



THE EMPIRE'S LAUNCH.

The Consuta Trust

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Patron: The Rt. Hon. Lord Strathcona & Mount Royal

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The Consuta Trust Newsletter No.6 (December 2000)

Patron

We are delighted that Lord Strathcona has consented to becoming a patron of the Consuta Trust. Members of the Steam Boat Association will already know that he is the President and a founder member of the SBA with a lifetime interest in our maritime history.

Funding

The Consuta Trust have applied for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and The Transport Trust.

Heritage Lottery Fund

We have applied for funds to complete the restoration of Consuta. Tony Cundick has put the application together, and this was deposited with the HLF in September. The estimated cost is about £49,000. We are very confident that the application will be successful. I hope to be able to say something positive early in the New Year.

The Transport Trust

The Trust have applied to the Transport Trust for funding, this application is limited to a maximum of £2,000. I understand that a decision from The Transport Trust is due shortly.

Monthly Standing Order Subscriptions

The Trustees have recently launched a new regular monthly contribution scheme, application forms for this have been circulated to SBA members courtesy of the SBA. The idea is to raise sufficient funds to help with the annual costs of operating Consuta. A minimum of £2 per month has been applied, some are contributing £10 per month, take up so far will raise nearly £1000 per annum. This fund will be held in reserve for operating costs. Eventually Consuta should be able to cover operating costs from appearance fees etc. A SO form is included if you would like to join.

Restoration Work Schedule

The summer work schedule was a little slow for various reasons. Since July Colin Henwood and his men have completed the construction of the engine/boiler compartment side decks, and finish off all work on the fore and aft cockpits. SBA members were able to view and inspect Consuta on an open day in September. At this time, the proper boiler and engine were fitted in the launch.

It was clear that the installation work of the machinery would have to be completed before the boiler and engine casing could be made. The exact position of the pipework will be needed before building the boiler and engine casing.

Early in October, the Trustees decided it was important to continue the momentum of the restoration by taking advantage of two offers of unsecured financial loans. As a result we dropped the idea of keeping Consuta in the Cowshed at Child Beale Park. So Consuta has now been moved to the Kew Steam Museum who have been commissioned to complete the engineering installation. We hope to move Consuta back to Henwood and Dean for finishing off, if funding is available.

The boiler and the engine were removed from Consuta and taken to Kew by Tony Cundick. Consuta was then fitted to her cradle/road trailer, and the Smith family towed her to Kew on 27th November. This vehicle and trailer combination was over 70ft long and required police permission, thankfully

without a costly escort. The day chosen was one of those rare dry and sunny autumnal days. The most interesting end of the trip was to lift Consuta plus cradle off the road trailer at Kew. We are not sure of the weight so Tony has promised to weigh the hull at some point, this will be interesting. The engineering work should be completed by Easter.

New boiler fittings are now being made that are just not obtainable now. For example a couple of new combined check and shutoff valves have been designed and made, these will be used for the injector boiler feed inputs. There are other details which still need to be resolved, the steering arrangements using two steering wheels, and the remote engine throttle control. Geoff Newton had made a mock engine casing to a drawing by Graham Lindsay, this has given much food for thought on how the original installation might have been.

Steaming Consuta during 2001

The Trustees have decided that (2001) the first year of operation, will be used to sort out any problems and to trained up operational crews. If all goes well we may be able to take part in some of the River Thames pageants. During this first year of operation, we will need additional financial support for all those costs, such as license, insurance, fuels, and mooring charges.

The Engine

Further research has confirmed (beyond reasonable doubt) that the engine which is on loan is the original from Consuta. James Taylor remembers a visit to Tom Taylor's yard in the 1950's with his father. They saw this engine, which was being used to drive some bending rolls, and James's father asked where the engine had come from. Tom Taylor told him that he should know because he had removed it from Consuta in 1923. We already know by information obtained from a different source in the 1960's that Consuta was moved to Tom Taylor's yard in 1923 for removal of the steam plant. There is no way of proving all this, but the Trustees have now accepted that this engine is almost certainly the original. A few of us would be interested to see and measure up the engine from Maritana, presently in Canada, we think that it is probably identical to Consuta's engine.

Supporters Club

Still working on an ad hoc basis (ie I do the paperwork). We now have about 80 active supporters which is very encouraging.

So where to keep Consuta when restored? We are looking forward to a permanent base at Beale Park. The Park has recently applied for planning consent for a navigation cut onto the large lake.

Seasonal greetings to everyone. *Brian Smith on behalf of the Trustees*



The boatyard near Henley – 7:30am 27th November



Kew Steam Museum – 9:30am 27th November

See present temp Website:- <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/consuta> Email:- brianws.ukonline.co.uk

New website for late December:- www.consuta.org.uk