

Wings & Wheels Show - June 2015

I decided to give this show a try. It is held annually at North Weald Airfield, near Epping which is one junction north on the M11 from the M25 and about 40 miles (single journey) from Orpington. It should be noted that in the main it is predominantly for model aircraft (with flying displays taking place during the day) and also to lesser degree, model trucks, tanks etc, hence the Wings & Wheels title. The entrance fee was £10 with no reduction for `twirlies` i.e. someone with a Freedom Pass. It is open on both Saturday and Sunday.

For the model boaters there was a raised/temporary pond and a marquee with about 4 or 5 local model boat clubs displaying their `masterpieces`. The ones attending this year included Brentwood, Southend, Fishers Green and Moorhen which I believe is located in Harlow. There were only two traders dedicated to model boats, these being Model Boat Bits and Mountfleet, selling their wares.

The remainder of the traders were in the main model aircraft orientated but obviously there is a certain amount of read-across between model aircraft and model boats regarding materials, adhesives, radio control equipment etc. Those traders familiar to model boaters were Howes, Component Shop, Balsa Cabin and SLEC. For those not aware, SLEC supply balsa, plywood etc.

Conclusion – This is not a show that I would want to attend on an annual basis, as I have no real interest in model aircraft. I also picked the wrong day weather wise as the Sunday became a bit damp around lunchtime which curtailed the flying and the model boats on the pond. However, I was in need of a re-stock of my supply of plywood, so an order had been placed with SLEC a week or so before the show and was collected from their stand on the day. Therefore the cost of the entrance fee was off-set by not having to pay the P&P on the plywood.

I also stocked up on some minor items which tend to be cheaper to buy at shows than from the local model shop.

Apart from the weather, the only downside for me was a pet hate which I have i.e. the inclusion of traders that sell items which have no connection with the show. Did I want a plastic bush for the patio complete with solar powered lights? No chance at all, even if it was a free-be. However, the bloke selling brollies was doing a roaring trade!!

Recommendation: If you want to give the show a try, then pick a day when the weather forecast looks favourable. At least the model aircraft (if you like that sort of thing) will be doing their aerobatics etc. Ditto the model boats. So in RAF language you are looking for day when the visibility is "gin-clear" and not "too claggy" as it was when I attended.

The dates for 2016 are June 25 and 26.