



The Classic Channel Regatta, held every two years, is a unique, week long international event with its own distinctive and varied blend of racing round buoys at Dartmouth, passage racing across the Channel, and racing round an island in Brittany – all with a lively and informal programme ashore which brings together a wonderful gathering of boats and crews. The Classic Channel Regatta calls at three of the finest ports in the English Channel with a handsome collection of classic yachts and their crews from many countries to celebrate the joy and spirit of the golden age of sailing and racing.

It all began in 2003 when the Classic Channel Regatta founder and chairman, Bruce Thorogood, sailed to the first Perros Classic regatta in northern Brittany where he was the only British entry. Bruce agreed to try and encourage more Brits to go to the next Perros Classic regatta in 2005 and on his return to Dartmouth got a small group of classic sailing enthusiasts together to work out a plan – and so the Classic Channel Regatta was born.

After the first Classic Channel Regatta in 2005 it has gone from strength to strength attracting more boats every year mainly from the UK and France, but with a smattering of others including Dutch, Belgian and Swiss. The regatta administrator David Newman, who looks after all the entries told us “we have about 80 yachts entered so far, with more expected in the lead up to the start on the 29th June. It has been very busy in the last couple of months, particularly as we organisers are all volunteers and have to keep the day job going alongside”.

The regatta has become a truly significant international sailing event, and Dartmouth has hosted racing in Start Bay and the start of the *Lewmar Classic Channel Race* since the very beginning. “We are very grateful to the Harbour Authority, Town Council, BRNC, local organisations and businesses of Dartmouth,” said Bruce Thorogood “for the help and support we have received over the years, and continue to receive. We are proud to show off such a significant port to our visiting yachtsmen and yachtswomen”.

The Royal Dart Yacht Club is the base for the Dartmouth section of the regatta and the Old Market Square will host the evening supper party for crews on Saturday evening. The Britannia Royal Naval college are providing on the water support this year in the form of safety and support boats.

There will be an opportunity for the general public to see the majestic spectacle of 80 or more classic yachts under sail on Saturday 29th June at 10.30 when the fleet will take part in the Parade of Sail from the higher ferry and out to sea.

For the sailors there will be a chance to enjoy all of the ports between races and there are several social events to complement the sailing programme. Among the many varied activities

planned In Paimpol are an England vs the Rest of the World cricket match and a France vs the Rest of the World boule competition.

The accent is very much on informality and the regatta prides itself on its relaxed Westcountry and Breton ambiance. They describe the racing as 'gentleman's racing' and skippers can be as competitive or relaxed as they like.

While the majority of the boats have an interesting tale to tell, some are of particular interest. These include:

La Grande Hermine:

Built at the shipyard Fidèle in Marseille and launched in 1932, she is now used as a training vessel by the French Navy who will be crewing her throughout the 2019 Classic Channel Regatta. Initially she was named "La Route est Belle" after the song of André Baudé, who used the boat in this time.

Puffin II:

One of the oldest boats in the fleet, launched in 1886. She was owned by Maurice Griffiths in the 1920's. Maurice was a noted yachtsman, boat designer and sailing author writing some 19 books, mainly about sailing the East coast and the Thames. Maurice was the editor of Yachting Monthly for 40 years between 1927 and 1967.

Pegasus:

Pegasus is owned by The Island Trust to provide sailing opportunities for disadvantaged and disabled young people. She will have a crew for this regatta of young sailors sponsored by the Classic Young Sailors Foundation, a charity set up alongside the Classic Channel Regatta to provide financial support and encouragement for young people who would not otherwise have the opportunities or funds needed to experience going to sea in classic and traditional boats.



The 1886 Bermudan cutter Puffin II



The French Navy training yacht La Grande Hermine



The Island Trust's Bristol Pilot Cutter Pegasus



Chairman Bruce Thorogood's 1966 Kim Holman designed yacht Mabel