



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 - Summer 2022

Dear all,

I hope you are keeping well and enjoying the summer season.

Consuta

The good news is that Consuta has had a successful boiler test in May. The test took about five hours, which is rather longer than normal, our boiler inspector required a hydraulic test in addition to the normal cold inspection and steam test. This was reasonable because the original hydraulic test had been carried out three years ago prior to installation in Consuta. This time however all the fittings were in place for the examination, the boiler was tested to approx 1.5 times working pressure, (actually only 240 psi), this was held for about 45 minutes. Yes there were a few fitting leaks which needed some correction before a steam test, three minor leaks remained which were noted in the boiler log for future corrective work. Steam raising was certainly quicker than with the old boiler, possibly better draughting with less water to heat; the new smaller diameter funnel really draws very well, so hopefully the brass funnel band will require less cleaning in the future too. The safety valve is blowing low and we didn't feel like adjusting it, we were only able to reach 172 psi not the 180 psi maximum pressure, perhaps the valve did not fully lift? Using the blower for forcing the boiler under static conditions has limitations compared with what can be achieved with the blast from the engine when under way.

I'm now wondering whether we should have gone for a high lift safety valve. There are three types:- proportional, high lift and full bore, so what is the difference? The proportional valve opens early depending on the boiler pressure, a high lift safety opens closer to the max set pressure, the full bore opens wide with a pop type action at the working pressure; so perhaps we need a high lift valve. I had searched for a safety valve with an adjustable lift control ring, but didn't find one. The other question is should the valve have an easing lever? The inspector said he preferred this type, however the old boiler didn't have safeties with this feature.

Supporters and Consuta operations this year

We had a most disappointing response to our request in the Spring newsletter for active volunteers to help run Consuta, and also from an advert placed in the Steam Boat Association magazine. We'd like to thank the couple of supporters who did get in touch as a result. I also understand that Beale Park don't want boats moored on the lake without significant payments and maybe even payments for use of the cut, this change of park policy is such a great shame. Due to lack of support and the potential of problems both with mooring and finding crew to manage Consuta we decided not to launch her this year but will try to get these difficulties resolved for 2023.

We had hoped that getting the boiler tested ready for an active season would help drum up interest and enthusiasm to run Consuta but sadly this didn't appear to be the case.

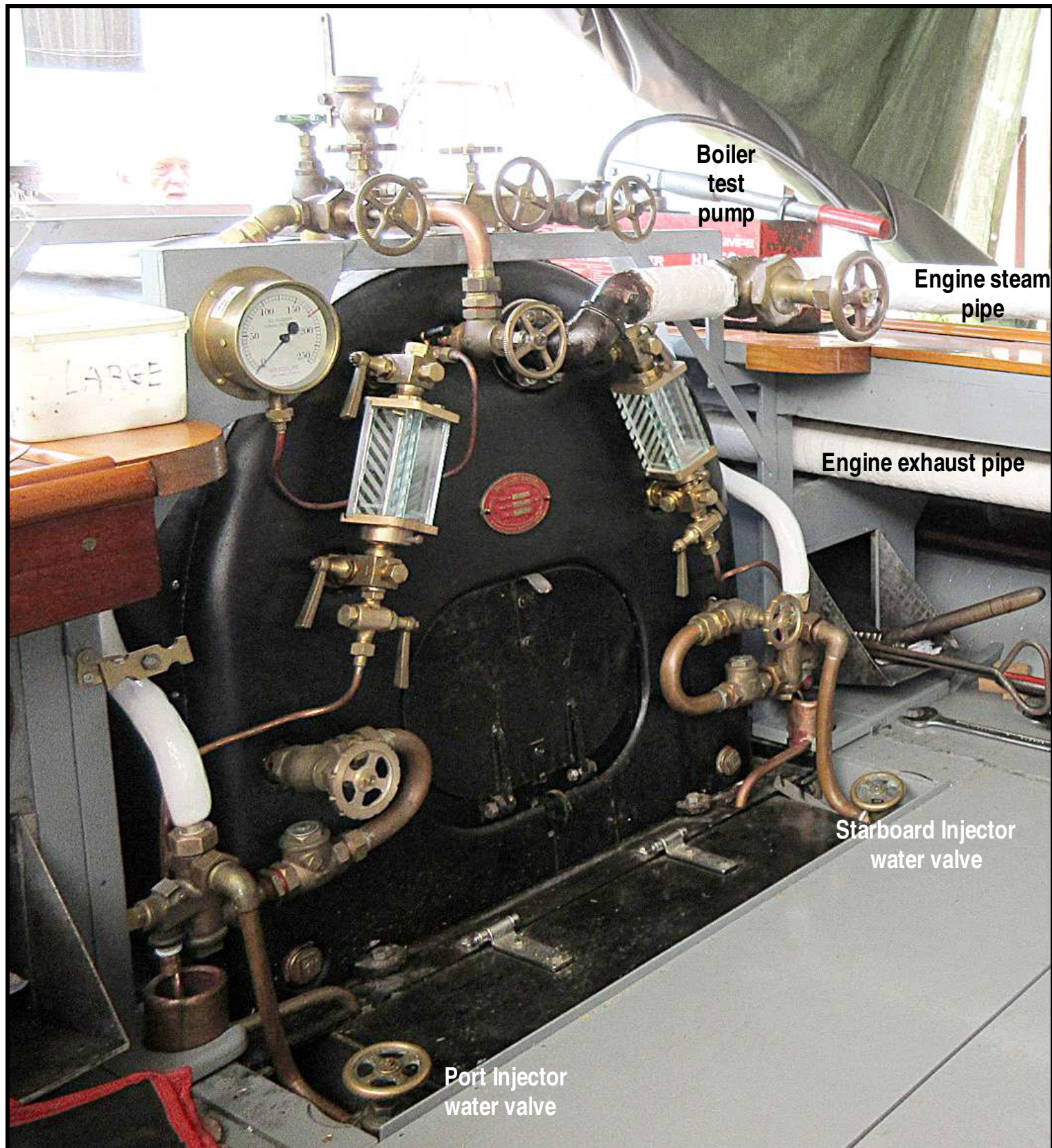


Photo of the new boiler backhead showing the controls; note some of the pipes are labelled.

The boiler test pump is on the red box, note the hand lever. Below this on the photo is the main steam stop valve.

The valve midway between the top of the water gauges is the auxiliary steam stop valve feeding the manifold. The manifold has three valve facing the engineer, from left to right these are the port injector steam, the whistle valve and the starboard injector steam.

Also connected to the manifold but facing upwards are the blower and the bilge ejector steam valves. The green handled valve seen on the top is a temporary shut off cock to the test pump used for the hydraulic test

The brass T handle above the port injector is the blowdown valve using a pull to open action.

As we all get older and in my case becoming less active, it's now becoming ever more important to attract more able supporters to help maintain and operate Consuta. Even if you are a past supporter and feel you can no longer help run Consuta yourself, please help us by spreading the word to friends and family, who maybe would like to get involved if asked. Another concern is the urgent need for a good base to house Consuta with possibilities of having her on public display. I'm still considering an earlier idea of a floating Consuta boathouse styled on the lines of those attractive Oxford college barges, but where could this be kept, any ideas?

You may be wondering is there much more work still to be done on Consuta? the answer is yes of course, there are always things to do, but this is mainly checking that everything works properly once afloat again. We now have the potential of steering Consuta from the front cockpit, although I'm not sure just how safe or practical this will work out. The problem with front steering is that the stern can swing sideways a lot if any correction is not made delicately, so it requires awareness and perhaps a bit more experience.

The new injector pipework and associated fittings worked very well during the boiler inspection, but I would still like this pipework to use period style fittings. A Victorian copy of a check and shut-off cock has already been designed, we just need this to be cast in gunmetal and machined up for use; also the present temporary brass steam manifold needs to be cast in gunmetal as well, because brass can suffer dezincification over time. One other very important issue is to install a Windermere kettle to provide tea making for the crew, however we still haven't decided the final position since having it in the engineers compartment can be quite disruptive when a whole boat load of cups of tea are in the making while trying to operate the boat.

It's surprising how many drawings were required for the various changes necessary for the new boiler installation.

Consuta social

Yes we are still considering the many options so it is still on the cards. We have a few ideas of our own, but would you like to let me have any of your suggestions to add to the possibilities?

Consuta Supporter Outings

Just because we don't have Consuta afloat this year that doesn't mean we can't still find interesting things to do as a group. These could be visits that don't involve having to do work on boats which doesn't seem to be too popular at present.

Whilst the Consuta Project was running, the Trust had arranged various talks and visits, so one thought is that perhaps we should kick start that activity with some more visits. If you have a suggestion for something you think we could do please let me know. A couple of examples are a visit to Bristol and see The Great Britain, or perhaps the impressive engines at the Kempton Steam Museum; so if you would be interested in such a group outing please get in touch ASAP.

The Henley Traditional Boat Festival 2022

The Consuta trust was invited to attend the Henley Traditional Boat Festival in mid July, this was very close to an SBA Windermere event in early July which my family attended so with limited time for preparation we rustled up one of our tried and tested displays.

We attended without Consuta using our marquee combining with the Tamesis Trust and the SBA Trust. The main display was the 1870 Thornycroft steam launch Cygnet plus several photo display boards. Cygnet is completely as built and is a unique survivor from 150 years ago and was a popular exhibit at the Festival, especially for children when looking at the engine should one of our helpers turned the propeller – it's magic you know. Many of the photos displayed included some of Consuta's reboiling work, plus sales of a selection of reprinted early steamboating catalogues.

This event is a great place to meet up with friends and fellow enthusiasts. There are always new things to see at the show with something of interest for most tastes. For me one of the highlights was a flyby of a WW2 Lancaster bomber which made three very low passes over the Festival site.

Many thanks to the Festival organisers for asking our trust to attend. Also a thank you to our four supporters who helped set up the marquee and look after the stand during the festival.

The future

So where are we going with Consuta. Everyone agrees it is imperative to have Consuta afloat and steaming for 2023 season even if we don't have a good base, but to do this we do need help from supporters !

There has been some talk about taking Consuta onto the Kennet and Avon Canal, perhaps a change of scene for her would help encourage some new blood into the trust. A few Crofton pumping station supporters at the Trad festival asked us "how about steamboats visiting Crofton?". Perhaps Consuta could be moored at the family Kintbury mill stream mooring for a season; this would provide opportunities to iron out any steaming problems with a proper workshop handy and also allow some supporter cruises on the canal, perhaps even with a visit to Crofton pumping station, sadly no fast umpire work on the canal though. Any thoughts on this let us know?

We'd love to hear of any suggestions you might have for Consuta ops next year? Always assuming we have supporters to help run her.

I've included a few photos taken at this year's Thames Traditional Boat Festival.

Best wishes,

Brian Smith

On behalf of the trust

30th July 2022



The Consuta Trust pitch early Friday morning ready for the public.

Steam launches at the Thames Traditional Boat Festival

There is always lots to see at the show, with a wonderful variety of Thames traditional boats Dunkirk little Ships and steam launches. There were also large numbers of amphibious boats, military vehicles, classic cars, vintage bicycles, and much more. Also many shore stalls selling a wide range of clothing and historical boating stuff.

SBA members steam launches attending:-

Alystra	Martin Allen
Anna Jayne	Nigel Thompson
Firebird	Dan McFarlane
Garlandstone	Francis Overall
Niaid	John Beveridge
Pendlebury	Unknown
Sunbeam	Martin Steggles



***Firebird** a regular attendee at the Festival passing by.*



***Sunbeam** owned by Martin Steggles, and as always looking immaculate*



***Garlandstone** under new ownership looking resplendent won two of the event awards*

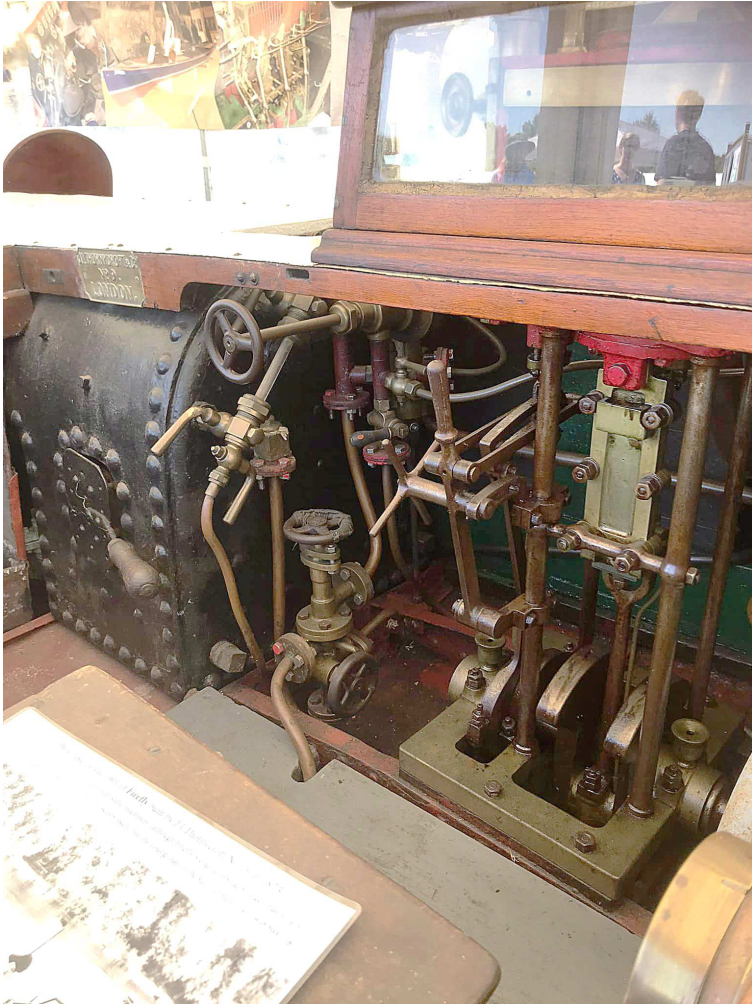


***Alaska** a regular at the show providing public tripping, using biomass green fuel, but does smoke on occasions.*



Windsor Belle** under new ownership was sharing passenger carrying work with **Alaska

Our pitch displaying Cygnet at the TTBF – 2022



Cygnet engine and boiler

Our main marquee display item was the Tamesis Trust steam launch Cygnet, built by John I Thornycroft in 1870.

We also had several free standing display boards covering the history of Consuta from 1898.

Our stall displayed several reprinted historic steamboat catalogues for sale, Consuta leaflets plus our own Consuta donation box.



Those large parasols were really welcome in the hot sun



Experts discuss some of the unique historical details of Cygnet's machinery



Cygnet seems to have gained some Edwardian hats and parasol's



Does this 8 ton amphibious vehicle really float? YES



One of many interesting military vehicles on show



Some of the Dunkirk Little Ships arranged on finger pontoon this year.



*Motor tug **Ensign** owned by the Bil family providing some youngsters lots of fun*



Sorry don't know the make of this classic car but it did look great.



The Lancaster banking so low that we could see the pilot