**News Release**

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# 13th January 2016

**British Marine Trades Association/Boating Business awards celebrate UK Marine Industry talent**

UK marine industry excellence was celebrated at the British Marine Trades Association Dinner on Tuesday 12th January 2016, as the winners of the annual British Marine Trades Association/Boating Business Awards were announced.

Panels of judges from both Boating Business and the British Marine Trades Association review nominations for the annual awards, which are sponsored by *Boating Business*, Kudos, Ocean Safety and URICA, and which were presented during the British Marine Trades Association Dinner at Gaucho at the O2.

The British Marine Trades Association award for Retailer of the Year went to Allspars Ltd, a yacht rigging and spars business, which was formed almost 15 years ago by Andy Postle, and has now expanded to cover distribution and architectural rigging.

This year’s award for British Marine Trades Association Personality of the Year was awarded posthumously to Greg O’Brien, who sadly passed away in September 2015. Greg was one of the industry’s true characters; making a huge contribution to dinghy sailing from club sailor to coach, picking up national titles on the race circuit, and founding Purple Marine before joining Crewsaver as Sales and Marketing Manager. He also played a key role in industry’s organisations, giving his time to the UK Enterprise Association and the British Marine Trades Association committee itself. Greg’s positive personality and boundless enthusiasm will be very much missed and for that reason the association panel wanted to honour him with this year’s British Marine Trades Association Personality of the Year award. His award was collected by his wife, Jayne O’Brien.

The British Marine Trades Association Chairman’s Special Award was presented to Peter Nash, editor of Boating Business. Peter started out as an advertising copywriter and wrote race reports for consumer yachting titles before becoming editor of Boating Business. He is now the title’s longest serving editor, having taken over the helm in 1983. Journalist, Peter Poland, who has know Peter Nash since the 1970s, paid tribute to his sailing skills, writing “Peter was a regular and skilled crew on top boats, …part of David Thomas’ crew on his all-conquering Sonata called *Piccolo*, …and crewing on the near-invincible Quarter Tonner *Odd Job* sailed by Jack Knights”. He also praised Peter’s role as Boating Business Editor, “Peter has always served the industry well in his position as Boating Business Editor. And he has never held back from saying things ‘as he sees them’.”

British Marine Trades Association Chairman, Riki Hooker, said: “This year’s awards go to an exceptional group of individuals and companies, who we hope will inspire the next generation of marine industry professionals. We have so much talent in our industry, and it’s important to be able to celebrate that by recognising achievements and remembering our industry champions, these awards allow us to do just that.”

This year additional awards were presented at the dinner. British Marine Leisure Boating, a group association of British Marine, announced that Flexisail was the winner of the British Marine Leisure Boating Customer Service Award 2016. The judging panel was particularly impressed by the company’s attention to detail, as illustrated by feedback from its customers, and by Flexisail’s

willingness to go the extra mile to ensure that each of its customers’ experiences is enjoyable and unique.

Another new award presented at the event was the British Marine David Coleman Excellence in Exporting Award, presented by Barton Marine and established in memory of David Coleman. David was a very well known personality within the marine industry and an active member of British Marine. He was the owner of Barton Marine and transformed the company into a global brand.

The British Marine David Coleman Excellence in Exporting Award was awarded to Active Research Ltd for its marine electronics brand Actisense®. The judging panel, made up of members of the British Marine International Committee, were impressed by the way Actisense® has expanded into new global markets and established trade links with marine electronics distributors in four new countries.

The Boating Business awards celebrate achievement in a range of diverse areas from the *Boating Business* Environment Award to the *Boating Business* Lifetime Achievement Award.

The 2016 *Boating Business* Environment Award was awarded to Grove Ferry River Trips. The company, which launched in 2010, runs cruises along the River Stour in Kent. Notably the company uses an electric boat, the Ellen Mary, making the trips greener. As well as being a more environmentally friendly way to travel, the electric boat is quiet meaning visitors enjoy sightings and close encounter with many wild birds and animals.

Princess Yachts won the *Boating Business* Website Award. The website is a reflection of the Princess Yachts brand values, creating an integrated message.

*Boating Business* choose to recognise entrepreneurship with the Young Entrepreneur of the Year award, this year’s winner was Gavin Moth. Gavin is the owner of Go-Stock, which provides environmentally friendly products to the marine industry. Go-Stock’s stand-out product is a non-biocide, non-hazardous cleaning solution, the Marine Algae Cleaner™, which is extremely effective in removing algae from all marine areas and is unique to Go-Stock.

This year’s *Boating Business* Scott Deverell Young Businessperson of the Year award was presented to Riki Hooker, International Sales Director at RS Sailing. RS Sailing is the world’s fastest growing small sailboat manufacturer. Riki has been instrumental in the company’s development since he joined as Sales Manager in 1997.

The much-anticipated *Boating Business* Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to John Charnley, Founder and Non-Executive Chairman of Discovery Yachts. John started his career as a British Airways pilot before going on to found Sunsail, now one of the biggest yacht charter companies in the world. Discovery was born out of John’s desire to build a dream yacht to cruise the world, the boat he developed proved so popular the John took time out to start Discovery Yachts, with his dream yacht becoming the Discovery 55. John is also a veteran of the single-handed transatlantic and other long distance races.

Peter Nash, editor of Boating Business, presented the Boating Business awards.

Nominations for next year’s awards will open in autumn 2016, details of the nomination procedure will appear in the MTA newsletter.

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