



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

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*Graham Eades Lindsay died September
this year at the age of 83*

Supported by:-

The Transport Trust
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Graham Lindsay was born in Birmingham July 1921 and with his younger late brother was raised in a Quaker family. He embarked on an engineering career which culminated working at Harwell in charge of one of the sites Nuclear Reactors. He was a Chartered Engineer and a member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers. On retirement he married Janet Barker who he had known for a very long time; sadly Janet died a year later.

From early childhood Graham had an interest in boats and ships of all kinds, Graham's particular forte however was the steam launch. In his research work, attention to accuracy and detail was almost obsessive. He loved pouring over drawings and photographs of historic launches; he knew all the boat yards along the River Thames. As a result Graham was able to contribute much to Raymond Wheeler's two splendid books covering the history of the Saunders business.

Unfortunately Graham was extremely short sighted and because of this depended heavily on public transport. Despite this handicap he often visited boatyards involved with any restoration or classic boat building project and he loved to discuss boating details with the restorers.

He rescued the 1874 Thornycroft steam launch Eva which was restored to steam in 1987. Eva is now on display at the River and Rowing Museum in Henley. Graham was greatly disappointed when he learnt that Eva after being taken over by the museum would never come out or be steamed again. He had taken such great effort to ensure that the installation was in full working condition.



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

Graham rescued Consuta in 1975 and he worked on the restoration, culminating with the formation of The Consuta Trust in 1998. He was delighted and proud of the way in which The Trust supporters had managed to complete the restoration and steam Consuta at so many Thames events.

Probably his greatest ambition was that the River Thames could one day have it's own Heritage Museum representing the story of navigation on the river with a centre piece of historic boats on display, afloat in the water and being used.

Graham would spent a lot of time on the telephone, and if you were on his list, there would be regular hour long discussions usually covering some engineering or boating topic. Graham was a charming gentleman, and he will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

The 2004 season

This year has been a memorable season for Consuta operations, although the last two months have been very quiet. Perhaps this is not surprising because we did start rather early with our Ely visit in February.

Since the last newsletter we have visited the Goring and Streatley Regatta which was quite delightful, and as last year we followed the Goring and Streatley village fours race; great fun. During the regatta, I was fascinated to learn that the site of the old Saunders Springfield Works had been left for the benefit of the children of the area, and a group are looking at the possibility of setting up a trust to achieve this objective. Consuta was built here for the first owner, Mr Clutton who lived at Cleeve Mill.

After this Regatta, Consuta returned down river on the Sunday to make a flying visit to the Traditional Boat Rally. Supporter David Harding, from the Midlands, had brought some Daw Mill coal (a Midlands coal mine) which he said was very good. It certainly was, but it was also a bit smoky so we had to be careful and time our firing to avoid unsociable conditions in locks.

During this trip I also discovered a technique for turning Consuta easily in the river width. The method needs a bit nerve from the helmsman and is not for the faint hearted (drive really hard before the turn and put full lock on without reducing power). Wow – passengers advised to hang on during the manoeuvre, but it does give an easy turn in less than half the river width. We did this just below Temple Island; admittedly turning round to port which is the correct way for the prop rotation I'm told. We had been advised that drivers of Tony Hobb's Enchantress also uses this technique (she has the rudder hanging right out at the back – ie some way from the prop).



Graham – in the bow of Eva taken during 1989

Earlier in the year we had had turning problems, but this was traced to lack of turns on the steering drum not giving full rudder movement. Oops! so when did we loose that cable turn then?

The last Consuta trips were for supporter booked outings, plus a wedding, and a birthday celebration. These excursions were all based at Beale Park, so we managed a cruise to Wallingford on one of the days.

Consuta is to be housed in the Cowshed at Beale Park through the Winter thanks to the Wednesday Model Boat Club and Richard Howard. The arrangements for the lift-out have been planned, and she should be out by the time you get this newsletter. The Trust are thinking of obtaining a substantial road trailer for moving the boiler when removed from the boat, it could also be used to transport coal supplies during the summer. Anyone know of one that is available?

Talking of Coal we seem to have burnt about 4 tons of coal, I wonder how many miles that covered. From the log we know how many hours in steam, so I might be able to work it out.

The Winter Schedule

There is a long list of all those jobs that need to be done once the boat is out of the water. We will also be looking at boiler design for a possible replacement. Our need is to reduce overall boat weight and to improve boiler performance. We decided to put off a complete re-varnish job this winter, and save our funds for a possible boiler replacement. The steam machinery has performed very well during the year, the engine at times is beginning to sound quite nice and quiet, however there is still room for improvement. Better valve set-up to get even chuffs at low revs and a thorough check of the bearings. Consuta had a hard time at Ely and also the tidal Thames visits, but very little work has been needed on the engine.

Future plans

The Trust need more skippers and crew. At the moment the only skippers are four of the Trustees. There are quite a few crew volunteers but unfortunately most of our younger crew members are only available at weekends. Don't hold back come and help run Consuta, it is great fun and can be very rewarding.

1 ton of coal being delivered from Signal Fuels to the Thames and Kennet Marina

Winter Social

Yes we are planning a winter get together. This is being arranged for Saturday January 29th and will be held at the Morrell room Streatley. Why Streatley? why not just for a change? Consuta is very close by if anyone is keen to make an inspection. The booking form will be out with the Christmas newsletter, but please make a note of the date now.



Brian Smith 6th November 2004



Above: Lensday Club Outing in June

Below: Another outing on the Henley reach also in June

*Photos provided by Derek Brown
Lots of familiar faces here.*

