

Vintage Day at Setley

No one can detract from the setting of the Setley pond. In the heart of the New Forest (which to the outsider always seems remarkably short on trees) its sloping gravel banks make a delightful change from the usual concrete edges. The New Forest ponies abound and I did see one of the promised swallows. Not quite idyllic but a thoroughly enjoyable change. The fact that one can drive literally to the pond edge and park is a welcome attraction.

Since nothing is perfect there have to be some snags. For ladies, those with cheap Hong Kong-made bladders or prostate problems, the lack of toilets or a clubhouse is a major disadvantage. Like the lady guests, I disliked having to resort to the gorse bushes. This can be countered by having an excuse to pop up to the local for a quick one or an excellent lunch defeating even the stomach of Howlett.

Vintage members were thin on the ground (if nowhere else) and mixed amicably with the members who turned up with scale models and what looked uncommonly like the original Mulberry Harbour where Len Thompson put us all to shame sailing his A boat in and out with total aplomb.

"Free" sailors perhaps would not be so happy sailing at Setley. The wind can be tricky but above all access is not easy to some lengths of the bank. A wader shod gazelle would have no problem, whereas I, with my poncy green mini wellies had no chance of avoiding the odd bootful of mud and slime (my own fault — I was warned).

"New" boats appeared and new members were welcomed hopefully to be seen again shortly. Boats were bought and sold, a welcome growing addition to our pond-side activities, although probably thoroughly illegal on a Sunday.

I believe that despite the low turnout, undeservedly, we have been invited again next year. If so, it is thoroughly worth the effort. You are guaranteed a warm welcome and a great day out. The wives and children will love it, being able to slope off to the delights of the forest, the villages and, not least, the sea.

Thank you, Eric, for the invitation and please pass on our thanks to your committee.



*Opposite page, top:
Round Pond Commodore
Mark Petrushkian and dog
Opposite page, bottom:
Trevor's display at Round Pond
Above:
Sailing at Setley
Right:
Intrepid editor up to ankles*

