

Alan Hidden Memorial Trophy

Alan Hidden very kindly left the Association monies in his will and a trophy was created in his memory. The Alan Hidden Trophy is awarded annually 'to an OGA member for the best outstanding performance by a young person (under 25 years of age)'.

In 2017 and 2018, the trophy was not awarded.

2016 winner: Finbar Pickering of the good ship 'Island Swift', South West Area



Here's a chap who was just 15 when he started out from Falmouth to cross Biscay on his first overnight passage, and then crossed the Atlantic.

Throughout his two-year adventure he was an invaluable crew member who instinctively took to sailing and problem-solving which proved especially useful when halyards and topping lifts contrived to do battle with the topsail spar.

On more than one occasion, he ventured up the ratlines or onto the

bowsprit in the cause of duty. He also showed great efficiency on deck when called from his bunk (usually in the middle of the night) to put a reef in the mainsail. His analytical mind also contributed to understanding and improving the ingenious home-made self-steering system, which had not quite been mastered in the limited daysailing experience prior to their departure.

As a lover of astronomy (and not early mornings) he immediately took to his night watch (officially from 11pm to 1am but often until 2am) which he performed diligently and with great vigilance. By the time of their return crossing, the skipper had invested in an AIS, but for the outward journey from Falmouth to Martinique they had no such marvellous technology, and this worthy sailor was both keen-eyed and dependable in spotting approaching vessels both day and night.

2015 winner: Eleanor Poole, South West Area

Ellie has achieved great success at national and international level in the Topper Class. She was made skipper of 'Wender' for the second Gaffer Race at Dartmouth Regatta and won 3rd prize for her grandfather in the Regatta Series. 'Wender' is a gaff cutter, built as a dayboat in 1898, to a design by GF Holmes. Ellie is just the sort of person we want to promote sailing in gaffers. She could not attend the presentation, but Dick Dawson read out her acceptance speech:



I am sorry not to be able to be with all of you old gaffers today, I am new to old gaffers as the only one I really know is my Grandfather and surely you cannot ALL be as old as he is! I started sailing in 'Wender' in a carrycot which they always claimed to be the most comfortable 'stowage' on the boat. I think now that I have helmed her in a stiff breeze that they were right. I think 'Wender' is wetter than my Topper and Laser! But it was huge fun to be allowed to helm her and to take part in the Dartmouth Regatta. Thank you all for awarding me this honour and I look forward to much gaffering in coming years.

This year, Ellie is the first female in 30 years to win the Topper National Championships, awarded at Trinity House, 12 January 2016. The Yachting Journalists Association Youth Sailor Of The Year states:

Eleanor Poole, from Dunsford in Devon, impressed members of the YJA, by garnering a

string of firsts to win the 2015 Topper National championships at the age of 14, as well as securing an impressive seventh at the 2015 Topper World Championship on Lake Garda, Italy.

In 2014, the Trophy was not awarded.

2013 winner: Jolyan Lumai, South West Area



Jolyan sailed as crew-member on the RBC vessel 'Minstrel' from Caernarfon to Cowes in 2013. Jolyan Lumai (date of birth 4 October 1993) was in the Caribbean, working in his first job as a professional crew member, aged just 20 and could not receive his trophy in person. The photo shows him taking sun sights mid-Atlantic, December 2013, with a big swell. Jolyan has been an instructor at a sailing school:

Jolyan related well to the rest of the crew who were mainly three times his

age. He had a real ability to find and follow the best angle to windward, and to keep the boat moving in a seaway. I let him helm the Cowes race as a sort of reward, but I also knew he would concentrate on the windward legs. Jolyan was always calm in a crisis (we had a couple) and could see what needed doing without being asked. On one watch below he was turned out twice for reefing and there was no complaint. He was a natural at the pilotage and navigation, usually spotting buoys before anyone else, and his cocked hats got to be quite small. When asked he came up with workable passage plans. Finally there were the extras; two winches stripped and serviced, varnishing and painting on the dry days, lugging cans of diesel, carrying the provisions, minding the laundry and teaching us some new recipes.