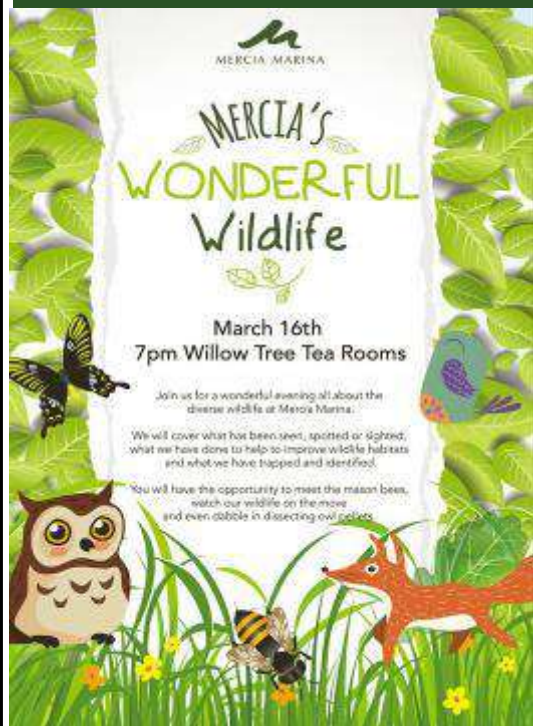


The Marina's Environment

NATURE SOCIETY Making a real difference



With Spring just around the corner, days are getting longer and the Marina's flora and fauna are starting to move! The Nature Society, which encompasses a lot of the volunteer involvement around the Marina has begun to busy! And there are others who contribute in a number of ways - photographing birds (recently a Water Rail), helping with litter picks, attending talks and taking part in various competitions. There are two particular events coming up in March - the first described on the poster (see left) . It will be an evening for everyone, so come and join in!

The second evening event will be on Wednesday, 28th of March. The Monthly Quiz will be a Nature Quiz but we're being promised no bird calls this time! It starts at 7pm in The Willow Tree Tea Room with sandwiches provided. Get your names down in the Office (teams of up to six people) and bring your own drink and other snacks. And there will be a raffle for the Wildlife Charities. The Nature Society Newsletter reports on the Woodland which was planted last year and the Cottage Garden which was a delight all through last summer and looks like it will be even better this year. There is a watch being kept on our black swans who are showing an interest in nesting and have established a territory on the north side of the Marina. If you would like to receive the Newsletter, get in touch with Jane Wakeham through the Office. She would be happy to keep you in touch with activities. Another first for the Marina was a

hedge laying! Jane Wakeham reports: *"What a great team they are, these guys and girls are ready for anything. Despite the wet, cold day they got stuck in, enjoyed learning new skills and are raring to go and get it finished. This hedge has not been laid for at least 40 years so not only will the hedge now improve it will also benefit our wildlife. Well done everyone - so proud of you. Of course without doubt we must say a huge thank you to Jon, Lead Ranger from Kedleston Hall who gave of his time to come along and teach these skills along with two of his own volunteers. A great day all round."* Thanks to Ian Carroll for the photographs!



**GRAB A
TEAM
ITS
QUIZ
NIGHT**

Mercia Piscatorial Society

The Mercia Piscatorial Society will be holding its first AGM on Saturday 24th of March. It will be held in the Willow Tree Tea Rooms and will start at 7pm. There will be a report from the Treasurer and also a yearly report from the Chairman. If you are a society member, you will then



be asked to vote on a new Treasurer and Chairman. **All are welcome** so if you want to find out more about the Society, now is your chance! There will be a meeting to follow the AGM when a number of matters will be discussed such as Match Fixtures for the year, Extra Event Dates, a Tackle Auction and a Charity Event.

Residential Boat Moves






Residential boaters are reminded they should now be planning their mooring changes. Please remember all boats need to have moved to their new mooring by the end of March 2018. And you cannot go back to the mooring you left in the Autumn. Questions or concerns? Please go and see Jules Auctott in the Marina Office.







Community Events' Programme for 2018

The Events are also on the Mercia Community Facebook Page. If you can't find what you want, ask! Ask in the Office or ask your Forum Rep - there is plenty of help around. And it is very important you keep in touch with any last minute changes or arrangements for your group. Some events are popular, so it is important you say you want to come in good time. Most events are in The Willow Tea Rooms (thanks to Helen Deaville) and usually start at 7pm.

----- MARCH DIARY -----



Thurs	1	Ukulele
Sat	3	Fire & Safety Maintenance
Mon	5	Watercolour
Tues	6	Music
Wed	7	Craft
Thurs	8	Ukulele
Mon	12	Watercolour
Tues	13	Craft
Wed	14	Photography
Thurs	15	Ukulele
Sat	17	Phone/IT Issues
Mon	19	Watercolour
Tues	20	Craft
Wed	21	Bingo
Sat	24	Mercia Piscatorial Society AGM
Sun	25	Sunday Market
Mon	26	Watercolour
Tues	27	Book Club
Wed	28	Nature Quiz Night (Book at the Office)
Thurs	29	Ukulele



Mercia Marina Photography Competition

Mercia Marina has a photography competition every month. If you've got a photograph taken at the Marina which you think it 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. January's winners gave us a wonderfully artistic shot, an architectural landscape with the boats, chimneys and Boardwalk development sandwiched between sky and water and one of our local squirrels. A great



variety so many congratulations to the three winners: Sue Jordan, David Shardlow and Miss Pinnk.

My thanks to Midland Chandelers for its continued support for the Newsletter. Copies are available by email (give your address to the Office) and hard copies are available to pick up in our own Midland Chandelers, the cafes and shops and in the Marina Office. And it's

FREAKY FRIDAY on 2nd March



Fire Safety and Maintenance



Starts at 7pm, Willow Tree Tea Rooms on Saturday 3March. Don't miss it!

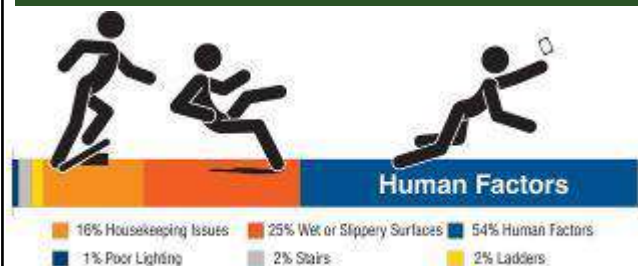
An evening which will remind you of fire safety, the do's and don'ts of keeping both you and your boat safe. Even if you believe you know everything, repetition is important as it will ensure that in any emergency situation, and it may be yours or someone else's, you'll be better prepared. And you might usefully ask yourself when you last did a check of your you last cleaned your chimney, etc.!

fire extinguishers, when you last cleaned your chimney, etc.!

For the maintenance section of the evening, questions will be encouraged. So come along ready to ask for advice or suggestions for anything to do with your boat. There will be a useful handout from RCR too - page 1 (too small to read!) is to the right here There will be time for discussions and contribution of ideas from everyone. A true Boaty Evening which should be of real use to everyone. Thanks to Nigel Hunt for leadi

[illegible]

Slips, Trips and Falls



The recent icy weather, 'they' tell us, a portent of more to come so, despite the budding leaves and budding wildlife romances, winter is not yet over. I am very aware of the icy paths and slopes as I head for the weather station first thing in the morning, choosing often to walk on the grass rather than risk the hard surfaces coated with a frozen sheen. But it's not just ice, slippery or wet surfaces that causes slips, trips and falls. I found the image on the left on SafeStart, a Canadian company concerned with safety in and around the workplace.

Reflecting on the four times I have fallen in and around the boat, I know that each of them was a consequence of inattention. The first, on our mooring on X Pontoon, was when I was in the process of stepping onto the stern. I saw a friend over on the other side of the water and got ready to call out and wave. Next thing I knew, I was waist deep suspended in the water with one elbow on the jetty, the other on the boat. I was lucky to avoid a serious accident. The second time I was stepping off the boat when we moored just onto the Shroppie after Autherly Stop Lock. I was meeting a very old friend over from Sydney who was coming to stay on the boat for a few days. I stepped off with the mooring rope in hand onto the grass, my foot went into a little hole and I ended up (I discovered a couple of weeks later) with a tennis player's twisting ankle fracture. The other two incidents were similarly caused by me - one leaving me with a dreadful black eye, the other with the cost of a new phone! But I've learned my lesson; I now never get on, or off, the boat carrying anything. I put things down and turn and get them. I never get on, or off, the boat without one hand firmly holding onto the top rail. I don't talk to anyone, I don't look at anything other than where my foot is going, etc. Overkill? Yes, maybe. But I really don't want to fall over now that I've reached an age where my body has mislaid the reflexes and muscles to jerk me upright and save a stumble.

We live in an environment where accidents will happen. We live in a Marina. A few of us could tell wonderful stories of how it was 'back in the day'; we didn't quite scramble across muddy banks in the dark and drag ourselves up onto pontoons and jetties and fall exhausted into the well of our boats with our clothes and shoes covered in the dust and dirt from the as-yet untarmacked perimeter road. But it wasn't far off; we certainly didn't have all the handrails, shallow steps, low level lighting, sand and grit boxes and pressure washing that we have now. Nor did we have a boaters' and lodge owners' forum to which questions and suggestions could be taken for discussion. Travelling around the system on our boat, I am very aware of how fortunate I consider we are (speaking for Wynne and me) to live here.

From October to March we need to take extra care. We need to be sensible and accept that living on a boat means planning things differently, doing things differently and taking extra time to keep ourselves and others safe.

FREAKYFRIDAY
THE INLAND WATERWAYS SALES EVENT OF THE YEAR:
FRIDAY 2ND MARCH

20% OFF
EVERYTHING INSTORE & ONLINE

24 Hour Extravaganza
Special offer in-store only

8AM - 8PM IN STORE | 12AM - MIDNIGHT ONLINE

The craft group are going to the Quilt & Stitch Show on Saturday 14th April. Craft group members can go free of charge. If anyone else would like to go at the reduced ticket price of £5 please let me know as soon as possible.

If you want to find out more about what the show is about look at quiltandstitchvillage.com

We are going to take cars and share lifts, as no transport is being arranged this time. It's only about 25 minutes drive. Contact me on Facebook, text to 07411946455 or email perfectharmony52@yahoo.com. I'll collect money once I have numbers, thanks.

Nancy Harman



It's taken a lot of hard work but we're ready to show you what we've created. Our official opening of Twigg Home and Fashion is on the horizon. There will be special offers available on the day and our team will be on hand to give you some insight into our brands. If you're after a new look or a change of décor in the home, then come down and take a look!

FRIDAY 2nd MARCH 2018
.....YOU'RE ALL INVITED

Boat Emissions' Study



Looking at the BSS Examination Record Form for Privately Owned and Managed Vessels, I counted 163 specific individual requirements (including those concerning fire extinguishers and fire blankets) that a boat has to satisfy if it is to pass its BSS Examination. The Examination is primarily concerned with Third Party Risk – is your boat a danger to others. On the other hand, First Party Risk – where you are in danger from your boat – is

looked at only insofar as whether your electrical systems are safe, whether you have enough ventilation, can you escape the boat and are your appliances and fires o.k. But these 14 checks are 'advisory' and failing to satisfy them will not prevent your boat passing its Examination.

And (except for hire/holiday boats) there is not even an advisory requirement for a CO alarm despite the known and accepted dangers of Carbon Monoxide poisoning which claims several boaters' lives every year. However, since CO can also pose a Third Party Risk – emissions from a neighbouring boat – the Technical Committee at BSS have begun a fact-finding project, bringing in the BRE (Building and Research Establishment) as the national body who do the monitoring and testing in the high street, for factories, residential buildings, etc. Mercia Marina was invited to be part of this and there are other studies going on with London boaters.

That is the background which led to *Autumn Mist*, *Whisky Mac* and *Life of Pi* being moored up alongside each other for two days a couple of weeks ago. Monitoring equipment was installed to measure carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and particulates. During the course of the days, the boats' engines, solid fuel fires and oil



stoves, Webasto, Mikuni, and Eberspacher heaters and a petrol-fuelled portable generator were all set running or lit in various different combinations. *Whisky Mac's* solid fuel stove was allowed to burn itself down overnight and then have a load of damp wood added in the morning (a lot of smoke, reported Ken, both over the boats and down between them!). The objective was to see just how the emissions from one boat would affect its immediate neighbour and, indeed, the boat one step further away. The report from BRE is due around the end of March in time for the next BSS Technical Committee meeting.

For those who came to do the testing it proved to be very interesting – Stuart and Chetas (the BRE technicians) had never been on narrowboats before and were amazed at the level of ventilation on a narrowboat; how noxious gases could build quickly if the conditions were right but could then dissipate within 40 minutes of opening doors and windows. Iain Jones*, a member of the BSS Technical Committee, saw from the monitors how emissions could build in a boat when a neighbouring boat was running a heater or engine. And how these emissions would collect in the middle of the boat (often the galley area). So, too, the petrol generator caused a build up of emissions when placed by the rear door and the wind was blowing the exhaust across the back of, or into, the boat. And the CO detector did not sound.

Our volunteer boaters – Ken, Peter and Irene, Kevin and Petra – were all well cared for. They had to be with the boats through the days to turn things on and off and light fires as asked. At the end of Monday and Tuesday, the technicians cleared up and the boats could be used as normal overnight. Expenses were covered and all three boats will have their next BSS Exam costs covered as a thank you. This, then, is but an interim report on an important project. The Marina was glad to have been part of it since it's objective is to make boaters' lives safer. Thanks to all involved and to Iain Jones for his photographs!

A Final Thought: Until that report comes out and there is a clearer idea of the danger from emissions, do make sure your CO

and fire alarms are in the right place and working, that you have your boat well ventilated (even if we do go through a cold spell) and you're aware of your neighbours and how your smoke and exhaust may affect them.

*Iain Jones, Marine Surveyor and BSS Examiner, based at Shobnall Marina
jonesmarinesurveys.co.uk

