

Consuta Newsletter - Winter 2009

Consuta Newsletter No 40.

As there is a lot of work in progress, it seems appropriate to include a news update with the Christmas Card

Engineering work — Boiler.

All the tubes have now been removed. The main problem has been leakage at the firebox end of the tube, mostly over the bottom three rows. We're still not quite sure why, there are various theories about this but no final conclusions. One possibility is that the fire has frequently been too deep covering the bottom row of tubes which cannot be good. It's probable that there has been leakage here for several years, and this had caused corrosion debris build up between the tube and its hole in the tube plate so it became impossible to make the joint good again by further tube expanding. Because of this the tube plate holes needing a bit of attention before we fit the replacement tubes. If there hadn't been this problem the tubes looked as though they would have been good enough for several more years service. The cost of replacement tubes will be quite high, they have to be a suitable grade of carbon steel for the service conditions, so if you want to make a financial contribution this would be most welcome. Each tube will cost I guess about £15 each and there are 43 of them.

While doing this repair work, we are taking the opportunity to replace some of the firebars which had become burnt and a little bent, also the bars will be mounted lower by about 2 inches and this will give a deeper firebox so should put less heat burning stress on the lower tubes.

While the boiler is out, all fittings are to be removed for overhaul. Work has already started on de-rusting the boiler round the foundation ring using an air hammer chisel; most effective if a bit noisy. The stainless steel ashpan will also need minor repair work because there were a few pinholes; proving the point that stainless steel is not impervious to corrosion

Consuta's Hull

As you will know we had a slight singeing of the varnish work in the back cockpit. David has had a preliminary rub down of the burnt varnish and it looks as though the wood is going to be OK. We are intending to re-varnish the fore and aft cockpits through the winter months, so hopefully all signs of the damage will have been removed.

Consuta's engine

Towards the end of the season there seemed to be a knocking noise from the reversing lever linkage, this was diagnosed as the lever having slight play on the weigh shaft. The lever is locked tight here with a key way with key plus a large taper pin. The key had always been slightly loose so relied on the taper pin. On removal of the taper pin, it was found to have shattered into three pieces – all is explained. This will be an easy fault to repair. Otherwise the engine is running very well.

The boathouse

The Beale Park Trust were not prepared to allow Consuta's floating boathouse to be based at the park without written approval from the planning department. We thought this unnecessary as the boathouse was not to be based on the lake which has the restrictive planning conditions on use.

We have identified two alternative locations in the Goring/Streatley area which looks most promising, and our approaches to the Goring and Streatley village communities have been met with a very positive initial response. A base here is perhaps more appropriate because the Saunders family owned the Swan, later they expanded business onto the Goring side with boathouses in the Goring mill weir stream, and

then to the Springfield Works site a mile up river.

HLF Grant

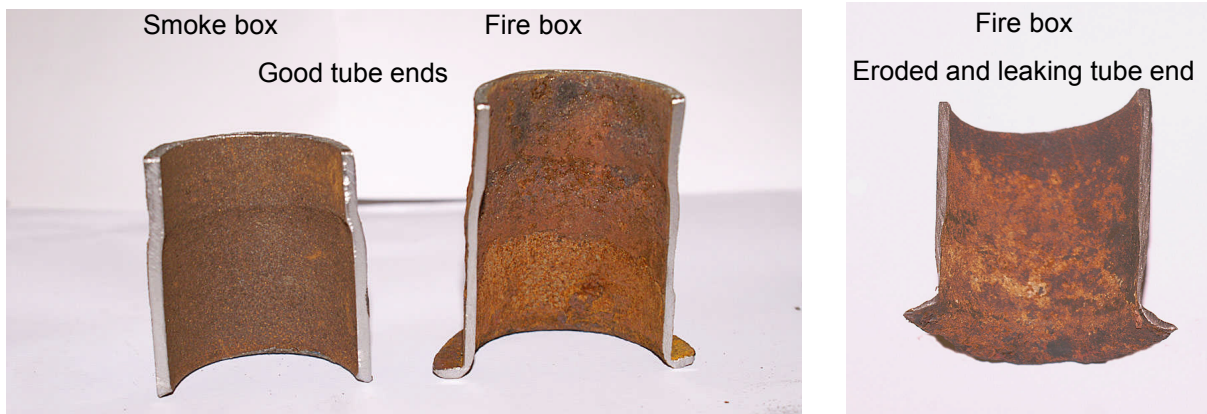
We've contacted the HLF London office and asked for details as to why our application had been rejected. As a result we have now been invited to meet senior regional officers for discussions. So we are hopeful that they can provide some useful advice and we can make a new application for lottery funding.

The 2010 calendar.

One new venture being planned for Consuta is to look at the possibility of providing formal engineering training sessions. These will take the form of theoretical and practical work; more on this later. One outcome is that we intend to publish an engineering training handbook, covering a simple explanation of all parts of Consuta's steam machinery and comprehensive guidance on good operational procedures on Consuta. This is long overdue and I hope will encourage volunteers from backgrounds who don't have any engineering experience to try their hand and gain new skills.

Our winter Social is at the Shiplake College, please see the separate sheet giving details. I do hope you can come along and enjoy a bit of winter socialising.

Trust news



Sections through three tubes ends removed from Consuta's boiler – bottom is tube plate end
The swaging of the tube where it fits into the tube plate hole can be clearly seen. The tubes are 1½" dia, tube plate ½" thick.
The tubes on this boiler were folded over (peened over) in the firebox, this is done to prevent tube ends being burnt.

We are please to announce that Robin Ford has now joined the Trust as a Trustee

Donations

I'm frequently asked "I want to make a donation but who do I send it to?", so I'll be including a donation request form with future newsletters just in case you wish to use it.

Cheques should be made payable to The Consuta Trust, if you are a tax payer you can make the donation as "gift aid". This means that for every £1 you give we can claim a further 28p from the tax man. If you send a donation please state whether you are a UK tax payer and that you wish to make the donation as "Gift Aid".

All donations should be sent to:- Hon Treasurer, Derek Brown, 'Wingfield', Wood Lane, Kidmore End, Reading, RG4 9BE Tel:- 01189723895.

Wishing everyone good luck for the New Year

Brian Smith

The Consuta Trust is a registered charity with the Charity Commission — No. 1076505