



CLASSIC YOUNG SAILORS FOUNDATION

REPORT TO THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF SHIPWRIGHTS ON THE SAIL-TRAINING VOYAGE ABOARD 'PEGASUS' AT THE 2026 CLASSIC CHANNEL REGATTA.



This was a two week voyage starting in Plymouth on July 5th and finishing in Roscoff on the 18th aboard the sail training yacht 'Pegasus' which is now run by the French organisation Passeurs d'Iroise based in Camaret. She was purpose designed and built for sail-training in the early 2000's and is one of very few, and probably the best, traditional sail training yacht available. The aim of the voyage was take part in the Classic Channel Regatta which is run biennially. The Regatta started on the 7th of July in Dartmouth with two days racing. Then raced across the Channel to St Peter Port and then on to Lezardrieux. Finishing in Paimpol on the 16th after a race around Brehat.

She takes nine trainees and as she had three French staff (skipper, mate and 2nd mate) we set out to select three French and six British trainees to have an equal number of each nationality on board. From past experience and for safeguarding reasons the CYSF had set a minimum age of 18 with a target maximum age of 21, with some flexibility to go down to 16 and up to 25. All the trainees on this voyage were in the 18 – 21 age range .



The three French trainees were selected by a member of our Classic Channel Regatta team in Paimpol following an article placed in the Brittany regional newspaper 'France Ouest' inviting applications.

For the British trainees the original plan was for them to be recruited from two schools - George Green and the London Nautical School and a sea cadet unit, all based in London and with links to the Shipwrights Company.

Notwithstanding extensive discussions with the two schools it was not possible to find suitable candidates mainly due to the problems with establishing safeguarding protocols for under 18's.

In the event though, a notice via Classic Channel Regatta mailing list, asking for for potential candidates which fitted the criteria of the Classic Young Sailors Foundation was successful. The final six that took up places included: young carers looking after parents or disabled siblings, some stating mental health issues and lack of confidence, one on the autistic spectrum, and all coming from low income households - and adding to the national and ethnic mix. Most had not sailed before, although a few had (and one had sailed on Pegasus before) which gave them the opportunity to help the others find their feet and for two to become watch leaders.

It is clear from the trainees' feedback that this very diverse crew of mixed nationalities, backgrounds and ethnicity bonded remarkably well right from the outset. It is also notable that the bonds really strengthened during the second week, demonstrating how beneficial longer voyages of two weeks (or more) are. In the attached consolidated report of the feedback received from the trainees it is clear that this voyage has been spectacularly successful in achieving its personal development aims for the trainees. All speak of the close bonds that developed between the crew and their enhanced awareness of the importance of personal relationships, with improved confidence in communicating and resilience in facing challenging situations through teamwork in the unfamiliar and challenging environment of a sailing vessel. The fact they were racing only added to those challenges and the need to work well as a team. That this trainee crew, most of whom had not sailed before, managed to win their group in the Classic Channel Race from Dartmouth to Guernsey and come second overall in their group behind the famous French race boat 'Pen Duick II' was a truly outstanding achievement.



The outcomes of this voyage are best summed up in this note from the lead organiser of Passuers d'Iroise, who was also the bilingual 2nd mate on board for most of the voyage.

"In addition to the individual reports we have consolidated the crew's comments into one and have titled 'synopsis' to give a quicker overview, but it is necessary to read all the reports to understand the breadth and depth of the profound beneficial impact this voyage has had on all the trainees - "life changing" and "the best experience of my life" are themes running through many of them".

(The synopsis mentioned above are included after this report).

It is evident from the reports from those who took part that the voyage has been a truly outstanding success. Much of that success must be down to the skipper and mate who clearly did a fantastic job.

To summarise the key takeaways were

- It was spectacularly successful in achieving its personal development objectives.

- Every single trainee found it a positive experience - and life changing and life's best experience for some.
- The professional crew did an outstanding job in facilitating that.
- They also did an excellent job in sailing the boat competitively - winning their group in the Channel Race and coming 2nd overall in their group behind Pen Duick II - no mean achievement with a trainee crew many of whom hadn't sailed before.
- Having a multinational mix added to the benefits of the experience.
- This very diverse crew bonded amazingly well from early on, but it is interesting to note that the bonds really developed strength in the second week, which showed the benefits of longer voyages of two weeks (or more).
- The French culture of giving more importance to food preparation and meals was an important ingredient in bringing the crew together (English sail training yachts should take note!)
- All the trainees thought being part of the regatta added much to the experience, although some thought they spent too much time in Paimpol (which was difficult to avoid).
- Pegasus is an exceptionally good traditional sail training yacht - and had a very good skipper and mate.

The CYSF Trustees are very pleased to have enabled this voyage and enhanced the lives of all these young people. They hope it is a success can be repeated and built on at the next Classic Channel Regatta.



The voyage was funded by the Classic Young Sailors Foundation thanks to donations from: The Baltic Exchange Charitable Foundation (£10,000), Hoares Bank Master Charitable Trust (£2,000), The Worshipful Company of Shipwrights (£1,500), together with transfer of the operating surplus from the previous Classic Channel Regatta in 2024, and numerous smaller private donations. The CYSF Trustees are extremely grateful for all these grants and donations.

Finally here are just four of the many positive feedback statements from the trainees:

“Being onboard the Pegasus and crossing the Channel in the Regatta for 2 weeks was the most memorable experience of my life.”

“It really emphasised to me the importance of relationships...my lasting impression of the regatta is one of community and collaboration and this is something I hope to encourage in my own life.”

“...spending 2 weeks on the Pegasus has been a life-changing experience for me. Everything exceeded my initial expectations, and I have so many amazing memories as well as photos! Thank you so much for an incredible experience.”

“I would also like to extend a special thank you to everyone whose donations made this experience possible for me. These two weeks will remain forever etched in my memory and have truly helped me grow I am sincerely grateful to them.”

(Prizegiving in Paimpol Pegasus Crew on the right)





CLASSIC YOUNG SAILORS FOUNDATION

POST VOYAGE REVIEW FORM – SYNOPSIS OF FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM THE TRAINEES.

DATES OF VOYAGE: JULY 5 – 18 YACHT: PEGASUS

(Some answers are translated from the French trainees replies)

WHAT WAS THE BEST PART OF THE EXPERIENCE?

- Meeting new people and working together towards a shared goal.
- The entire experience was incredible.
- I loved meeting so many new people
- Being onboard the Pegasus and crossing the Channel in the Regatta for 2 weeks was the most memorable experience of my life. For me, the best part of the experience was becoming close friends with eleven like-minded, ambitious and determined individuals by the end of the trip. I learnt so many skills and saw so many places that I would not have the chance to see... all from the perspective of entering the harbours on the Pegasus. I think sailing the Pegasus has perhaps given me a clearer direction to where I want to head in my future career.
- I particularly enjoyed the crossing between Dartmouth and Guernsey. We got off to a great start, and the conditions were ideal. We encountered dolphins along the way and finished the leg in first place! The day ended with an unforgettable anchorage off Sark, making it one of my favorite memories of the trip.
- The highlight of my experience with Pegasus was the two-week regatta voyage with the mixed crew. Sharing that journey with my fellow crewmates was an incredible feeling—it was almost like coming back to life.

- Meeting the entire crew in Plymouth will remain the highlight of this experience: from the very first moments a genuine chemistry developed between us, laying a warm foundation for the rest of the journey.

WHAT WAS THE LEAST GOOD PART OF THE EXPERIENCE?

- I genuinely can't think of one.
- There were some challenges I faced onboard such as learning to sail for the first time when our crew in the majority were fluent French! It was tricky to begin with as there was a slight language barrier especially during the high stress times in the race. By the end however, we had helped teach the crew the key words which helped everyone to work better together.
- I liked it less that we stayed in the port of Paimpol for several days in a row, even though I realize it was difficult to do otherwise. After several days of sailing, it did allow us to rest and enjoy the town a bit, but I would have preferred to sail more.
- The least positive aspect of the experience, for me, was the lack of time to visit the various attractions—particularly in Dartmouth.
- I didn't identify any negative aspects: the experience was positive from start to finish, with not a single downside to report.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST LASTING MEMORY OF THE EXPERIENCE – AND WHY?

- I found the mundane tasks the most bonding within the crew – like cooking and playing music.
- Sailing into Paimpol harbour – the entire trip was full of amazing moments.
- The wonderful atmosphere we had throughout the whole event...the entrance into Dartmouth and seeing the scale and pride of the regatta is something I will remember for a long time.
- My most lasting memory is all of us having a sleepover on the deck of the Pegasus watching the stars and falling asleep to the gentle bobbing of the boat. I think we all appreciated the time we had together and wanted it to last for as long as possible! I have many countless memories to add to this like jumping from the bowsprit to go swimming...
- The staff often chose serene places to anchor; we would often refrain from anchoring in ports unless we had to be there for a race or briefing. This resulted in us being able to explore islands like Sark, and at the end of the voyage got to see a beautiful sunset the night before catching the ferry. There was everything, we got to eat Brittany style crepes which were sensational, the staff and crew went above and beyond to introduce us to the parts of French culture and cuisine that they love.
- Our first anchorage at Salcombe will remain one of our most memorable experiences, no doubt because it was our very first night aboard Pegasus. The setting was magnificent, and the atmosphere was truly special. We were all able to get to know one another that first evening, and I think that was the moment the crew really began to come together.
- The most memorable aspect of this experience is the people I met during the trip, as it was an opportunity for me to flourish socially.

- Arriving in Dartmouth will remain my most memorable experience. After several days at sea, discovering this new port and its unique atmosphere was a moment that was both powerful and offered a profound sense of being somewhere completely different.

DO YOU FEEL THE EXPERIENCE HAS CHANGED YOU AND YOUR OUTLOOK ON LIFE – AND IF SO, IN WHAT WAYS?

- I had never sailed before this experience and now I am actively looking for more sailing experiences. The experience changed me and my outlook.
- Definitely changed my life outlook – never before have I been dropped into such a vibrant and large community of sailors – was also taken aback by the kindness of strangers, being invited with other Pegasus crew to sail in White Dolphin, being invited to join another crew for a drink, and another couple reassured me after receiving some bad news from home. I was utterly taken aback by the resilience displayed by my fellow crew mates, especially when they openly discussed the past experiences that led them to come on this voyage.
- It really emphasised to me the importance of relationships...my lasting impression of the regatta is one of community and collaboration and this is something I hope to encourage in my own life.
- I believe the experience has changed me in ways I may find useful now and later in life. I think seeing the community between the people in the Regatta and all of us onboard has made me realise human connections are the most important. Working together on the Pegasus starting as strangers and ending as close friends has shown this. I feel as though I have become more confident in myself to grasp opportunities and meet strangers without a second thought. I was pushed sometimes socially and physically but I enjoyed every second of it!
- The moment I stepped foot on Pegasus, I began journaling. After a few days into the voyage, I found other members of the crew also liked writing. I began a group journal that everyone could contribute to and from some of these contributions I began writing a poem.

HOW DID YOU FIND THE PROFESSIONAL CREW, AND WAS LANGUAGE A PROBLEM?

- The professional crew were fantastic, very helpful, kind & excellent teachers. Language wasn't a problem, just a slight hinderance.
- The professional crew were amazing – they were hardworking, knowledgeable and friendly, but what shone above all was their calm collectedness and the value they placed on allowing the trainees to have their say on what happens on board. The language barrier did pose an issue, especially when the bilingual staff member left...and I could sense the frustration from some English crew when things got lost in translation. I would sail with the staff again in a heartbeat as they were outstanding.
- I wouldn't say language was a problem...was a fun twist...at times a little confusing.
- The professional crew were so lovely to all of us. They made sure we were well looked after. They treated us with respect and maturity which was reciprocated so we all got along very well. Language was not a huge problem at all when it came to socialising and if there was a slight language barrier, we would always end up laughing about it. Overall, the atmosphere

on the boat between all of us couldn't have been better and I really enjoyed getting to know everyone.

- Language was not a problem for me; the language barrier did not make the boat less safe. The crew did well to make sure we understood important information.
- The fact that they were relatively young strengthened the bond. They were very attentive, available, and highly informative. They knew how to give us enough autonomy while remaining present whenever we needed help or explanations. I think we were very lucky to come across them!
- The crew was really friendly and taught us a lot about sailing throughout the trip.
- The professional crew was perfect and always available.

HOW DID YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE OTHER CREW MEMBERS DEVELOP DURING THE VOYAGE?

- Developed very quickly and very organically, we had such a close bond.
- Everybody was incredibly friendly from the moment I embarked, despite the intense circumstances of the new environment. Towards the end of the voyage we found ourselves opening up about difficult aspects of our lives back home...
- I think we all just got closer...and worked really well together.
- Over the voyage, I believe I became good friends with the other crew members. Despite all of us coming from different backgrounds and life experiences we all got on very well. We worked together in our teams of four for cooking and doing the dishes and I think this also helped us bond more.
- At first, it was difficult to communicate with the French members of the crew but quickly we found other ways to communicate and bond. Through food, music, card games etc. The decision to have teams and helped with teamwork, each team was assigned to either cooking each meal, cleaning dishes or the boat in general.
- I was very surprised by the rapport that developed so quickly among all the crew members. From the very first evening, we played cards together and had already really gotten to know one another. As the days went by, we learned more about each other and how to work together on the boat. By the end of those two weeks, we knew each other very well—as if we had spent months aboard the same vessel! That was, in fact, one of the aspects of the experience that struck me the most.
- On a very positive note, everyone on the crew got along well and was able to quickly form friendships during the voyage on the PEGASUS, despite the language barrier.
- Excellent from start to finish. A sense of cohesion developed right from the first few days and only grew stronger throughout the trip, ultimately forging genuine friendships

WHAT WERE YOUR EXPECTATIONS PRIOR TO THE VOYAGE?

- I had no expectations, I didn't know what I'd signed up for.
- I wouldn't say I had any expectations before the voyage...it was all about trying something new and exciting, meeting new people and expanding my horizons.

- Honestly, I had no clue what to expect. I knew there would be some challenges to overcome but I was more excited to dive headfirst into something completely new!
- I kept an open mind, I had no idea what it would mean to race a sailboat.
- I wanted to use this experience to improve my sailing skills, gain racing experience, meet new people, and develop my English. I also wanted to learn more about life aboard a large sailing vessel with people I didn't know.
- At first, I wasn't sure about the journey I was embarking on, as I was surprised by the sheer scale of the excitement surrounding the boat races
- I didn't have any specific expectations before leaving

TO WHAT EXTENT WERE THESE EXPECTATIONS MET OR EXCEEDED?

- Really exceeded.
- Absolutely exceeded in every way - the racing atmosphere was fun, energetic and incredibly fast paced...
- Definitely exceeded. I loved everything about the trip...I really enjoyed getting to know the crew and cooking together.
- When it came to sailing, from knowing absolutely nothing to walking away with knowledge I would not have gained at my age elsewhere I believe is a massive achievement. Everything from sailing, to being part of the Regatta to exploring France was beyond incredible so my expectations were very much exceeded.
- This trip perfectly met my expectations. I was able to discover the world of regatta racing in an ideal setting for improving my skills. I bonded with the entire crew, and I think we'll stay in touch and see each other again!
- Having had no specific expectations at the outset, the experience inevitably—and by a wide margin—surpassed them.
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HOW MUCH OPPORTUNITY WERE YOU GIVEN TO BE INVOLVED IN SAILING THE BOAT - AND WAS THIS ENOUGH?

- I felt I received plenty of opportunity to get involved in sailing Pegasus... the staff placed a lot of trust in the trainees – I did however have multiple English trainees privately divulge that they felt the French trainees were often picked first for sailing activities and these trainees felt they were missing out...
- There was loads of opportunity to sail the boat and I think this was largely due to the crew doing a really good job of involving us with life on Pegasus.
- At almost every junction or moment when we would be doing something new, we were given the opportunity to give it a try. I think all of us were able to experience every position on the boat even in the first race we were assigned to one specific position to build confidence.

- I was able to take part in numerous manoeuvres! Having prior sailing experience helped me quickly grasp how the boat worked and assist other crew members. I also learned new things from the professional crew and the other young people. As the voyage progressed, we all became more self-reliant.
- I had the opportunity to take part in maneuvers on numerous occasions, which was more than enough to improve and feel fully involved in the life of the boat.

DID YOU ENJOY BEING PART OF THE REGATTA, OR WOULD YOU HAVE PREFERRED TO BE SAILING IN PEGASUS AWAY FROM THE REGATTA? AND WAS THERE TOO MUCH TIME SPENT IN PORT?

- I enjoyed being part of the regatta, it gave us a more solidified shared goal – I don't think there was too much time in port as it allowed for more social activities.
- I absolutely loved taking part in the regatta and I think it added an immeasurable amount to the voyage for everyone on board – and I think the sailing:exploring ratio was spot on...
- I think being a part of the regatta was so much fun! It made the sailing more competitive and also gave us a goal to work towards.
- Yes, I enjoyed being part of the Regatta. I think this allowed us to always be doing something and gave us chances to get to know others in the Regatta.
- I really enjoyed taking part in the regatta. It added a competitive edge, and everyone gave it their all to win! We finished second overall, behind Pen Dick II, and I think we can be proud of that performance. We might have spent a bit too much time in the port of Paimpol.. Overall, however, I think the balance between sailing, racing, and time ashore was pretty good.

ANY OTHER THOUGHTS OR COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE?

- I enjoyed the experience immensely.
- Overall this voyage was an amazing experience and it was a delight to be able to take part in the regatta onboard Pegasus...I believe the people who need these opportunities the most are young people who may face disadvantages in their day-to-day life and otherwise would not ever get the chance to go sailing, like the people I had the pleasure to sail with. I think the more young people like them that take part in the next Classic Channel Regatta the better as it is a dream environment to introduce young people to sailing, and it is full of knowledgeable and kind sailors. I am incredibly grateful and extend my sincerest thanks to everybody involved in getting my crewmates and I onto this voyage (from trainee watch leader).
- The regatta has had an effect on me that is far larger than the trip itself. I feel inspired to pursue sailing in the future and also to travel and see more of the world. Thank you.
- Overall, spending 2 weeks on the Pegasus has been a life-changing experience for me. Everything exceeded my initial expectations, and I have so many amazing memories as well as photos! I am so grateful to have been a part of the voyage and become close with so many great individuals. I now want to explore a sailing career, and I am desperate to go back to sailing! Thank you so much for an incredible experience.

- I would also like to extend a special thank you to everyone whose donations made this experience possible for me. These two weeks will remain forever etched in my memory and have truly helped me grow and solidified my plan to work in the sailing world. I am sincerely grateful to them.
- The regatta is great – and so is Pegasus!
- We may have stayed in port a bit too long, but it gave us the chance to bond with other crews. That said, the racing aspect is great for learning how to really get the sailboat moving, and it remains an engaging and rewarding experience.
- many great individuals. I now want to explore a sailing career, and I am desperate to go back to sailing! Thank you so much for an incredible experience.
- I would also like to extend a special thank you to everyone whose donations made this experience possible for me. These two weeks will remain forever etched in my memory and have truly helped me grow and solidified my plan to work in the sailing world. I am sincerely grateful to them.
- This experience helped me feel more at ease in social situations. Living for two weeks with people of different ages, nationalities, and backgrounds taught me to adapt quickly and reach out to others more easily. I also realized just how possible it is to forge very strong bonds in a short time when sharing such an intense experience.
- I think the experience significantly changed my perspective—both regarding the way the residents lived together and the landscapes I saw in England—showing me that there was more to see beyond my own region and the career path I am pursuing. I view the experience very positively and am glad I took part in it.
- Yes, absolutely. This experience confirmed my desire to work as a crew member on sailing vessels. This initial encounter with industry professionals opened many doors for me and provided valuable insight for my search for future positions; it was truly pivotal in shaping my career path.

DO YOU FEEL THE EXPERIENCE HAS BENEFITTED YOUR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT – AND IF SO, IN WHAT WAYS?

- Definitely! Learning to live and work with people I had never met before was invaluable
- Definitely – I feel more confident sailing and working with other people. On a more personal note, during the second half/last quarter of the voyage my crewmates strongly encouraged me to share more of my personal thoughts and feelings with them which I normally don't feel comfortable doing around my peers.
- Absolutely, I've learned so much about navigation and sailing...also building teamwork and communication skills.
- Yes, absolutely. From never stepping on a boat before to learning how to sail is an incredible skill to have gained. I had the chance to be away from home and learn skills from cooking for 12 adults to how to tie knots... I have developed my listening skills and now I am determined to become more fluent in French!