

# Bruce Kirby

## 1929 - 2021



As the sailor in later years.



The catalyst for our friendship. Sailing Norwalk Islands Sharpies. Image Margo Kirby.

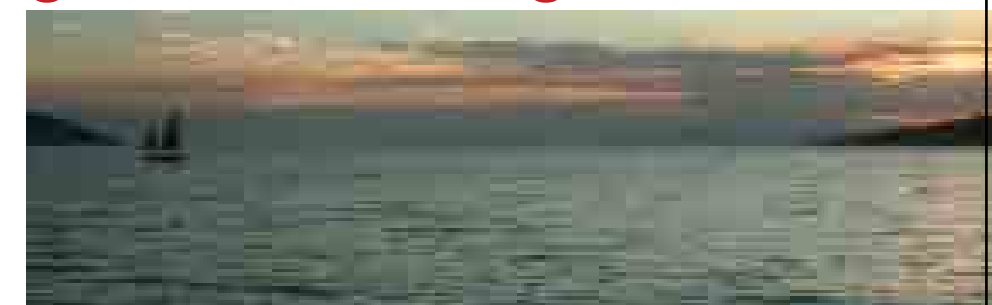


The last time we saw Bruce, July, 2018. He has just driven us from his home to the Darien Railway Station, en route to LA. I am wearing his shirt, gifted to me because Margo correctly thought I needed to lift my game for the Noroton Yacht Club. I treasure it. He liked Ali much more than he liked me, I'm sure. A man of impeccable judgement!



Exit 12. NIS 26 - into the sunset, with Bruce and Margo aboard, as they have been, for 65 years. Image Robert Ayliffe

friend and  
genius boat designer



by **ROBERT AYLIFFE**

It was Paul Atkins, NIS 26 Mk2 builder, who called me to let me know our friend, Bruce Kirby had died.

The many tributes I have read since are, not surprisingly about Bruce's boat designs and world wide racing record. His legacy is nearly 70 major boat designs of which thousands have been made, and are still being campaigned accross the world.

And that's before we get to the hundreds of thousands of Lasers, the genius small boat that has introduced more people to sailing than any other.

He was a loved sailing teacher, and a respected advocate on social issues, guiding some significant changes within the New York Yacht Club.

I stayed with the Kirbys for nearly a week in July 1998.

First I got to help Bruce carry Laser #1 to the courier, en route to the permanent collection at Mystic Seaport, two hours up the road from the Kirby home.

The second (and the purpose of my visit) was sailing on Norwalk Islands Sharpie #1, "Exit 12".

That experience changed many lives, in Australia especially, and in Europe and the US.

There are about 200 or more Norwalk Islands Sharpies out there, and a very loyal fraternity that has grown with it.

Mostly though, I will miss a conversation that has spanned three decades.

Margo, our thoughts are with you and your family, and Bruce, wherever you are, you will not be forgotten.

Thank you. From us all