



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.9 (24th September 2001)



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Heritage Lottery Fund

Also supported by:-

The Transport Trust
The Steam Boat Association
International Paints

Hello all supporters

So when is the launching day for Consuta?

I cannot give a precise date at the moment, however we are going to have a little party. Colin and Lucy Henwood are very kindly letting The Consuta Trust have a tea party at the boatyard (Henwood and Dean, Dairy Farm Lane near Hambledon). This party will be on Saturday afternoon 6th October, 2 o'clock onwards. All are invited, Lyn Smith will provide light refreshments (tea and cakes etc., however if you want alcoholic beverages please bring your own).

The party is to celebrate the completion of the boatyard work, and allow supporters to see the results. If the weather is fine, and I can get some helpers during the morning, we can have Consuta rolled out into the yard to raise steam, and run the engine very slowly, and of course test the whistle. We will welcome your comments, criticism (not too many I hope), and compliments.

During the week following this party, we are planning to move Consuta by road to Bushnell's, Wargrave for launching and river trials. The initial trials afloat are not intended to be in the public gaze, to save possible embarrassment, however once everything is pronounced in good order, the formal re-commissioning of Consuta could be during the weekend 20th/21st October (weather dependant). Contact me nearer the time for confirmation of this, I will also put this information on the Consuta web site.

Any other boats on the water during this weekend would be most welcome to join in. Peter and Liza Sutcliffe, owners of the steam launch Mythical Maid (a 30ft Saunders stitched hull), have already said they would like to come along and celebrate Mythical Maid's 100th birthday – wonderful, so fingers crossed that we can get everything together and for nice weather over this weekend.

Is the restoration work really finished?

Of course not, there are still a myriad of task to be completed, some jobs can wait until the winter lay-up, but some have to be done now. Here is a list of some urgent jobs for which you might like to give a hand, please give me a call if you can help:-

- Painting the removable canvas covered side decks, these can be taken away (on a roof rack) for painting.
- Painting the engine floor plates, the cockpit floor boards (these also can be taken away for this).
- Painting the boiler top, has to be done in situ.

All these will be in the same colour (light gray, paint provided)

- Antifoul painting.

Geoff Newton is busy making a boat cover for Consuta (light weight for summer use)

So where is Consuta to be based?

Consuta will be based at Bushnell's for the initial trials, following this we may take up the kind offer of a free temporary mooring between Sonning and Shiplake lock. Present thinking is that Consuta will then be lifted out and kept at Bushnell's on their hard during the winter. If we do this then we would need to erect a simple weatherproof tent over Consuta to allow access to the launch for the duration ashore. Has anybody got access to a suitable structure? The tents used by Colin Henwood show the type of cover that can be provided.

How is the funding going?

Pretty well. At this stage we have not had all the final bills yet, but it is likely that we are going to be a few thousand pounds overspent – oops!, so I'm sorry, but we will need to go around with the begging bowl again. I did ask my fellow Trustees "should we stop when our fund allocation has been spent", they are all of stout heart and said "no we have to go to completion". So if you do have any spare cash, please consider the Trust. Many thanks to those who are contributing by way of a monthly standing order, Geoff tells me that he is about to process the tax refund on the years contributions, you will be pleased to know that we get 28% additional to your contributions courtesy of the Inland Revenue. If you are not yet making a monthly donation but would like to join this method of contribution, please contact me, donations can be as little as £2 per month.

The volunteers efforts

There have been several work parties, all involving paint and varnish preparation work. There are several benefits for the Trust. A typical work party can save us about £300, also this work can be claimed as "in kind" contribution as our part of the HLF funding payments. We get a credit of £50 a day per person (unskilled rate), and we are allowed to claim some £2,500 in total for this type of work. These volunteers now have a better idea of how to go about getting those wonderful paint and varnish finishes produced by the professionals.

Thanks very much to the supporters who have contributed various odd jobs towards the restoration. I would also like to thank all those who have offered, or have donated items. These include:- oil cans, ensign and jack staff, engine lubricator, fenders, mooring lines, engine bilge pump, various casting items, Windermere kettle (Tony, we don't seem to have a steam valve for this!), lubrication and steam oil, boiler treatment, etc.

Still needed are:-

- 12V electric bilge pump with float switch and 12V battery.
- Emergency tiller – fabricated to fit over the rudder shank.
- Handles for the injector boiler feed shut offs.
- Perhaps we need some paddles in case of emergencies.

Paints for Consuta have been provided at no charge.

International Paints have provided free paint, varnish and anti-foul for Consuta, this is valued at £700 – thanks very much to IP and also to John Schofield for making the arrangements.

Keeping up to date

We have a web site which I try to keep up to date, so look here for the latest news.

Consuta website is:- www.consuta.org.uk

If you have any ideas or comments please let me know either by email or ordinary mail or telephone.

Email:- brianws@ukonline.co.uk or Brian Smith, 19 Mill Bank, Kintbury, Hungerford, Berks., RG17 9UW

Telephone 01488 658795

Brian Smith

Items required for Consuta

- Firing irons:- Rake, and slicer (bent poker), hand shovel
- Boiler cleaning rod and steel tube brushes, 1¼ inch size.
- Metal buckets – two minimum
- Oil cans – thumb pump action. – at least two.
- Suitable tools for an onboard toolkit. For anyone who fancies there is an opportunity to make a nice wooden tool chest to fit on Consuta. If you have visited the Steamboat Museum at Windermere, you may remember that the SL Otto has a lovely wooden tool case. Now this really would be something special.
- Tins of Brass polish.
- Cleaning and polishing rags.
- Mops
- A mechanical driven oil pump for the steam supply to the engine.
- Boat hooks. Probably two a short one and a long one.
- A brass megaphone for coaching duties (I jest!)
- Fenders We think the best size would be say 7 inches diameter, tubular type with rope eyes at each end, 6 to 8 off needed, and 4 off of bottle fenders diameter about 9 inches.
- Mooring Lines.
- Anchor and chain – folding fisherman or folding Thames type – say 20 to 30 lb.

This list is not a definitive list, if you think I've missed anything off let me know. For example I've not included consumables such as kindling, coal, lub oils, packing material etc. If you think you can help with any of these items, please let me know:- Brian Smith 01488 658795.