

## PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION



Congratulations to Graham Roper for taking the photograph won the January competition. Submit your photographs to [lucy@merciamarina.co.uk](mailto:lucy@merciamarina.co.uk) if you would like them entered in the Marina's monthly competition – open to everyone.

## EVENTS



All events are in the Willow Tree Tea Rooms and start at 7pm. Please note that there is no bar running for any event and so take your own drinks.

**Wednesday, 2 March**

**Craft Night**

**Thursday 3, 10, 17, 24 March**

**Watercolour Painting**

**Wednesday, 9 March**

**Bingo**

**Saturday, 12 March**

**Rope Care, Knots and Splicing**

**Monday, 14 March**

**Music Night**

**Wednesday, 16 March**

**Quiz Night**

**Wednesday 23 March**

**Beetle Drive**

**Tuesday, 29 March**

**Book Club**

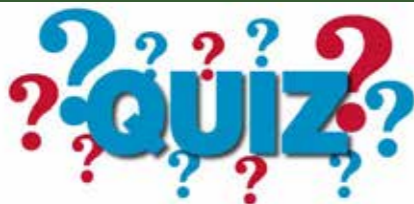
**Wednesday 30 March**

**Writers' Club**

Further details are on the Marina Community Facebook page. Or, if you don't do Facebook, ask in the Office.



## MARINA QUIZ



Next Quiz is on Wednesday, 16th March. Questions are being set by Lucy and Jules. Future quizzes will be set by volunteers, so if you would like to do this, please let Lucy or Jules know. They would be very glad to hear from you.

## EASTER EVENTS



**Treasure Trail** – One trail for children, another for adults. Collect the information from the Marina Office (£1 per entry) and solve the clues or directions to follow the Treasure Trail. There are questions to be answered along the way and all those successfully completing the course will be awarded a small prize and entered into the draw for the main prize at the end of the weekend. The Trail will be running throughout the Easter Holidays and the children's trail will be a permanent feature.



**Food and Craft Market** – There will be a Food and Craft Market around the bandstand on Sunday March 27th. With new operators, we hope to have a good season of busy and bustling market stalls so come on Easter Sunday and see for yourself.

**Trip Boat** – The Mercia Swan will be running trips to Stenson and Willington throughout the Easter weekend. Book in advance to be sure of your places (see separate item on the Mercia Swan for contact and booking information).



## ANY QUESTIONS?



Live from Central United Reformed Church in Derby, Friday 1st April 2016. See posters in office and Still Waters on how to apply for a free ticket.

# Mercia MERCURY

March 2016 Issue:85



[www.merciamarina.co.uk](http://www.merciamarina.co.uk)

## MARINA UPDATE

**Elsan** The new Elsan near the dry dock will be finished and open for business (!) by the end of the month. Its design is similar to the other Elsan but this is a single drop with the other side of the cabin being used for storage.



**Storage Sheds** In early summer, there will be 18 new storage sheds built alongside the dry dock. There is a waiting list of people for these sheds, so they are likely to be already allocated. But sheds do change hands as people leave the marina or their needs change, so if you are interested in one, you could always add your name to the waiting list.

**Red Sticks:** There has been some interest in the little red sticks on the Findern Lane verges by the Marina. These were placed as part of an official survey being done to regularise the boundary between the Marina's land and that owned by the Council.

**Security Guards:** The area near Egret Pontoon and near the Bandstand have been being used by evening visitors parking up in their cars. Whilst they are not causing trouble, they do sometimes

leave their headlights on and play music which is disturbing moorers. The Marina has therefore employed a Derby-based security company to undertake mobile patrols through the evening, telling those in the cars that they are on private property and asking them to move on. This is intended to be a long-term arrangement.

**Footpath:** The footpath to Potlocks Bridge is being improved by Pete, Stewart and Sven and, if the conversations with Sustrans and CRT progress well, the footpath from Potlocks Bridge to Willington may also be improved. But



more of that at a later date!

**New Development:** i) Plans for the development in the North Field are on view in the Marina Office. They have been drawn up to respond to the communities' needs and primarily include more parking, long-term parking, a sports' area, and a single-storey building with flexible space to allow for gym, leisure and social activities. Assuming planning permission is given, there is no particular timescale decided upon but the work will probably be done within the next five years.

ii) Plans for the 32 new Lodges are also on view in the Marina Office. These have been drawn up because the current group are now, with a couple of exceptions, all sold. The new development will take up one half of the Compound Field and one fifth of the Middle (Dog) Field. The Lodges will again be built by Pinelog, of either New England or Nordic design. As before, they will only be built as they are ordered so, despite a number of early enquiries and expressions of interest, it is expected that this development will grow slowly over a number of years.



Our thanks to Midland Changers for their support for the Newsletter.

## BLACK SWAN



Photo: Bruce Napier

We have had an unusual visitor in the Marina over the last few weeks. Most of us have seen the black swan and most know that these are not native birds so our girl (we reckon it's probably female) will have come from some breeding centre or known group. A couple of black swans live at Colwick, there is often one at Holme Pierrepont (but it's not this one) and Attenborough Nature Reserve recorded one last October. Willington Gravel Pits has a record of one on the 19th of January this year - maybe this one has decided to move in with us. JCB have some three pairs on their lakes at Rocester but theirs are all ringed and our swan has no ring.

## MIDLAND CHANDLERS' CHANGES

Midland Changers' Changes: Ian Burnage has been appointed Manager at Midland Changers store at Braunston. Ian and Lisa will be moving their boat down there but not for a couple of months yet so plenty of time to bid your farewells. We'll be sorry to see them go, as will Justin at Aquanarrowboats where Ian has worked for the last five years. Brian Carter (Manager at the Mercia store) retires at the end of March and Matt Willets takes over as Manager. Brian has become a familiar face and friend to many of us and Matt is equally well-known and has nine years' experience at Midland Changers and is a Marina resident. As Darren Cook (General Manager) says "I'm sure you will [all] join me in wishing them all well on their chosen paths". We do indeed.

## FIRE AWARENESS & FIRST AID



There was a truly excellent evening in The Willow Tree Tea Rooms on Monday 15 February. Nigel and Terry gave their time and expertise to take everyone through a number of (what should be) basic regular safety checks and what to do if things go wrong either with you or a neighbour. Everyone on the Marina should attend this presentation – liveaboard or leisure boater. Here's a couple of questions for you:

*When did you last check your fire extinguishers?*

*Is your CO detector in the right place?*

*What is the procedure to follow if there is an emergency at the Marina?*

*What is the role of the Marina First Aiders and who are they?*

*What information should you give the emergency services if you are calling them out?*

*How can you best help your neighbour if they have a fire or first aid emergency?*



It really IS important that you have all this information in your head or close to hand and that you refresh your knowledge on an annual basis.

The Marina has a team of volunteer Fire Wardens and a team of volunteer First Aiders. Full training and support are given. If you would like to join one of the teams, talk to the Office.

Little cards for what to do in case of an emergency are being prepared by the Marina and these will come to every boat.

## Calling the Emergency Services

Write your information down then it's to hand for you or anyone else if needed. When calling the emergency services, keep it short and to the point. Give your name and address as if you were in a house, for example:

**My name is** xxxxxxxx  
**My address is** xxxxxxxx  
 (name of boat, pontoon and jetty number or lodge name)  
**Mercia Marina**  
**Findern Lane**  
**Willington, Derby**  
**DE65 6DW**

**My telephone number is** xxxxxx

After your call to the emergency service, call the Marina Emergency number 07831 126796.

If you would like to attend another presentation, please let the Office know and you will be given details of the next date. Or, if Nigel or Terry can give you any advice (Fire Awareness, First Aid, CO and Fire Alarms) in the meantime, they would be very happy to do so. Please get in touch with them via the Office (not via the First Aid number unless it's an emergency).



Symptoms of CO poisoning

## BEES



A small team of volunteers, lead by Jane and Neil Wakeham, has been carrying out discrete and limited planting in some Marina areas to help support the bee and butterfly populations. This planting will supplement our wild flower meadows and the butterfly drift. Bees are in decline, as most people know, both through loss of habitat and from a virus, so it's good to do what we can to help. There will be a couple of Bee Awareness days later in the year, so watch this space!

## SONG-BIRD FEEDING

Spring is just around the corner (fingers crossed!), so the birds are beginning to have plenty of 'natural' food available. But providing supplementary food helps at a very active time – breeding, nesting, raising young - and it's fun to see them close at hand and practice photography skills!



### Bird cake and fat balls/blocks

Fat balls and other fat-based food bars are excellent, particularly as winter food. If they are sold in nylon mesh bags, always take them out of the bag. All the birds will feed on fat blocks and a crowd of Long-Tailed Tits clustered round a block, chattering happily is one of nature's prettiest sights!

### Peanuts

These are rich in fat and are popular with tits, greenfinches, house sparrows, nuthatches, great spotted woodpeckers and siskins. Crushed or grated nuts attract robins, dunnocks and even wrens. Nuthatches and coal tits may hoard peanuts. Whole nuts need to be in a mesh feeders at this time of the year to ensure food taken to the chicks is in tiny bits.

### Bird seed mixtures

There are different mixes for feeders and for birdtables and ground feeding. I find that if there are sunflower seeds and fat blocks on offer in other feeders, the mixed gets ignored. But throw it down on the ground and the chaffinches, robin, blackbirds, dunnocks and other ground feeders are delighted!

### Black sunflower seeds

These are an excellent year-round food. The oil content is higher in black than striped ones. We have a Marsh Tit and Greenfinches that come almost exclusively for sunflower seeds but Nuthatches, Great, Blue and Coat Tits are more than happy to add them to their diet!



### Nyjer seeds

Goldfinches just love Nyjer seeds and once they've learned where there is a supply, you can have half a dozen either feeding or waiting their turn. Because the seeds are so tiny, it also takes a while for a feeder to be emptied – unlike sunflower seeds which can disappear in a day!

### Water

Do put out a shallow dish of fresh water (renewing it regularly and cleaning the container). The small song birds visit it constantly all through the year as water is not naturally present in their diet.

### Hygiene

It is important to keep your feeders clean and make sure bits and pieces aren't accumulating on the ground underneath. Mouldy or stale food is obviously not good for the birds, it provides a breeding ground for parasites and bacteria and you may find you're attracting rats. Personal hygiene is also important. Clean feeders under an outside tap (clearing up any mess afterwards) and make sure you've washed your own hands when you're done.

### Finally ... Squirrels!!

We have four and they are right nuisance! Unless food is in squirrel-proof double mesh cages or you've rigged a long wire with other wires hanging off it, they will almost certainly get to and eat your bird food! But if you can keep them off the bird feeders, they will forage around on the ground quite happily.



## THE MERCIA SWAN

On Good Friday, or a little before, the Marina's revamped Trip Boat "The Mercia Swan" will take to the water in its new plumage. Joint skippers Paul Hughes and Steve Brazier will be running the same two popular Willington and Stenson trips and taking bookings for private parties – birthdays, club outings, team development sessions, Prom trips, anniversaries etc. Have a look at the new website [www.merciaswan.co.uk](http://www.merciaswan.co.uk) and keep your eyes open for the new leaflets. If you have a specific question or suggestion or enquiry, call Paul on 07398821650 or email [merciaswan@hotmail.com](mailto:merciaswan@hotmail.com). Bookings can also be made at the Still Waters Shop. Word of the relaunch is already out and bookings have been taken for March, April and May so if you are thinking about celebrating a special occasion in a different and delightful way, get in touch!



Paul and Steve both have perfect backgrounds for this new phase in their lives. Paul worked at a senior level in the motor industry and, before that, in accounting and finance and is thoroughly used to project planning and dealing with people. Steve is a joiner and worked in the building trade and has considerable craft skills which have been put to good use in the boat refit. Both of them know engines and boat design and fit out and both have lived on their widebeams at the Marina for the last few years. Both hold the Inland Helmsman Certification and both are First Aid trained.

The Mercia Swan has undergone a major refit; the engine, gearbox, fuel lines, batteries and electrics have all



been replaced. She has been blacked and is currently away for repainting which will be followed by Phil Waters's signwriting. There is a new seat configuration with Pullman style tables and benches down one side. Cushioning has been newly made, there's a new front door, new windows, new rear rails and a new hatch made. So she really will be rather splendid when she makes her first appearance at Easter!

There will be an official Launch Celebration, so watch out for announcements!

## IF YOU GO DOWN TO THE WOODS TODAY...

There is a new resident in the Bluebell Wood near Facilities' Block 3. Tread quietly as you approach and keep your eyes peeled; you may be lucky enough to spot him.

