



The Eric Twiname Memorial Trust

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Trustees: Hazel Twiname (Patron), Bruce Aitken (Chairman), Jim Kirkpatrick, John Reed, Peter Whipp, Bryan Willis.

Administrator: Mrs. Dinny Reed

Who was Eric Twiname?

Those of us who knew Eric well find it hard to believe that he died in 1979, and it comes as a shock to realise that many sailing today were not even born then. So, asking forgiveness from those who are of a more mature generation, we will first answer the question – who was Eric Twiname ?

He was a rare individual who excelled at many things. He was a brilliant pianist, cellist, a qualified pilot, a prolific writer of books, articles and plays, and above all a superb sailor. Born in Workington, Cumbria, he was taught to sail at an early age by his father on Bassenthwaite in the Lake District. He became Captain of his University Team and then Captain of the British Universities Sailing Association, with whom he team-raced in Europe and the USA during the Sixties. In addition to winning many championships in GP14s, Lasers and International Canoes, he also had a profound influence on the administration of sailing, especially in the area of the Racing Rules. During his life in London he worked, mainly freelance, as a yachting journalist and also successfully writing radio plays for the BBC. He committed his ideas on dinghy racing to a wider public with “Dinghy Team Racing”, published in 1971, “Start to Win” in 1973, and “The Rules Book” in 1977 – a revised version of which is still a popular publication. He was also one time Editor of “Dinghy International” Magazine. He served on the Racing Rules Committee of the RYA and in 1976 was appointed as Racing Rules adviser to the British Olympic Team; he went with the team that year to Kingston, Ontario, for the Olympic Regatta.

And Eric’s skill on the keyboard was legendary. With a little encouragement he would give huge entertainment to competitors and colleagues on any convenient clubhouse piano.

What is the Eric Twiname Memorial Trust?

The Trust was set up in an informal way in 1980 by Eric’s father Alec, in order to perpetuate Eric’s memory and to enable his many and diverse sailing interests to continue. At first the Trust responded to calls for funding from many areas, including

round the world yachtsmen, disabled sailors and Olympic campaigns, Alec paying the grants out of his own pocket. However, a more formal approach emerged with the formation in 1991 of a Charitable Trust, with the concentration on youth sailing, and especially on racing. Alec Twiname settled an amount of capital to the Trust, which was invested to provide a steady annual income. Since 1980 the Trust has provided over £500,000 for deserving causes.

Alec died in 1996 and his widow, Hazel, now heads the Trust as its Patron. The finances of the Trust and the designation of funds are run by a small team of Trustees, most of whom are keen sailors, and all good friends of the Twiname family. Overheads are minimal and the income from the capital is always put to optimum effect. Additional revenue is derived from fundraising events (such as talks given by the Trustees) and private donations.

Donations to the Trust

All donations, whether from individuals or from organisations, are warmly welcomed. As a charity the Trust is able to reclaim basic rate income tax on subscriptions and donations paid under Deed of Covenant or Gift Aid. This means that the Trust is an ideal method for businesses to support youth sailing in a highly tax efficient and tax deductible way.)

Who is eligible for grants?

Beneficiaries should be young people, the objects of the Trust being to assist in the organisation and provision of facilities which will enable and encourage pupils of schools and universities in the United Kingdom to sail or yacht race, or to participate in any activity associated solely with yachting, and one of the Trust's criteria is that as many people as possible should benefit from a donation. In following these objectives the Trust provides much needed money for deserving causes, who might otherwise be unable to fulfil their ambitions – whether it be assisting clubs to purchase boats, or providing the means to assist in the organisation of an event.

The emphasis is directed towards youth, for whom sailing can be prohibitively expensive, with sympathetic consideration always being given to applications that would not attract sponsorship or aid from bodies such as the Sports Council or the RYA. Over the years there cannot be many young sailors who have not been helped in some way by the Trust, and it is a particular pleasure to see former young “sprogs”, first appearing on Optimist courses or the Regional finals, now appearing in National Olympic teams and even winning Olympic medals (Ben Ainslie being one notable example).

Any group may apply for aid. The Trust is very approachable – a simple handwritten letter is usually all that is required – although further information about the project may be requested. Since its inception, the Trust has helped many people and, to give a flavour of its activities, the following are just some of the causes which have been supported in the past and/or are assisted on an ongoing basis:

The Eric Twiname Championship: This premier national event for Juniors (16-year-olds; pre Youth) is entirely financed by the Trust - there are no entry fees. It is one of the largest sailing events in the calendar for regional teams in Optimists, Cadets, Toppers, Mirror dinghies, and Bic Techno Windsurfers.

The RYA Eric Twiname Youth & Junior Team Racing Championship: This highly successful team racing event, which attracts young sailors from a broad spectrum of the sailing community, is financed by the Trust. Large numbers of clubs and schools enter teams, and all the Youth and Junior classes are represented.

Optimist bursaries: Financial help is given to impecunious youngsters to attend the well-known Easter and Summer courses at Papercourt Sailing Club. Up to 90% of the fees may be granted in deserving cases.

Support boats: All of the youth classes have received brand new RIBs, outboards and trailers as support boats; these are replaced on a rolling programme.

Fevas: Two fleets of Fevas have been purchased by the Trust – one located at Spinnaker Yacht Club, Romsey and one at the RYA's Team Racing Academy at West Kirby Yacht Club. These are loaned (in return for a small fee which goes towards the costs of their upkeep) to clubs/schools for team racing and other activities.

Team racing book: Team racing is really back in favour and is the mainstay of school and university sailing. There were no books on the subject since the original Twiname publication, but in 2002 the Trust sponsored a new book by Steve Tylecote.

Provision of boats: Grants have been given for the purchase of around 45 boats (mostly by clubs), including Toppers, 420s, Optimists and Fireflies.

For further information, for making applications for financial aid, or for making contributions, please contact:

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