



## Death of Merry DE LA POEZE: Tribute to an emblematic figure in the boating world

November 19, 2024 - Saint-Gilles-Croix-de-Vie

It is with great sadness that Groupe Beneteau and all those involved in the boating industry have learned of the accidental death of Merry DE LA POEZE, which occurred on Sunday, November 17, 2024. All the teams at Groupe Beneteau would like to pay tribute to him and to the exceptional career of this passionate, visionary and deeply respected man. Groupe Beneteau also extends its sincere condolences and support to his family and friends at this painful time.

### MERRY DE LA POEZE: VISIONARY, BRILLIANT AND BENEVOLENT

Merry DE LA POEZE has left his mark on the world of yachting, both in France and abroad. Throughout his career, he has embodied the values of honesty, benevolence and perfectionism. Whether through his commitment to the development of JEANNEAU boats or his constant concern for innovation, Merry has combined his love of design with an attentive ear for the needs of yachtsmen and the requirements of a major industrial group such as Groupe Beneteau.

As Jean-Paul CHAPELEAU, former member of the Groupe Beneteau Management Committee and President of the French Nautical Industries Federation, points out:

*« Merry was a human being, honest and respectful, always kind and smiling. A passionate man. He worked hard for the yachting industry in his various capacities, and was recognized by the entire profession. Merry was driven by the quest for perfection in the boats he developed, with an eye for practical, useful and attentive detail. He could put a lot of energy into imposing his convictions, but he was also good at giving advice and willing to pass on his knowledge. A complete and all-round person. Feet on the ground, head in the stars, always with enthusiasm, desire, creativity and ingenuity. »*



## A KEY FIGURE IN THE GROUPE BENETEAU AND THE BOATING INDUSTRY

Through his career, Merry has been one of the leading figures in the world of boating, both in France and abroad. Since his student days, he has been on the water, on the boats, whether as a yachtsman or accompanying the activity of a distributor shipyard during the summers.

Until his retirement at the beginning of 2023, Merry made a major contribution to the development of JEANNEAU's engine ranges, and more recently those of other Groupe Beneteau brands.

A keen yachtsman himself, he knew how to reconcile his taste for design with the needs of our customers. His exceptional eye, his love of beautiful objects and, above all, his human values enabled him to develop over the long term a very strong collaboration with the Groupe Beneteau teams, as well as with designers Vittorio and Camillo Garroni, the Sarrazin Design team and Centkowski & Denert.

A visionary, he was able to anticipate market trends and develop today's market-leading ranges: Cap Camarat, Leader, NC, DB and of course Merry Fisher.

A magnificent speaker, he knew how to get the JEANNEAU dealer network on board.

Respected and appreciated by in-house teams both in France and Poland, he was able to pass on his passion and prepare the handover to the younger generations of the Groupe Beneteau.

Samuel DUBOIS, Chief Sales Officer of the Groupe Beneteau's Dayboating BU: "*We have lost a dear friend and a wonderful colleague. We are deeply grateful for his generous and strong commitment. He'll be in our thoughts every time we come across on the water one of the many models he has developed.*"

## AN EXCEPTIONAL CAREER SPANNING MORE THAN 40 YEARS

Born in 1956, Merry DE LA POEZE joined JEANNEAU plants on May 2, 1980. At the age of 24, he joined the French sales team and for a few months was in charge of marketing JEANNEAU sailboards, which were booming at the time.

He soon took charge of the "Eau Vive" and "Eau Claire" business unit for river barges. "Eau Claire" barges, many of which still sail today. He became responsible for the development of the professional fishing ranges, later giving birth to the Merry Fisher success story. More broadly, Merry was involved in developing the JEANNEAU sales network.

Between 1993 and 1995, Merry joined André DAUXIN at OMC. Becoming General Manager of OMC France, Merry developed the marketing of Evinrude and Johnson engines, and signed a strong partnership with JEANNEAU. During these years, Merry was also a member of the FIN board, representing engine manufacturers.

Following the bankruptcy of OMC's US parent company in 2000, Merry joined White Shark until 2003.

He was also director of GPO from October 1991 to February 2023, secretary from November 1992 to November 1995, and vice-president from November 1995 to January 2024.

In 2004, Jean-Paul CHAPELEAU invited Merry to join JEANNEAU again, within the Beneteau Group, this time as Product Marketing Director for the JEANNEAU and PRESTIGE engine ranges, before PRESTIGE became a fully-fledged brand under Jean-François DE PREMOREL from 2009.

Merry made a major contribution to the accelerated development and success of engine ranges, first in Europe, then worldwide, particularly in America with the rise of the iconic Cap Camarat and Merry Fisher ranges, and more recently with the launch of the DB range.

From 2020 onwards, before retiring, Merry DE LA POEZE will take on new responsibilities and share his experience by supporting the motor product marketing teams of the Beneteau Group's various Dayboating brands.

In February 2023, Merry retires and celebrates with the JEANNEAU dealer network, leaving a final word to his close collaborators: *"Thank you, it's been fun!"*

Now it's the turn of all the Groupe Beneteau teams to say a final THANK YOU to Merry for everything he has contributed both professionally and personally.

Gianguido GIROTTI, CEO of the Groupe Beneteau's Boat division, would like to emphasize:

*"All our teams and I held Merry in profound admiration. Merry has been first and foremost a man of profound intellectual integrity melted with an incredible passion and dedication for his job. A creative leader who, through his pursuit of perfection, was able to detect and shape exceptional products for thousands of happy customers.*

*Merry will miss to us enormously. We will miss the man, his ability to listen, understand, adapt and always support the truth and respect for the collective interest.*

*Thanks again for all you gave to us Merry"*

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## ABOUT GROUPE BENETEAU

Founded in Vendée 140 years ago by Benjamin Bénéteau, Groupe Beneteau today boasts an international industrial presence with 23 production sites and a worldwide sales network. In 2023, Groupe Beneteau had sales of €1.785 billion and a workforce of nearly 8,000, mainly in France, the United States, Poland, Italy, Portugal and Tunisia.

A benchmark player worldwide, Groupe Beneteau offers, through the nine brands of its Boating division, more than 135 models of pleasure boats that meet the diverse uses and sailing projects of its customers, whether sailing or motoring, monohull or catamaran.

Through its Boating Solutions division, the Group is also active in daily and weekly rental services, marinas, digital and financing.

Its Habitat division is a major European player in the open-air hotel business. Its 3 brands offer a wide range of mobile homes. It employs 900 people at 6 production sites in France and 1 in Italy.

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