



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 - Spring 2026

Welcome to our 2026 Spring newsletter.

There was no major Consuta work activity before Xmas since she was lifted out at Better Boating of Caversham. We had a couple of visits just to make sure that the dehumidifier was working, this is checked by an onboard sensor, so no need to lift the covers.

However the two steam injectors and their pipework were removed for the winter. It's a pity that during Consuta operation these very important parts of the machinery are just left alone so needed a good clean. They are low in the boat and get any coal, dirt or water falling from above,.

Consuta Social

We had looked at several possible places for our annual social event and finally decided that the Bear Inn in Hungerford had a good value menu with an excellent special dining room. Mark then made all the arrangements with 23 supporters booked to attend.

We took along some recent photos of Consuta from last year, and Tiki also brought along photos of Eva when she was steamed following restoration by her father Tony Cundick in 1980's.

Tiki told us that she had been helmsman on many of these outings, confirming that Eva could not be stopped quickly, also would be somewhat erratic on the helm when manoeuvring.

I can understand that the big single cylinder engine might be difficult to manoeuvre when going from ahead to astern, we had developed a technique to help with this on the smaller Thornycroft single cylinder engine fitted in Arlette. But why would the steering be erratic?



Paul pointed out that Eva's prop was barely submerged and dependant on boat trim might actually be partially out of the water at times, not good, as this could cause side paddling effect.

In the 1980's Eva was owned by Graham Lindsay who was keen to have her steaming at many SBA events, including a visit to Windermere during 1989.



Photo taken before museum closed. Note rudder is in front of the propeller, typical of many small Victorian vessels



We had a long table plus a side table for young Adam. This arrangement seemed to work very well.

Other news update

In January 2026 Consuta's sister trust the Tamesis Trust has sent an "Expression of Interest" to the Henley River and Rowing Museum Trustees, for future public display of EVA, so we will have to wait and see.

I'm told that the Henley River and Rowing Museum building has been put up for sale, however no sale price is shown on the Rightmove website.

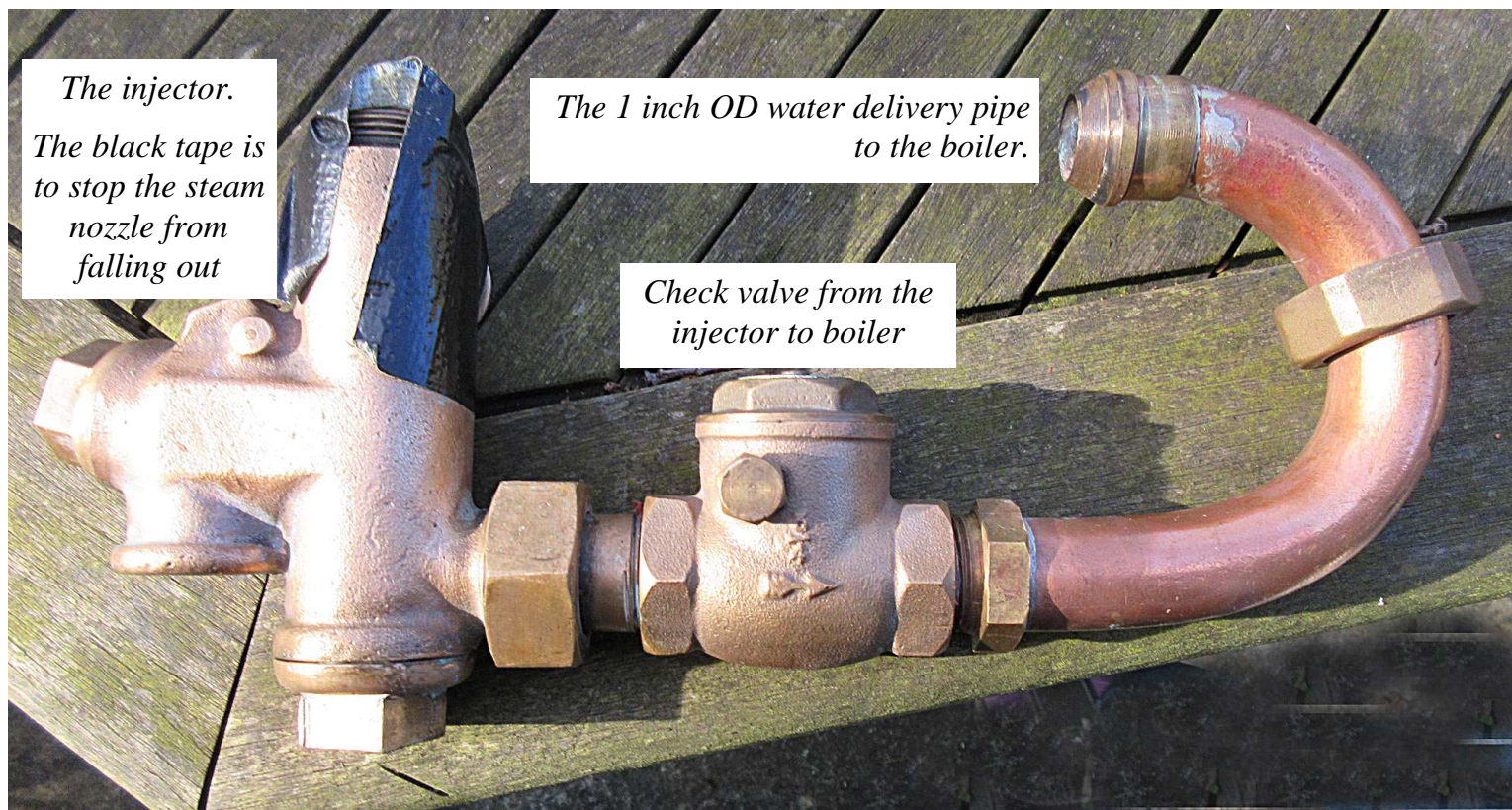
Consuta winter work at home

When Consuta was lifted out for the winter we removed both of our Penberthy injectors. This was to ensure that no water remained inside which could so easily cause frost damage but also because they looked rather dirty and uncared for, with even some green verdigris on the bottom nuts. Probably because they are low in the boat they never get a good clean or polish.

You could argue leave injectors well alone if they are working OK. Well I have given them a bit of a clean up so that they at least for the start of the steaming season will look cared for.

Consuta has two sizes, usually referred to as the big and little injector. Looking up their particulars in an old pre war catalogue, the small one is an AA size and delivers 180 gallons of water per hour, the bigger one is a BB size and delivers 380 gallons per hour. In the late 1930's these cost 50 shillings and 75 shillings respectively. The Penberthy types are still made in the USA and cost about £800 each now though. They are classed as automatic lifting types which means that if they stop because of a knock while operating they will restart automatically without any further adjustment. They have two controls, a water feed regulator valve and a steam valve. Ours work perfectly above 100 psi with the water valve fully open, the steam valve is then adjusted until delivery is achieved.

Steam injectors are very simple devices basically using three special in line shaped nozzles named "steam", "combining" and "delivery" cones, two of these are easily removable.



Here they are cleaned up externally, also with the connecting pipework and the boiler gate valve so they look much smarter, however this of course won't make them work any better.

Consuta early 2026 – the antifouling and the relaunch



We had a few weekdays work to prepare for the relaunching, the final antifouling was completed on 2nd April. Better Boating Ltd agreed to relaunch Consuta on Friday 10th. Supporters attending were Brian, Paul, Lyn, Mark Smith and John Border with Ann and young Adam as onlookers.

Mark decided to steam Consuta from Caversham to the Charvil mooring during the Saturday afternoon, based on weather forecasts. However the weather turned out a bit variable, although with plenty of sun there were also occasional heavy showers, one even of hail, and a strong and very cold northerly wind. Only one other boat was moving on the river during the move.



After this short trip, some additional work was needed to cure a leaking injector feed pipe and some repacking of the stems of two steam valve.

Consuta is now ready for the steaming season, only requiring all the brass to be fully polished up, any volunteers?

Left a group of some of those who helped steam Consuta to Charvil. Paul is holding the SBA Alex Ritchie Memorial Trophy awarded to the trust for Engineering Excellence 2025

Eva on Windermere shortly following restoration.



Breaking News - April.

As you will know from the previous newsletter the Henley River and Rowing Museum (HRRM) closed its doors to the public for the last time last year so our sister trust The Tamesis Trust had been keeping contact

with HRRM about future options for the safe keeping of Thornycroft's steamlaunch **Eva**.

At the end of last year the museum invited "expressions of interest" for Eva (along with much of the rest of their collections) to find a new home. The basic pecking order is Museums are the preferred options, followed by charitable/public organisations with suitable charitable objects, all the way down to possible private sale, or scrapping for items that no other home can be found.

The Tamesis Trust, with support of its Trustees and of the Consuta Trust, put in "an expression of interest" to take over the future care of Eva, and we were informed just a few days ago that the Trustees of the HRRM had agreed that The Tamesis Trust would be good future custodians for Eva.

The Tamesis Trust (a registered CIO) already looks after a nice collection of historic Thornycroft marine steam related objects, so the addition of Eva will probably make it the biggest collection of Thornycroft small steam launches anywhere. Other items in the collection are the 1870 steam launch **Cygnets** (possibly the oldest completely original river launch in existence), the engine and figure head of the experimental tunnel stern launch **Aurora**, the engine from the 2nd class Torpedo Boat **Mosquito** originally supplied for the Colony of Queensland, and last but not least what is believed to be Eva's original boiler with numerous original fittings.

So where from here? The long term aim is to have Eva on public display, which could be as a static exhibit with the option of periodically putting her back into operation. When she was sold for display at the HRRM she was in full working order so it wouldn't be a major task to get her running again, it would also be interesting to have her reunited with her original boiler (if this is repairable), but that would be something for the future.

However for the short term our main aim is to find a suitable place to store her undercover, perhaps with the option of bringing the other parts of this unique collection together in one place with her. **Is this something you could help us with? If you have a suitable space, or know of any, please do get in touch ASAP.**

Initial thoughts are that things are likely to be moving around August.

Trustees of The Tamesis Trust

Possible events to steam Consuta during 2026

Event	Date	Details
Pre launch prepwork. General cleanup of Consuta ready for launching	March to mid April	Clean hull and antifoul make ready for refloating
Launch Consuta and move to summer mooring for boiler	Mid April	Needs to be launched by mid April
Upriver steam to College Barge at Hardwick Estate or	May or June	Supporter outing Good weather only
Henley Woman's Regatta	June 19th-21st	We normally umpire only on a Sat which this year is 20th
Reading Town regatta	June 27th	Just a visit if weather good
Henley Royal Regatta	June 30th-July 5th	General supporter cruising during regatta. Good weather
Henley Music Festival	July 8th July 12th	Supporter cruise at the event. Good weather only
Henley Traditional Boat Festival	July 17th – July 19th Set up on Thursday 16th	Consuta in steam plus a shore display. All days plus setup
Henley Town and Visitor Regatta	August 1st	Supporter cruise at the event. Good weather only
Down river trip to Marlow	August	Supporter outing could be arranged much earlier in
Private outing		Possibly down river

Best wishes from Brian Smith and
The Consuta Trustees, Spring 2026