



The Consuta Trust

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

Consuta Trust Newsletter - Winter 2020

Dear Supporter,

Seasonal greetings, we hope that you are keeping well and profitably occupied during this difficult year.

You may be wondering what we are planning for Consuta's during 2021, lot's of ideas of course but all depends on what restrictions are likely to be in place and how long they will last. We will just have to hope for a reasonably normal boating season later in the year. There is no point making any long term plans at present; so sadly no annual social for now, however as soon as the situation becomes clearer we will see what can be planned.

The trust have signed off the HLF Consuta grant project while still retaining sufficient funds to complete the main part of the project activities programme, and this looks very ambitious. First we will need to train our volunteers in the use of the new Consuta steam installation. She was last steamed some three years ago. and we now have the new boiler installation to master – exciting times ahead.

That vintage Frith photo quiz included in the last newsletter had everyone guessing, I thought it might have been an easy one to identify because we pass through this lock many times each year. The photo was taken from the upstream approach to Caversham Lock. Someone pointed out that there were street lights along the pathway in the old photo; interesting, that left me wondering if they were oil, gas or electric, the photo was dated 1913. Giving my age away, I do remember gas lights which were used at my old primary school in Northumberland, it was quite exciting for the school children when the gas lighter came during lessons to each classroom when turning them on then lighting up. The gas was of course town gas, a mix of hydrogen and carbon monoxide.

In the last newsletter we published some details about a Consuta plywood house in Devon. Well completely out of the blue, the house's new owner contacted us a few weeks ago and said he would like to gift the building to a suitable organisation if it could be put on public display; it is listed grade II by Historic England. This building certainly deserves to be on show, however the Trust cannot consider taking this on as it is not part of our charitable objects. If you have any thoughts, suggestions or ideas to help the owner, please let me know and I will pass these on? Pictures overleaf show the Consuta building.

Many thanks for your continuing support

Seasonal greetings to all and stay well.

Brian Smith on behalf of the Trustees.



Details below from the Historic England website

PLAN: Dodecagonal (12 sided) bungalow, with alternating rectangular projections, of approximately 11 metres in diameter.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION: Southdown is designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * The design of the house featured in the 1923 Daily Mail Ideal Home Exhibition and is an early example of the pre-fabricated holiday home for the middle classes * It is the only known surviving example of a patented Consuta bungalow by S. E. Saunders Ltd *

* It uses the innovative Consuta, a veneered plywood which was a pioneering material for boat building and British aircraft, in a domestic building. * It has an unusual dodecagonal plan form with rooms radiating off a central space * It has an intact interior which retains its Consuta panelling, light and electrical fittings, and door furniture

