

Aboard Sengo

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April 2016

Tinnie troubles
in Tin Can Bay.

A bad fuel day!
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School

Fraser Island's
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Made of timber from
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A month of wild weather

We have finally started the seasonal migration north, traveling from the Gold Coast to the top of Fraser Island, and it is so good to be back to visiting and exploring new places. However, as is its want, the weather is also back to its typical self and the regular 'southerly blow' now becomes the feature we have time our travels around.

Jacobs Well to South Currigee Campground, South Stradbroke Island Jacobs Well

1st April 2016

Surprisingly, continuing on from the last days of March, I spent the day polishing; this time most of the starboard side of the Sengo. This took several hours as I was moving along the side in the tinnie and had to cope every few minutes with the bow waves of the vessels going past in the channel. It was a big job and I now have to steel myself to polishing the port side. The highlight of the day was dinner with **Kereru**. We all headed to Harrigan's Irish Pub at Calypso Cove for their \$15 steak night. Three out of four of us were happy with the meal.

Leaving Jacobs Well

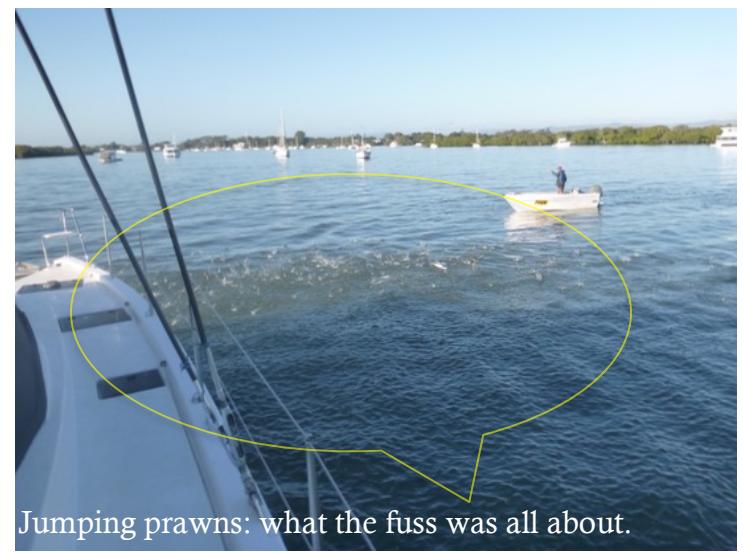
2nd April 2016

When **Kereru** had said they noticed the prawns jumping on the 1st April I expected them to have seen the occasional ripple on the water, but as we got up to raise the anchor to leave Jacobs Well I knew the phenomena was a bit more serious than that.

In front of us were a plethora of small fishing boats with many still on their way, drift fishing, heading straight towards us. In the main, the fishermen weren't looking at where their boats were heading; they were far to engrossed in throwing nets in the most advantageous direction without hitting any of their neighbours. One particular boat, with fisherman, small child and three half grown hounds (all sitting in a row across the bow of his boat-it was very cute), got within a couple of meters before I politely asked him to move as we were pulling up. Anchor up and turning around, having, thankfully, not hit any of the tinnies, I suddenly realised what all the fuss was about. From our bow, thousands(?) of prawns were launching themselves several feet into the air. It was an amazing - and noisy - experience....



Drift fishing tinnies; too interested in the prawn catch to notice they were heading straight for us.



Jumping prawns: what the fuss was all about.

Exploration: South Currigee Campground

Whilst not as long as the walk from Tipplers Campground to the eastern beach of South Stradbroke Island, the walk from South Currigee Campground to the eastern beach of South Stradbroke Island was definitely more undulating and I could definitely feel my calves working. The birdlife and sound was dominated by rainbow lorikeets and brown honeyeaters and there was no sign of the small wallabies that were common at Tipplers Campground further north. South Currigee is a much smaller campground, although it does have huts for hire and the glamping 'wallaby tents'.

Facilities include a picnic area with bbqs with a key start and a children's playground. The office has a few supplies...insect repellent, hand lines, and the necessities of life - chips, chocolate and ice-cream!

The outlook is across the Broadwater back to suburbia and 'mid' rises. You are also looking over the main channel so there are many boats going past; powerboats, jet skis, jet boats and water taxis. The wakes can be quite large so if you bring your dingy ashore here pull it high up on the beach or you risk getting it swamped like we did.



View from South Currigee Campground back toward Runaway Bay



Crab Pot Responsibility

This non descript plastic drink container was probably the float for a crab pot. We had seen this float travel north



and south over several days, corresponding vaguely with the tide alongside an adjacent boat. However, clearly it wasn't weighted down enough, and after coming back from shopping we found this in the area where our bridle met the water. As we had clearly swung around with the tide, it was not just a case of pulling the thing up; believe me I tried, trying to haul the bottle and whatever it was attached to into the tinnie. There was no way this was happening so we suspected



our chain had been pulled over it. In the end we cut it off. There seem to be many abandoned crab pots all along the Broadwater, left to rust in the intertidal area, or been washed ashore on a big tide. Legally you are required to put your name and contact phone number on the floats of your crab pots, of course this seems to be rarely done.

Runaway Bay: Electrical Work

4th – 5th April 2016

It was because our preferred electrician has shifted his base to Runaway Bay that we were anchored at South Currigee, across the water and down a bit from the Runaway Bay Marina. The works were booked in for Monday 4th April but the weather wasn't playing ball. Andrew got himself over to the marina in the tinnie, eventually, as the pick-up time was delayed twice, but having found himself on the fuel dock decided that he really wasn't happy with the conditions and just wanted to get safely back to Sengo. He cancelled the job, as picking up the contractor would have meant he would have had to do this trip an extra two times. It was blowing a good 15 knots and we had wind against tide – which is not much fun in a small tinnie. He told me later it was the one of the most uncomfortable tinnie rides that he has ever had (the idea of putting two extra bodies plus tools in our tinnie to return to Sengo was not a pleasant prospect). Work delayed, Andrew returned to Sengo where I struggled, in the conditions, to get him back on board.

The morning of the 5th presented a much calmer prospect and based on this we motored Sengo across to just outside the Runaway Bay Marina. She dragged very slightly whilst we were setting the anchor but based on the current wind strength that would pose no problem and after locking the bridle on, Andrew got in the tinnie to pick up the contractor...now less than 200 meters away.

Unfortunately, during the morning, the wind picked up and due to a quirk of wind direction, tide direction and our freeboard we found ourselves drifting into the channel; being passed within meters by sailing dingies, trailer sailors and one rather big

Sea World ferry. When I noticed the yellow marker buoy signifying the edge of the channel was significantly closer than earlier, Andrew was back off the boat and I only had an 11 year-old as company. After struggling to get Andrew and the contractor back on board, I convinced Andrew we had to move. After circling around north of the marina entrance our first attempt at anchoring failed ...due to a rocky and compacted surface....and in the attempt to pull the anchor up, the bridle got stuck. Unfortunately it freed itself whilst I was looking for a hammer and we lost the Mantis clip. A stressful re-anchoring and a struggle to get Andrew back on board after dropping the contractor and his son back on land and we finally motored back to our original anchoring spot at Currigee. The dramas for the day didn't stop there however as due to my distractedness at the day's many stresses, I didn't let enough anchor chain out and when we pulled back on the bridle there was one almighty bang, a shudder, and I didn't see it, but, flying debris...the end of the bridle. A piece of dyneema rope has been tied in its place; it will have to suffice for the time being. We caught up with **Kereru** for sundowners and I don't think a gin and tonic has ever been so appreciated.



Sengo outside South Currigee Campground

Runaway Bay Shopping Centre.

What a find! I doubt I will ever anchor in Bums Bay again. Okay, well, admittedly we didn't find it, we were told about it but it is so convenient. Whilst the anchorage adjacent South Currigee Campground is rocky (to say the least) as you are adjacent the main channel, and, particularly on weekends all the hoons come out to play, it is extremely convenient to the Runaway Bay Shopping Centre. (There is also the possibility of anchoring on the western side of the waterway here but that puts you next to suburbia, not next to South Stradbroke Island).

The Runaway Bay Shopping Centre is like all typical shopping centres, having several big supermarkets (Coles, Woolworths, Aldi) as well as big variety stores and the usual mix of music stores, pharmacies, cafes, a newsagent, clothes shops, optometrists, a couple of liquor stores, banks etc. There is also a fuel station nearby and a bus stop on the outside wall of the main building. The complex has even provided bins; a general compactus for normal rubbish and separate bins for glass/plastic and paper recycling. And the best bit – you can get to the shopping centre by tinnie – it has its own little dock. Of course these facilities would have been set up for the locals in the canal estates, and not the yachties travelling through, but I'm not complaining. It is perfectly set up for cruisers.



Heading home after a shopping trip



Runaway Bay Shopping Centre Jetty

Under the Powerlines

6th April 2016

One is not amused when a crab pot is placed just where one wishes to take one's boat. And whilst one usually has choices to go around said crab pot, these are limited when you are travelling under power lines where the HAT is 2.5 meters lower than your air-draft (mast height from water) and you need to be as close to the external pylon as possible so your mast doesn't touch live wires. In the end, Andrew split the distance between the crab pot and the pylon - only giving us a couple of meters clearance on either side.

We'd left Runaway Bay at 0730 in order to time the rising tide north so we could get ourselves over the shoals up to Jacobs Well and into the entrance of Horizon Shores Marina at high tide. We were heading into the marina area only for fuel as the fuel dock was long, had plenty of access and at the northern end, has no pylons. You can ring through to get some help to dock up - on the weekend they have two dock hands stationed there - and the fuel is well priced.

We docked fairly easily but discovered that the fuel lines would only just make the outside fuel outlet, and that was with the dockhand holding the boat to the dock

(clearly the lines weren't designed for big, fat, cats). Filled up, we paid at the office and were told we could have a coffee if we wanted (it wasn't a busy day) just that we had to



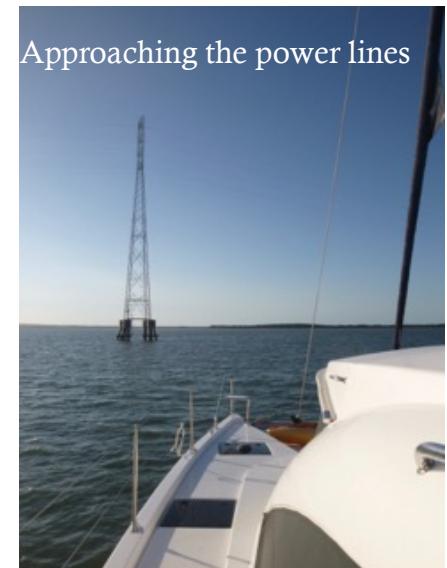
Fuel Jetty: Horizon Shores Marina

move if someone else turned up looking for fuel - which in the end they did, but we had help getting off as we'd hooked up with another sailing couple for a cuppa.

Anchoring off Cabbage Tree Point we settled in to wait for low tide to get under the power lines, but moved when I discovered the exposed sand bank creeping to within meters of us. Finally we made the call, with about 20 minutes to low tide (according to the tide book) and held our breath, gritted our teeth, avoided the crab pot, looked up with trepidation, and, made it safely under.

We headed north, along Russell Island and turned right. Whilst we enjoy exploring new places and could have anchored off between Mcleay and Russell Islands, we opted travelling that little extra distance to Canaipa Point, Russell Island. We knew the anchorage. We knew we would

be able to hold and we knew we wouldn't be disturbed by ferry traffic. The sun had set by the time we had the anchor down.



Under the power lines



Position of the crab pot!



Chivalry is not dead! For the kindness of strangers

8th April 2016

Today we visited Russell Island. Having arrived at Russell Island at high tide it was only natural that we would be dragging the tinnie back down the beach when we left. (the accessible dingy spots on the jetty had been taken so we snuck in on a small patch of sand in front of the children's play equipment, adjacent the vehicle ferry landing area). However we didn't expect such a long visit and with spring tides the water level had dropped significantly by the time we got back. The slush of the mud didn't look inviting although seemed solid enough when we tested



Whistling Kite Wetland

that closest to the shoreline. I was about to drag my half of the dingy down the slope when hailed by a burly young stranger (I'd say in his mid twenties) who came down and took my handle from me. Just as he and Andrew were dragging the tinnie closer to the waterline they were hailed by another. Apparently toward the edge of the slush there is a drop off full of unruly rocks. At this second helper's suggestion the tinnie was turned around and, with the help of yet another local young man, carried out through the dry pool area, lifted over the net and we were sent on our way.

We had only expected to be ashore or an hour or so, just to check out the town facilities on the island near the ferry terminal and maybe have a cuppa. However, looking at the island map at the terminal we discovered a couple of major wetland areas and went off to have a look at the closest of these. The Whistling Kite Wetlands area is the closest to town



Whistling Kite Wetland

and 1.9km away on the main road. The wetland area itself is surrounded by bush, populated during our visit by honeyeaters, butcher birds, tree creepers, friarbirds, willy wagtails and egrets. We did hear a whistling kite and saw many small, and very quick unidentifiable avian silhouettes in the bush. There is apparently an uncommon froglet in the swamp area, which we didn't see or hear, and the area is known for brown bandicoots - the only one we saw unfortunately was dead. The observation area on one of the tracks has a picnic table.

Back at the township we had lunch at Aunty Alice's before heading back to the high and dry tinnie.



Whistling Kite Wetland

Canaipa Point to Horseshoe Bay, Peel Island



9th April 2016

The 9th April turned out to be a rather social day. We headed up to Peel Island to catch up with **Joule** and caught up with **Phase2** and **Purrifik** as well, as well as a text conversation with **Ultimate 1** who wound up in the same anchorage but was on a different boat for sundowners.

Raising the anchor to get to Peel Island from Canaipa Point proved a challenge however...with the dyneema tied to the chain and the spinning of the boat with the tide, the chain had wrapped/flicked itself around in such a way that we couldn't pull the bridle back up. It took two of us an hour with muscles, boat hooks, more dyneema and a whole lot of grunt to hand pull the chain up far

enough from over the front of the boat to get it back to normal. Of course the wind was blowing northerlies so we motored all the way, eventually taking two goes to settle the anchor.



10th April 2016

Free Spirit dropped in for over an hour to catch up with us. They are temporarily heading south and as usual, we don't know when we will see them again. After that we imposed on **Joule** again for an hour or so before they sailed back to base. After a late lunch we went to shore

for a walk, walking east from the toilets up and around the corner (having walked a section of the beach west of the toilets last time we visited Peel Island in February) before returning to guide the tinnie over the shallows at low tide. We spotted **Osiris II** whom we hadn't seen since Rosslyn Bay in November, and imposed empty handed for sundowners (he was the other end of the bay from where Sengo was anchored) and got home just before it got dark...we didn't have our navigation anchor light on Sengo and there were no lights in the tinnie...just as well we left when we did ..we passed the water police as we got close to Sengo. Another ten minutes and we would have been caught.



Morton Bay to Mooloolaba

Peel Island to Tangalooma

12th April 2016

Finally we went sailing...the first time since...well, it seems a very long time. The predicted southerly came in at around 6am putting us on a lee shore but by the time we got the anchor up the wind had died down again. It wasn't until we got around the western side of Peel Island that it picked up to something useful. But oh how wonderful...sitting between 8 and 9 knots all the way across to Moreton Island. The little bay south of Tangalooma was a bit too rocky for us and we settled in for overnight with slightly less rock at Tangalooma, between the resort and the wrecks.

Tangalooma to Mooloolaba

13th April 2016

The sail from Tangalooma to Mooloolaba was lively and we averaged 8-9 knots, topping at around 1 knots. We picked up the anchor around 0615 and the other two yachts we knew were heading to

Mooloolaba were already ahead of us. We eventually overtook them and came into the river first but we did have a reefed mainsail and a full genoa up - the other two boats (monohulls) were only sailing under headsail. To be fair, the weather was slightly against us; the wind was behind us if we used a direct run line (so we tacked a couple of times for a better trip) and the swell was largish and lumpy; it was a definite insult to my stomach.

In the anchoring area in the Mooloolah River we finally got the anchor down; after 5 attempts!

Admittedly it wasn't all bottom; the chain stuck around the anchor at one point, the chord I'm using attached to the makeshift bridle got stuck on the anchor at another point, and a small amount of swearing into the wind 'entertained' the boats either side of us before we could finally relax. We had timed it well. The wind outside picked up just as we came into the river.

14th to 16th April 2016

We spent a few days in Mooloolaba, mainly waiting for the wind to ease. We had brunch with **Reve** (A boat we had met at Tipplers Passage in March), put my computer back in to the repair shop to make it happy, and ordered some rope from the local chandlery. We also caught up briefly with **Vamanos** (Lagoon) and stocked up on food.



Evening: Mooloolaba



Sunset: Mooloolaba

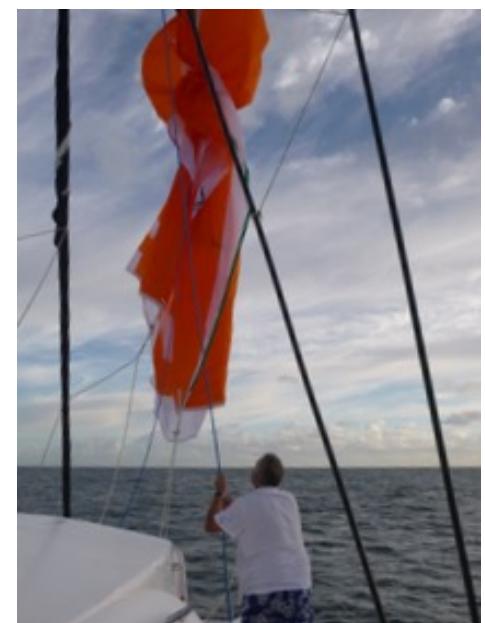


Morning: Mooloolaba

Mooloolaba to Tin Can Bay

17th April 2016

The anchor was up at 0620 and as soon as we got out of the Mooloolah River we went about working out how to put the spinnaker up. It took less time than I thought and we made a couple of adjustments to its set but had it working beautifully in the light winds that were mostly directly from behind us. That was until the rain-squall changed direction and came across us! I was pretty impressed at how quickly we got the spinnaker down and into its bag, just as the first rain-drops hit the deck. We had had the kite up for four hours. The next four hours we spent motor-sailing with the genoa only (with the delightful company of a pod of dolphins) and we made it through the bar...doing 9 to 10 knots this time. (not 2 knots like last time.) by 1600. A short motor down to Tin Can Bay saw us settle in to an early evening. We had had a long day!



Tinnie trouble at Tin Can Bay

19th April 2016

We got towed today! The small matter of not being able to row against the tide and quickly getting sucked upriver towards a moored houseboat had me using the international wave of distress to a passing boat. At first they thought we were just saying 'hello' until I yelled, 'No – Help!'



Being towed home!

Prior to this it had been a great day. We had headed for the public jetty at Tin Can Bay to explore the local area, had followed the roads around to the chandlery and marina and then, on the directions of a couple of locals, through the back roads to the local pub where we had an adequate lunch for \$10 per head, and an adequate glass of wine for \$5 each (until a fly decided it would try backstroke in Andrew's glass and he had to

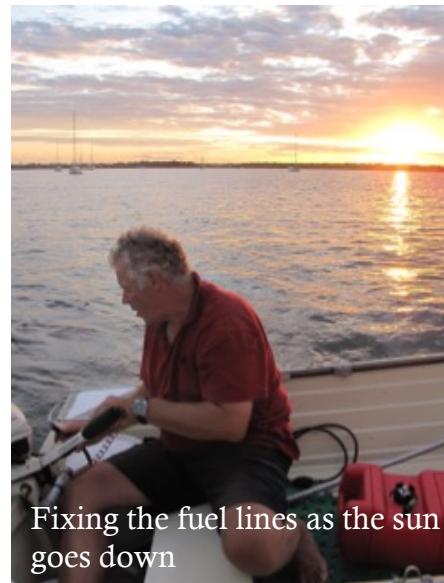
get another one).

After lunch we visited the IGA and stocked up on a few minor necessities, before heading for the beach and turning right toward Crab Creek to head towards one end of The Foreshore Bird Walk (see description later in this newsletter).

As per usual at the end of a day's exploration we had got back in our tinnie, started her up and started for home. Not as per usual however, she conked out – around 40 meters from the public jetty, and ironically in front of the Coast Guard premises...no members of whom clearly saw that we were in distress. Andrew tried the starter again. And the boat ran for another 5 seconds or so. We were now in a bit of a pickle; both our mobile phones had no battery power left and we had no way of ringing the Coast Guard. We tried rowing but there was an incoming tide. We were matching the tide – just. Andrew again tried to start the engine, as we were being dragged up river, toward a moored house boat and if we didn't do something quick we were either going to crash into it or start drifting on the north side of it, where no one would see us. So you

can imagine my relief when the small boat responded.

I don't know the names of our saviors and I didn't invite them in, but that was more due to the time of day than anything else. I did invite them back the next day, but alas, they were going to Brisbane to



Fixing the fuel lines as the sun goes down

partake in the ugly four-letter word called 'work.'

Once back on board Sengo Andrew immediately went about trying to fix the problem; which he surmised was an issue with the fuel line. Fortunately he had a spare, but the new connectors didn't seem quite right, and he tried to nut this out whilst the sun was going down. Frustrated he gave up to work it out the next day.

When the engine had conked out the first time we had immediately had a visitor...a friendly dolphin who managed to squirt us both during the frantic moments we were trying to get the engine restarted. As both phones and one camera were out of power, and the other camera had issues, (and by the time I had an epiphany of how to fix it the dolphin was gone) we didn't get a photo of our lovely friend. Apparently, according to our rescuers, this dolphin is called Mystique and it is one of the dolphins that live in the area. Every morning there is dolphin feeding at the local cafe (clearly they have a license for this and you pay for the privilege of joining in) with a regular pod of dolphins (of course there is, they are fed every morning!). We had just been contemplating partaking in the dolphin feeding but I am not sure if we need to now...we had just had our own personalised dolphin experience. A pity we didn't get more time to enjoy it.

20th April

I spent the morning trying to knockdown some of the washing pile that had been building up. Because it is a hand-operated unit, and only

takes a few items at a time, it takes a long time to get through the pile. But I always work on the principle if I work in the morning I get to explore or enjoy myself in the afternoon. Andrew spent the morning emptying the tinnie fuel tank of its current batch of fuel and replacing it, (having now worked out that our problem was bad contaminated fuel) and cleaning up anything on the engine that was associated with the fuel line. Washing done and fuel replaced we thought we deserved an off boat exploration. There is a marked trail that is labeled the Wildflower Walk (see description later in this newsletter) on the local map and so after lunch we headed across to town to check it out. However, we didn't quite get there, as the engine conked out on way over (Andrew had to hold the fuel line on to get to the public jetty) and we were then distracted with trying to fix the fuel line problem. At this point we were fairly confident we had solved the fuel quality issue. What Andrew suspected was that in his cleaning up of the engine he'd disturbed a couple of corroded connections that

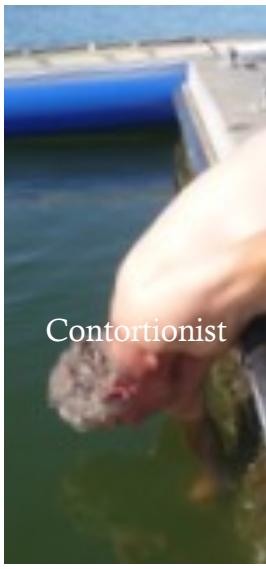
hadn't been touched for over twenty years. The trip to the chandlery was only partially successful, as Andrew's first choice of bits to fix the problem couldn't be found, but one local found an adequate substitute in his work shed. After a cuppa with **Reve** we headed off to IGA to pick up methylated spirits (for cleaning up future bad fuel) before heading back to the tinnie and hopefully fixing it up so we could get home. Grinding down the fuel connector in the fading light didn't quite work on way back, so Andrew had to again hold the fuel line onto the connector to get back to Sengo. I did a few more loads of clothes washing before the 'elegant dinner' of hard-boiled eggs, realising too late that it was actually our wedding anniversary and perhaps something more grand should have been consumed.



Cleaning the engine.
Something has to work

21st April 2016

Some times you wonder if your luck is ever going to pick up. After lunch we headed across for a second time to see if we could explore the Wildflower Walk as the engine was now going, the connector was now fixed and everything seemed as



Contortionist

it should be. However, as we got out of the tinnie on the public jetty, the kill switch lanyard for the engine fell out of Andrew's pocket and out of the corner of my eye I saw it disappear down into the water between our tinnie and the jetty. We were extremely lucky; as it had caught on the coral growing off the floating pontoon. It was however just out of comfortable arm's reach. Short of jumping in the water we couldn't see how we were going to retrieve it and I went off to see if I could borrow something thin and long from the Coast Guard to hook it with. In the end Andrew managed to contort himself, almost unbalancing himself, to retrieve the thin red cord (a Coast Guard member and I had to hold Andrew's legs so he didn't go in the drink). We did get to the walk the Wildflower Walk but didn't enjoy it as much as we could have. Whilst there were lots of birds, a few of which we stopped to observe, the midges were far too plentiful to make it a comfortable experience. On the way back to Sengo we were fortunate to pick up a couple of waste drums from the local servo to put our bad fuel into.

22nd April 2016

We finally caught up with **Mara** for morning tea today. **Mara** was the reason we had actually stopped at Tin Can Bay in the first place, as I had been promising since last September to catch up with them. After they'd left the only real job on the boat this day was that Andrew changed the impeller in the genset – it was a shock to see the state of the existing one;



Old impeller: how frightening

there was only one tyne left !(see photo). We just hope that all other breakages were small enough to get spat out of the system and not caught in mechanics

Hunkering

23rd – 26th April 2016

Someone had suggested bad weather was on the way and little did we know just how bad it was going to be. We stayed around Tin Can Bay and dropped the bad fuel off at the oil dump on Saturday morning, doing a quick walk up to the IGA and having a coffee 'where the best coffee in Tin Can Bay can be found' according to a couple of locals we met. Unfortunately we were disappointed. Then again, we are from Melbourne and a bit fussier in our coffee. On Saturday afternoon the wind started to pick up and it didn't relinquish for three days. Andrew's thought of staying around Tin Can Bay to go fishing was morphed into one small opportunity when the wind gave us a temporary reprieve and we fished off

Sengo's back steps (mostly feeding the fish). I pulled up one small thin fish with vicious looking teeth but Andrew had thrown it back in before we had identified it. All he got was an 'almost crab' as the individual decided it would let go of the bait just before being hauled aboard; making for a crab dropping out of the sky. When I got the chance, I cleaned the clears, but that was in between rain showers. Mostly we just read, there was not much else to do. I did have a go at one small (overdue) gluing project – with varying success. The wind also meant we didn't attend either service for Anzac Day at the local RSL. It was just too uncomfortable to get off the boat.

The wind up and down the coast was horrible, and at Double Island Point -the closest recorded spot to us (that was online) – it was averaging in the high 30s and low 40s. Gusts were higher and at one point Double Island Point recorded 51 knots. We think our instruments are reading low, I noted up to 23 knots (but this wasn't the gusts). We know other boats, further up the Great Sandy Straits though who were recording, and sheltering from, higher wind speeds.

Tin Can Bay Wildlife Walk

The Tin Can Bay Wildflower Walk consists of a pathway through parkland from the Snapper Creek end of Squire Street to the Snapper Street end of Bass Street. Dotted along this pathway (which forms part of the town walking circuit) are interpretation boards, each with information of up to four wildflower species which I assume to be in the area when in flowering season. Some areas along the path seemed very groomed to me, and I worry that this manicuring may be responsible for reducing the number of species. Bird calls were numerous but bird watching was kept to an absolute minimum as the large number of sandflies (for which of course we had not protected ourselves) made the whole experience exceedingly uncomfortable.

Noted species were the White-cheeked honeyeater and the Double-barred finch.



The Foreshore Bird Walk

Quoted on the interpretation signs as *'this 4 kilometre walk provides a range of habitats for excellent birding'*, the Tin Can Bay Foreshore Bird Walk provides a pleasant stroll from Norman Point to Crab Creek, along a pathway dotted with interpretation signs noting some of the major significant bird species, their habitat, breeding and migratory (if necessary) cycles. At Norman Point there is a pleasant picnic shelter overlooking the area's waterways whilst at the other end there is a toilet block, boat ramp and children's play area. There is also a conveniently located café nearby which serves reasonable coffee and able to supply gluten free cake.

The Tin Can Bay area lies within the Cooloola listed RAMSAR Great Sandy Straits site and 137 bird species have been seen here. We only saw 29 species but that's not bad when you are not putting in a concerted effort. The species were:

Whistling kite	Black winged Stilt
Eastern curlew	Caspian tern
White ibis	Silver gull
Spangled drongo	Swallow
Lapwing	Rainbow lorikeets
Rainbow Bee-eaters	Indian mynah
Australian Magpie	Mudlark
Pied butcherbird	Grey butcherbird
Kookaburra	Intermediate heron
White-faced heron	Blue-faced honeyeater
Little wattlebird	Willy wagtail
Bar-shouldered dove	Peaceful dove
Crested pigeon	Brown honeyeater
Grey tailed tattler (?)	Sacred kingfisher
Pied cormorant	



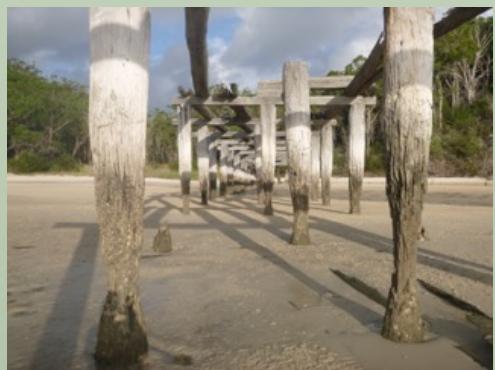
Tin Can Bay to McKenzies Jetty, Fraser Island

27th April 2016

The weather was starting to change and the wind was predicted, in Sandy Straits waters anyway, to drop off significantly. Not rushing it we had the anchor up at 0920 and had the most serene sail up from Tin Can Bay to McKenzies Jetty, just south of the Kingfisher Resort on Fraser Island. It was that calm, when Andrew made me an afternoon cuppa, I got it in a normal mug, and not in one of those protected travel insulated thingies. The strongest wind we got was 17 knots but mostly the wind speed was around the 9-10 knots, making it a gentle sail – we were in no hurry – ranging from 2.8 knots to 8 knots boat speed. We did the whole trip on genoa (headsail). Andrew did threaten to put the kite up (spinnaker) but this wouldn't have helped when we had to change direction and the wind did swing around a bit. I did have to put the engine on three times in a very small stretch that had us heading straight into the wind (around South White Cliffs (Yankee Jacks Creek)) on Fraser Island) but that didn't last long. We anchored behind **Reve** south of McKenzies jetty and enjoyed a protracted sundowners with them.

When we arrived at McKenzies Jetty the light was gorgeous; late afternoon hues with leaden skies

threatening. A quick explore of the shore allowed me to take some photos. It was unfortunate though that the really good camera is having issues and needs to be seen to. These photos were taken on the Lumix.



Commando School

Near McKenzies Jetty lies the ruin of a secret government military commando training school which was operational from 1942 until the end of the second world war. During 1943, the government set up a training program for recruits who were going to undertake special espionage operations behind Japanese lines. The successful trainees became members of Z Force. 909 trainees went through the system here, 380 graduated as Z force.

Recruits, mainly Australians, were never told what they were training for except that it was highly dangerous. During training, test missions were undertaken, including successful placement of fake ordinance on businesses up the Mary River in Maryborough and artillery tests included firing and destroying abandoned equipment and boilers from the old mill site, and practice firing at the wreck of the Mahino.

Fraser Island was chosen 'because its natural features offered ideal jungle and amphibious training.' Permanent buildings weren't erected until 1944.

(note: information summarised from interpretation boards on Fraser Island)



Part of an old boiler at the Mill site. Notice the impact hole..



The wreck of the Mahino was used as target practice for Z Force trainees. Photo taken July 2010

McKenzies Jetty

McKenzies Jetty lies in ruins; a skeleton of its former self, extending from the tree line down to the waters edge, where the waves of time have eroded the seaward pylons to circular, fungal like stumps. This jetty once rang with the sounds of loading timber – from the tall and glorious stands that came from the forests of the Island. Trees on Fraser Island were identified for the timber industry in the early 1840's by Andrew Petrie, a pioneer that had a great deal to do with the timber industry and the railways coming to Maryborough. Timber was being taken from Fraser Island by 1863 and Hepburn Mckenzie purchased 4000 acres here in 1918. The mill, and the town around it – North White Cliffs – operated in private hands until 1925 when 'high running costs and an industrial dispute' stopped operations. The Queensland Government then bought the tramway and jetty and continued using them until 1930.

The pylons of the jetty are *Syncarpia hillii*, known as Satinay or Turpentine, a magnificent tree that was noted for its long straight trunks and resistance to rot, and therefore used extensively in the marine industry. There are pylons in jetties in England that came from Fraser Island and the Central campground and picnic area on Fraser Island (we visited there in 2010) is full of these magnificent plants. The short walk there – the Valley of the Giants, is worth doing if you can get to it. Satinay trees can grow in the region of 40 meters tall and around 1 meter in diameter.

(note: information above summarised from interpretation boards on Fraser Island)



McKenzies Jetty



Satinay trees: Valley of the Giants, Fraser Island. Photo taken July 2010

Tiger has some excitement and we explore some history.

28th April 2016

A walk on Fraser Island. But not before a little excitement!

I haven't seen Tiger jump so high since I scared him prior to his swim in April 2015 (See aboard Sengo April 2015) but his pirouette in the front cockpit was a sight to be seen. Unfortunately for a welcome swallow it wasn't that impressive, as the poor bird was swiped down and I think he ended up with his head in Tiger's mouth. (Two other swallows had breached the back cockpit but this adventurous one had flown all the way through to the front). Tiger didn't seem that pleased to be pulled off the bird and the poor little bird escaped from me, momentarily hanging upside down on the front cockpit screens, with one wing hanging out to the side. Fending the cat from doing any more acrobatics (and damage) I opened the middle of the fly screen and the poor little victim managed to see his escape route, flying off toward land for safety (and taking all the other swallows that were sitting on the lifelines along with him). Tiger at least had had his 'natural' instinctive experience for the day. Disaster averted and wildlife saved we got off the boat for some exercise ourselves.

The walk from Mckenzies Jetty to the Kingfisher resort is about 2.9 kilometres, although it doesn't look that far, but can be roughly calculated by the time we took to get there (and the walking map available at the resort).



The weather was pleasant, the sky was not threatening, and after a short rest at the Kingfisher Jetty we made our way to the General Store, where some overpriced rice crackers were purchased (but necessary for dip later in the afternoon) and a loaf of bread was bought on consignment for another boat. Instead of coming back via the beach we took the inland route (3.7 km); the start of which is a

somewhat steep climb up a resort road before veering off onto the dirt track proper. At this point there is a picnic table, and had we known this we would have brought our lunch up here and enjoyed it amongst the trees, rather than eating it outside the General Store - where carpenters were filling the air with sawdust and noise. Initially winding up and back onto itself so you can get through the dingo fence into the national park, the track back to Mckenzies Jetty consists partly of foot tracks and partly of vehicular access tracks. The vegetation looks to be of typically dry habitat species but occasionally you come across a plant that looks like it belongs to



a much wetter climate. Note the dingo sign. The walking brochure we had picked up at the General Store (free) had a seasonal explanation of the behavior of dingos and a note that you should always be walking with a walking stick to fend them off if necessary. We had not brought our walking sticks with us but found a couple of suitable sticks left by previous walkers at a walking track sign. We did the right thing and left them at a



similar walking track sign at the other end of the track for the next walkers going in the opposite direction.

Birds were chiming, despite it being the middle of the day, and Fraser Island is known for its plethora/variety of bird species. About two thirds of the way back to the derelict McKenzies Jetty is an interpretation board explaining the area's importance for the training area of the military Z Force toward



the end of WWII. Just beyond this, in the bush is the ruins of their camp, with old vehicles and concrete slabs deteriorating. The plastic vehicular mirror amongst the pile of rusted steel, I suspect however, is not an historic remnant.

Continuing on, an unmarked track approaches from the downhill side just before the

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decent back to the beach and this is part of the short McKenzies Mill Circuit. We started this circuit walk from the picnic tables beyond the jetty but turned back before we had to climb up here and repeat the last bit of the track back from Kingfisher. The vegetation on this short walk is in the valley where the creek runs and is much cooler and thicker. The bird song was more prolific and had we not been keen to get back for a cup of tea, (and to rest our feet) we would have had the chance to get a bigger bird list. The bird list for the day is:

Torresian Crow,
Green/striated heron,
White-faced heron, Willy wagtail, Grey fantail,
Brown honeyeater,
Drongo, Lewins
honeyeater, Yellow robin, Eastern whipbird (heard),
Welcome swallow, White cheeked honeyeater

The evening was spent fishing off the back of Sengo. Variety wise, it was a success: we caught 4 different types of fish, all of which were far too small and were released. In the process I also lost one hook and two singers. The only success was a squid, which we kept for bait.



McKenzies Jetty to Urangan

29th April 2016

Our preferred plan of arriving at the Great Sandy Straits Marina at 8am in the morning, (I like to arrive early at every marina if I can because the wind has yet to pick up (usually)) was thwarted by the fact that another boat was occupying our allocated berth. Fortunately, the wind was mild when we did arrive just after 11am; the previous boat had vacated and the Queensland Government Hydrographic work ship booked on the other end of the T Berth had the decency to be out working so it was very easy docking.

After lunch and a lovely land shower we went shopping, finding one of those shopping centres with the 'Chinese' massage places that charge you around \$1 per minute. The neck, shoulder and back massage was a treat for us both, but we had to rush the shopping after that to get the car back on time.

The evening was spent at The Hervey Bay Boat Club, at the regular Friday 6pm SICYC member catch up. Most of the group, however, disappeared at 8pm; the Wolverines were playing in one of the venues rooms upstairs, but we wanted an early start and didn't join them. We spent the rest of the evening with the couple of members left downstairs finally leaving at 930pm, mainly because I was getting hungry. These gatherings are always good for 'gossip' and we came away with some good tips on fishing and the locations of a few 'secret' fishing spots.

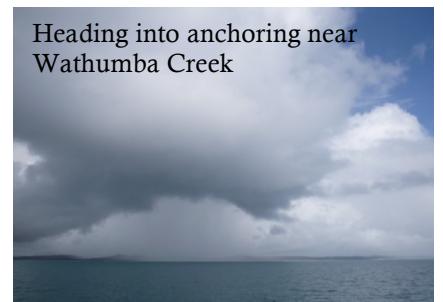
Urangan to Wathumba, Fraser Island

30th April 2016

We left the dock at 8 o'clock and very easily made our way out of the boat harbor. But there was no wind – or practically no wind, with the wind gauge indicating 0.9 knots at one stage. As a result we motored for the first hour, taking a short cut over the shallows close to low tide to save some time. At just after 9am, the wind picked up but it wasn't strong. However, hopeful, we put the mainsail up and the genoa out and sailed to Wathumba. The wind was variable in speed and direction and at one point we were only travelling at 2.8 knots, however in the main it was a comfortable and smooth sail of between 5 and 6 knots.

We anchored north of the lagoon exit in the only spot the sun seemed to shine, as all around us was rain. The only other boat anchored on this side was *Osiris II*,

Heading into anchoring near Wathumba Creek



with whom we had an early sundowners before we had another go at fishing. The first hookup was big, and unfortunately determined. We didn't see the animal at the other end of the line, and the line was clearly not strong enough for its size. We lost the 'fish' the hook and the sinker. However, with that omen we kept going, hoping some of the luck of the two gun fisherpeople we had met at the gathering the night before had rubbed off on us. It was a successful fishing session in terms of numbers but not in terms of size; all were released because they were too small. Andrew managed to hook another crab, who again fell off before we could haul him on board

Sunset from anchorage outside lagoon: Wathumba Creek

