



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

Consuta Trust Newsletter - Winter 2016

Dear All,

Consuta end of season

We had one last trip with Consuta on 15th October. Steam needs to be raised to blow the boiler empty, and because this year the Autumn weather was so good this year why not have a short trip? why not indeed? So we had a run up to Goring in the sunshine then back to have lunch in the Swan at Pangbourne. The Swan was very busy, probably because it was such a nice day. Once back at Beale Park the boiler was blown down empty, and boiler doors knocked in.

The crane was booked for the next week; all went well at first on quite a nice day but we had a problem because one of the boat support pads on the trailer had been reversed so she didn't sit down correctly at first, soon corrected when the mistake was spotted. This was a gentle reminder that craning out is always a bit risky even though it usually goes so smoothly, not this time though.



*Oops we nearly had serious problem here!
Everybody looking - to see what's gone wrong?*

The Consuta Project (A new boiler and more)

An HLF grant application has just been submitted for a new boiler refurbishment of Consuta. This application is for a "Our Heritage" HLF grant and we are asking for £80,000.

The grant application is called "The Consuta Project" and will last for about 18 months from Spring 2017 to Autumn 2018. The main part of the fitting out period for Consuta however will be during winter of 2018 aiming to be ready by May 2018. This should mean no loss of operational outings.

The HLF project requires an exhibition unit in the Beale Car Park to allow a co-ordination of various project activities which are an important feature of HLF grants. This unit will be staffed by two part time staff recruited for the 18 months programme, plus support from any volunteers who would like to help the project. The costs for this are included in the grant application. The Consuta Trust will be contributing £18,000 from our cash reserves towards the project, plus a similar cash equivalent of volunteer effort.

If we are successful in obtaining the grant then all work on Consuta should be completed out of season. If not then the Trustees had decided we will still order the boiler paid with trust funds; but the fitting out will probably not be as quick. This would also mean there will be no public display unit which is where we are hoping to gain more supporter recruits.

Sad News

National Historic Ships Director Martyn Heighton died suddenly early November. He was a great advocate of our marine heritage and had helped the Consuta Trust on several occasions. I last saw Martyn at the Trad Rally this year when he scolded me that Consuta was not displaying the National Historic ships defaced ensign which shows that Consuta is registered with fleet status. Martyn produce a flag with instructions to put that on Consuta's flag staff before taking part in any more parades. We shall miss Martyn.

The Tamesis Trust Museum project

Lyn, Paul and myself decided to visit the National Maritime Museum (Falmouth). I had last seen the museum when it first opened and at the time had rather disappointing display arrangements. I was told that there had been major improvements since then and that I should see it now. Another reason was that this museum has responsibility for displaying the Greenwich National Maritime Museum small ships collection which include several important historic Thames boats.

Two of interest are Waterlily built by Thornycroft in 1866, and Merk the first Andrews slipper launch built 1912. Waterlily is presented very well and is a delightful historic launch, but does not have the original machinery; the steam plant fitted in 1977 is not even a practical working installation. Merk a much smaller boat, is a delightful Edwardian sports boat with a twin cylinder copper jacketed Watermoto. Merk is quite different to all the modern and bigger Thames slipper launches. It's a bit like comparing an Austin 7 with an Austin Healy.

What a pity the only way to see these historic Thames boats is to travel to Cornwall. There is no doubt in my mind that the Thames should and must have a boat museum which celebrates the River Thames's wonderful and wide ranging history covering the period of mechanically propelled boating developments.

The Trustees of the Tamesis Trust (all Consuta Trustees as well) have just finalised the museum design, so during 2017 we will start the serious task of fund raising.

Winter Social

This has been arranged at the Riverside Restaurant. The meal will be an Indian style buffet lunch with a wide variety of dishes. The inn is placed by the down river side of Caversham bridge overlooking the river, this is frequent stopping place for Consuta during repositionals

Help Needed

We will need lots of volunteer support if we are successful with the new boiler grant application, the decision is expected by February 2017, also we need help to get Consuta ready for the 2017 season. There are a few Consuta jobs that probably can be managed at home, so if you would like to offer your services please just let me know by email.

Thank you for your continued support and wishing you all the very best for 2017.

Brian Smith - December 2016

The National Maritime Museum (Cornwall)

A display of some Historic Thames craft at the Falmouth based museum



Merk is the original slipper style launch made by John Andrews on Maidenhead in 1912.

She is a wooden hull with a flat bottom fitted with a Watermota twin cylinder two stroke petrol engine.

Built as a sports boat and is quite small, there is only room on board. for two friendly people

Presented to the Greenwich National Maritime Museum

This is the lovely Thames steam launch Waterlily built by J.I Thornycroft at Chiswick in 1866, with a riveted iron plate hull.

In 1919 the steam plant was removed and an internal combustion engine fitted .

Waterlily was then restored to steam by Vosper Thornycroft apprentices in 1977. A single cylinder steam engine (thought to be from 1896) was fitted with a new boiler built in 1977.

Waterlily owned by the Thornycroft family was steamed at an SBA river Beaulieu event after the restoration, then presented to the Greenwich National Maritime Museum



Museum Model sail boat pond.

There are a row of fan ducts along the right hand side which creates the breeze for the sail boats.

The remote controls for the yachts provide rudder and sail set functions.

We were told that when the weather is bad outside this is sometime very popular with the local sailing community – sounds like a good tale.

However I can confirm that it is great fun to have a go

Consuta Winter Social

Booking form

The River Spice Restaurant is on the immediate left of this photo.

Photo of Consuta stopping for lunch in 2015, on the way to Pangbourne



To be held at the River Spice tandoori restaurant, Caversham, Reading, 12:00 to 15:00 on Saturday 18th February 2017.

The restaurant is right on the banks of the Thames on the down river side of Caversham bridge with pleasant views across the river.

The meal is a buffet with a selection of Indian dishes including vegetarian options. There will also be a selection of puddings or ice cream, finishing with tea or coffee.

Cost per person £15 each

The Restaurant has a reasonable size car park. Access is from the Caversham bridge roundabout on the Reading side of the Thames, turn off down Waterman Place road.

If you would like to come along please fill in this form, include your payment cheque made payable to The Consuta Trust and send to 19 Mill Bank, Kintbury, Hungerford, RG17 9UW before the 6th February 2016

If you have any queries please just contact me

Email:- brian.smith@consuta.org.uk or telephone:- 01488 658795

Print your name

Number in party My payment cheque enclosed for £

My contact emailTelephone

Nicholas Bazil has contacted The Consuta Trust because he wondered if our members might be interested in a **DVD** titled **Secret Life of Father Thames** about the upper River Thames, which he is selling at £7.50 plus p&p; there may be a donation to the Trust. The DVD covers the Thames from the source to Hardwick House and contains much historic information about various locations along the river. There is a short section about S.E. Saunders with a film clip of Consuta.

If you are interested please contact Mr. Bazil to obtain a copy.

Contact phone and email 01189841602; e-mail: nicholasbrazil@btinternet.com.