters Shop

24th December - 9 till 2 p.m.

**Closed on 25th December**

**Closed on 26th December -**

27th December - 9 - 5.30 p.m.

28th December - 9 - 5.00 p.m.

29th December - 9 - 5.30 p.m.

30th December - 9 - 5.30 p.m.

31st December - 9 - 4.00 p.m.

1st January - 10 - 2.00 p.m.

2nd January - open from 9 a.m. as normal

There will be no coal, gas or logs deliveries during this period so would people please get their deliveries organised early, or make arrangements with someone who could collect for them.



## Best Decorated Boat/Lodge Competition

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



Thank you Midland Chandelers for your constant support for the Newsletter. Although more is going on and more copies are needed, Kerry sorts the printing and despatch of copies on the van heading to Willington with great efficiency and good humour!!

**The Chandlery will be closed: Sunday 21 December and on the 25/26/27/28 December and on the 1 January 2015. Check with the Chandlery for more details.**



## Christmas Dates for the Diary!

**Saturday/Sunday 29th and 30th November: Christmas Market** on The Boardwalk. Festive

Stalls, Santa's Grotto on the Trip Boat, Frozen-themed area for the kids and face-painting, mulled wine and mince pies. All the shops will be open. 10 till 4 each day. Free entry and parking.

**Sunday, 30th November 3pm: Community**

**Carols** by the Bandstand on the Boardwalk. Four local churches, All Saints Findern, St Michael's Willington, the Methodist Chapel Findern and the Baptist Chapel Willington. With The Revd. Sue Starkey. Carol sheets to share; so come and join in.

**Wednesday 17th December: Christmas Quiz**

at The Willow Tea Rooms. Get your teams booked in at the Office. If you don't have a team, the Office will join you up with others. The Quiz evenings are very popular and spaces fill quickly so don't delay in getting your name down!!

**Saturday, 20th December, 7pm:** Join fellow moorers and lodgers at The Willow Tea

Rooms **Christmas Fuddle**. Marquee and patio heaters means plenty of room and shelter whatever the weather! Cash bar. Call in at the Office and write down what you will bring to this "bring and share" evening (this will help ensure a good spread of food - savoury and sweet).



**Thursday, 25th December, 12 noon: Christmas Day Lunch** at The Boardwalk Bar and Dining. Single Sitting starting with a champagne reception at 12 noon. Seven courses, £65 per head (excluding drink). Bookings now being taken.

**Wednesday, 31st December: New Year Party** at The Boardwalk Bar and Dining. Tickets (at the Boardwalk) £18 for a welcome glass of champagne, hot buffet, balloons and a bit of a bop. £8 if you'd like the champagne and the bop but will skip the food. 7.00 pm start, food at 7.30pm, music and bopping from 9pm till 1am. Tickets on sale from Tuesday or Wednesday. Expected to be a sell-out so don't delay if you'd like to be there.





Pumpkin Carving Winner

Many congratulations to Jack Burnage for a wonderful and inspired winning carving - a rather alarmed looking little pumpkin inside a big devil-carved pumpkin! There were a lot of beautifully carved pumpkins on view in the Office - but the unseasonably warm weather meant they didn't have long to show off.



A True Bonfire Night!

It was a lovely evening and much enjoyed by all. A few sparklers, a big bonfire (thanks Stewart) and a lot of laughter and conversation! Everyone votes for same again next year.



2015Calendars now on sale



You can get your Calendars at £4.25 (cost price) from Stillwaters or the Marina Office. With photographs taken by moorers showing the Marina in all its glory, it's an ideal present for friends and family. It's the same long, thin narrow Calendar as last year - so the perfect shape for a boat!

The Golden Windlass Awards

The November Boaters and Lodge Owners Forum were happy to agree to two new nominations for Golden Windlass Awards.



The Awards were made to Nigel Hunt and Jo James for their significant contributions to the Marina community in many different ways and additionally, in Nigel's case, for a recent occasion which called on his First Aid role. The boater had written to Robert Neff with his thanks from the family and commending Nigel's help and support.

The Tillerettes

The purpose of the Marina project is to offer support and coaching to any woman who may not have done a lot of boating. A small group of women in the Marina who have done a lot of boating are only too happy to give their time and experience to help. The first general meeting took place on the 20th of October and there was a good attendance. It was an open meeting, as they all are, so a number of 'other halves' joined in. Following that meeting, the pairing up has started and there have been a couple of excursions organised! The next meeting entitled "Know Know Know Your Boat" took place on Tuesday 25th of November. Sue Winning recounts her trip to Shobnall with Maisie Trotman:



"We came to boating later in life than most, but it had been a dream for 5yrs. Both of us did a Helmsmans Course in 2011, prior to having our first holiday. This has proved useful as we now know more than we thought we did after listening to other boaters.

When I saw the Tillerettes advertised I jumped at the chance to put my name down as a refresher. We bought our boat Breakaway (50' cruiser stern) from New and Used 16mths ago, and the furthest we have been in her is Fradley Junction so far. As I have only just retired we hope to continually cruise a little further afield and will be leaving the marina at the end of November. My hubby Charlie doesn't mind me steering, but so far I only steer when nothing else is around. I get a bit panicky when confronted with obstacles and traffic. I have never taken her into a lock, and never taken her out of her berth in the Marina.



Maisie Trotman contacted me and offered her experience on a trip to Shobnall. The weather was forecast dry for the day (needless to say it rained most of the journey).

Under Maisie's guidance I reversed out of the berth (in wind) and managed to get her out on the cut without bashing her. We then set off on our cruise. My hubby was assigned to dog sitting (Chip, Maisie's Jack Russell), and making tea and coffee, which he did admirably. He stayed in the saloon all the time and was very well behaved. Maisie's first question to me was "does your husband worry about you bashing the sides of the boat". Well he has done it a few times himself, so he can't really complain.

It was a pleasant cruise. At one point we had a weaving, speeding Henry V coming towards us (it was a wonder the moored boats kept on their moorings). At Shobnall again under Maisie's guidance I took Breakaway into the lock and even managed to pick up my tea making crew. I was very

proud of myself.

We stopped for lunch and after a short break travelled back again. We even saw 3 kingfishers on our return journey.

We just got back before dark. All was going well in my effort to get her back on her berth, when we had a slight mishap. My hubby suddenly disappeared off the end of the finger jetty. As he had alighted to help moor he slipped (very slippery from the rain), and luckily after I put the engine in neutral quickly he pushed the boat away from his leg and so averted being squashed. Only 1 leg got wet luckily, and apart from bruises no harm done. Needless to say he scrubbed the finger jetty the next day. I hope to do some manoeuvring practice soon, then I feel I just have to get more practice instead of letting my hubby do it all the time. What would I do if he couldn't do it?

I am very grateful to Maisie for her time and patience, and I think both hubby and myself learned a lot from her.

Sue Winning  
NB Breakaway "

Boaters'/Lodgers' Forum

Headlines from 18th November:

Both Richard Tandy and Keith Tonge resigned as Reps - we thank them for all their time and commitment. R Pontoon is now with Tony Wilkinson and the new elected Rep for V, W and X is Bob Drummond. Notes from the last meeting (available in the Office or by email) include news of:

- ♦ The Boardwalk and Businesses
- ♦ Marina Entrance and Signage
- ♦ New CCTV cameras
- ♦ Volunteering Opportunities
- ♦ Events
- ♦ Issues and Suggestions from moorers

This is your Forum  
Your Rep attends for You

**Nigel Hunt** (NB Mary Ann) Finch, Grebe, Heron

**Ian Cowlshaw** (WB Popsey Bell) Ibis, Jay, Kingfisher, Lapwing, Moorhen

**Tony Wilkinson** (NB Cheers) Nuthatch, Owl, Peregrine, Quail, Redshank

**Terry Evans** (NB Gentle Gypsy) Sandpiper, Teal, Upland Goose

**Bob Drummond** (NB Mrs D) Veery, Woodcock, Xantus

**Mike Coates** (NB Aphrodite) Yellowhammer, Zebra Dove, Avocet, Blackbird, Albacross, Bullfinch

**Bev Wilcockson** (Fir Tree Lodge and NB Esmee) The Lodges



ZING  
Furniture

Zing opened for business on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup>

November with two floors of treasure to delight the eye and any home! And with a 10% discount for Mercia Clubcard holders - or 15% if you have a special Zing leaflet - this is the time to go shopping! Pauline Gill moved Zing from its previous home in Shardlow but her own commercial roots are far more wide-ranging. After an early stint at Debenhams and the Co-Op, she was one of the earliest franchisees to work with Tie Rack. Her success with them and her obvious talent had Roy Bishko (Tie Rack's founder) taking her under his wing and helping her build her own business. From establishing Tie Rack at Merry Hill (that mecca for all boaters cruising towards Birmingham and in need of a serious retail therapy fix with safe mooring right alongside!), including the introduction of those little mobile covered 'cart' stalls, Pauling opened The Pine Factory in the Old Post Office at Sawley.

With that business closing and more adventures along the way, Pauline realised her passion was for interiors and furniture so, finding the premises in Shardlow (the warehouse housing a million spiders and their webs!), she founded Zing. Her partner, Geoffrey Wallis, is a furniture maker par excellence and Geoffrey's daughter, Emma, is Zing's Manager. Zing has gone from strength to strength and it just needed the perfect home - rural, among other independent businesses, an attractive environment, easy to get to, good parking .... Pauline took one look at Mercia's Boardwalk and the decision to move to made!



Zing is an Aladdin's cave of gifts and home interiors. Pauline does the buying, choosing things you won't find on the High Street and is careful on price. There are gorgeous top-end pieces and many many lovely gifts at all price levels and for every age group. The stock constantly changes so repeat visits are useful and necessary. Geoff is wonderfully talented and is busy with a big order book but if you know what you want and can wait, the result will certainly be amazing!

**Zing will be CLOSED Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.**

MARINA CHRISTMAS CARDS

Darren Amphlett, Cartoonist and recent moorer at Mercia has been commissioned to produce some Mercia Christmas Cards. They're in the Office now!!



Boaters' Bring and Buy  
@ The Christmas Market

Sue Eales (nb Joe) will have a stall at the Christmas Market to raise money for our



local Air Ambulance. £500 was raised at the Opening Weekend in October so she aims to do even better this time! On offer will be a raffle with some great prizes and lots of good quality items with boaters in mind. If you have things to donate now, tell the Office, pop by Sue's boat on X Pontoon or see Pete (when he's around the Trip Boat with Steve). Useful things, decorative things, pretty and 'must have' things all welcome - but clean and in good condition please.

Willow Tea Room Quiz  
21 January 2015

With no Newsletter for January, this is your advance notice of the January team quiz. You can get your names down now, get joined up with another team if you don't have one. But do remember to tell the Office would want to join in - it's always booked up so the sooner the better!



Farm Shop Christmas and New Year



Christmas Day and Boxing Day: **CLOSED**  
New Year's Day: **CLOSED**

Christmas Eve open from 7am to 2pm. New Year's Eve will be Sunday hours. Other than that, normal hours



Having lived in Findern many years ago and now living just over the other side of the A50, Steve Robinson is delighted to be back close to his home patch with his three Boardwalk businesses. A background in Design, Graphics and Fashion led to a career in Property Development. But his interest was always in Fashion and he and his wife, Rachel, opened their first Blue Water in Burton nearly ten years ago, its immediate success leading to further stores at Barton Marina, Derby Cathedral Quarter and Belper. The womenswear boutique offers affordable quality designer labels and one-offs, filling a gap in the market between chain stores and expensive designer products. This 'theme' has carried on as Steve and Rachel founded other stores - Start & Tremayne with designer leather goods and luggage in both Burton and Barton Marina, Sophia's at Belper and Barton Marina and George Fox Men's Outfitters in Belper. The two new stores at the Boardwalk, to complement Blue Water, are Molly & Co and Annie & George.



Molly & Co has a wonderful collection of accessories and a great selection of designer leather goods and luggage. Annie & George is full of gorgeous childrenswear and gifts.\* Shoppers will find Laura Managing Blue Water, Diana as the Supervisor in Molly & Co and Chloe as the Manager in Annie and George. But you'll probably see Steve and Rachel too - they're never far away, despite the growing portfolio of businesses to look after. They are an extraordinarily creative partnership and The Boardwalk is fortunate indeed to have them. Together the three stores make for superb browsing and buying - there will be something for each member of the family in one of the stores and everything is open and ready for Christmas shopping!  
**The three stores will be CLOSED Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.**