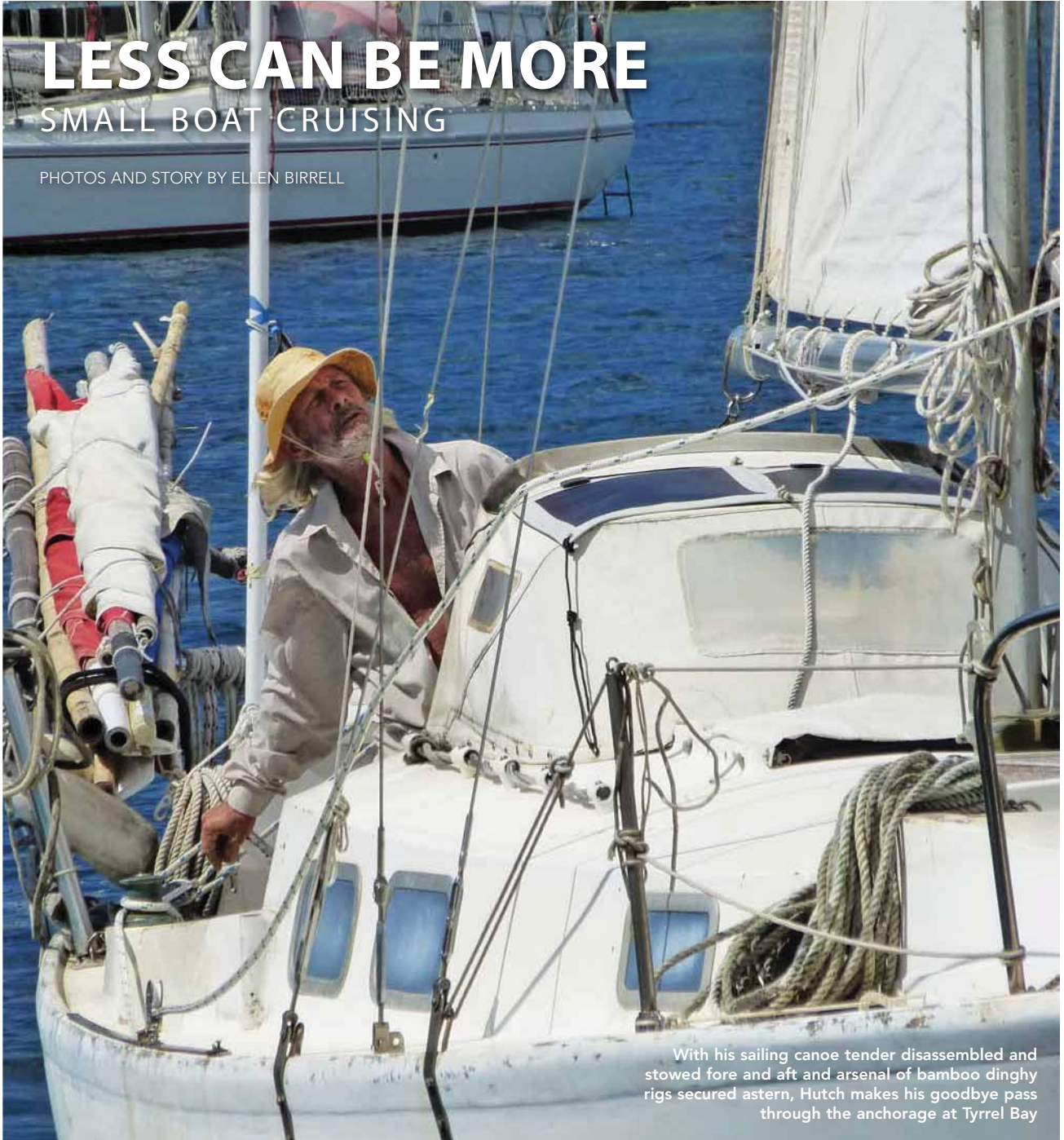


# LESS CAN BE MORE

## SMALL BOAT CRUISING

PHOTOS AND STORY BY ELLEN BIRRELL

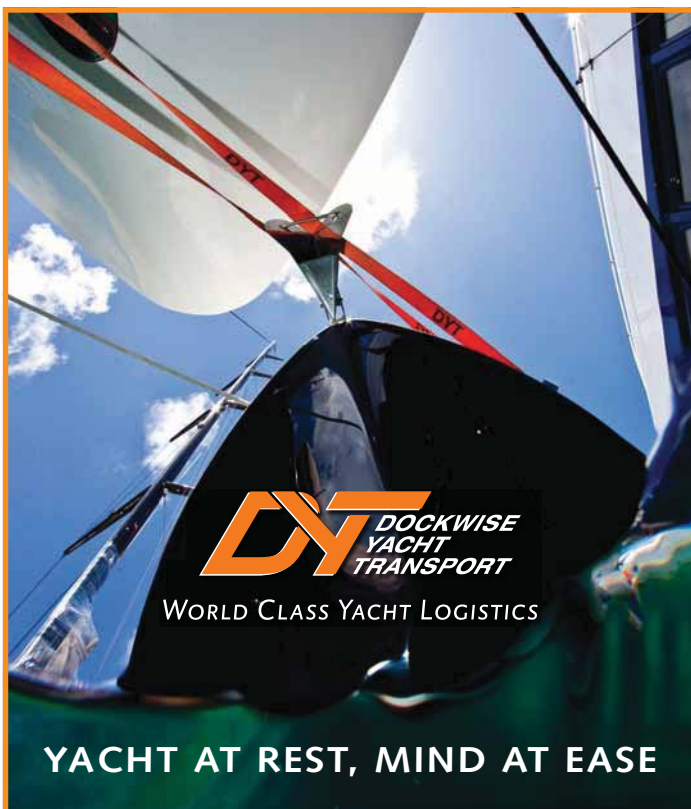


With his sailing canoe tender disassembled and stowed fore and aft and arsenal of bamboo dinghy rigs secured astern, Hutch makes his goodbye pass through the anchorage at Tyrrel Bay

It was the slowest Ensenada Race on record. There were four of us aboard *Seraffyn*, the Lyle Hess design Bristol Channel Cutter 28 that gained popularity when its owners Lin and Larry Pardey circumnavigated on a shoestring budget, and wrote books based on their adage 'go light, go simple, go now'. It was 1980, and my first husband Tom was enthused about our opportunity to sail with the famous pair. We were \$11,000 into building a Sam Morse design Bristol Channel Cutter 28 kit boat. I was already hav-

ing doubts about leaving behind what I had acquired, to circumnavigate in a 28ft boat.

Sloshing around in light winds and fog, pressed into a small cockpit, helplessness and nausea overcame me. Humiliated at the thought of attempting the 'bucket & chuck-it' method, even though the Pardeys excused themselves and disappeared below, I couldn't get myself to go. At 03:00, after 15-hours at sea, I couldn't wait to get off the boat, use a conventional bathroom and sit down over a hot meal. Young



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## 2013 SAILING SCHEDULE

### VOYAGES FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN

#### TO THE CARIBBEAN

Genoa → Martinique  
Palma de Mallorca → Martinique  
Palma de Mallorca → St. Thomas

11/2013  
11/2013  
04/2013

### VOYAGES FROM THE EAST COAST USA

#### TO THE CARIBBEAN

Newport → St. Thomas  
Port Everglades → Martinique  
Port Everglades → St. Thomas

11/2013  
06/2013  
10/2013

#### TO THE EAST COAST USA

Genoa → Port Everglades  
Genoa → Port Everglades  
Genoa → Port Everglades  
Genoa → Port Everglades  
Genoa → Port Everglades  
Marmaris → Port Everglades  
Palma de Mallorca → Newport  
Palma de Mallorca → Port Everglades  
Palma de Mallorca → Port Everglades  
Palma de Mallorca → Port Everglades  
Palma de Mallorca → Port Everglades  
Palma de Mallorca → Port Everglades

03/2013  
04/2013  
06/2013  
08/2013  
10/2013  
12/2013  
08/2013  
04/2013  
04/2013  
05/2013  
09/2013  
10/2013  
11/2013

#### TO THE MEDITERRANEAN

Newport → Palma de Mallorca  
Newport → Palma de Mallorca  
Port Everglades → Genoa  
Port Everglades → Genoa  
Port Everglades → Genoa  
Port Everglades → Genoa  
Port Everglades → Palma de Mallorca  
Port Everglades → Palma de Mallorca  
Port Everglades → Palma de Mallorca  
Port Everglades → Palma de Mallorca  
Port Everglades → Toulon

05/2013  
11/2013  
04/2013  
05/2013  
09/2013  
10/2013  
12/2013  
03/2013  
05/2013  
06/2013  
09/2013  
10/2013  
06/2013

### VOYAGES FROM THE CARIBBEAN

#### TO THE MEDITERRANEAN

Martinique → Genoa  
Martinique → Genoa  
Martinique → Toulon  
St. Thomas → Palma de Mallorca  
St. Thomas → Palma de Mallorca

03/2013  
11/2013  
06/2013  
04/2013  
11/2013

#### TO THE PACIFIC WEST COAST

Port Everglades → Golfito

12/2013\*

#### TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Port Everglades → Auckland  
Port Everglades → Brisbane

12/2013\*  
12/2013\*

#### TO THE EAST COAST USA

St. Thomas → Newport  
St. Thomas → Port Everglades  
Martinique → Port Everglades

04/2013  
04/2013  
12/2013

\*Sailing originates in Palma de Mallorca in November, 2013, with port calls in Martinique, Port Everglades and Golfito in December. The voyage arrives in Auckland, New Zealand, in perfect time for the 2014 NZ Millennium Cup.

All dates are approximate, without guarantee. For exact dates check with our booking agencies. DYT offers sailings to/from additional ports of call. Please visit our website or call us to discuss your specific needs.

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Jim Hutchins transports a mast utilizing highly functioning sailing canoe tender

and impressionable, it was a shocking first introduction to small boat cruising. I soon abandoned Tom's dream.

Sailors like the Pardeys forego heads and holding tanks in favor of storage and other functionality. But not all small boats are designed or outfitted the same way.

After a career running a flight school in Boulder, Colorado, Jim 'Hutch' Hutchinson tried sailing. Fascinated by aerodynamics, but plagued by stacks of paperwork and too much time in the office, Hutchinson was seeking a change.

"It didn't take long before sailing took over," he says. "I left Colorado, bought a boat and cruised to the Bahamas."

After several years, Hutchinson ventured deeper into the Caribbean, arriving in The Grenadines in 1994. He never left.

Choosing a fiberglass Bristol 2 for its strength and full keel, this man is passionate about seamanship and designing sailing dinghies. He refined our understanding of best practices for anchoring, storm management, knots and rigging. He brandishes a MacBook and handheld GPS, but doesn't hold truck with higher, larger rigs or the vast interiors, electronics, plumbing, pumps, engines and generators that are found on bigger boats.

Spending an afternoon aboard Hutch's *Ambia* makes our 40ft sloop seem like a luxury yacht. Other cruisers say: "Everyone wants something bigger. They are more comfortable at anchor. Let's face it; we all want more room and amenities."

Do we?

Hutch has time for ice cream, sailing derbies, writing, designing sailing canoes and supporting junior sailing.

With less storage, there is pride in water conservation and catchment systems. A mister at the end of a short hose in the cockpit constitutes a shower. Air conditioning? No. His mister or a dip in the ocean suffices. With a defunct wind generator astern, two small solar panels charge Hutch's computer and a small bank of batteries.




Fuel docks and marinas are irrelevant. Collecting rainwater and avoiding diesel or gas-powered engines, leaves just a quick trip ashore for cooking gas. Foregoing refrigeration or an oven, most of Hutch's meals aboard are cheese sandwiches. "I stuff spinach in or bite into a fresh pepper like a pickle to get my greens."

A misconception about small boat single-handers is that they must be kind of nutty to live in isolation. Truth is they gain a social network in anchorage communities that is robust. Access to neighbors is open and often. Sharing coffee, sundowners, potlucks or just standing alongside another vessel for an 'across the fence' conversation is commonplace. Many single-handers like Hutch are well read and develop a deep knowledge of marine skill that instills confidence. Confidence is a major building block for charisma and communication that leads to meaningful relationships. Small boat life facilitates this.

Hutch's chief complaint: "Yachts come into the anchorage and think they can anchor right next to me. I need as much swinging room as anyone else!"

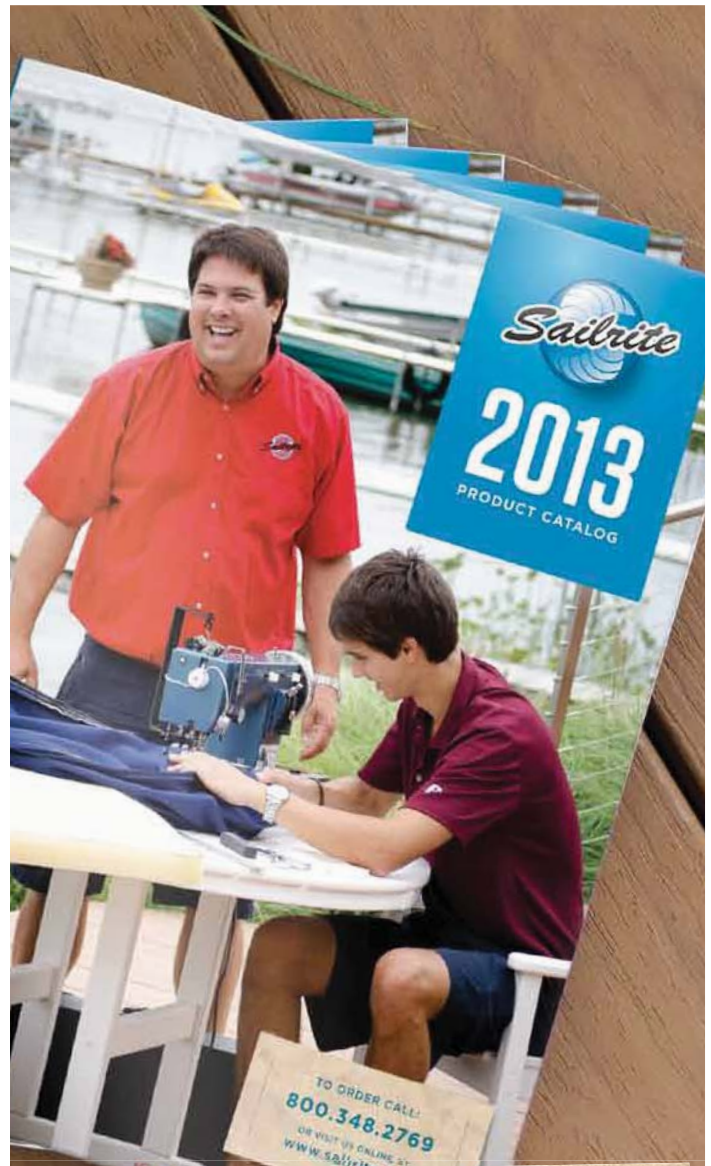
Nestled in *Ambia's* tiny cockpit, my knees interlocked with husband Jim, he goes into battle with Hutch, whiling away the hours with chess and chatting.

With no pretense or materialistic distractions, there is a deep-felt intimacy with the birds, fish, breeze, and environment. Conversations are satisfying.

Becoming part of the Caribbean fabric, Hutch's work with youth sailors, his writing and other contributions have created community and been a model for us. Going small has made all the difference. 

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*Living aboard since 2009, Ellen and her partner Jim Hutchins make the Eastern Caribbean loop each year. For details of their Caribbean sailing community, visit: [www.boldlygo.us](http://www.boldlygo.us)*



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