

Hall of Fame - David Tyler

by Graham Cox

David Tyler: 1945 -

It takes an independent and adventurous spirit to take a small boat ocean voyaging. To do it time and again, quietly and competently, requires an organised and resourceful mind. It could be argued that similar qualities are needed to develop and test

new ideas, although perhaps the emphasis is different. To find a person who excels in both fields is rare. David Tyler is such a person.

David is a lifelong sailor, having started at the age of 10. He is also an experienced designer of yachting equipment, working for both M S Gibb and Kemp Masts (now Seldén

UK) in the UK. It was while developing Hasler self-steering gears, with Blondie on board *Pilmer*, that David first became enchanted with junk rig. When they wanted to fiddle with the self-steering gear, they would just let the sheet fly and the sail would quietly take care of itself. Pull it back in and off you go. David decided he had to have one.

In the mid 1970s, he began fitting out *Lliutro*, a twin-keeled Sadler 25, and decided to fit it with junk rig. However, being David, he was interested to see if he could improve it. His subsequent wingsail design was highly commended in the RCC Centenary design competition. The sail proved

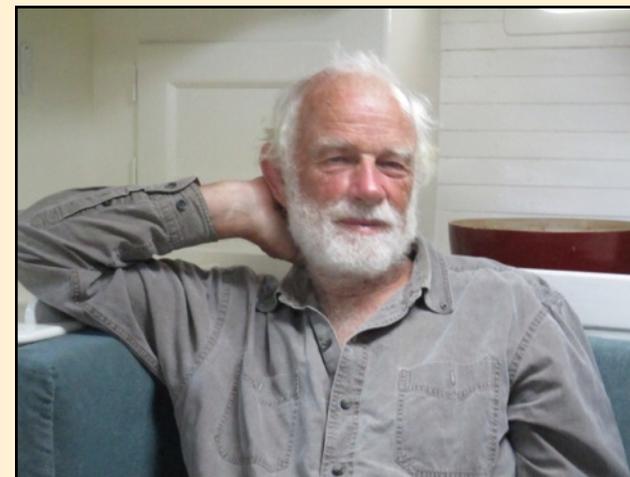
to be more efficient to windward than a standard, flat-cut junk sail, though not as efficient as *Lliutro's* Bermudan rigged sisterships.

This rig consisted of stiff battens that were split to pass either side of the mast, joined at the forward end by a radiused block of wood, with the sail doubled around the mast and single, flat panels behind the wishbones. The running lines passed down inside the wishbones, giving the rig improved aerodynamic efficiency. There was no yard. The first mast David built was one of the earliest hybrids, but it was a bit light and eventually bent. He replaced it with a stouter carbon fibre mast.

A couple of years later, he adapted a Swingwing sail from Robin Blain, cutting it down to fit *Lliutro*, and designing shorter wishbones. This rig had an articulated joint just abaft the wishbones, inducing camber, although it was just made from a lashing and was subject to considerable chafe. It was a successful sail, allowing David to cruise, often with his family, to the Channel Islands, Brittany, the West

Country and the Isles of Scilly. At times they had a hard beat down channel, and the rig performed excellently. This rig became the basis of all David's future wingsail designs.

After 12 years, David found himself in a position to afford another boat, so bought the hull and deck of a fibreglass *Lone Gull II* (designed by Maurice Griffiths), and began fitting it out. He had to fit a Bermudan rig to *Lliutro* in order to sell it, and was thus left with two spare masts. The decision was therefore made to rig *Ivory Gull*, as the new vessel was called, as a junk schooner. The carbon fibre mast became the mainmast and the cut-down hybrid mast was used for the foremast. David, along with other members of the JRA, had begun experimenting with batten hinges and cambered panels by this time, so *Ivory Gull's* sails were barrel cut with 4%



Marie- Hélène Fercot



Ivory Gull with original sails made in 1995

camber, with hinges in the lower battens as well.

David's wife unfortunately died of cancer soon after the launching of *Ivory Gull*. David took early retirement at 50, in 1996, and began a series of summer voyages around Land's End and up to Scotland, where he engaged in a vigorous campaign of mountain climbing, known as "Munro bagging." He completed them all, some 280 odd peaks, between 1997 and 2003. They are all in excess of 3000 feet. He also found the time to sail *Ivory Gull* around Ireland.

Now that he had no commitments ashore, David began dreaming of more adventurous voyages to the far ends of the earth. He was not dreaming of tropical seas, trade winds and flying fish, however. His preference is for the lonely, wild and woolly, high-latitude places, preferably ones with challenging mountains to climb. David's voyage photos are often taken from the top of some peak, with his yacht visible as a speck far below.

Ivory Gull was not the ideal boat for such enterprises, so he drew up a set of comprehensive sketches that David Thomas turned into a formal yacht design. The hull and deck were built in plywood by Hedley Bewes at Hamble. On his last summer aboard *Ivory Gull*, David took along a drawing board and designed his ideal voyaging interior, then came home and started fitting out the boat himself.

Tystie is an unusual vessel. She is 10.36m LOA, displaces 7 tonnes, and has moderate draught, with twin, asymmetrical, pivoted bilge boards, which are toed in and canted out. The hull has high freeboard aft and is somewhat reminiscent of a Chinese junk in profile. She has a conventional hatchway, but this is fitted with a *Jester* pramhood, from where David keeps watch and handles the rig at sea, rarely needing to go on deck, and only putting on his wet weather jacket when standing up in the hatch to reef.

The boat was initially rigged with a single, 55.7 square metre junk sail, with moderately fanned battens in the lower five panels, two large fanned panels in the top of the sail, a high-peaked yard, pultruded fibreglass battens, and a cambered, acrylic sail. The sail had three separate luff-hauling parrels, each controlling two battens. The lower one went aft then forward again, allowing David to haul the luff of the sail to windward, to balance the rig downwind.

Launched in 2000, *Tystie* joined the JRA Scottish Rally that year, and appeared on the cover of the November edition of the JRA Magazine (#37). It was the first edition to appear with colour photos, and her large, bright red sail on the cover looked quite startling. *Tystie* later sailed 2,500 miles to Lofoten, Norway and back with this rig.

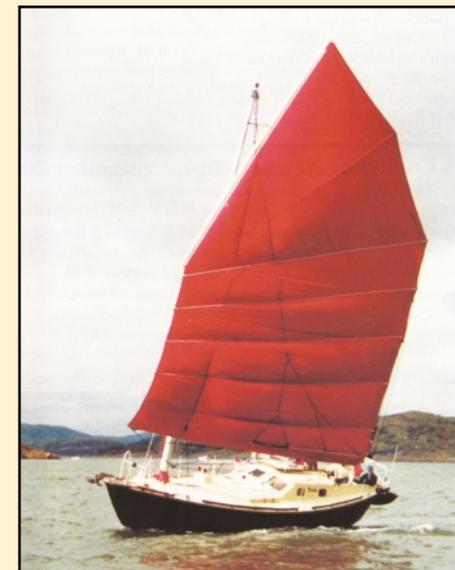
Returning from Norway, David decided that he needed to make a new sail. The acrylic material was subject to

too much chafe and stretch, especially for ocean voyaging. It had been quite satisfactory on *Ivory Gull*, which had much smaller sails. The two upper panels proved too large for heavy weather, and too much of the sail hung down when deeply reefed.

The new sail was a considerable improvement. It had more pronounced fanning in the panels, allowing smaller top panels, and was built from polyester cloth, Hayward's "Sunwing", and had a U-sectioned sail catcher. The battens were retained by a series of short pockets, instead of being lashed on, as they were on the first sail, which still allowed access to the battens for repairs etc. David had tried using plastic cable ties on the first sail initially, as Tom Colvin recommended, but found they broke easily and chafed the sail.

At New Year, 2004, David was introduced to Fran Flutter by Annie Hill. Fran had already made a solo circumnavigation and became *Tystie's* first mate. After a shakedown cruise in the Irish Sea in February (enough to test anybody), they set off to the north, cruising all the Scandinavian countries that summer.

By the time they returned, David was thinking of further rig development. The new sail performed excellently in moderate airs, although David lamented the lack of sail area for light winds, as always with junk rig, at least on short-handed voyaging yachts. (Chinese trading junks, with their



Tystie's first seven-pannelled sail

crews of 20 or more, used to set astonishing amounts of canvas, and Arne Kverneland and his cohorts in Norway have shown what can be achieved inshore with huge rigs and fast hulls.) The real problem, however, was handling the sail in stronger winds.

In winds above Force 7, with the sail deeply reefed, the high-angled yard required the yard-hauling parrel to be eased, which increased twist and weather helm. Undoubtedly the sail could have taken *Tystie* around the world in the trade winds, but he felt it would be difficult to handle in high latitudes. He began thinking of two-masted rigs. In *Tystie's* case, that meant a ketch, as he did not want to move the existing mast aft. He was not

convinced that a junk-rigged ketch would give him the performance he desired, so he decided to revisit the wingsail concept.

Tystie's new wingsail ketch rig was built during the following winter, with fibreglass battens, wishbones and nose cones, HDPE bearings, and fibreglass articulating joints behind the wishbones. The battens were all the same length except for the top two, to give the top panels a semi-elliptical planform. Sailing trials early in 2005 showed that the rig performed better than the previous rig to windward and

was even easier to reef than a standard junk sail.

In 2005 David and Fran sailed to the Faeroes, around Iceland, to the Azores and back to England, stopping at *The Turks Head*, Agnes, Isles of Scilly, on the way home, for a pint of English beer and a pasty. The voyage was an outstanding success, nothing broke, and the rig was easy to manage at all times. They began planning for their big departure.

Tystie finally left Ravenglass on the 1st May, 2006, sailing to Plymouth via Ireland, the Scillies and Falmouth.

After farewelling the start of the *Jester* Challenge, they departed Falmouth on the 12th of June, bound for Cape Town and the Southern Ocean. After brief stops in Spain, Portugal, and Madeira, they finalised preparations in the Canary Islands, including fitting a new, improved self-steering gear to David's design, which was personally delivered to them by fellow JRA member, Peter Manning, who has since launched his own sistership to *Tystie*.

Departing from Gomera on the 3rd October, they were carried by fresh trade winds down past

the Cape Verde Islands. Just south of that archipelago, they were treated to the stirring sight of a square-rigged ship under full sail, the Dutch sail-training vessel, *Europa*. Shortly after, they noted that the log now recorded 25,000 miles since *Tystie's* launch.

They met the doldrums at 12°N and took 6 days to get through, crossing the line on the 10th October. Luckily, they caught plenty of water here, as when they arrived at Fernando de Noronha, they found that only expensive bottled water was available. Once upon a time a lonely, remote outpost, the island these days is largely a resort for rich Brazilians.

South of Fernando de Noronha, *Tystie* found boisterous easterly trades and rough seas. Leaks from the forward mast boot and ventilators wet all the spare bedding and they decided to request permission to stop at Ilha de Trindade, a military reserve, to sort things out. Permission was granted for a brief stop, but they had to cut their anchor cable and make a hasty exit when large rollers entered the bay and they could not free their anchor from the rocky bottom.

South of here they had light easterlies for a few days, crossing the Tropic of Capricorn on the 5th November, before meeting Force 7-8 south-westerlies. On the 13th November, while broad reaching with five panels reefed in the main and four in the mizzen, in other words fully reefed, they were knocked down twice in the space of 2 hours,

which took them by surprise, as the sea-state had not – until then – appeared particularly dangerous.

Fran suffered a cut in her scalp and a few crockery items were broken, but there was no damage to the vessel or rig. David later found that the port bilge-board was down, which may have contributed to the knockdowns. They then chose to run off under bare poles without further incident, although a few waves broke heavily against the transom.

It is interesting to note that, in the 1968 Golden Globe Race, several contestants had trouble in this region. Bernard Moitessier's *Joshua* was knocked down in very similar conditions. He noted the presence of a cross current on the pilot chart, as well as a subtropical convergence of warm and cool currents nearby. Bill King, sailing *Galway Blazer*, fared even worse, being rolled and dismasted, although he was in much fiercer weather. On a later circumnavigation, *Galway Blazer* was again capsized and dismasted here. Robin Knox Johnston, sailing *Suhaili* in the 1968 race, also had his woes here, though he was much earlier in the season. It would appear that the higher latitudes of the South Atlantic are dangerous in spring and early summer.

Cape Town was reached without further incident on the 24th November. After a pleasant summer cruising the SW Cape, Fran decided she would prefer not to continue on across the Southern Ocean to Australia and New



First wingsails on Tystie



Ford's Terror, Alaska



Tystie in Desolation Sound

Zealand. David admitted to being quietly relieved at not having to face the Southern Indian Ocean, which has a treacherous reputation.

The ship was turned around and they had an easy, pleasant sail to the Caribbean via St Helena Island. The passage north through the doldrums, which are narrower to the west, was much quicker than their passage south, and they sailed 3,700 miles from St Helena to Tobago in 30 days, arriving on the 1st March. With the help of the Guyana current, *Tystie* frequently logged 150 - 170 miles off the north-east coast of South America.

Passing through the Panama Canal on the 17th April, they departed for the Galapagos Archipelago on the 24th. From there, *Tystie* made the 3,000 mile

leg down to the Marquesas Islands in 23 days. There were some light winds and squalls early on in the passage - David welcomed the squalls as it enlivened the sailing - then the SE trades became well-established, allowing *Tystie* to make some fast runs, including one of 187 miles.

The Marquesas failed to impress, despite their dramatic scenery, with rolly anchorages, nasty insects, poor provisioning and indifferent locals. They left for Hawaii on the 21st June and had a fast passage, with only a brief period of doldrums (ITCZ), passing almost directly from fresh SE trades at 5°N into the NE Trades, arriving at Hilo on the 5th July.

Hawaii proved to be an interesting place to visit on the land, but with poor

facilities for cruising. They left Nawiliwili Harbour on the 4th August and entered Victoria Harbour, British Columbia, on the 26th. Eight days hard on the wind against the NE trades, not much appreciated by the mate, brought *Tystie* to 38°N, where they found a period of light winds, followed by moderate westerlies, some fog and much overcast. There was only one near-gale. A visit from two Sei whales, who came close alongside, enlivened the passage. They also began to see Laysan Albatrosses gliding around the ship.

Tystie had now sailed 24,000 miles since leaving Ravenglass, and visited 11 countries. It was time for a rest and they happily settled in for the winter in Port Sidney, where David enjoyed donning snow-shoes and tramping the

hills. The following spring they set off for Alaska, getting as far north as Skagway. They had a wonderful summer exploring glaciers, observing bears, salmon runs, and visiting the villages of the region's indigenous inhabitants. David walked the Chilkoot Pass, a high mountain pass through the Boundary Mountains, which was the main route inland during the Yukon gold rush, taking 4 days to tramp 33 miles through rock and snow.

On the 7th October, vowing to return to the north to see more of this stunning place, they sailed south, refitted the boat in San Francisco, then sailed on to Mexico, where they cruised the Sea of Cortez and battled with the endless Mexican bureaucracy. *Tystie* cleared out of Mexico at La Paz, bound for the Marquesas, and arrived in Taiohae Bay, Hiva Oa, after a 27 day passage. They experienced light winds at times and suffered from an outbreak of goose barnacles on *Tystie's* bottom, but otherwise had an uneventful passage.

Once again, they found the anchorages rolly and the climate oppressive. Fran suffered an infected insect bite on her leg here, requiring medical treatment - these islands are notorious for tropical infections - which didn't improve their opinion of the Marquesas; then they sailed to the Tuamotus.

Making landfall on Kauehi Atoll after 5 days, they had to heave-to offshore to avoid a severe thunderstorm, entering the lagoon the following morning. This



Assembling aluminium battens in the sail

proved to be a delightful place, with easy navigation through the coral and a sheltered anchorage off the village. Like others before them, they delighted in the healthy climate and friendly, energetic people of the Tuamotus.

The next atoll, Fakarava was more exposed, with a 15 mile fetch across the lagoon, and then they made a final stop at Anse Amyot, a blind pass on Toau

Atoll, which provides perfect shelter and is home to only two families. They bought some beautiful black pearls here at a fraction of the cost they sell for in Papeete.

A month was spent in Tahiti, awaiting mail and attending ship. They much preferred the quieter anchorages of Tahiti Iti, on the southern end of the island, to Papeete. Moorea was pleasant, with good walks ashore on ancient stone pathways. Then it was on to Huahine, a charming, unspoilt island, Raiatea, Tahaa, and finally Bora Bora, considered by many to be the most spectacular island in French Polynesia, for the Bastille Day festivities.

Departing French Polynesia after 3 months, they ran into a long period of inclement weather, which stayed with them all the way to Tonga. The Western Pacific is notorious for reinforced trade winds, rain and squalls. The passage to Avatui, Rarotonga, in the Cook Islands, saw *Tystie* forging slowly ahead fully reefed in strong to gale-force south-easterlies, while many other yachts on the same passage chose to heave to. David hiked the cross island trail here, including making an ascent on The Needle, a near vertical volcanic plug, with the help of two young climbers.

An overnight sail brought them to Aitutaki, where *Tystie* nearly came to grief, grounding on the coral reef while trying to enter the shallow pass into the lagoon. *Tystie* only had a folding, two

bladed propeller, which had poor thrust astern, and for a short while it looked as if they might not get off easily. Luckily, there was not a big swell running, and their combined weight forward lifted the stern sufficiently for *Tystie* to slide off into deeper water. There was only minor damage to the keel. David later fitted a three-bladed, feathering prop in NZ.

More rough weather took them on to remote Suwarrow Atoll, made famous in earlier times by the beachcomber, Tom Neale, where they celebrated a cruising couple's wedding with 23 other yachts. Then it was on to Apia in Western Samoa, followed by Tonga, squally all the way. As Fran noted in their cruising notes, *What idiot called this the Pacific Ocean?*

Tystie departed Tonga for New Zealand and had a windward passage, with occasional fronts and rain but no gales, entering the Bay of Islands on the 11th November. After a bit of rest and recreation, they went down to the Tamaki River on the southern side of the Hauraki Gulf, where fellow JRA member, Paul Thompson, has his base. Paul had invited them to use his workshop to refit *Tystie* and David was keen to modify the rig.

By the time *Tystie* arrived in NZ, the rig had clocked up 40,000 miles without problems, apart from minor chafe and the odd

nut and bolt working loose. However, the battens and wishbones were showing signs of wear, as were the sails. David wanted to put more camber in the sails, increase the sail area by adding to the leading edge of the mainsail, and improve the shape of the upper panels.

Tystie was given new battens, wishbones and hinges made from aluminium. The foil shape now extended right to the head of the sail, the area of the mainsail was increased, as was the camber. The improved performance was pleasing. After cruising the east coast of North Island, *Tystie* departed NZ for Australia. September 2010 found them cruising





Fantail rig, New Zealand May 2012

Moreton Bay, before heading south to Pittwater.

Unfortunately, Fran developed serious health problems here and left the ship in October, 2010. Thankfully, she made a full recovery, but her voyaging days were over. She now lives aboard a 25ft yacht in Falmouth, UK. On the 12th November, 2010, without his gallant shipmate, David set sail alone for Tasmania, catnapping in his hammock under the Hasler pramhood (he was coastal cruising on this leg), and using his AIS to alert him to shipping. Two days took him from Eden across to Deal Island, and then he sailed on to the Tamar River.

A pleasant summer was spent in Tasmania, followed by a winter up the Huon River and an excursion around to Bathurst Harbour and MacQuarie Harbour on the rugged W coast of Tasmania. Once, under the cliffs of Tasman Island, *Tystie* was struck by a fierce downdraught that bent the top 3 sheeted battens abaft their hinges. He straightened these out, observing that they might not have bent if they had been made from T6 grade alloy, which is hard to find in Australia or NZ. Before he left Hobart, he replaced the battens with heavier tube.

On the 3rd November, 2011, *Tystie* departed Hobart for Nelson and arrived 12 days later. Four days of strong to gale-force north-easterly headwinds were followed by some excellent westerlies, in which *Tystie* reeled off 150+ miles a day. David was pleased, however, to put the somewhat psychotic Tasman Sea behind him.

Some time was spent in Nelson and surrounding waters, cruising in company with Annie Hill on *Fantail*, her Raven 26, which now sports a fan-shaped junk sail and self-steering gear to David's designs. David was very impressed with how good this sail looks and how fast *Fantail* is. By the time *Tystie* arrived on the east coast of

the North Island (followed shortly after by *Fantail*, both heading for the 2012 NZ JRA Junket), David had decided to build a fantail sail for *Tystie*. There was nothing wrong with the wingsail rig, apart from some unanswered questions about the longevity of the alloy hinges, but David just wanted to try something new.

Tystie departed NZ with her new fantail rig, which sported carbon fibre battens, boom and yard, on the 14th July, 2012. She was bound for Tubai in the Austral Islands, French Polynesia, en route toward Alaska. She experienced strong northerlies for the first week, followed by a brief calm, then several days of strong south-easterlies, before fresh westerlies sent the ship scurrying on her way. She covered 1000 miles in the first 8 days, making the 2300 mile passage in 18 days, averaging 123 miles a day, with the best day's run being 152 miles and only one day below 100.

The boat frequently took green water on deck and a lot of it found its way in through the vents and forward hatch. David realised he would have to completely seal the vents and forward hatch before leaving Tahiti for the windward passage to Hawaii. The rig worked perfectly, with no breakages, though handling the large sail, with its 7m battens, was hard work at times. He began to think that he'd like to make the after sections of the panels flatter, to stop them from slatting, which annoyed him. Junk rigs are not supposed to do that!

From Tubai, he sailed up to Tahiti, where he broke 3 battens when they tangled in the pulpit during a gybe. He then shifted the attachment point of the halyard on the yard, and shortened up the topping lifts, to discourage this from happening again.

From Tahiti, he sailed to Rangiroa in the Tuamotus, against fresh trade-winds. At one point, a tropical disturbance brought the wind NNE, right on the nose, giving him a miserable night tacking into steep seas, clawing for every mile, with further leaks through the forehatch handles. David says that he briefly considered abandoning ocean voyaging and taking up embroidery or something similar!

Taking departure from there for Hawaii, *Tystie* encountered an adverse, WSW current and winds from the NNE to ENE for 5 days. David managed to hang onto his northerly heading until a fresh easterly established itself, allowing him to make more easting. He crossed the line at 145°W, emerging from the doldrums at 10°N, after a frustrating period battling steep cross seas, light winds and heavy rain. This placed him in a good position to reach across the NE Trades to Hilo, making good time most of the way.

Tystie's passage from Tahiti to Hawaii proves beyond doubt that a modern junk-rigged vessel is capable of making difficult windward passages at sea. This is a tough route that very few cruisers are willing to undertake, even in boats that are considered windward



The same sail with the wrap-around removed 2015

flyers. At the end of it, David wrote that he was not enthusiastic about sailing back into the Southern

Hemisphere, but, luckily, sailors soon forget the bad times!

After making landfall at Hilo, *Tystie* spent Christmas in Lono Harbour, Molokai, before going on to Honolulu for several weeks. She left Nawiliwili Harbour for Kodiak, Alaska, on the 11th May 2013. They reached 40°N after 12 days at sea, beating hard against the NE trades, which went NNE at times, often sailing deeply reefed. The weather then became extremely cold, and David was soon wearing several layers of clothing and feeling grateful that he seldom had to go on deck.

Four days out from Kodiak, in a severe gale, *Tystie* broke a batten, later discovered to be caused by a dry spot in the carbon fibre layup. He was very grateful to make landfall on the 2nd June, shortly before another gale and torrential rain descended on the region. He poured himself a wee dram in celebration, toasting his good luck and his stout ship. *Tystie*, had now logged more than 75,000 miles at sea.

After cruising Alaska, *Tystie* sailed south to overwinter. A meeting with Darren Bos and others, who were interested in wingsails and who had suitable workshop facilities, resulted in David planning a new wingsail rig, using carbon fibre battens, hinges and nose-cones. He originally intended to return to the

ketch rig, but changed his mind after building the first set – he was already feeling exhausted and somewhat regretting his decision to proceed.

So, instead, *Tystie's* mast was lengthened and a single, high-aspect ratio wingsail designed and constructed. The new rig was taken for its first sail in July 2014. This rig proved to have excellent performance potential, but David had trouble with the nose cones and hinges, and spent much of the summer making modifications. By the time winter arrived, he was still not satisfied with it.

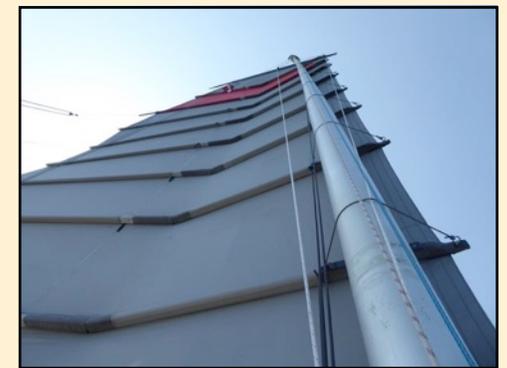
Undoubtedly he could have resolved these issues, but he did not wish to lose another season in research and development – he wasn't getting any younger and just wanted to go sailing. So the wingsail was shelved, the doubled section of the sail forward cut off, and *Tystie* reverted to a flat-cut, high-aspect ratio junk sail, with a single, wooden hinge in each batten, placed about 40% abaft the luff, with 20° articulation. This gives the sail 8.5% camber. These wooden hinges have the same cross-section, at their narrowest point, as a timber batten would have, but are made from much stronger timber. Their design is ingenious.

He reports that the sail is delightful to handle. *Tystie* performs almost as well as she

did with her various wingsails, and the short battens make the sail very easy to manage. Because the sail has a low-angled yard and short batten parrels, it does not need a luff hauling parrel – even the yard-hauling parrel has little load on it - and the sail sets and reefs effortlessly.

Flat-cut, high-aspect ratio rigs were tried many years ago but did not prove to be successful, developing too much twist. However, the addition of camber changes the equation dramatically, and David has fitted upper and lower sheets, with 3:1 advantage in each, to control the leech. After trials, David decided the sail was ready for ocean sailing, and he departed for New Zealand, via Hawaii and the Western Pacific, at the end of May, 2015.

Annie Hill was having her 60th birthday bash on the 5th August, and he wondered whether he might get there



The same rig showing the hinged battens

in time. It would be a race against the clock. The other reason he was keen to return to New Zealand was to help Annie with her new boat, the *Sib Lim* project, which she shortly announced would be built to his design.

Tystie had an easy passage to Hilo, sailing 2,397 miles in 18 days, and averaging 130 miles a day. David only made one gybe, halfway through the passage, and read *War and Peace* and two other large novels. By using *Predict Wind* plus Grib files, he was able to shave the edge of the North Pacific High and cut down on the distance sailed.

Shortly after leaving Hilo, David broke two battens, later traced to dry spots in the carbon fibre layup. He returned to Hawaii and replaced them with timber battens, then set out again a couple of days later. *Tystie* made good time for a few days but then ran into extensive doldrums. David swore (but then he has before) that he would never cross the equator again. Once into the SE trades, *Tystie* made good time, often averaging 6 - 7 knots. It was David's intention to sail non-stop to New Zealand, but a spell of 30 knot headwinds and very steep seas, while passing through the Samoan Islands, saw him divert into Apia for a few days.

From there it was direct to Whangarei, with a marginal likelihood he would make it for the big party. He took a gamble and sailed the rhumbline, instead of taking the recommended

longer route, which favours a more westerly course. Luck went against him and strong contrary winds saw him headed, at one point sailing off to the NW to get a better slant. Being sporting types, the party committee postponed the big bash for one week, allowing David to arrive in the nick of time. It is believed he thoroughly enjoyed the party.

David Tyler is a founder member of the Junk Rig Association, former Chairman of the committee and former Editor of the JRA Magazine. He was awarded the Rose Medal of the Ocean Cruising Club in 2012, for the most meritorious short-handed voyage that year. He is one of the most accomplished short-handed ocean voyagers cruising today, and one of the most innovative.



Think on This...

Typhoon Number Six By Rob Prince

I would like to reflect on a previous sailing experience.

In 1989 I was sailing my pointy rigged yacht in the Auckland to Fukuoka Yacht Race. Towards the end of the voyage, whilst sailing along the west coast of the Japanese island of Kyushu, the wind started to increase very quickly.

We reduced sail, changing down from a genoa and full main to a jib, staysail and reefed main, then as the wind increased even further to a trysail and storm jib.

All the shipping seemed to have disappeared into safe anchorages behind the islands. There was spray everywhere and the seas were very confused.

All of a sudden the wind vanished and we were tossed around going nowhere. Within a couple of hours a gentle breeze picked up from a different direction. We hoisted full sail. In no time at all we had changed down again to trysail and storm jib.

At the evening radio schedule, there were concerns for our safety, as we

learned that we had just sailed through the eye of Typhoon Number Six.

In Japan they number the typhoons during the season - too many to name, evidently.

Thinking about that experience today... if we had been junk rigged the sail changes during the typhoon would have been far easier.

Thinking about it a bit further... with all the typhoons coming and going in that region it is probably no surprise that junks were developed in those waters

