

BRIXHAM HERITAGE RALLY 2022

Twelve boats came together from 23rd to 25th September in Brixham for our now traditional end of season get together. Gaff Rig Association boats came from Dartmouth (Little Tern and Cynthia), Dittisham (Mischief) and Brixham (Minx) to complement local boats and classic yachts from Exmouth and points west – Amnesia, Escape, Fly, Isobel, Joker, Lexia, Maid of Shannon, Mary Flora and Tamarind. Friday gave them all a good passage and then a fair evening on the pontoon, followed by a lively get together at Brixham yacht club, exchanging tales of summer sailing and remembering the warmth of that summer's heat and the return of cross Channel passages.

A gusty day on Saturday for the Rally with a steady northerly wind accompanied at first by some spectacular clouds followed by beautiful late afternoon sunshine giving the photographers some superb shots (on the Brixham Heritage Regatta Website). The Rally Officer, Richard Spreckley, set an excellent course reaching out towards Berry Head, then towards the Orestone when the wind obligingly picked up a bit of westerly, followed by a lovely broad reach down towards Churstone. The informality of the event was soon usurped by the inevitability of boats enjoying the challenge of being out on the water together; just two classes, the four larger yachts (over 40') and then the remainder of the fleet started 10 minutes later. Some skippers had neglected to listen in to the skippers' briefing on Channel 8 and headed off on what is the 'usual' course; their realisation and subsequent manoeuvres puzzled the rest of the fleet, especially as one of them was Cynthia who we usually rely on to lead us round the course!

Cynthia somehow managed to get out into the lead, with Isobel and Mischief chasing her, closely followed by Minx and Lexia. It was a particular joy to see Mary Flora back participating with her new foresail and not undertaking duty as committee boat as so often with club racing.

All back to the yacht club where we had an excellent evening, although some boats went off early to beat the weather, the remainder leaving in the morning for a good sail back home (or in Minx' case to Dartmouth for crane out and the end of another season).

Thanks to everyone who helped make the event such a success: the Regatta committee, the BYC staff and chef, and the BHR bosun out on the RIB as safety boat.

Just in case you've already got your 2023 diaries do put in the date of the Heritage Regatta, 27th and 28th May – and Rally 16th September. And 2024 will see the Heritage Regatta in party mood as Provident celebrates her 100th birthday! (25-27th May 2024).

Penny Jolley, Brixham Heritage Regatta secretary