

A Met Office Weather Station for the Marina?



Last week, Gill Allbones – Regional Networks Manager for the Met Office – visited the Marina to do an assessment and site survey with a view to installing a Met Office Weather Station. The Met Office is keen to increase their number of volunteer weather observers and extend their official Weather Station network where suitable. We offered and they followed up. Gill believes there is no other Marina installation (which makes us a bit of a trail blazer!) and she has since submitted her report and recommendations to the Head Office in Exeter. We should know the result in January. She expects a 'go ahead'. The plan is to site it in the 'middle' or 'dog' field – in the bottom right-hand quadrant as you walk in. You will probably be familiar with the white louvred Stevenson Screen and the equipment will be this, a raingauge, a handheld wind meter and a Campbell-Stokes Sunshine Recorder (what a beautiful bit of kit - see little image below!) surrounded by a small fence



to protect the area which will measure around 2m x 3m . Gill did a site survey - measuring tree and hedge height, looking at the gradient of the field, checking the presence of any underground services, the distance from concrete (A50 slip road), vehicle access, power lines and any development plans for the area.

Once the station is in place (the Met Office provide everything and continue to look after it), daily readings will be taken by the onsite volunteers at 0900 GMT (so at 10.00 a.m. during BST) and the Sunshine Record card changed, that data will be fed into what will be our own bit of a Met Office website. From there the data goes into the Met Office supercomputer and provided our readings go in soon after 0900 GMT, they will form part of the national forecasting process.

An interesting issue being dealt with by the Met Office is that all mercury thermometers have to be removed/replaced by October 2017. Alternatives are being considered but there is no new international standard - countries are deciding for themselves and the criteria are rigorous. Alcohol and Glass lose accuracy at high temperatures, digital/electrical have to be regularly recalibrated to meet the WMO's 0.2 degree accuracy standard. The Met Office are considering gallium as the replacement for mercury. Gill is not sure about the effect this will have on our four thermometers in the Stevenson Screen. There is already a team of 10 volunteers ready to be fully involved. And take their place on the daily rota. Some know about weather; others (like me) know nothing! If you're interested and would like to join the gang, do let me know. Boaters go cruising, go on holiday, have time off, so it's not a 'job' but rather an interesting new addition to Mercia's increasing activity. And there's bound to be cake involved.



Mercia Marina Lights up for Christmas!

Photographs from Dave Pinkney and Wynne



For comments and contributions, please contact Jo—07973711431 or jojames46@gmail.com

Christmas Fuddle

It was a grand evening - the food contributions were up to their usual high standard and there was plenty of it. Santa came with 'Elf & Safety, to everyone's delight. Thanks to those who put a lot of time and effort into the planning of the evening and thanks to Ian Carroll for having his camera with him so that we have photographs!



Mercia
Activities'
Committee



New Year Wishes and Thankyou!

This is a good moment to wish everyone a peaceful, cheerful and Happy New Year. May the next twelve months be good to you and yours (and your boat!) and, as neighbours in a strong and growing community, let's all look out for each other and lend a hand if we can. Genuine thanks to those at the Marina whose work and commitment gives us such a great home and leisure environment – John and Michael Thornton and Robert, the "Office" - Lucy, Jules (up till May), Carol (from May) and Tony - then Kath, Pam, Naomi, Jennie, Sarah, Jackie and Chris who keep everything so beautiful. Stuart, who with Sven, Pete, Ryan and Ben are always working to improve the estate - despite the sometimes tough weather conditions - and always with a smile on their faces and a cheerful wave as we go by. Then there's the Mercia Activities' Committee who have done an amazing job with co-ordinating all the various clubs, outings, picnics and fuddles, talks and presentations - huge thanks to those who have given up so much time along with the people that head up the clubs and, alongside, the conservation groups who work to improve the estate for wildlife (and us). And what about Kev and Angie and the Community Bikes and our very own Santa's Grotto with Paul and Santa and 'Elf & Safety who have become local celebrities!? Thanks to Helen for letting the Willow Tea Rooms be used night after night for all our activities and other functions - and her trust in us that we'd leave it as we found it! There's the First Aid and Fire Warden Team who do a remarkable job on constant stand-by should they be needed. Chrissy and Grahame with Michael in the Still Waters Shop - always responsive to our needs, and all the other shops and businesses who add to our life and the life of our many visitors. Thank you, as well, to every single one of us! We have a great community and that's down to its members. So a cheer, a handshake and a pat on the back for ourselves!



As another year rolls around, the Marina's thanks are also due to Midland Chenders for their continued support for the Newsletter. Thank you Kerry, for doing the printing work and thank you Alastair, MD of Arleigh Group Ltd.

The New Year Brings a Serious Warning

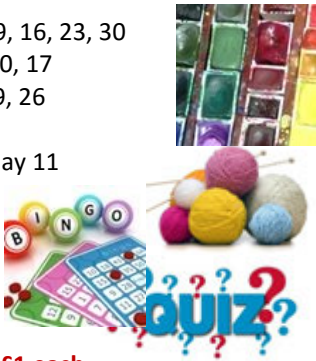


There is a speed limit on the Marina - it is 10mph. Unfortunately, despite the displayed signs - on the gates and all the way round the perimeter road a significant number of vehicles either forget, don't notice or ignore it. And this despite constant reminders from the Office, in the Newsletter and from individuals having a word. The speed limit is there for a reason. We have a shared roadway. Pedestrians, dogs and cats, children, bicycles and trolleys are also on the roadway. And people may not hear your vehicle approaching. Vehicles appear from any number of parking spots all the way round. And, at this time of year with its dark mornings and evenings., there is even more reason to drive slowly. Boats observe an advisory canal speed limit of 4mph. It's not asking much for a boat-based community to honour a 10mph speed limit with their wheeled vehicles. So, now that technology makes it possible to attach a speed radar to a mobile phone and pictures of the offending vehicle can be captured alongside the speed readout, those who can't obey the site regulation will find themselves without their vehicle! At various times over the coming months, in various places on the Marina and without notice , there will be someone monitoring vehicle speeds. Don't expect to know the monitor; a number of moorers are offering to help, so it could be anybody on any part of the estate. If your vehicle is clocked doing over 10mpg you will be contacted by the Office and warned. Get caught again and your vehicle will be off the Marina for a week. Come back and get clocked again and it's a month-long ban. Delivery vans, commercial vehicles and trucks will all also be warned about the speed limit being enforced and action taken against those who can't keep below it. There will be no excuses, no 'second chances' and if, during a ban, you bring your vehicle through the green gates, expect someone to let the Office know. The vast majority of people on the Marina are fed up with those who speed so will be only too happy to help stop this unsocial behaviour. Of course, these measures won't be needed if everyone remembers to check their speed as they travel round the Marina and just GO SLOW. Treat the green security gates as though it were the gateway to your front drive. From that point on, 10mph is your absolute upper limit. Some cars, if you put them in second gear and take your foot off the accelerator, will drive on at 10mph or just under. Try it. If it works, that's your easy solution. If your car won't, and your cruise control doesn't go as low as 10mph then tough; you'll just have to keep your foot on the brake. But you won't get bored; at that speed you'll get the chance to glance about and see what's happening! Boats go no more than 4mph, people walking go at 4mph, fishermen don't move at all; we are a water-based community, so you and all your vehicles must GO SLOW IN THIS SHARED SPACE.



January Events

- Watercolour Class Mondays 9, 16, 23, 30
- Craft Group Wednesdays 4, 10, 17
- Ukulele Group Thurs 5, 12, 19, 26
- Music Group Tuesday 3
- Photography Group Wednesday 11
- Bingo Wednesday 18
- Beetle Drive Tuesday 24
- Monthly Quiz Wednesday 25
- CPR Training Saturday 28
- Book Club Tuesday 31



7pm Willow Tree Tea Rooms. £1 each.
Sign up in the Office for the Quiz.



The CPR Session is concerned with CPR, the signs and symptoms of a heart attack, dealing with an unconscious person and recognising a cardiac arrest. This are all truly important things so go and sign up in the Office.

Précised Forum Meeting Notes
13 December

- The emergency gate has been approved as a secondary access; redesign work needs to be undertaken prior to use
- Pontoons remain slippery due to the mild weather. Many have been washed; you can borrow a jet washer
- Further repair work is needed on the elsan by FB2
- More storage sheds may come in the new north car park
- No project cars on site. No car covers, no SORN cars
- Gravel to be laid on car park behind Woodcock pontoon
- Dog Owners reminded that extending leads not allowed
- Cats Owners reminded cats must wear collars/bells outside
- Disabled parking bays near the tea rooms will be changed from 4 to 3 to allow space for wheelchairs
- Additional shower fans have been installed with more to follow; toilet cubicle fans will be updated
- A mini grit bin has been ordered for the junction of F,G,H
- New path and lights being installed above Nuthatch pontoon. Part of plan for off-road paths around the whole site.



Image Source: cliparts.co

A New Year Quiz
(thanks to Bruce Napier)

- Winttry Hits
Who had hits in January with:
1. A Winter's Tale
 2. Yeh yeh
 3. Walk away Renee
 4. Suspicious Minds
 5. My ding-a-ling
 6. Down down
 7. Another Brick in the Wall
 8. I Know Him So Well
 9. Fairy Tale of New York
 10. The Masses Against the Classes

It's not a competition and, on this occasion, there are no Prizes - just an exercise for the little grey cells at the start of the year.

See how far you can get without resorting to Google!!

But if you do get on well, let me know and I'll note it in the February Newsletter with the answers!!

- Winter Sun
1. There are seven inhabited Channel Islands. Name one that's neither Jersey nor Guernsey.
 2. If you visited this island in the Indian Ocean before 1681, you might have seen a dodo.
 3. They used to be called the Islands of the Dogs, and then the Fortunate Isles and they have in turn had a species of bird and a kind of sweet wine named after them.
 4. Barry Manilow had a song about this triangle.
 5. This island is the setting for Gerald Durrell's *My Family and Other Animals*, Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Mary Stewart's *This Rough Magic*.
 6. The Princely County of Tyrol was once part of the Holy Roman Empire. Which two modern countries is it split between today?
 7. In which country will you find the Nullarbor Plain and why the name?
 8. Which theme park was 60 years old in July 2015?
 9. In which part of which country is the most southerly ski resort?
 10. Earth's orbit reached perihelion on 4 January this year. Was that when it was closest or furthest away from the Sun?

- General Knowledge
1. Alamogordo, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, ... What comes next?
 2. At which battle in 1314 did Robert the Bruce defeat the English forces?
 3. Which reggae singing star died on 11 May 1981?
 4. Which river forms the eastern section of the border between England and Scotland?
 5. What is the financial centre and main city of Switzerland?
 6. In which city was Martin Luther King assassinated in 1968?
 7. What does a numismatist study or collect?
 8. At which town did Billy Butlin open his first holiday camp in 1936?
 9. Which Latin term, usually applied to legal evidence, means 'at first sight'?
 10. Which musical is the odd one out? *Twang!*, *Spring Awakening*, *Movin' Out*, *Springtime for Hitler*, *Meno-pause the Musical*.

- What are you afraid of?
If you have:
1. Arachnophobia
 2. Aerophobia
 3. Carcinophobia
 4. Ornithophobia
 5. Triskadekaphobia
 6. Hemophobia
 7. Ailurophobia
 8. Aquaphobia
 9. Xenophobia
 10. Neffophobia



Golden Windlass

The year ends with three very well-deserved awards. Firstly for **Pete Eales**, who has - over the past weeks - been emptying rubbish, emptying ashbins, carrying porta-pottis, shopping, humping coal, fixing taps, winterising engine and much more for the stricken Sue Hicks. And **Pat Foster**, who has also swung in to do all the house-work, Hoovering, cooking, washing and ironing. [Sue had a nasty fall which resulted in a pulled hamstring and nerve damage and was on complete rest for several days before a little bit of moving about. It's a six-week healing time, at the very least, so for someone who is normally all over the place all day long doing things for other people, it's been dreadful! But neighbours, friends and family have all swung in and she and Pete are very grateful.] An equally well-deserved Golden Windlass for **Celia Kind** for all her help with the sudden serious illness of another boater, and in particular, for helping with the care of the boater's beloved dog.



A Golden Windlass is our way of recognising human kindness

and contribution which is above and beyond the usual to help each other and the community. Everyday kindnesses, looking out for each other, making sure people are o.k. and have what they need are the vital threads that bind our community. At this time of year, in particular, it's good to watch out for each other.



Well done Santa, 'Elf & Safety and Paul with his great Grotto!!!
Hundreds of happy families loved visiting. Fly safely back North.

