

Aboard Sengo

August 2015



Sengo at Shaw Island

Activities in Paradise

From a race to a party...who could ask for more..

August was a month of variety: from a full-on week of yacht racing at Airlie Beach, to pleasant walks on relatively quiet walking tracks, and the SICYC Rendezvous at the beautiful Gloucester Passage. This is the most active and social month we've had since we got on board!

Art in the Whitsunday's
Shaw Island: The MONA
of the North

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Airlie Beach Race Week
Racing around on
Two Up Together

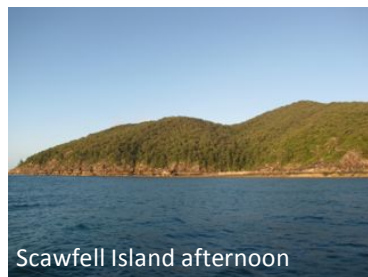
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Shag Islet
The SICYC Rendezvous

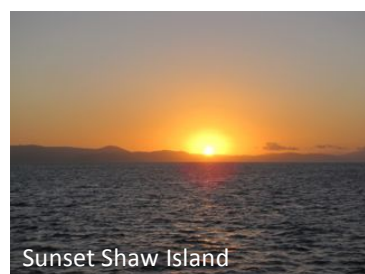
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Sunrise South Percy Island



Scawfell Island afternoon



Sunset Shaw Island

Balls up!

International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972 (Colregs) - state that, in summary: **Lights for vessels anchored and aground:** A vessel at anchor must display an all-round white light *[between sunset and sunrise or in restricted visibility]* or one black ball in the fore part *[during the day]* if the vessel is less than 50 meters in length.

Q: Guess how many anchor balls on yachts we've seen in the past year?

A: Including Sengo: 3.

South Percy Island to Scawfell Island

1st August 2015

We missed the sunset! We thought we had arrived at Scawfell Island just in time to see the setting sun but it took three goes to get the anchor to set before we finally sat down to a glass of wine at the fading twilight.

I did glance around at one stage; a quick peep to see the magnificent yellow orb kissing the horizon's surface between the mammary looking islands of Cockermouth Island and Wigton Island, (it was an quite erotic scene really), but I had other priorities and had to turn my back to it.

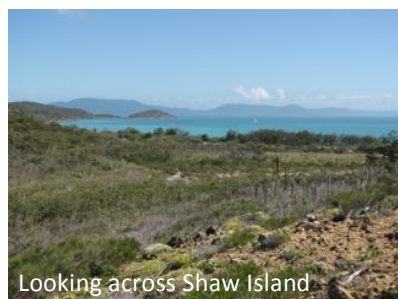
We had started early, but possibly not early enough, for our 70 nautical mile trip north. The preference was not to leave in the dark so we waited until 0615 to pull up the anchor. We motored between Middle Percy and North

East Island before turning the engines off. The wind was up (a bit) but the wind angle didn't want to play ball. Eventually I managed to coax Sengo around to the right course, at around 6 knots, and we sailed for around three hours before the realisation that we were losing ground set in, and we put a motor on. We kept the sails up in the vague hope that the wind would pick up but finally we conceded defeat and with about 3 hours left in the trip we dropped the sails altogether, put the other engine on and powered both up full. I would have loved to have provided you with a photo of sunset on 1st August 2015. Instead you can at least see Scawfell Island in the late afternoon sun as we were motoring along her sides

Scawfell Island to Shaw Island 2nd August 2015

We decided this day we would think like general sailors (instead of cruisers) and instead of waiting for the right wind angle to get from Scawfell Island to Shaw Island, we headed out at the best angle to the wind. Providing the wind wasn't going to change too radically we should still get to our destination with a couple of tacks, heading below Brampton

Island and then up the west side of Goldsmith Island before rounding into Shaw Island. We travelled a bit further than we would have taking a straight line but because we used a better wind angle (and got around 7-8 knots boat speed) we probably didn't take all that much longer to get there.



Looking across Shaw Island



Mangrove swamp



Heading into the jungle



Scrappy scrub



Welcoming director

Shaw Island

3rd August 2015

On 3rd August we took a rest day (after two long journey days) noting, as only light winds were predicted, we weren't going to miss much. Shaw Island is part of the Kennedy Sound Group of Islands at the 20 degrees 30' parallel. There is a 'shoulder' between two peaks (Mt Arthur to the south) that looks quite low and we wondered whether we might be able to walk across the island. When we landed the tinnie however the bush looked impenetrable and we opted for a walk along the beach instead. Toward one little headland we noticed a couple of 'blue items' hanging in the trees just off the beach and I quipped to myself that there must be a human bowerbird out there. I didn't know then how close I was. From this 'bower' there was a path that lead across a

mangrove patch, through some 'jungle' and across to a small stony beach on the south-eastern side of the island. This essentially was what we wanted to do and someone had provided the path for us. Scattered along this path, like crumbs in Hansel and Gretel, were blue path indicators; old thongs, bits of plastic etc. Occasionally there was a bit of 'art' and when you finally got to this stony beach, where lots of rubbish flotsam and jetsam had washed up, more sculpture was provided; clearly made from the rubbish found in the repository at the water's edge. I hope no one destroys this little patch of creativity. Queenslanders don't need to travel 2000 kilometers to MONA (Museum of Old and New Art (Hobart)), they have their own outdoor gallery at Shaw Island.



Toothbrush art



Tree of ???

Airlie Beach

4th – 7th August

Our journey into Airlie Beach was slower than we expected, as the wind wasn't in the right direction and after heading west (instead of north) for some time we bit the bullet and put the motors on, battling the current in the Whitsunday Channel before the tide changed and we got a final push into Airlie. We anchored outside the mooring area of the Whitsunday Sailing Club for a day before managing to secure a mooring for the next week – insurance if the wind changed whilst we were out on a race boat.

We were delighted that Airlie now has a Woolworths within walking distance (although Cannonvale (3 kilometres away) has a Coles) making it easy to stock up on food; particularly sandwich items, as salads (what we usually have for lunch) were going to be impractical on a race boat during racing.



View from Bicentennial Walkway

The Bicentennial Walkway

The Bicentennial Walkway is a 3 kilometre (approx.) walkway between Airlie Beach and Cannonvale, predominately along the beach. The track markers are stencil turtles so you know you are still following the right path. At Cannonvale the track leads you to the Whitsunday Regional Botanic Gardens where there are some bare patches where some plantings have just not survived. Scattered in amongst this area are sculptures. The crab is fenced in too closely to get a decent photo – but he's a great bit of creative metal. The old mooring buoy has a poem at the front, which I was quite taken with – see photo. It is a pleasant stroll (but 6 kilometers in the hot sun in the middle of the day was a bit exhausting (and possibly just a little bit silly)).



View from Bicentennial Walkway



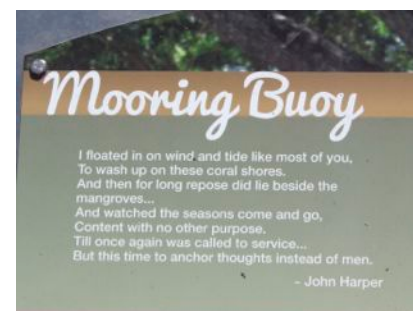
View from Bicentennial Walkway



Metallic Crab



Mooring Buoy



Mooring Buoy

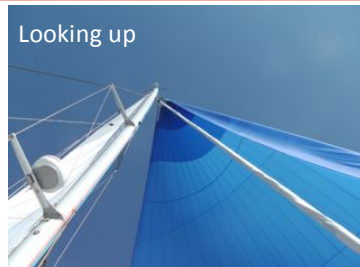
I floated in on wind and tide like most of you,
To wash up on these coral shores.
And then for long repose did lie beside the
mangroves...
And watched the seasons come and go,
Content with no other purpose,
Till once again was called to service...
But this time to anchor thoughts instead of men.
- John Harper



Walkway mascot guide



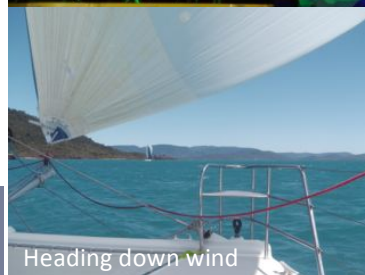
Race start!



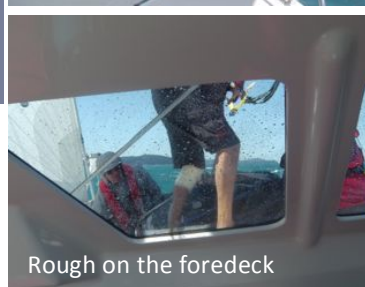
Looking up



Gypsy Soul



Heading down wind



Rough on the foredeck



Wooling the spinnaker



Adjusting the main sheet

Airlie Beach Race Week

8th to 14th August 2015

From the becalmed to the ridiculous...

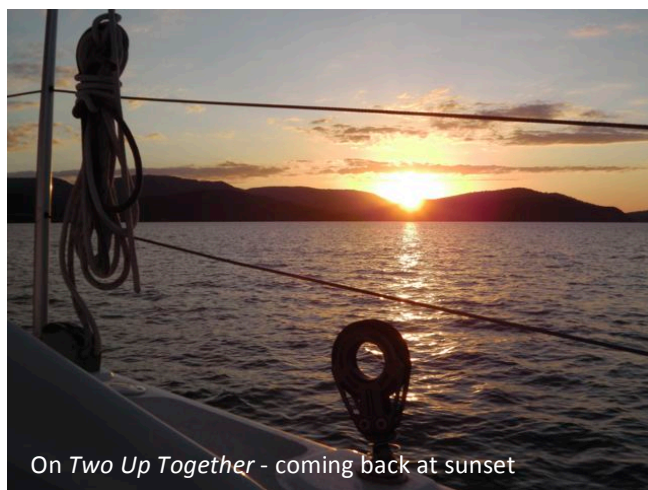
Well almost. Apparently last year the winds were consistently strong but you wouldn't say the winds for the first few days of the 2015 Airlie Beach Race Week were a yacht racer's ideal. In fact, Monday's race start was delayed two hours because of no wind and eventually the courses were shortened (after everybody had finally started). Every yachty I spoke to about this said the courses should have been changed much earlier. It was the only day we all had lunch before the race start and we finally made it back to the pen as the sun was setting. The Thursday race was the opposite and gusts of 30 knots were recorded - we had crew clipped on at the front of the boat! One catamaran broke a dagger board and one turned turtle (thankfully all occupants were ok) and we had a bumpy ride going around the Molle Group of Islands (down the Whitsunday Channel and up the Molle Channel) before heading back to base.

Whilst the Whitsunday Sailing Club put on entertainment every night I am sorry to say it was not as well patronized as it could have been - and I admit we were not there every night. The food available outside - where the stage and lawn were - was almost as 'greasy joes' as you can get. There was no incentive for those of us who were



Spinnaker run

prepared for a little 'junk' but still wanted something reasonable to stay and eat. Last time I was at Geelong's Festival of Sails race week, you could still get pizzas and chips, but you also had a choice of other, 'healthier' (at least healthier looking) options. We often tied our tinnie up to the Sailing Club pontoon after the races and we had to pass through the Sailing Club grounds to get home so we saw the extent of the crowd – or lack of it. One night there were less than 20 people at the end of the night listening to the band. We felt obliged to add to the numbers and waited until their set finished (while waiting for the wind to die down so we could safely get to our boat)– I even got up and danced with the six drunks who were utilising the tunes. (I was sober, just in case you were wondering).



On Two Up Together - coming back at sunset

Down time – or so I thought

17th to 24th August 2015

After over a week of 'town', dodging tourists, running around decks and shopping in crowds we headed out into the Islands for a bit of peace and quiet. However, there is 'no rest for the wicked' and at our first stop, Mays Bay, just north of Cid Harbour, we found we had a water leak to investigate. The bilges were filling up (thankfully the bilge pump worked) and after a bit of investigation we discovered our internal bridge deck covered in a layer of water. The result of this was for every slight tilt the boat made, water came down into the bilges (and into some cupboards ruining the boxes of 40

year old games). We spent a day and half investigating possibilities, sealing up holes in the hull (purpose built holes) and scratching our heads (and other people's heads) to work out what was going on. Finally, when chasing up an inclination it might have been a leaky pipe to the water maker, we actually discovered the culprit – the hose to the anchor wash down pump is not in one piece and where the two pieces were clipped together the hose clamp ('jubilee clamp' in yachting parlance, apparently) had rubbed through the hose. Hence every time I turned the wash down pump on to clean the anchor chain as it was coming up, I was also filling my boat full of water!

Having moved from May's Bay to Cid Harbour we caught up with Sunshine for sundowners on Thursday and on Friday joined them for the walk from Dugong Beach to Sawmill Beach (and back again). We hadn't seen Sunshine since we left South Percy Island.

Whitsunday Peak – 24th August 2015

From Sawmill Beach, Cid Harbour, we started the walk to Whitsunday Peak at low tide and made our way up the official track (unlike the last time where we bush-bashed using a description of the walk from a magazine that was then five years old)! When we reached the top it was (as is typical I believe) enshrouded in the clouds – with the occasional bit of Cid harbor peeping through. It was a good walk as I needed the exercise and the walking sticks didn't disappoint on their second trip out in a year. We knew the track and we knew they would be useful but we were surprised to pass a couple of blokes walking up the track in bare feet and reef boots!

The rainforest along the track was dappled in sunlight (when the sun wasn't blocked by cloud) and was freshly shining (as the day before had been raining). The rain also meant that the warning about rocks being slippery was particularly pertinent and I did manage save myself from several slides stepping down the rock steps. Unfortunately I didn't save myself from the slip closer to the peak and as usual saved the camera but not my elbow as it rammed into rock on the way down. (A bit of a graze but no long-term damage).



Walk to Whitsunday Peak

We kept our own company on the peak but passed 8 intrepid walkers on the way up.

We were exhausted and hot when we got back and contemplated a swim but I

don't think we've hardened up enough yet and I was only brave enough to dangle my toes over the back of Sengo into the water. There were other brave souls around us exclaiming, after jumping off the back of their boats, how cold the water was.



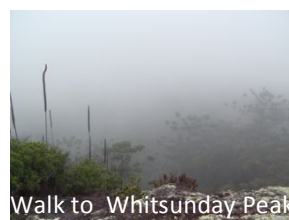
View form Whitsunday Peak



Walk to Whitsunday Peak



Walk to Whitsunday Peak



Walk to Whitsunday Peak



Walk to Whitsunday Peak



Walk to Whitsunday Peak



Walk to Whitsunday Peak

SICYC Rendezvous

27th to 30th August 2015

In the Gloucester Passage, Queensland is a small islet (at 20 03.8S, 148 26.5E) which becomes the centre of attention once a year when it is surrounded by hundreds of sailing and motor yachts.

Affectionately known as Shag Islet (because of the number of shags reported to roost on it), but officially known as Passage Islet, it is connected to the mainland by a mostly underwater spit (except at very low tides) and it is the symbolic home of the Shag Islet Cruising Yacht Club (SICYC).

According to the *Geology of the Northern Half of the Bowen 1:250 000 Sheet Area, Queensland (with additions to the Geology of the Southern Half)* (printed in 1974), geologically, 'most of the outcrops along the coast consist of pink and brown medium-grained biotite leucogranite, [] dated [] at 216 m.y. (Middle or Upper Triassic).' Essentially this means, the islet is made of granite. The top part of the islet is covered in scrub and funnily enough I saw no shags (cormorants) on it. (I did, however, see one Brahminy Kite).

The yacht club is a not-for-profit organization whose members (about 4000) are boaters and cruisers who come from around the world. The SICYC yearly 'Rendezvous' is held at the adjacent Montes and Cape Gloucester Resorts.

The Shag Islet Cruising Yacht Club prides itself on being exclusively non-exclusive and every member is a Vice Commodore (see www.sicyc.com.au for details). The rendezvous is a chance for club members to meet each other, have a good time, and because the club has a pet charity – prostrate cancer - a chance for some fundraising as well. It is a bit like Clayton Rotaract's (Melbourne) mantra 20 years ago – 'Party with a Purpose' - (When Andrew was a member 20 years ago their fundraising efforts from their major event, the Red Rubber Ball, usually went to DEBRA); a party with raffles and auctions mixed in. In the middle of all this you have a bunch of relaxed people playing dress-ups – this year to the theme of the 'Swinging Sixties' (Saturday night) and parleying at the Pirate themed lunch (Sunday). Andrew doesn't like dressing up so the extent of his Saturday outfit was a pair of gaudy red and white swimming trunks and a white



Shag Islet

t-shirt and was deeming himself to be a 'Beach Boy'. I went as Audrey Hepburn (there were three of us) and used a long black dress with shoulder straps, made some long gloves from black rags (after 2 G&T's so they weren't the most professional job) and put my hair up in a bun - decorating it with the three-tiered (fake) pearl bracelet from the set that was bought for my grandmother by my grandfather in around 1930. The pearl necklace that went with the bracelet I put around my neck –eventually- after restringing the bottom tier with fishing wire as it decided to break (and scatter tiny pearls all around the cockpit) with around 30 minutes to go before event start. I will give the string credit – it did last for 85 years! For many that I spoke to the Rendezvous is the northern culmination of their annual or biannual adventure, and heading back down south (home or below cyclone zones) was the next phase of their trips.

A couple of (environmental) gripes. The cost to attend the event is a mere \$20, but like many events in the past ten years, proof of this is given that you have to wear a coloured bracelet. This bracelet seems to be made from the same stuff as the one I got from a concert in Victoria a few years ago. The bands are non-recyclable and non-biodegradable! One of my pet hates is those who sell/swap/associate environmentally unfriendly products in order to raise money for causes. My mantra is 'there is no point saving people if you are killing/polluting the planet in the process.' (I refused to touch the one associated with the entry fee and Andrew was wearing two (although I would have preferred if he didn't take one in the first place- sometimes he has an issue with my values – but someone has to have them or we'd have a sicker planet sooner!)).

The other gripe was in relation to 'disposable plates'. The pirate lunch was held for the first time at Gloucester Eco Resort and as a result I suspect they would have had to bring in plates (it is a small resort). I will be very happy if I am wrong and the plates and cutlery were corn, but they looked like foam (non recyclable) and plastic to me. An alternative perhaps may have been to get an event hiring company on board and hire proper plates and cutlery. Yes, there would have been a bit of extra washing involved but.....



Gloucester Island from Shag Islet



Kite flying on Shag Islet



From Shag Islet – Sengo is out there somewhere



Sunset over Shag Islet

All in all it was a good weekend. The food was great, the entertainment was great and the setting is gorgeous. You can't ask for much more. We met some delightful new friends, and spent valuable time with some old ones.

Surely, we can't all be blind!

Further to my rubbish appeal to Yachties in July's 'Aboard Sengo' newsletter I was disappointed at the rubbish area of the Able Point Marina North (see photo). Can't anybody read?



31st August 2015

After four days of being surrounded by people it was time to head off for a bit of peace and quiet! We headed off in the morning for Bait Reef but the weather conditions (although predicted to be good) worsened as we got closer and we changed course, finally settling at Stonehaven Anchorage, on the west side of Hook Island, to see out the last sunset of the month.



Sunset from Stonehaven Anchorage, Hook Island- 31st August 2015: Solway Lass