



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 2025

Welcome to our Winter newsletter.

Consuta outing with works apprentices

Mark had arranged a Consuta demonstration steam outing for his works apprentice group on 26th August. The cruising was based on the Thames Dreadnought reach with help from the Thames Valley Rowing Club.

Consuta was to pickup and drop off all participants in two groups at the sailing club jetties which are close to the Caverham Lakes marina. The rowing club were very helpful allowing Consuta the use of their excellent moorings on this reach of the Thames.



Visiting the Henley River and Rowing Museum before final closure

Our visit was planned to be with Consuta, by steaming down to the museum on Saturday 20th September. Unfortunately the weather forecast for the afternoon predicted heavy rains so the Consuta trip was cancelled – let's face it putting the covers over Consuta at the end of a rainy day is not a good idea.

However several members took the opportunity to come along by car so there was a good supporter's gathering at the museum.

We made a thorough examination of the 1874 Thornycroft steam launch EVA, she was looking great, very clean and tidy. Obviously museum

staff have taken much care to keep her looking smart. Eva of course has a similar boiler to the old one previously used in Consuta, the only difference is that Eva's is side fired and the fire box is only about two thirds as long as Consuta's old one.



Matthew Pinsent, James Cracknell and Lyn

You may be wondering what will happen to Eva when the museum closes. It seems there are complicated procedures for the disposal of accredited museum assets, however the Thames Trust are in contact with the Museum trustees about all future options.



Photos from top to bottom

Consuta supporters studying engine room details.

The steam engine is rated at 45hp

View from the stern

The large three bladed prop

Note rudder is in front of the propeller,

Eva is 45ft long with a riveted iron hull built by J.I. Thornycroft at Chiswick in 1874 No.34. Fitted with a single 6 ¼" x 8" cylinder engine and a side fired loco boiler, originally tiller steered without the cabin. Eva was restored to steam by Graham Lindsay in 1985.

Consuta's final steaming

Made on October 11th to move her to the Better Boating Co. boatyard for our winter crane out. The choice of where to do this was rather difficult decision and depended on ease of locational access for our winter workers.

Consuta cruised up river first, passing the boatyard, then through Caversham lock to moor at Caversham bridge just above the lock for some take away lunches. It seems that the Reading Amateur Rowing club had a racing event on the day, so the river here was extremely busy with rowers. The race course located by Caversham meadows is quite short, I think it is only 600 metres, so the races do not carry umpires by boat. After lunch we then had a short two mile cruise further up river before returning to the boatyard at Caversham, to moor up ready for the lift out arranged for the following week.



This steam outing was attended by eleven supporters involving a rather complicated car shuffle which worked well despite major road delays crossing the Thames in Sonning. At the end of the day everyone was accounted for and reunited with their cars.

Crane out and initial winter prep work

Consuta was craned out without problems, the crane could lift well over 30 tons, Consuta's weight with empty boiler was just over 3.2 tons. We think Consuta is currently about one ton lighter now than with the old boiler although perhaps still a bit heavier than when first built. The yard pressure wash removed most of the antifoul but was having difficulty removing the chalky lime film, so we said leave that for us. It was surprising how quickly this fouling had built up on the white topsides, following the Henley Trad event, and mainly on one side. Maybe the Thames was rather dirty this year, perhaps due to low river summer water flow.

When we went over to winterise Consuta a couple of days later we took a great range of toilet cleaners. Paul and myself thought the Debs cleaner was best, Lyn preferred the Cillit Bang. Anyway after one hour of careful work the hull white topsides were pristine clean.

The funnel was then taken down, the safety valve removed, and dome top plate lifted. The tubes were rodded through and a large amount of soot was removed from the smoke box.

Paul decided he would like to put the extra sheeting over Consuta before we left as heavy rain was predicted during the following days, so quite a lot of work was completed by end





*Top left:-
High pressure jet wash*

*Top right:-
Bottom row of tubes cleaned, more to do.*



After all tubes were cleaned, this bucket shows how much soot/ash was removed from the smokebox

Left:- Final a battery jet wash off by me when all lime scale grime had been removed.

Bottom photo:-

Funnel now lowered and Consuta all sheeted up ready for the winter.



Seasonal greetings from
Brian Smith and
The Consuta Trustees,
November 2025

