

Aboard Sengo

June 2015



Sengo at Marine Stadium (Bums Bay), Southport

We made it to Queensland!Finally....

After some final works in Pittwater we were finally free to head north. Whilst day sails are preferable, this time it was just a matter of getting there... Days are mostly sunny, but the temperature is still not averaging 24 degrees. We are still too far South!

Lyrebird Gully Walk
Well recommended

Page 3

Making of The Spit
Revegetated diversity

Page 7

Fishing lines....bah
Who needs 'em!

Page 9

Newport, Pittwater, New South Wales

Let us eat cake!

1st June 2015

First of June. First official day of winter. And Andrew's Birthday. As usual the electrical contractors were on 'site' early and I had to work around them moving in and out of the boat - from the bowels to the cockpit - and trying to grab as much bench space as I could. The two layers of chocolate cake, made the night before to a previously untried recipe, were safe on the inside lounge table (amongst everything else that was haphazardly out of the way on the inside lounge table) and the morning's job was to dress it. I decided that the 4 tablespoons of jam stipulated by the recipe (I used cherry instead of apricot) were not enough and neither was the amount of rum. I added some chopped pecans before spreading the mixture on



Andrew's Birthday Cake

top of one of the layers. I eventually added some whipped cream (and not having done this before I had no idea just how whipped it was meant to be) on to the jam mixture before placing the second cake layer on top. Now to something completely new for me: the icing. Using that wonderful tool - the Internet - I found a recipe that used melted chocolate and melted butter mixed together, cooled and then whipped to make a frosting of sorts. After quite a few minutes of using the 'blender' however (which is actually an electric cutter (and part of our coffee grinder)) I decided that reverting to the manual egg whip might give better results. 25 minutes, and several sore muscles, later we came up with something we thought we could 'ice' the cake with..... All-in-all the cake turned out rather well and we had a gathering of 7 to enjoy it for afternoon tea (three contractors, one admin worker, the owner of a neighboring boat plus ourselves).

Some heavy lifting

2nd June 2015

The 2nd of June 2015 was the day the generator went in. We moved the boat temporarily around to a different pen at Heron Cove Marina; this put Sengo on one side of a dock arm and a barge with a crane on the other side. We were going to use the crane to get the heavy genset in. It was a delicate operation (and painfully slow) but all worked wonderfully well in the end and the generator is now sitting on its custom made shelf looking 'schmiko' (that's a technical term for 'pretty bloody good.')

After all the day's works were done and Sengo was back in the usual pen on the end of the dock we headed across for drinks and dinner on an adjacent boat: **Heart & Soul**. A successful day topped off by a very enjoyable evening.



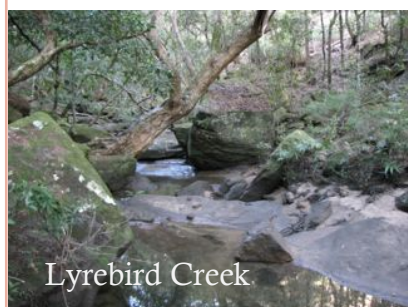
Genset installation

Lyrebird Gully Walk

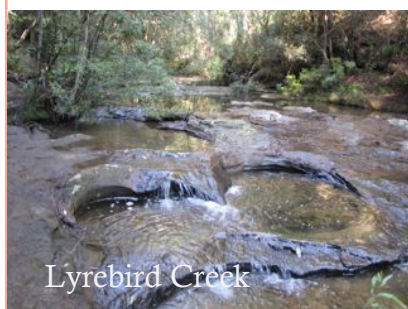
7th June 2015



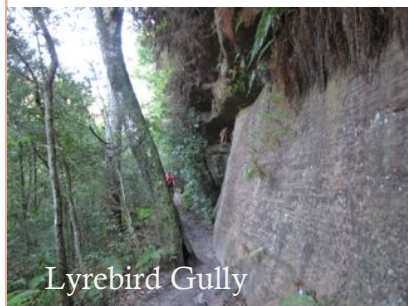
Campround



Lyrebird Creek



Lyrebird Creek



Lyrebird Gully



Calna Creek

The Lyrebird Gully Walk extends from Mt Kuring gai to Berowra. We started out by following details for the Mt Kuringai to Calna Creek Track walk (a one-way return track according to www.wildwalks.com) but instead of turning back we continued – essentially doing the Lyrebird Gully Walk (see www.friendsberowravalle.org.au)

The walk is 9 km long and listed as medium to hard. The track was busy, and as well as a few recreational walkers and overnight hikers, there were several groups of people training for Oxfam and about 30 girl guides doing their Duke of Edinburgh. We had access to a car and drove to the start of the walk but both Berowra and Mt Kuring gai are accessible by train.

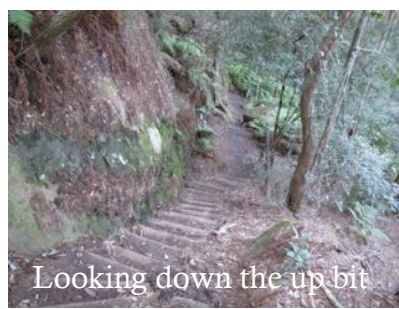
The first part of the walk was down hill, through temperate rainforest along the Lyrebird Creek. From Calna Creek a boardwalk across an open marsh leads to a track behind mangroves, past old aboriginal shell middens, and through a dryer habitat before climbing back up through wetter mountain terrain and eventually through dry open forest. We caught a bus back to Mt Kuring gai station. The walk took us around 5 hours but we were dawdling and we did stop for lunch.



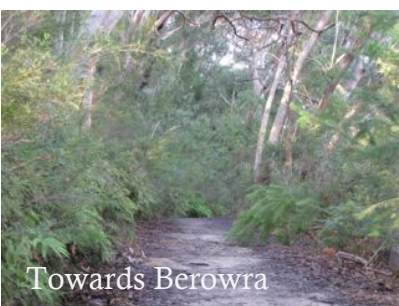
Calna Creek



Marsh boardwalk



Looking down the up bit



Towards Berowra



Towards Berowra

And some culture..almost

The 7th June was also the second last night of Vivid (<http://www.vividsydney.com>) and we thought, depending on how we felt after the walk, we might head into Sydney city and have a look. We pulled up pretty well (surprising to both of us) so we drove to Manly to get the ferry. Parking was almost impossible – all the street parking was full for a couple of kilometres from the centre of town – but we managed to get into a commercial car park under the ferry terminal. I had a fit looking at their rates – but rationalised that the rest of the day hadn't cost us anything (except fuel). However, when we got to ground level we found people streaming out of the terminal, up the street and back again. It would have taken three ferries just to get to town! Having spent the day on a relatively challenging bush walk (where I was very glad of my walking stick) we weren't prepared to stand around for at least an hour doing nothing. So, we purchased the obligatory amount of groceries from Aldi so we didn't have to pay for the parking and came home; picking up a Coles roast chook and salads on the way. I don't know whether we will ever get the chance again to get to Vivid – in future we are unlikely to be this far south in winter.



Heron Cove Marina on a grey day

A rare one-hulled experience

8th June 2015

On the official Queens Birthday holiday we went for a sail. 'Bliss' is a 40' Jarkan on a mooring not far from where we were docked and her owner wanted Andrew to give her some pointers on the finer points of sailing. When we got on board the wind was starting to howl and quite frankly I was having second thoughts. But after we cleared the mooring field and put the sail up we had a delightful time. We sailed into Coasters (The Basin) for a latish lunch; a bay that Andrew and I had yet to visit – before heading back to pick up the mooring just as it got dark.



Sailing pointers

With a new gen-set and water-maker, we are now, except for fuel and food, essentially independent. A final check of the new electronics on the morning of Tuesday 9th June revealed all was working as it should and we were cleared to go.

However as Andrew had a dentist's appointment on Wednesday morning we opted to stay at the dock another night. Eventually we didn't leave until the morning of Thursday 11th June, stocking up on food and supplies whilst we had the chance.

Morning Bay 11th June 2015 - lunchtime

Anchored back in Morning Bay, Tiger conducted his first circumnavigation of the boat in two-and-a-half weeks. He started slowly, sitting at his normal position in the open back door before he ventured out further. It is quiet in Morning Bay; no traffic sound; no sound of the slip way; no sirens; no dogs yapping on the Newport spit where tens are exercised every morning (and night) and the yelling of the owners to the disobedient hounds is harsh and shrill; no boats choofing past (and therefore no bow waves slapping across the back); only the sound of a doleful raven occasionally breaks the stillness. It is a weekday so all the locals are at work. Silence: Serenity.

The weather forecast indicated unsuitable (northern) winds until Wednesday 17th June so the aim was to try to catch up with as many people as possible from Newport as we don't quite know when we will be back again.



Pittwater from Church Point



Sunset 17th June 2015

Broken Bay to Gold Coast 17th to 20th June 2015

The sail from Broken Bay, NSW to Southport, QLD was, thankfully, essentially uneventful. It took us a total of 68 hours including two 10-hour stretches of languishing (at one point we were officially doing 1.7 knots - and half of that was current!). We persisted however and managed the entire trip without motors. And with the new feathering props the only noise was the water rushing past our hulls. Three hour sleeps never seemed so solid. I can honestly say I was surprising refreshed after my overnight tranche breaks.

Andrew first saw a whale a couple of hours after we left Broken Bay (at around 4pm on 17th June) but by the time I emerged from the cabin all I got to view was the spray. The only other sighting was more spray on the 19th. Watching the crescent moon sink below the horizon south of Ballina at around midnight I wondered whether whales could be seen on a moonless night. The volunteer on duty for Cape Byron had warned me to be careful not to hit any whales as they were apparently gathering in numbers off the coast there, but at my protests of 'it is midnight and I'm not likely to see them,' he conceded it would '**probably**' be alright as we were travelling in the same direction!

The crew was reintroduced to their sea legs early on and after each cat threw up shortly after leaving Broken Bay they settled in for the journey. Tiger remained in the lounge area regaining his energy quite quickly (although not really happy about the situation and cried for attention each time we went into the cabin). Cilla, on the other hand, remained downstairs on our bed for almost the entire trip - sensibly sleeping of course.

Just when I had made the decision not to take copious amounts of photographs of sunsets and sunrises we get presented with more beautiful views and I couldn't resist. I will have to learn to pare down the numbers though to a 'representative few' and hone my technique to ensure that most of them come out in focus from a moving deck.

We entered the Gold Coast Seaway with minimal fuss at 0730 on 20th June 2015. The feared 25-30 knot winds never eventuated in our patch, the worst (apart from a small stint of 20 knots at midnight on the 17th of June) seemed to be around 20 knots in the middle of the night on the 19th June. Because we had to recalculate our timing a

couple of times (due to the lack of wind) we suddenly found ourselves going too fast, and like our trip into Lakes Entrance in January, we found we were struggling to keep the boat speed down. We dropped the main sail altogether and the genoa was furled back to the size of a large handkerchief but we were still doing over 5 knots. I counteracted this by heading further out to sea, thinking that the further out I went, the further I would need to come back in (and therefore take longer) However, on reflection, and a further check of bom.gov.au, I changed tack, seeing that once past Coolangatta I could turn west and have the mountainous hinterland give me some wind protection. This worked and almost immediately the boat speed went down to around 2 knots. Normally, no self-respecting yachty would be happy with 2 knots, but when it means you can get to an entrance in the light, the lack of speed is like gold.

Sunrise 18th June 2015

Maintenance on the run

Sunset 19th June 2015Burn-off at Sunset 19th June 2015Sunrise 19th June 2015Gold Coast Sunrise 20th June 2015

Southport

A small exploration 21st June 2015

On Sunday 21st June we went for a walk. Anchored at the northern end of Marine Stadium (otherwise known as Bums Bay) we were quite close to the shore and we needed to stretch our legs. Of course, Andrew made it quite clear that this wasn't going to be a long walk so I decided on Adventure sandals rather than walking shoes, and left the binoculars aboard Sengo (although Andrew had his).

The Doug Jennings Park is at the end of The Spit (where we landed the tinnie) and we walked the loop of the park and car park before heading out onto the seaway wall. We were thankful we were wearing windproof jackets as the wind was gusting around the 26 knot mark. The view to the Gold

Coast proper (all the tall buildings) past the 'sand bypass system jetty' was hazy; a mixture of the light and the moisture from the tumbling surf.

We were going to pop in and visit the Seaway Tower but the place looked like Fort Knox (locks on gates and intercoms) so we passed that up and went for morning tea in the Seaway Café instead. The place was popular and it looked like most patrons were having brunch (perfect time for it on a Sunday) but we opted for a coffee and something nice from the cake cabinet. There is a small balcony out the back and this was a lovely spot to enjoy a cuppa (and bemuse at the blue-faced honeyeaters and noisy miners (and one bold white ibis!) searching for scraps on abandoned plates). (I myself was told off later for not discouraging the birds on my own table – but I was trying - unsuccessfully – to get a photograph)).

Before returning to Sengo we walked a section of the Federation Walk

The Federation Walk is a track built behind the beach dunes along a 2.7 km beach section from Phillip Park to the Gold Coast Seaway. The area, known as The Spit was created partially by natural forces shaping the coastline and finally stabilized by the building of the seaway in 1986. Originally, and with the help of sand mining, it was a typically barren spit mostly devoid of vegetation. Now, as a result of a concerted effort to revegetate the area, it is covered in coastal heathland. The revegetation has not only made it possible to anchor in a sheltered spot at Marine Stadium (just behind The Spit) but has provided fantastic habitat for birds. This is the thickest ornithological site we've seen so far. (Heathland is always good for birds). The fact it was the middle of the day did not seem to perturb them. The area was quite sheltered from the winds. Plantings are ongoing (see photos) and the community has done a stellar job.



View from Gold Coast Seaway to Gold Coast

Birds seen on our morning walk
(without trying) included:

- 1 - Speckled Drongo;
- 2 - Pied Butcherbird;
- 3 - Brush Turkey;
- 4 - White Ibis;
- 5 - Blue-Faced Honeyeater;
- 6 - Welcome Swallow;
- 7 - Brown Honeyeater;
- 8 - Golden-Headed Cisticolla;
- 9 - Noisy Miner;
- 10 - Brahminy Kite;
- 11 - Silver Gull;
- 12 - Willy Wagtail;
- 13 - Crested Pigeon;
- 14 - Lapwing;
- 15 - Pied Oyster-Catchers;
- 16 - Noisy Friarbird;
- 17- Rainbow Lorikeet.

In the vicinity were also egrets,
ravens and pelicans

We didn't walk the entire
length, instead cutting across
The Spit north of Sea World and
back north along the shore of
Marine Stadium.



Overlooking Federation Walk



Federation Walk



Federation Walk



Federation Walk



Federation Walk



Federation Walk



Federation Walk



Honeyeater: Federation Walk

The Sand Bypass System Jetty

Quote: (from link below) 'The Sand Bypass System Jetty consists of a steel framed jetty, constructed 500 metres out to sea and 250 metres south of the southern training [seaway] wall.' The system currently delivers 500,000 cubic metres of sand from the spit to South Stradbroke Island each year, allowing the Gold Coast Seaway to provide safe transit between the Broadwater and the ocean for recreational and commercial vessels.' This is an interesting concept. Go to the following link for recommended reading: http://www.gcwa.qld.gov.au/userfiles/resources/static/GCWA_Sand_Bypass_Fact_Sheet.pdf.



A scaly problem!

22nd June 2015

As a smokers windpipe slowly closes due to nicotine, as does our marine head (toilet) outlet pipe close due to the slow build-up of calcium deposits from the flushing seawater. So guess what we were doing today!

Andrew managed to tell me this morning that it is recommended to replace these hoses yearly – but I guess the idea is to do this before they become a problem! Our boat is nearly 18 months old and we hadn't put any solutions down the system to minimise the effects: our problem was well beyond cleaning (quickly) – it was time to replace the hose.

The closest chandlery was at the Southport Yacht Club so the positive side to this is we took time out of this messy project to enjoy lunch on the Yacht Club verandah - a delightful location – serenaded by the melodious calls of the pied butcherbirds who were skimming the tables looking for scraps.



Juvenile Pied Butcherbird

A bit more maintenance!

From 23rd June 2015 to 29th June we did the following:

- cleaned the clears
- washed the decks
- handwashed clothes
- I gave Andrew a haircut
- Sold the water tank
- Raised the main (to pack it away properly)
- Unfurled the genoa (to swap the ends of the starboard line to even the wear)
- Sent the port/starboard running light to Melbourne to get it assessed for warranty
- Conducted a quick clean up before guests arrived on Thursday night
- Caught up with friends and family
- Caught up with **Two Up Together** and **Take It Easy**.

During this time we were serenaded with noisy tourist helicopters and seaplanes. The excitement included trucks of suspected film sets heading toward the half made boat at the entrance to Marine Stadium and knowing the adjacent park is going to be cut off for filming this coming week we assume the excitement has something to do with the filming of *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

Who needs fishing line?

We still haven't quite got ourselves organized into having the fishing rods trolling out the back whilst we are sailing – and we are a little jealous of **Take-It-Easy** who reports in their blog regularly catching bonito on the way up north (and on 29th June very kindly presented us with some fresh mackerel) - but it seems that sometimes it takes no preparation (or preparedness) to catch a fish – they come to you. If I had seen this fellow when he landed he may have become dinner. As it was though I discovered him once we'd got to Southport and he was stiff – and may have been on the deck several days (I was not even willing to feed him to the cats). I had to peel his salt encrusted fins (wings) off the hatch - which temporarily left an etching that reminded me of the outline of a fossil.



Flying fish



Flying fish

Southport to South Stradbroke Island

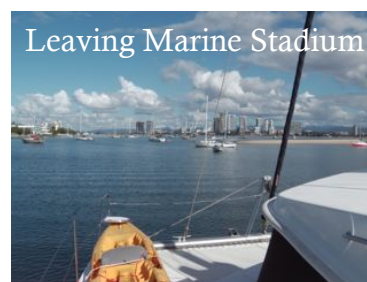
30th June 2015



Western shore South Stradbroke Island

After a morning shop to resupply our fridge and larder, we moved further up the Broadwater, leaving Marine Stadium and passing the 'caribbean style' film set (which I just thought was someone's unfinished project when we had arrived ten days earlier) before briefly heading outside the seaway for a bit of a (hopeful) whale watch and then heading back to the western side of South Stradbroke Island. We eventually anchored south of Jumpinpin Bar. (Jumpinpin Bar is where where South and North Stradbroke Islands meet). The day was sunny with a nice smattering of cumulous clouds in the sky and the sun at one point got hot enough for me to actively seek shelter.

Prior to 1896 North and South Stradbroke Islands were one entity. It seems that concentrated activity with the burial of victims from the shipwreck of the Cambus Wallace (1894) and the detonation of its cargo of explosives was enough to destabilize the sand dunes and



Leaving Marine Stadium



Film set?



Broadwater view – mainland mountains in background

weaken the area allowing the tide to break through creating the two islands.

The current here is surprisingly strong, so much so that I refuse to let the cats out of the cockpit. If tiger goes over he'll be back in Southport before we get to him (not really; but it is fast). The boat rocks in the current – a strange sensation after the past week - and we are vulnerable to all water disturbances here (we are anchored on the edge of the narrow channel). The Broadwataer is very much like the Gippsland Lakes in that most of it is exceptionally shallow or dries out at low tide. Here however there has been more surveying and if one follows the markers one should be alright (but one has to know what one's draft is!).

The ornithological highlight of today was a group of royal spoonbills but many other waterbirds were present. Wallabies were also regularly seen on the beach of South Stradbroke Island.

We sat up the front to watch the sunset but compared with those on the way up to Brisbane we were disappointed. Maybe tomorrow

By 9pm high tide had arrived and we found ourselves suddenly facing the other way as the current was now flowing north. There are no longer any bird calls and we will be serenaded to sleep by the waves rhythmically kissing the shore.



Shoreline South Stradbroke Island



Sunset 30th June 2015