



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 2024

Dear All,

We are still wondering what happened to that Indian autumn weather that was a possibility for the end of the boating season. The Thames was in red board flood state for most of October, however all was OK here at Kintbury although we were lacking sun shine. A boiler inspection had been booked but didn't happen before we laid Consuta up for the winter.

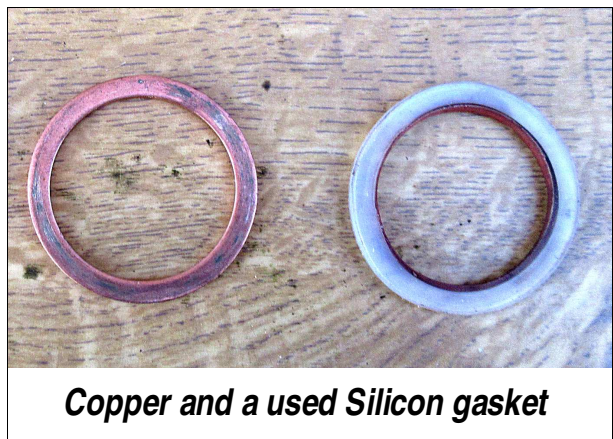
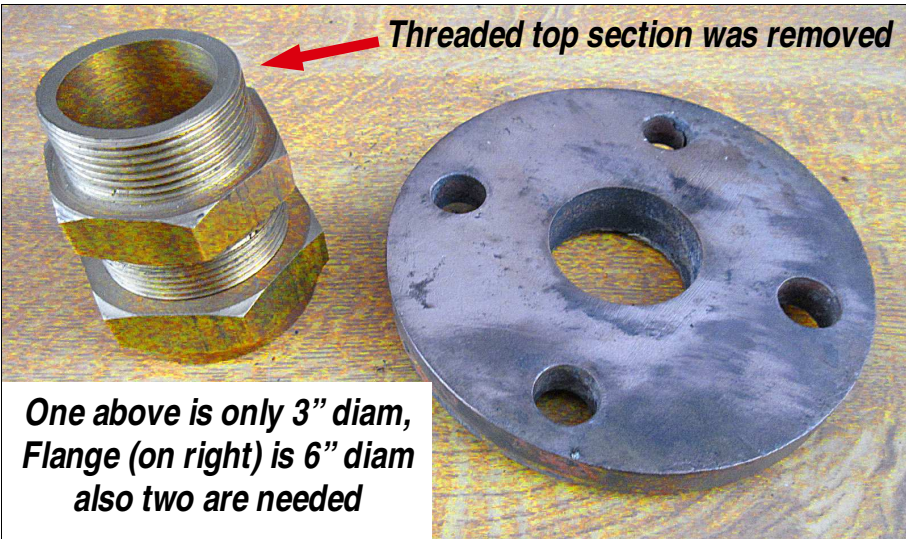
Consuta was fired up one last time just to check for any steam leaks, and to blow the boiler down for Winter. The last steam test revealed two minor leaks, the steam kettle boiler stop valve and a slight leak past the blow down ball valve, these are two tasks for winter servicing. When the boiler was blown down there was a lot of reddish brown mud output into the river, also the small injector boiler delivery pipe had similar very fine reddish debris, I'm now left wondering do our engineers only use the small injector and this mud had possibly been sucked up from the bottom at a less than ideal spot for injecting.



A few days later, after this, water in all the pipes was then blown out, by pressurising the boiler with air. It is so important to avoid frost damage to fittings if water is unknowingly trapped, as happened in 2023.

Paul and I were delighted that the new copper engine steam pipe and it's fittings had been most successful during the summer season. The fittings used for the main steam pipe on the old boiler had used traditional British Standard large flange couplings, they were about 6 inch diameter – see photo over.

Our new boiler only has a 4 inch flange output, but even this was larger than the one we wanted to use at the engine coupling end. I had obtained two different types of quick release pipe joint couplings for the 1½ steam pipe, which were only 3” diameter, so would be very neat. See photos of these over page.



There were two types, one with a cone metal to metal joint. This was tried on the first steel steam pipe but did have a minor leak. The second fitting came with two gasket options, either a copper or a PTFE ring. These fittings were in brass because I couldn't find them in bronze. Neither of the two gaskets seemed likely to provide a full seal without excessive tightening force, so I investigated the use of thin silicon ring gaskets, which were rated for temperatures up to 240° centigrade.

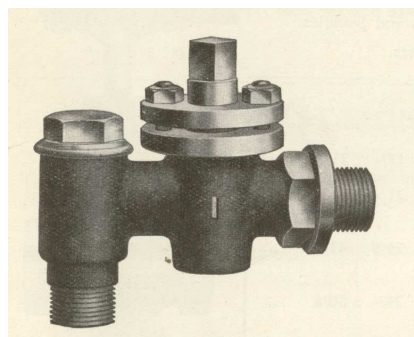
The joint sealed with the silicon gasket shown in photo has been perfect and no gasket creep at all during the whole season, with no distortion at all.

Work still to be done

During this winter we will need a boiler wash out, clean and polish all fittings, attend to some minor engineering issues such as blowdown valve leakage and fix the steam kettle valve leak.

Consuta is now fully operational but there are always more things which it would be worth doing, or maybe nice to have.

By the end of the 2025 season Consuta will be lifted out of the water for any future repainting and varnishing work needed. I would like to have the auxiliary steam manifold replaced in bronze also it would be great to have the two current injector feed valves replaced using more traditional fittings, these however would have to be made. Unfortunately the modern range of bronze steam valves is very limited compared with what was available in the past.



Period combined check and stop cock

Keeping updated with Consuta's steaming activities

If you want to be kept informed about Consuta's operations, please make sure you are on our active members email circulation list. Contact Mark about this if you are not sure:- mark@consuta.org.uk.

Also if you would like to see more recent photos of Consuta, please take a look at our facebook section.

Work parties and steaming options during 2025

Various activities which are possible options to use Consuta. Running Consuta at any of these can only be possible if we have people to manage and crew Consuta. Where possible we will try to choose days when weather is good.

Social Luncheon. Non boating social event

This will probably be a weekend day during March. Any suggestions for a good venue will be most welcome?

Boiler inspection will be needed for 2025. This should only take one day provided no problems are identified.

Steam Consuta to Crofton and back to see the beam engines at work.

This would be a three day there and back trip during either late April or early May, before Consuta is moved onto the Thames. Not a great distance, but there are many locks.

Move Consuta from Kintbury to a mooring on the Thames

This is a two day trip which is essential to attend the following Thames events.

Steam training outings on the Thames during late May and early June.

Henley Women's Regatta

Sat 20th June

This give us a chance to test our fireman and is always very exciting

Reading Town Regatta June??

Sat 14 – 15th

Not sure if they still use umpire launches but a great event.

Henley Traditional Boat Festival

18th to 20th July

Henley Town and Visitor regatta

Sat 2nd August

We always need your help and encouragement to keep Consuta operational as a unique steam umpire launch.

Best Christmas wishes and a very happy New Year to all,

Brian Smith and the Trustees.

November 2024

Some photos taken during the summer



A returning race four at Henley Town & Visitor Regatta



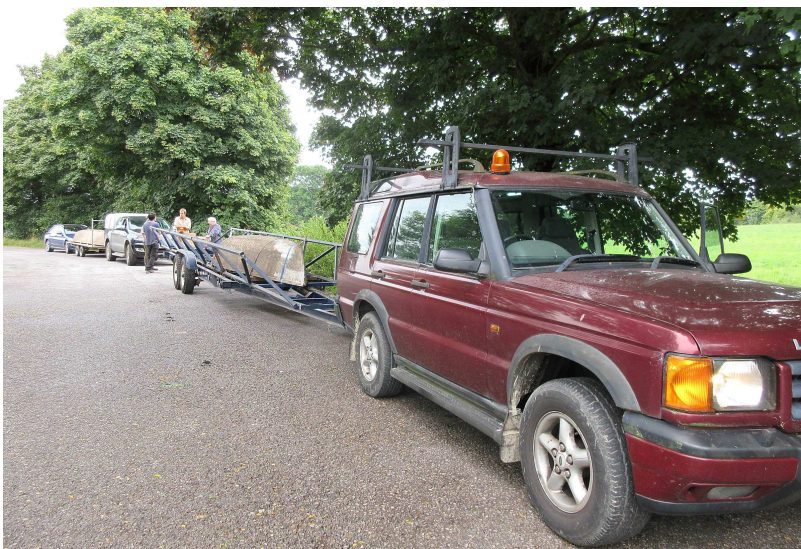
Admiring crowd at the Henley Mill Meadow mooring



Passing Ulysses at the Henley Town & Visitor Regatta



Lowering back half of Ulula at Beale Park shed



Convoy moving Ulula and Consuta's trailer to new home



Stern section of Ulula being prepared for moving