

OTRC "Match Report" - Fête Accompli, 26 June 2016



Depending on your view of OTRC members, it was either a case of "the sun shining on the righteous" or "the luck of the devil" but, after a week of thunder storms and episodes of torrential rain, OTRC's first Garden Party took place in dry and intermittently sunny weather.

Becky Smith and her kind family opened their beautiful garden at Tansor Manor to club members in order to raise funds for OTRC's new, soon-to-be-started clubhouse. Therefore, elements of both club-support and garden-curiosity contributed to a high turnout from club members on what was to be a very enjoyable occasion.

The crowds enjoyed free-flowing Pimms, a treasure trail which allowed us to explore the gardens, a delicious 'Regatta Platter' and a gorgeous bowl of meringues, fruit and cream. There were games to play and books and plants to buy. We even had live music from the highly talented Lottie and Matt (look out for them at the Oundle Fringe – group name of 'carterdolby').

Debbie James (Bob's artist wife) donated a beautiful picture of our stretch of the river, with apparently, Auntie Angela portrayed in one of the two sculls on the river. Now, for those of you who know Auntie Angela, this will come as a bit of a surprise and regular Saturday rowers were vociferous in their disagreement. Auntie Angela doesn't row in a single! Artistic licence (very) obviously played a part here or there's a need for a visit to Specsavers!

Initial plans for the clubhouse were on display with estimated project timescales and costs. It was great to see these. Now we all have a picture of what we are aiming for (and an idea of how much effort it's going to take).

To avoid withdrawal symptoms, we went down to the river, onto which Becky's garden borders and partook of a very sedate duck race. The stream was VERY slow but things were livened up by Jason's commentary and mostly by the vision of Becky and Daisy, dressed in very pretty party gear, paddling a kayak, rounding up the ducks at the end of the race with a fishing net. Very entertaining – and rumours abound that they will be entering as a crew in said kayak at St Neots! Anyway, the winning duck, seemingly nudged over the finish by a bribed fish or a secret Russian submarine belonged to Paul Pearson ("Not another pot", I hear you cry. "Not another pot", I hear Mrs Pearson groan).

This race was followed later in the day by **The Boat Race**. Attendees had been challenged to build a boat (from purely biodegradable materials) and they came in all shapes and sizes. There was a beautiful Viking Longship from Richard, 'Corky McCork Face' from Hugh and Fiona, multiple origami entries from Philip, an elegant lump of wood from Jo (I'm only joking Jo. It was a beautifully crafted lump of wood), an aesthetically pleasing modern catamaran design from Mr Dunn and a miniature quad from John Wight. George got caught up in the spirit of the day and entered a paper bowl from the dessert table!

(I apologise if, I've left any boat designers out. The excitement got to me).

If anything, the stream was even slower this time and the crowd were encouraging Becky and Daisy to blow and make waves to build up the excitement. This arrived when two cruisers powered into sight. Unfortunately, they were going in the wrong direction to encourage our boats and their wake even pushed some boats back upstream and into the bank. Hard luck to those designers, but all's fair in love, war and boat races! After an interminable wait, John Wight's boat crossed the line first, much to the disgust of Philip who is still claiming that his boat, to which John's had been attached for most of the race, had pulled John's down the course, so he should be declared the winner. However, the Blazers ignored his appeals for a disqualification and John's mini-quad was declared the Pot Winner. You will be interested to hear that George's paper dessert bowl finished third!

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After the unbearable excitement, pots were awarded, the raffle for the painting was won by – go on, you'll never guess – Paul Pearson, and thanks were expressed.

Thanks to:

- Rhona for organising the event
- Jo for purchasing and serving all the delicious food
- Lottie and Matt for the music
- Daisy and Becky (Jnr) for their kayaking/marshalling
- Jennie and Mel for making hundreds of meringues
- Debbie for her painting and donations
- Everyone who donated books, plants and drink
- Everyone who turned up in doubtful weather to lend their support and spend their money

But most importantly to

Becky and the Smith family for the loan of their gorgeous garden

The garden curiosity has now turned into garden envy.

And the great news is that, not only did we have really good time, but a marvellous **£752** (with maybe a bit more to come) was raised for the Clubhouse Fund.

Below are some of Richard's photos of the day. More are available on Dropbox, if you can access them.



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