



THE EMPIRE'S LAUNCH

The Consuta Trust

The advancement of education in the history of steam launches, by preservation, maintenance and exhibition of the steam launch **Consuta**

Patron: The Rt. Hon. Lord Strathcona & Mount Royal

The Consuta Trust Newsletter No.7 (March 2001)

Funding

It's official from January 2001 – The Consuta Trust has been awarded funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This is great news and will ensure the complete restoration of Consuta this year. Our thanks to Tony Cundick for preparing our application, and of course to the HLF for their support.

Geoff Newton also confirms that we have been awarded a donation from The Transport Trust. The Transport Trust are planning to make a formal presentation at the Thames Traditional Boat Rally on Fawley Meadow in July 20/21st. We are hopeful that we will have Consuta there on the water. Thank you Geoff for your work on this.

The Steam Boat Association have adopted SL Consuta as a project worthy of SBA support. We have already benefited with much publicity among SBA members. The SBA arranged a fund raising auction of donated items at their March AGM, this realised some £224 for The Trust. Ian Cross (one of our supporters and also an SBA member) kindly donated his vast collection of Steamboating photos, plus a pile of old Classic Boat magazines for fund raising at our stand at the meeting. The photos at 25p each were in great demand from boat owning members and we raised £150.

A fund raising Steam Boat Trip on the River Thames – * Steamboat River trip in May *

The SBA are arranging a special fund raising cruise on two ex Salter Passenger Steamers – Streatley and Nuneham – both now restored to steam. This is to be a four hour cruise on Sunday 6th May. I think that the two vessels will travel in company, starting and finishing at Runnymede. Costing is £17.50 per head, all profits going to The Consuta Trust. The cruise is dependant on a minimum of 125 bookings. This River Cruise is open to all Consuta Trust Supporters and friends, so ***if you want to know more, please contact Richard Havard 01633 856488 without delay***, or me on brianws@ukonline.co.uk

Monthly Standing Orders

The Contributions made by many of our supporters with regular monthly (and other) donations is proving very successful – many thanks to all who have responded. At the moment we have an income of some £250 per month from this source, because most of the donations are gift aided, we will benefit by a tax refund as well. I should also record that we are grateful for an un-secured loan of £5000 from one of our members, The Trust have promised to pay this back in due course.

After restoration, what about those running Costs?

You could be forgiven for asking “do we have we sufficient funds?”. To this I would have to say “yes we now have the funds to complete the restoration”. However the cost of getting the launch operational and keeping it that way has been put at various figures of between £4,000 and £6,000 each year. These are ongoing annual costs to cover regular maintenance, boat license, insurance, mooring, and fuel costs. Eventually we expect to be able to raise sufficient income to cover these regular expenses by using and displaying Consuta. The key to future success will be to have the continuing help of our supporters. For example we will always be dependant on volunteers to help run and keep Consuta in a presentable condition.



Supported by the
Heritage Lottery Fund

Restoration Progress

Consuta is presently at the Kew Steam Museum. An intensive engineering work schedule is in progress. On Thursday afternoon, 22nd March I rushed over to Kew to see the very first steam test of the boiler completed with all fittings in place, pictures below. Both boiler feed injectors work very well, these injectors are used to keep the boiler water level up as steam is used – there are no pumps. To give you an idea of how much water is required, the boiler will use about 3 gallons of water per hour for each engine Horse power developed, the water feed is taken straight from the river. As this steam test was satisfactory, Tony has now arranged for the boiler inspector to come along, and we are confident that the boiler will be certificated for use.

The DesVignes engine, which is on loan to the Trust, is being completely overhauled by the owner at no cost to the Trust. The installation of Consuta's engine and boiler should be completed during April. Consuta will then be moved back to Colin Henwood's boatyard near Henley during May for the final woodwork and painting jobs. Volunteers please note ***we may need you*** for some of the paint preparation tasks to help speed up the work, and keep within budget.

This work schedule is very full so the Trustees are keeping fingers crossed that we can have Consuta on the water by July. I will try to get a note to everyone when there are firm dates, but we are hoping (no promises) that Consuta will be able to put in an appearance at the Henley Traditional Boat Rally during July 20/21st.

Where is Consuta to be based?

Beale Park have just been granted planning permission to construct a navigation cut onto one of their lakes. Unfortunately the Foot and Mouth epidemic will have serious consequences for this wild life park, so I think it is unlikely that the works will proceed this year.

The Trust are fortunate to have been offered a private mooring on the river at Whitchurch during the interim. Other options are also under consideration – if you do have any ideas on this please let me know. There is also the possibility of temporary short term moorings on the Henley reach during summer.

The ideal base for Consuta, would be a covered wet dock to provide full access to the launch completely independent of the weather.

What else is going on.

We are considering the possibility of providing Consuta "lapel badges" to all supporters, with the help of one of our members.

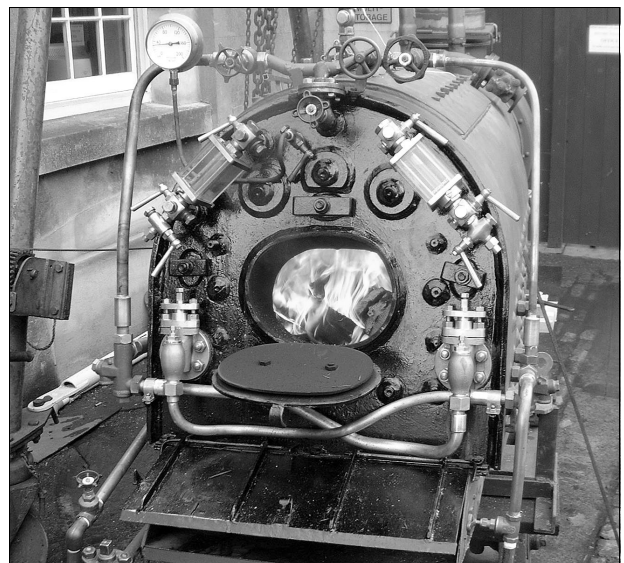
Consuta has its own domain name website:- www.consuta.org.uk - I hope to put any important information here, so keep looking. If you have any ideas or comments please let me know either by email or ordinary mail.

Email brianws.ukonline.co.uk or B.W. Smith, 19 Mill Bank, Kintbury, Hungerford, Berks., RG17 9 UW

Consuta's boiler being steamed for the first time



Tony Cundick blows the whistle



A splendid wood fire – the gauge shows about 35 psi