

Mercia Mercury

Christmas Lights

The Marina's display of Christmas lights on boats and lodges is going from strength to strength and the illuminations this year were really something to behold! Behind the scenes photographers captured the striking images and the judging group, this year, put their analytical and critical eyes to one side and simply chose the boat and lodge that had that little bit extra! So



many congratulations to Kev and Ange for 'Santa's Grotto' which was, this year, accompanied by a snowman made by Kev from bicycle wheels (the photograph below shows all the elements of Kev and Ange's display) and to John and Gail Lees for a sparkling kaleidoscope of colour across their lodge, verandah and nearby shrubbery. An additional thanks to our resident photographer, Dave Pinkney, who spends many hours taking photographs in all weathers and then as many hours again editing. He also—for a bit of fun— did a composite image in 2016 and it was such a success he's done another to celebrate the Marina's colourful displays for Christmas 2017!



Mercia Marina has a photography competition every month. If you've got a photograph taken at the Marina which you think is pretty good, then send it in to tony@merciamarina.co.uk. The winner each month can choose from a box of chocolates or a bottle of Prosecco and all the photographs are put on the Marina's Facebook page so everyone has the chance to see what's being entered as the month unfolds. The winners for

December were Dave Pinkney (photograph of very apt recycled snowman) - see above, Amanda Hibbert for the Boardwalk lit for Christmas and Ian Carroll's shot of Santa's coffee break. Congratulations to all of you—there was some stiff competition!

And if you enjoy all the photography going on and you'd like a reminder of all the delights the Marina has to offer, the Office still has some 2018 calendars available to buy. They are the perfect size for odd gaps in the kitchen or galley and make a lovely little gift to take home for someone or just to keep for oneself!



Community Events' Programme for 2018

The Calendar of Community Events is on the Mercia Community Facebook Page. If you still can't find what you want, then ask! Ask in the Office, email merciaevents@hotmail.com, ask your Forum Rep - there is plenty of help around. And it is very important that you keep in touch with any last minute changes or arrangements for your group - either on Facebook or asking a friend to check for you. Some events are very popular, so it is important you say you want to come in good time. Events on the FB page have a 'join' button (no need to 'decline' or 'maybe', just accept if you want to) or, if you don't use Facebook, email merciaevents@hotmail.com or give the Office a note of your name/event to pass on. Most events are in The Willow Tea Rooms (thanks to Helen Deaville) and usually start at 7pm.



February 2018 Diary

Thurs	1	Ukulele
Mon	5	Watercolour
Tues	6	Music
Wed	7	Craft
Thurs	8	Ukulele
Mon	12	Watercolour
Tues	13	Craft
Wed	14	Photography
Thurs	15	Ukulele
Mon	19	Watercolour
Tues	20	Craft
Wed	21	Bingo
Thurs	22	Ukulele
Frid	23	First Aid Friday
Mon	26	Watercolour
Tues	27	Book Club
Wed	28	Quiz Night (Book at the Office)



See and Be Seen



Driving round the perimeter road in the dark is not easy. Even driving at 10mph, with headlights on and looking out for trouble doesn't allow you to spot the bike without lights, the dark-coated pedestrian with a torch that lights only the ground ahead of her/him or the dark-coated dog walker with a pooch on the end of a 6' lead having a wander into the road. Please, please think about BEING SEEN as you head out in the early morning or in the evening. High vis tape stuck on your back, a tabard easy to put on/take off, a high vis jacket for the dog ... each of them can cost no more than a few pounds but it will mean you are spotted much earlier by a car driver and you will be much safer as a consequence. The first walk of your day may be right at the time when a lot of cars are leaving the Marina and at this time of year it's still dark. A torch helps you see where you're going, but it isn't any help to someone coming at you from behind!



Thank you to Midlands Chancellors for their support for the Newsletter which is now in its eight year. Copies can be emailed and hard copies are available in Midlands Chancellors, the cafes and shops and in the Marina Office.



Winterising Your Boat



We've been fortunate, to date (13th January!) that we've only had a cold snap for a couple or three days this winter. The photograph of the snowy day we had in December (below) isn't a problem for boats. It's when it's too cold to snow, when the temperature drops below freezing and stays there, that you need to run through your checklist to make sure you've done all the things you need to do to protect your boat against extreme weather. And that's true for liveaboard boaters alongside the extra precautions a leisure boater needs to take.

There are boaters here who remember the winter that started in December 2010 and didn't end till March 2011. I took this photograph of 'X' Pontoon on a morning when the temperature was -17° .

If you aren't winterising (because you liveaboard or visit a couple of times a week), you can still do a number of things to make sure your boat stays healthy:

1. Check engine coolant, if not obvious then drain and replace anti-freeze mix
2. Grease exposed linkages
3. Grease battery main terminals, isolate engine battery if appropriate
4. Grease stern gland
5. Leave batteries on a float charge
6. Make sure the bilge pump is working

For leisure boaters, each time you come down check your water is running through the taps and the water pump is working. Run the engine and heating for a bit and perhaps light a fire while you're there to warm the cabin. Invest in a couple of thermostatic radiators which will switch on if the temperatures plummet - that's usually overnight and in the early morning hours.

And there are few basic things for everyone (liveaboards and leisure) to consider: put poles, lines and roof equipment in the boat; make sure ventilators are unobstructed and a couple of windows open a crack. It's important to stop condensation and you can never have too much ventilation. Keep your diesel as full as possible to prevent water condensation in the tank. And talk to a neighbouring boater. Swap phone numbers and have keys to each others boats so that, in the event of a sudden emergency, you can help each other out. It's what neighbours are for and the community of boaters here at Mercia are very very good at helping each other.

Equally importantly, keep an eye on the five-day weather forecast here at the Marina. Stock up, pump out and fill up with water and diesel when the weather is good. If you have a solid fuel fire, get your coal in. Water trapped in your hose can also freeze so store the hose inside or empty water from it each time its used. Remember that ice forms fast on still water, one morning's ice film can turn into a solid and thickening layer 24 hours later. So a pontoon or jetty that was safe yesterday, may have become an ice rink today. Get the sand/grit from the bins at the end of each pontoon and keep the pontoons and jetties as clear as you can. If it snows, brush it off as soon as you can and sand/grit afterwards. Walking over the snow packs it down and if the temperature drops overnight you'll be faced with a hard job the next day because you'll be trying to shift impacted ice before you can sand and grit.

If we do go through a tough spell and you need help, just ask—ask your neighbour, ask a passerby, ask the Office. And don't forget to keep yourself healthy—keep warm and keep as active as possible—visit a neighbour for a coffee or play lively music to jig around to on the boat. Start the day with porridge, make soup, keep your brain active.



Marina Bits 'n' Pieces



Planning permission was submitted for 66 new **Storage Sheds** which will be put in the Long Term Car Park. Storage sheds have always been in high demand at the Marina so the addition of a significant extra supply is an excellent step. If you're interested, get your name down in the Office.



Canal &
River Trust

Willington to Mercia Towpath:

CRT will continue when time and volunteers permit. If you would like to help with the refurbishment project, then let the Office know.

Mercia Marina Vehicle Permit: Does your car, van or motorbike display its permit with your boat/lodge name on it? If not, it should not be on site so go to the Office and sort it out!



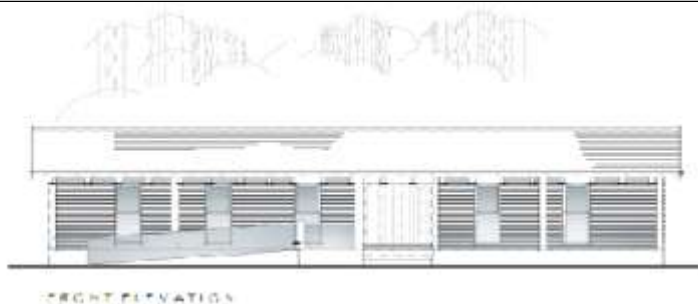
NATURE SOCIETY Making a real difference

There is a lot going on with the Marina wildlife over last year thanks to the Nature Society volunteers. They have been working in the woodland, carrying out a live mammal trapping survey, planting a hazel copse, improving the hedgerows with native planting, successfully introducing red mason bee nesters, using wildlife cameras to look at our night time visitors and going on a dawn chorus walk. If you would like to be involved or have ideas or questions, do get in touch with Jane Wakeham through the Office. There is so much to do that every bit of help does make a big difference and there are activities to suit ability, every age and every interest. So there is definitely something there for you!!



The Hall

A Centre for Exercise, Fitness and Community Events



Encouraging steps are being taken to develop a multi-use hall for exercise, fitness and community events in North Field. It's early days, as yet, but if you have any ideas or thoughts about what you would like to see as part of such a development, then do write in to the Office or send an email.

If the plans come to fruition, it needs to be well-used by everybody and yet be simple and cost effective.

The Piazza

The hoardings are down, the fitters are in and the individual shops and businesses are hard at work so that they can open their doors as soon as possible.



Twigg Home has an active Facebook presence where they've been inviting comment as to which lettering design people like. **Black by Design** and **William Wheelwright Hairdressing** are also on Facebook and you can sign up to be kept up-to-date with the latest news.



WILLIAM WHEELWRIGHT
HAIRDRESSING

**BLACK
BY
DESIGN**

Maxine Walker, who with Nigel Pincher, head up **Bluebird Gallery** tells me: I have over eight years experience working in and managing a gallery, I am very passionate about this business so when the opportunity for a unit at Mercia

arose, Nigel and I decided to go for it. We both have spent a lot of time at the marina in the past and really love the site, it offers such a lovely range of shops, we felt an art gallery here would be perfect. We can't wait to welcome clients to Bluebird Gallery to view the fabulous and diverse portfolio of artists. We will be exhibiting original paintings, sculptures and limited editions. We will cover all genres and media, so we

will have oils, sketches and watercolours covering everything - figurative, landscape, cityscape, portraits and naïve.

Chair-Based Exercise!

Watching TV? Listening to the Radio? Just having a bit of a sit and think? You can do some exercise at the same time! And though they might seem a bit tame, planning half an hour a day of deliberate and rhythmic movement can make a big difference if you're not able to get out and about much. So have a go but take heed of a few preliminaries: use a strong arm chair which gives good support, keep your movements steady; 10 or 12 repetitions a minute is plenty; warm up and cool down - start steady and tail off gently; don't hold your breath while exercising; don't exercise too hard and keep arm exercises below head height.

1. Alternate leg heel digs

As one foot moves out to place the heel on the floor, the other foot remains planted on the ground. As the heel is placed on the ground, try to pull your toe towards your shin.



2. Alternate arm across body

Raise your right hand diagonally and touch your left shoulder. Return your right hand to the arm of the chair. Repeat motion, this time using your left hand to touch your right shoulder. Only reach as far across as is comfortable for you.



3. Double arm forward and back to the armrest

Push both hands forward to shoulder height. Your wrists should be extended. Coordination is important so, if possible, try to alternate which hand is in front of the other as your arms are forward.



4. Alternate single arm across body with heel digs

Raise your right hand diagonally and touch your left shoulder. Simultaneously extend your left leg and plant heel on the ground. Return your right hand to the arm of the chair and your left leg to a relaxed position. Repeat motion, this time using your left hand to touch your right shoulder, while extending your right leg.



5. Alternate arm and leg

Push your leg forward and your opposite hand across your body, keeping your wrist extended. Your fingertips should be level with your shoulder. Only reach as far as is comfortable for you. With alternate arm and leg exercises such as this, it's important that as one arm is moving, the other is supported on the chair and the supporting foot is planted firmly on the floor.



6. Double arm forward with heel digs

Push your hands out slightly higher than your shoulder, in line with your chin, keeping your wrists extended. Only reach as far out as is comfortable for you. Coordination is important, so try to alternate which arm is in front of the other.

