

Aboard Sengo

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April 2018

Streaky Bay

Land Ho! A quaint little seaside town

4

Smoky Bay

Quiet and well protected

7

Ceduna

Noisy but nice; but we didn't expect to be calling in twice!

12



A New Month: A New State

We are on the '**north eastern**' edge of the Great Australian Bight, '**centrally**' placed across the continent and along the '**Upper Western Coastline**' of '**South**' Australia. Where are we, exactly?



Dropping tide: Davenport Creek

It was with some relief at around 1400 on the 1st April 2018 that we put the anchor down into a little patch of lovely yellow sand and congratulated ourselves on a job well done. The trip across the Great Australian Bight had not been uncomfortable, thankfully, but it had been four and a half days long and we were glad for a break. We sailed into Streaky Bay on the 2nd and, after a couple of days rest and recuperation, the only thing holding us there was waiting for our mail. To fill in the time we went exploring, and headed north. The plan was vaguely structured around the following; pop in and have a look at Smoky Bay, pop in and have a look at Ceduna, and then zig-zag our way back to Streaky Bay down amongst the islands of Nuyts Archipelago. We were expecting to be away a little over a week. But, as always, the weather had other ideas. And then of course there



1st April – Tiger is very glad to have his front cockpit back for gentle sailing

was the imploding winch! By the end of the month we we'd made it to Smoky Bay and Ceduna but, apart from our overnight stop on 1st April, we were yet to set foot on the islands of Nuyts Archipelago.

If we were to cross the Great Australian Bight from west to east again, and we weren't hugging the coast or going the long haul to Port Lincoln, I would seriously consider coming in to Ceduna as the first stop rather than Streaky Bay. Streaky Bay is a very friendly and more intimate little community, but Ceduna has more facilities, albeit not quite as ideally placed to the town jetty. A simple comparison is below:

Ceduna:

Anchoring: several good-sized sand patches near jetty. Mooring available on jetty if vessel less than 30 tonnes but bollards high up (no security). Check with Ceduna Council

Facilities: One decent sized Foodlands supermarket. (plus IGA at Thevenard). Ceduna is a well-serviced town (It has to be; It is the last major town before people drive west across the Nullabor).

Fuel: Petrol stations require a walk (we were lucky enough to be adopted by a local to haul our jerry cans to the fuel) (The proposed fisherman's harbor at Thevenard may provide further options in the future).

Smoky Bay

Anchoring: Good sized sand patches in shallow water behind (south of) boat ramp. Main anchoring area on chart is indicated at north of jetty and we cannot comment.

Facilities: General Store and Community Club only

Fuel: bowser at General Store. Swap and Go gas at General Store

Streaky Bay

Anchoring: Only a couple of sand patches that were suitable near jetty (inside mooring field). Tying up to jetty requires bargeboards and permission from Streaky Bay Council if over four hours

Facilities: Two small independent IGA's. Hardware store, bakery, Post Office etc

Fuel: Petrol stations require a short walk but a fuel trailer can be organized to deliver fuel onto the jetty

We made it!

1st April 2018. We'd done it! We'd crossed the Bight! Well, as far as we were concerned we'd crossed the Bight. The purists might argue that we hadn't yet got to the mainland, but being able to put our anchor down was close enough for us.

Because we had lost a fair bit of time trying to sail the Bight we realised that our arrival into Streaky Bay was going to be at night. Night-time anchorings are something we avoid, particularly in unfamiliar anchorages. We had an option though – we could head to St Francis Island and anchor there during the afternoon, stay overnight and head into Streaky Bay the next day. This was going to extend our time and distance somewhat but at least we would see what we were doing!

A pod of 15 'common' dolphins greeted us as we approached the northern anchorage on St Francis Island and it was a great sight to see half of them lined up at the front of Sengo as we headed in. Of course by the time I got my camera half of them were gone. And then just as quickly the rest disappeared as well. Just like that.

But we were soon to assume why. Territory. After dropping the main sail we entered Petrel Bay and were greeted by 15 more dolphins - this time 'bottlenose' - who frolicked around us as we headed up and down the coast looking for a place to put the anchor.

Like our last anchorage there is weed and sea grass growing close to shore here, the lovely light sand line from the beach is quite thin and there are only a couple of sand patches off shore



Our escorts



Waiting for a haircut



St Francis Island

from this - giving you only a couple of feet more (in distance from shore – not depth). Three attempts ended in success only as we drifted onto a suitable patch. We were anchored! We were relieved. We needed a cup of tea!

The Island has a lighthouse and a couple of old ruins and I would have loved to have gone to shore to explore these. But by the time we had had a cup of tea, organized some washing, pulled in the spinnaker sheets (we were expecting to use them across the Bight but didn't), pulled out my slightly wet clothes from 4 days before and hung them to dry completely, cut Andrew's hair, and had a shower (and by this time a glass of celebratory wine as well) we didn't really have the time (or the inclination) to get off Sengo before the sun went down.

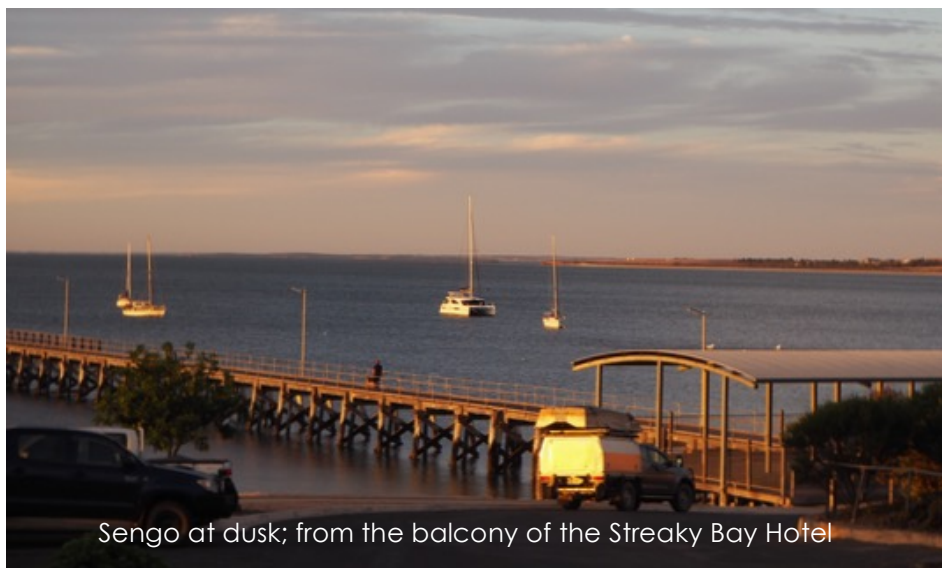
A boisterous sail to Streaky Bay

2nd April 2018. We had briefly discussed reefing the main before we hoisted the sails today, but the wind strength wasn't too bad as we left Petrel Bay so we put the full main up instead. The wind did however increase significantly as soon as we left the island group but Andrew persisted with the full main until around 15 nautical miles from our destination, when we finally reefed down. We had been escorted to the island by common dolphins, and we were escorted away from it as well. I am not sure what we should read into that? Strangely, no birdlife was seen until about 15 nautical miles from our destination, and apart from one silver gull, all the new birds were black-faced cormorants. I am not even sure I've seen black-faced cormorants before, and if I have it wasn't in such large numbers.

In the literature it is suggested that at Streaky Bay there are a couple of sand spots amongst weed east of the jetty – but on our reconnoiter we only saw one that was useful. Well, one and a bit. There was clear sand just off to the side of the base of a mooring and a little further out there was a slightly larger patch. The problem was if we'd taken the larger patch we would have been backing close to another mooring – which was currently occupied. We dropped the pick next to the mooring with the sand patch and hoped its owner didn't turn up to claim it (if desperate there were a couple of other moorings free for them to choose from).

The empty moorings are not public moorings (indeed I am yet to find out if South Australia actually has public moorings), and whilst we have noticed other boats pick up strange moorings, we will seldom risk it - you don't know what the mooring is rated to, or when it was last inspected. Andrew had hand steered all day in brisk seas with no breakfast or morning coffee - and survived the whole trip on just muesli bars. We'd started sailing at 0715 and stopped at 1630. He was exhausted, so we didn't take up the opportunity of getting off to meet **Scaramouch** for dinner. (frustratingly as Monday is steak night at the hotel and I'd been craving for a steak for the last three days!)





Sengo at dusk; from the balcony of the Streaky Bay Hotel

3rd April 2018. At around 0830 this morning we managed to step foot on land. What a novel concept! To get our bearings, and our land legs, we started our stroll along Alfred Terrace. The back of the properties that overlook the Bay here are an incongruous bunch of buildings; old factories line the street, along with shacks and relatively new houses in contrasting styles. The Streaky Bay Shell Roadhouse on the other side of Alfred Terrace boasts a model of the largest great white shark caught in the area; what was at the time believed to be a World record. Copies of newspaper articles on the wall articulate the catch. Unfortunately, this monster was a sexually active female. We arranged to come back to this fuel station to fill up our jerry cans but most vessels who want bulk fuel would be best to contact the local 'man with the fuel 'truck' (trailer) who will deliver it to you on the jetty! (as at April 2018 – 0427263050). If you only have a couple of jerry cans then you have a choice of two service stations within waking distance (a few hundred meters) from the jetty.

As Andrew went snooping around the hardware store, I was ringing the vet. Lincoln Vets are based in Port Lincoln but they service the other towns on the Peninsula on certain days. A notice on one of the public notice boards indicated the next visit to Streaky Bay was the 4th April. Perfect. Tiger was fine but I was running out of his food. I left a message on the mobile only to get the message back that the country run this time serviced Ceduna as well and the vet had already left. I had to ring the practice in Port Lincoln to organise the delivery.

Checking the status of our mail through Aus Post online we found it had actually reached Esperance this morning – two weeks after it was sent! Notification was given on the

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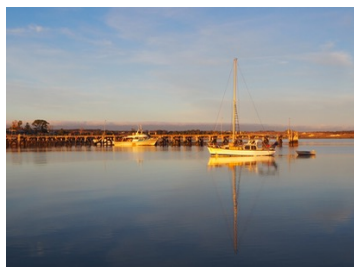
Model of world record shark catch



website that it had been redirected so it was now only a waiting game

We were just enjoying a morning cuppa when we spotted **Scaramouch** who were heading to Bayfunction Cafe for breakfast. It was great to see them knowing we'd both made it across the 'dreaded 'Bight' – they took a little less time than us – but they didn't deviate from their rum line. The afternoon was spent on a bit of a clean up, before catching up with **Scaramouch** for drinks and dinner at the Streaky Bay Hotel.

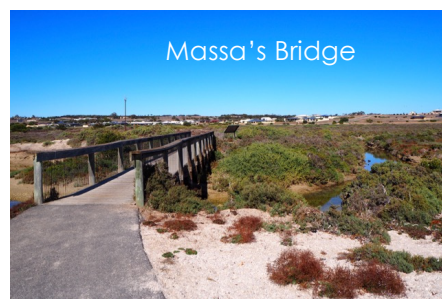
4th April 2018. Winter is coming. The mornings aren't getting as light as early and whilst I've been waking up just before dawn, my body clock is still assuming it's in WA. We managed to lose both the time difference and daylight savings time in the run across to South Australia so, as the wall clock had not been converted yet, I had to keep readjusting the time in my head. **Scaramouch** left around 0700 (as they said they were going to) and we will hopefully see them in Sydney. But that maybe months away. Our walk this morning was along the bike path towards Moores boat ramp, a five kilometre each way trip. However, we only ventured to the Massa Bridge just past the caravan park. The bridge, named after Charles Henry William (nickname 'Massa' as it means 'boss' – he was the captain of the local cricket team) was built in 1922 so his six kids could cross the creek to get to school, and was originally constructed of Mallee (now rebuilt in treated pine).



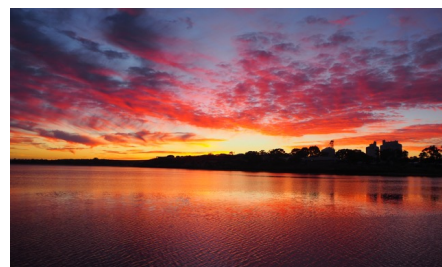
The interps board for the creek is discoloured, weathered and graffitied and unable to be read. The sand flats are exposed here at low tide and there was a range of birds seen.



Massa's Bridge



Massa's Bridge

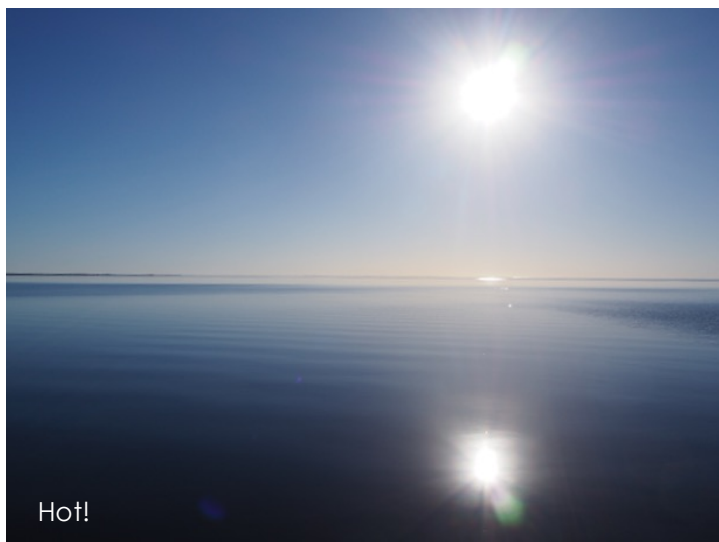


6th April 2018. A visit to the museum. Like many small country museums/National Trust properties, the Streaky Bay Museum suffers from being overfilled with artifacts and items from the local district; most with minimal or no interps or information. Where there were write-ups on individuals you do get a sense of history of some of the prominent people from this town's past. For example, Mrs 'Granny' Redding was a midwife that helped deliver countless babies in the town, and her private practice was often used in preference even after the maternity section of the hospital was opened. One of the staff on duty at the museum happened to be her granddaughter and I overheard her searching for a record of a birth for another museum visitor.

The main section of the museum is in the old school building and there was everything from war artifacts history of local soldiers, remnants of religious sacrament and furniture from old churches, clothes, kitchen items, and yes, Andrew's nemesis, 'bedpans'.

In the grounds is a large open shed full of old buggies, cars, (some have specific personal history relating to prominent individuals of the town), machinery, tractors and even a couple of old telephone boxes. (Andrew made the quip that the red and yellow Royal Mail buggy would probably have delivered our mail quicker than Australia Post. He's probably right!). On the grounds was also a pine and pug wooden hut – built by a prominent family of the district (although the interps inside was a bit confusing as who was who (there were a lot of this particular family)), and the old doctors surgery; a small building used up until the 1980's.

The second museum in town displays old and restored machinery, but we gave it a miss, instead stocking up a bit more food, picking up a cat food delivery at the local 'Trading Post' (second hand furniture, bitsy junk and the Toll office), before heading back to boat.



Hot!

Smoky Bay

Motor sail to Smoky Bay. 7th April 2018. I'd like to say, we sailed today, all the way to Smoky Bay. But it wouldn't be true. We did have the sails up most of the time but there was not enough wind, or it was in the wrong direction, to give us anymore than a one or two knot boost.

The sun wasn't quite up – but it was light – when we lifted the anchor. The timing was later than I'd hoped because of the distance we needed to cover – but couldn't be much earlier as it was still relatively dark. The complication was the wind direction; the northerly had come in overnight (as we had expected it to), twisting us around on our anchor and putting us perilously close to the mooring that we'd put the anchor down next to. We didn't want the mooring around our props; for its sake and ours.

Visitors along the journey were few – a couple of dolphins (mother and calf) and the odd cormorant – still many 'black face' but with a couple of 'little pied' flying past into the mix. The few fishing tinnies we saw as we entered the Smoky Bay (Nuyts Archipelago) area were anchored on shallow spots; and a few with surrounding crab pots that needed to be avoided. Smoky Bay is apparently famous for its

oysters but the leases that were occupied were significantly smaller than the schematic on the chart plotter (I had seen some advertised for lease on notice boards in Streaky Bay).

Sand patches are obvious here although they do have sparse weed scattered throughout them. They are not as clean cut as the patches we've seen at Streaky Bay or Duke of Orleans Bay (the very few patches at those places are probably the result of old moorings). We took a couple of attempts to get the anchor to take (after fighting with a knot in the chain inside the anchor locker) and settled down to relax at around 1600. The anchor symbol on the chart is slightly to the north of the jetty however we wanted protection from a predicted northerly so we tucked in as far as we could south behind the groin and the sand bank (south of the jetty).

8th April 2018. After a windy morning we took an afternoon visit to town – rejecting the staircase adjacent the swimming area on the jetty to tie up to because the width of it wasn't as wide as our tinnie and I would be landing in significant depth of water in order to get off. The Streaky Bay staircase had been perfect – there was only one balustrade and whilst there was one pylon with a tyre skirt adjacent it, it was far enough away for us to easily get off on the steps and to provide a second tie down post for the tinnie.

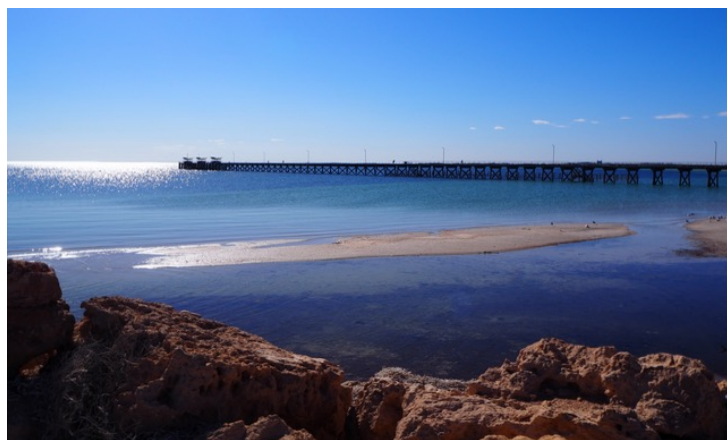
We landed the tinnie on the beach instead and stepped immediately into soft squelching substrate; an indiscriminate mix of sand and shell. Subsequently we left deep foot prints, and the suction meant a little extra effort was required when pulling the tinnie out of the water a bit – we needn't have bothered; it was a dropping tide.



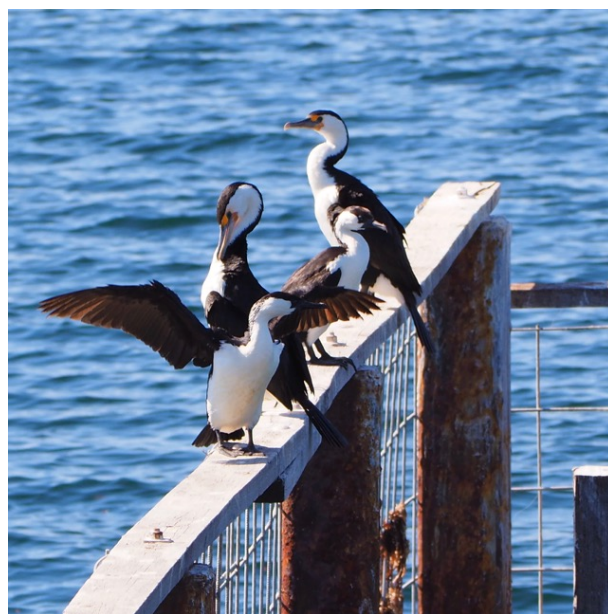


Smoky Bay Beach

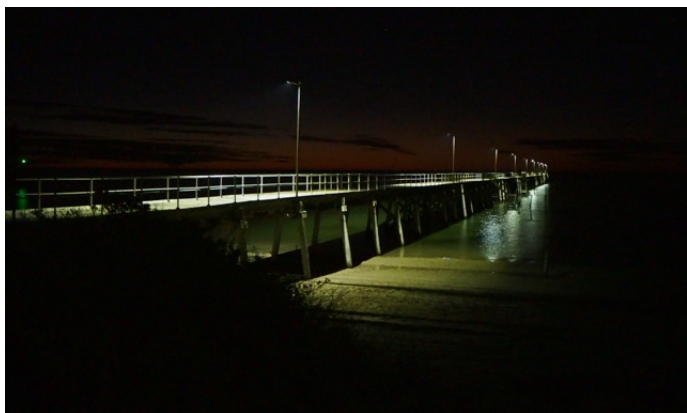
There is not much in Smoky Bay. We checked out the General Store cum liquor store, cum plumbing stop cum pizza joint (fresh on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights) before searching out the Smoky Bay and Districts Community Club which is open for dinner on Wednesday and Sunday nights (and Saturday nights if there is a footy game on - but as we were told the footy club merged with Ceduna some ten or so years ago this doesn't occur every weekend). We wandered along the pier, had a chat to some grey nomads, and tottered off past the memorial of lost lives toward the boat ramp. We wanted to see if we could use it for this evening – we were coming back for dinner. A walk back along the beach toward the tinnie was hardish going because of the squelchy sand mix and we got back to Sengo around 1600 for a cuppa.



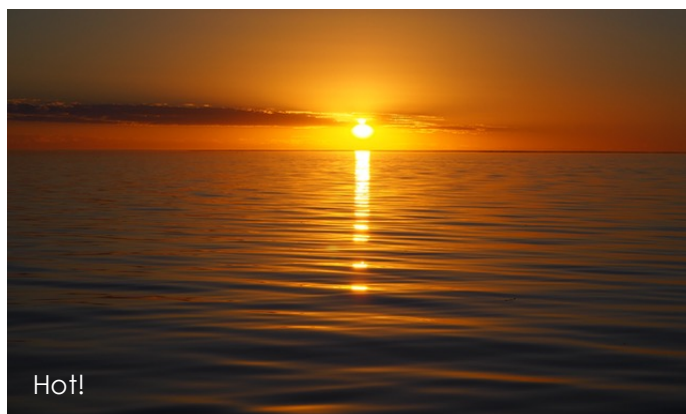
We headed back out to dinner around 1700. The club opens at 1730 although the kitchen wasn't open until 1830. It was popular and most tables were booked – generally with large groups; a mixture of locals and itinerants. Apparently this place is pretty busy from January through to May – the presence or absence of school holidays doesn't really make a difference. Most people come here for the fishing (I've read the influx of people takes the resident population from around 200 permanents to around 1000). We had heard the food was good and that there was plenty of it and the rump didn't disappoint. Ordering rump can be a hit or miss affair but this was delicious – and it took half the plate!



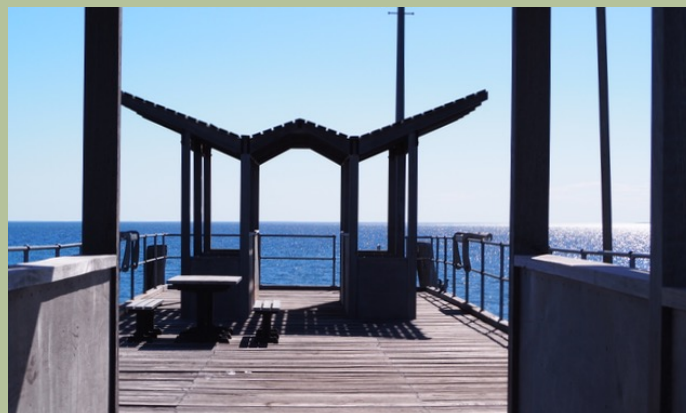
Back at the boat ramp the tide was still going out and we maneuvered our tinnie off the rocks adjacent the ramp in the dark. There are two ramps here with a middle walkway– which is great for efficient flow of launching and retrieving boats, but there is nothing here to tie up a boat for any length of time - 10 minutes is the maximum. Our return took a little longer than our trip to shore – avoiding the sandbank behind the groin - and the evening promised the possibility of sitting on the bean bags admiring the stars - until I discovered the sand-flies!



9th April 2018. Today was hot – Ceduna expected 40 degrees and we couldn't be bothered doing much. Andrew's day was more successful than mine – he managed to fix up the power cords in the fish finder in the tinnie, put Loctite on the bolts that hold the boom up (one of which we noticed had fallen out on our way over on the Bight – we were surprised to see it on the deck as we were in the middle of nowhere – and we were lucky it hadn't bounced off!) and put the danbouy back in its spot on the port shrouds (it had bounced out of there coming around Cape Leeuwin to Cape Naturaliste). I managed to sleep most of the morning, read a bit, made muffins and washed a few towels. Tiger – well - he just lounged around.



Hot!



Smoky Bay Jetty

After sitting idle for 40-odd years a Jetty Subcommittee of the Smoky Bay Progress Association reinvigorated the move to restore the town's jetty structure and so provide a focal point for tourists and locals to enjoy. The Architectural design was donated by Murray Edwards from Perth (who indicated his design was inspired by the cormorants – they clearly like it – they line the swimming enclosure fence) and several companies and the Ceduna Council donated construction materials and labour for the finished project. Volunteers made up a huge proportion of the workforce and what they've ended up with is a lovely jetty (facing west for great sunset photos) with several shelters that provide seating and fish cleaning facilities toward the outer end. Like Streaky Bay Jetty, there is a swimming enclosure and an access stairwell (that straddles the swimming enclosure fence) and ladders. I would however be reluctant to raft up Sengo to the jetty due to the distance between the pylons, and no facilities have been provided to cleat your lines off (you would have to tie the lines to the balustrade.) The restored jetty was opened in 2012, on the 100th anniversary of its initial construction.

Denial Bay

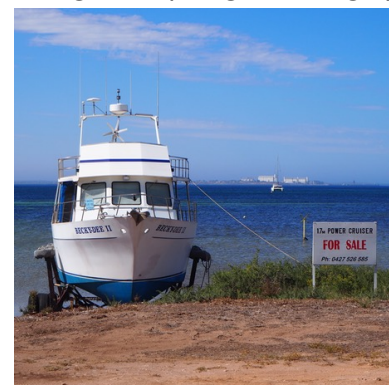
10th April 2018. It was another hot and still morning. The water was exceptionally clear and very tempting for a swim. There were at least a dozen cars near the Smoky Bay boat ramp and I counted seven tinnies out fishing to the north of us. There was predicted to be no wind until later in the afternoon but none the less we decided we would use the morning to move up to Ceduna, so we were expecting to motor all the way. A 17-knot gust whilst we were pulling up the anchor gave us hope for a full sail but immediately afterward the wind was back down to 1 knot. It was eventually a mixed run, with some patches of pure sailing and some with the motor on. It had been a relaxing start and our arrival at Ceduna was mid afternoon. I was hoping for an afternoon snoop at the town but the weather had changed during our trip and at around 1530 it was blowing 18 knots. Putting the 'explore' off 'until the morrow' we checked the forecast again. We would not be exploring 'on the morrow' unless it was very quick. Light and darker greens had eked their way into Wednesday's forecast (15-25 knots) – from the west! To get a bit more protection we would be heading across to Denial Bay on the other side of Murat Bay. Ceduna would have to wait.

11th April 2018. Denial Bay Jetty provided a good set of steps to tie up to when we went ashore - after moving across from



Ceduna in the early morning (The unexpected morning wind did have me attempting to sail across Murat Bay with the genoa until I conceded it was in entirety the wrong direction and I managed to jam the furler line whilst refurling the sail. Andrew fortunately managed to extricate the line after we'd anchored). We were only on shore for an hour or so though as the expected wind started to pick up and whilst Sengo's distance wasn't far from the jetty, we did get wet getting back to boat.

Poor little Denial Bay. It is a small 'settlement' that is sometimes referred to as a village on the internet but there is no longer even a General Store here, that last remaining bastion of tiny settlements having reverted to a private house many years ago (the sign is still on an inner fence but it is half overgrown with vegetation). The houses are either occupied by locals that 'work in town' (Ceduna) or holiday makers that have their own 'shack's they come to for their fishing forays. We spoke to one holiday maker who comes here regularly from south east South Australia – at least she's from the same state – there were some in Smoky Bay that have been going there regularly for 20 years from northern NSW! The attraction, amongst other things is (King George) Whiting. But the place is also big on blue swimmer crabs. And of course, Oysters. There are two obvious (along the coastal road) oyster farmers in Denial Bay – there are probably more.



The bay. Denial Bay, was so dubbed by Mathew Flinders because he was unable to locate any water (he was 'denied' water – very creative!). The limits of the bay are a bit hard to determine on the chart as Murat Bay (between the current Denial Bay 'settlement' and Ceduna) lies within the Denial Bay boundary.

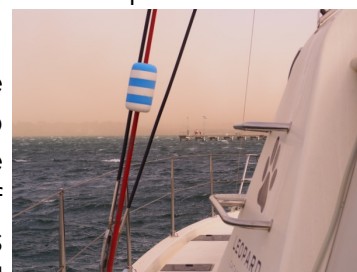
The town. The first land in the area was taken up by William McKenzie in 1889 and eventually a town grew around his homestead a few kilometers inland from the current settlement. That settlement was originally known as Macs Town but is now in ruins. There was petition for the current settlement on the water's edge to be called Macs Town but it was dubbed Denial Bay in 1909 and officially listed under that name in 1940. Before the jetty existed a landing that was tide dependent was used for the transport of goods into and out of the settlement (Macs landing). The early settlers, whilst tough were also speculators and many including McKenzie bought town blocks in the newly opened Murat Bay, now Ceduna. Ceduna is now the centre for the district, Denial Bay reduced essentially to a domicile suburb (13 kilometers by road). The Denial Bay jetty was opened in 1909. A crane was still used to load goods on the jetty in the late '60's but the jetty at Thevenard (opened in 1961 and currently, the locals tell me, the busiest port in South Australia) now handles all bulk exports for the area.

12th April 2018. It was a beautiful calm day. And I spent the morning washing the cushions! And then wiped down the flyscreen covers. And then washed the sleeping bag we'd used for our crossing of the GAB and any other small job that that I had the inclination to do. And Andrew made water and fiddled around with a few smaller projects. Our original plan had been to sail back to Ceduna and spend the day, and tomorrow's morning, exploring the town before returning to Denial Bay for protection from the next blow. However, the prediction of the next blow had come forward a few hours, and having survived the last one with winds at least up to 30 knots we knew we had a reasonably secure holding here so opted instead to stay until the next blow had passed. Having also explored all that is Denial Bay 'township' there was little on shore that attracted us; there was no point at this stage looking for the location of the ruins of McKenzie homestead – I wouldn't have been able to convince Andrew of the merits of the 6 kilometre walk.

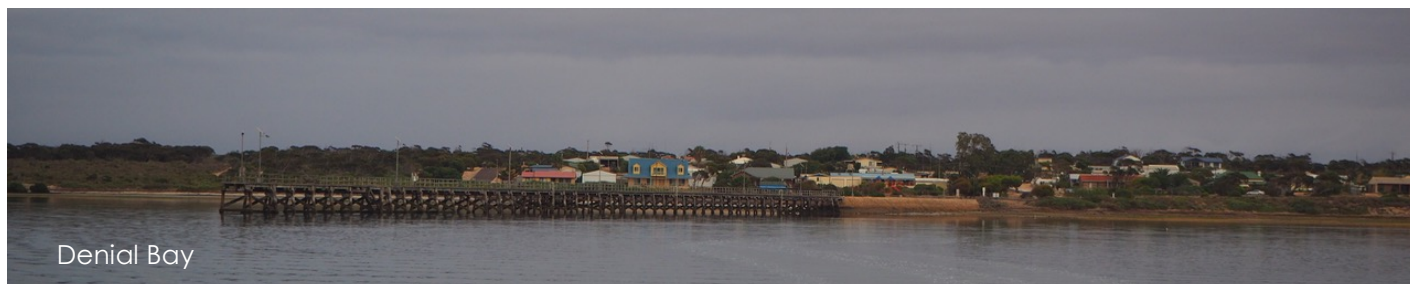
'Mad keen fisherman'.

13th April 2018. I note that it is Friday! The term often denotes those that are passionate and one-eyed about chasing the piscatorial delights that the oceans or rivers are willing to give up. BUT to remain on the Denial Bay Jetty in 43.8 knots of wind in a dust storm engenders one to believe that the first word

of that description, *Mad*, has definitely come into play. I couldn't see Ceduna or Thevenard as I had done so early this morning. I couldn't see the land to the north of us or the peninsular jutting out to the south of the bay south of Denial Bay. I could see the catamaran anchored adjacent us but that view was getting dodgy and eventually I couldn't see the 'township' of Denial Bay and the Jetty eventually faded from view. There were people on that jetty; I assume looking for dinner. But seriously, I would be hiding from this. According to the forecast the wind was supposed to ease to 20-25 knots at around 1600. But then again according to the forecast our expected wind range had been downgraded – we were supposed to be experiencing 25-30 knots! So far we had got more than 13 knots above predictions!



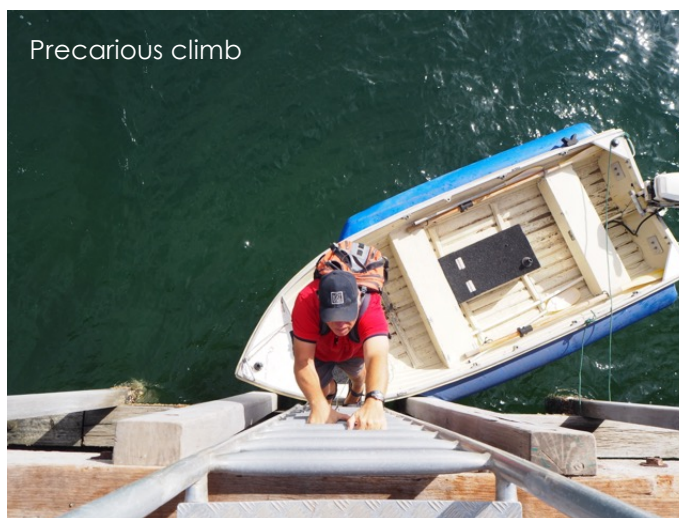
14th April 2018. I don't know why I bother. Despite being at the back of the boat and technically out of the wind, the drying sleeping bag this morning was covered in a layer of dust. The back walkway was covered in a layer of dust. The fly screens I had washed two days ago were covered in a layer of dust, as were the outer cushions. The front cockpit cushions that weren't washed because I ran out of time are a lovely reddy tan colour now. The wind was still up today and blowing 10 knots above predictions.



Ceduna

16th April 2018. The weather was right, the larder was getting empty and we finally had an opportunity to get back across the bay to explore Ceduna. Heading off after breakfast it was a short-ish motor across Murat Bay to anchor back around our original spot of a few days before. Alighting Sengo we found the walkway steps on the jetty, like those on the Smoky Bay jetty, unsuitable due to hand rails each side, and instead tied the tinnie up to the ladder adjacent a sign that requests vessels to be less than 30 tonnes. I think the tinnie will just make it! It was however a precarious climb from the tinnie and one of the steps is in an iffy location compared with an adjacent timber strut. We made it up and we made it down. But we would go to shore next time we went into town.

Our morning's visit included a peruse at the Visitor Information Centre, where one of the locals confirmed that the Bom.gov.au forecast can be a bit hit and miss around here (no kidding!). (He also told us he'd seen us hanging off Denial Bay for a few days (it is a small world and you cant hide from



anyone)). We also visited to the local op shop (you never know what you might find - but loved the board out the front that noted 'Winter clothes' were available (what's Winter?)), walked around some of the back streets, visited the local Indigenous arts centre, visited the Natural Resources Centre to get some info on visiting the islands of the Nuyts Archipelago, checked out the camping store and had lunch at the community owned hotel (where the deal for the shanks is much better on the bar menu - even if they are pre cooked and need heating up).

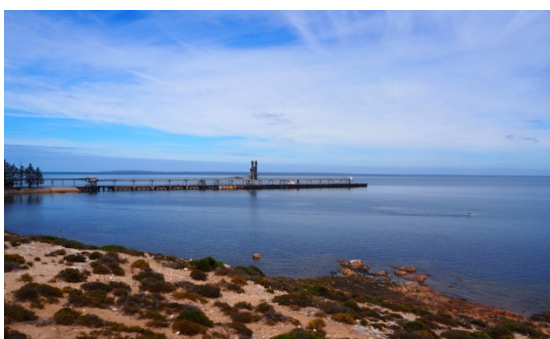
The Encounter Walking Trail

17th April 2018. **The Encounter Walking Trail** is a 3.6 kilometre coastal track that heads from the south end of the Ceduna Yacht Club to a lookout north of the Thevenard bulk loading terminal. The walkway was constructed as part of the 2002 bicentenary of the 'encounter' between Matthew Finders and Nicholas Baudin at Encounter Bay. There are interps boards along the walkway giving a brief description of the farming and fishing 'European' history for the area, mostly towards the Thevenard end. As the Encounter celebration in 2002 was designed to celebrate the coming together of three cultures, I was surprised there was very little information provided on the indigenous habitation of the area.

The mosaic lighthouse at the end of the walk is a memorial 'For those who have lost their lives to the sea' - 57 individuals who perished between Haslam (north of Streaky Bay) to the WA/SA border between 1900 to 2008. Individual names and the names of the artists and contributors are in the Ceduna National Trust Museum.

From the lighthouse we didn't head toward the salt pile or the bulk grain silos but cut through roads diagonally towards the Thevenard IGA – it was lunchtime and we were hungry. From what we saw there is not much at Thevenard – the supermarket and the pub. The houses are in different states of care; those toward Murat Bay in neater condition than those a few streets inland. The sports ground was the only green patch of ground. We didn't explore south of Thevenard Road so didn't see the railway siding where the big orange caterpillars (trains – that's what they look like from Sengo) deliver their loads (they run 24 hours per day from the gypsum mine to the terminal and are very noisy!). There is apparently a place on the south side of Thevenard where you can buy fresh fish and a walk along Shelly Beach south of Ceduna is supposed to be quite nice.

Not knowing what to expect for the centre of Thevenard – and only finding the supermarket (I was hoping for a coffee shop or bakery) we ended up with rice crackers, tomato dip and cheese for lunch, making our way back to a lookout platform overlooking Murat Bay at Seaview Terrace to eat it.





A Visit to the Museum

18th April 2018. We ventured to shore twice today. The morning trip was essentially uneventful; just a quick trip to restock the larder. The afternoon's excursion however was more purposeful – a visit to the local National Trust Museum (which, on Thursdays' doesn't open until 1400).

Of course the main part of the Museum's collection is situated in the 'old Ceduna School House' (I am starting to suspect that 90% of all National Trust Museums are housed in old school buildings) and then there are numerous other buildings on site from around the town and district.

The displays in each building are usually centred around a theme or themes including; the history of the local schools, churches, some local ships, shark attacks and whale and shark beachings.

There are also large sheds that include collections of engines, tractors, buggies (not all local – one is a Dutch hearse dated 18something but is owned by an individual that seems to have donated much of the Museum's contents so I guess he gets to store it there), as well as lots of sewing machines, radios and washing machines (most of the latter I ignored).

The main building is full of an eclectic collection of 'stuff' - some of it labeled, and includes a local spider collection, a bird collection (most of which is labeled as road kill (except the one that says it was 'killed by Tiger the cat in the back yard')). The leadlight panel from the front door of the homestead at Yalata Station that used to exist between Fowlers Bay and Coorabie and at one stage ran 120,000 sheep, is a poignant reminder of the pioneering

European spirit. There is a room dedicated to Maralinga and has some of that site's old equipment - although most info of the site was in old newspaper articles that I didn't read. I did enjoy however the letter in 1984 from the SA Heath Commission that states that..... *'No radiation hazard exists for any of the items, however it may be prudent to keep the lid of the storage container shut.'*.....



Ceduna was also once the Overseas Telecommunications Centre of Australia for telephone signals to and from Europe, Asia and the Middle East. There is some information on this as well as schematics of how the system worked.

Had you really wanted to read up on the local history there was a collection of books/pamphlets/reports/type writer reminisces pertaining to the local area and individuals on a coffee table in the room displayed as the 'library or sitting room.' Whilst a lot of the documents may not have many copies outside this room, a fairly substantial book: *Life on the Edge – the Far West Coast of South Australia* by Jim Faull and published by the Ceduna Council in 1988, would be a fascinating read.



Davenport Creek

19th April 2018. Travelling up Davenport Creek was in some ways reminiscent of traveling up the Bizant River in far north Queensland; thick trees line the banks of a suitably wide waterway, the landscape behind them relatively low (apart from the sand dunes that shadowed the camping fisherman at this entrance) and weed floats by with the current. The differences here were a) we had to avoid the sandbanks, b) the water was clearer, and c) there were no crocodiles likely to be lurking beneath us.

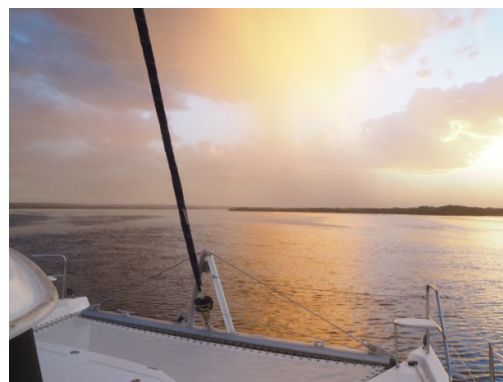
We had picked up the anchor at Ceduna at around 0800 and whilst the forecast was for northerlies of 5-10 knots the wind did seem a bit stronger than we had expected. A check of bom.gov.au showed us that the wind had gusted to 20 knots at 0600 and a check of our instruments showed it was currently blowing 17. Murat Bay however was still relatively flat (it did help that the wind was behind us on our journey) and we had a delightfully (genoa only) smooth sail to Tourville Bay. For the most part, the wind averaged around 15 knots but just after we dropped the genoa I went to check the forecast again. The updated forecast was still showing an expected 5-10 knots. Then why was it now blowing 28!? I am sure that's what the fisherman in Tourville Bay



were asking as well. There were around a dozen small fishing boats, all anchored, and all swinging to the tide. Which means they were all exposed on the back of their small boats to the wind....

We motored past the camp ground (which could almost be called a fishing village, the camping shelters looked as though they were in for the long haul) and followed the schematic of the chart plotter to where it indicated the permanent water ended. We could see further up river but it was a rising tide and the sandbanks were still visible.

After an early lunch Andrew partook in an activity he hasn't done for ages; he tried fishing. Tried is not quite the right word – he was reasonably successful – catching four fish – it was just that they were all juvenile salmon (extremely similar to the local tommy ruff - the only blatantly obvious difference is the colour of one of the fins and we wonder whether the casual fisherman know this or the future salmon stock is being fished out!). All went back. By this time the wind had almost disappeared and it was hot and oppressive. I needed something to distract myself so I did some baking before sitting myself down to read *Gulliver's Travels*. In the midst of these pleasurable activities we noticed the clouds mounting to the west and north west. Thunder was first heard from our port side – by this time the tide had changed and we were facing upstream. And then, occasionally, a bout of lightening was seen coming from the dark grey cloud through the blue sky.



Behind this the opaque block of water obediently followed. Soon after, a similar scenario was playing out to our starboard. Heading up to the roof to get a better look we realised the starboard storm was picking up dust; first there was just one patch, and then two and then half the horizon was filled with red dust clouds rising from the ground. Thunder was intermittent. And the lightening was persistent. Looking at bom.gov.au both Denial Bay and Ceduna seemed to be getting wet and dirty again - for the second time in a week! (although last week's rain was minimal and the farmers will appreciate this bout of concentrated water) On the other hand, despite a short tease of rain just upstream, we were kept dry, and became witnesses to a gorgeous picture show of soft pinks and purples as the sun went down.

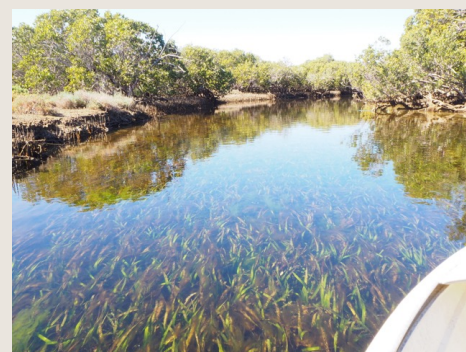
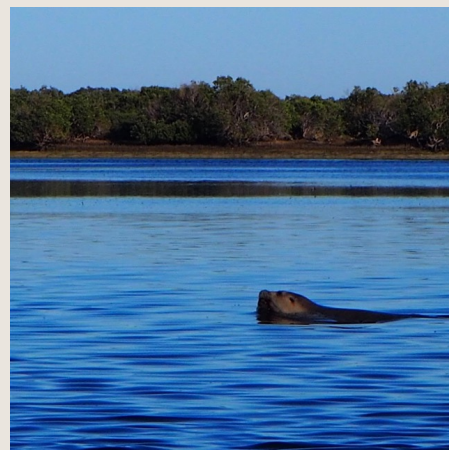


Upper Davenport

21st April 2018. Upper reaches of Davenport Creek

Despite there being no clouds in the sky at dusk, the second night we spent up Davenport Creek (20th April) provided more of a lightening show than the first, and we watched for sometime (from inside) as the pitch black night sky to the north was lit up almost constantly. I would have loved to have tried to take some photographs of the show; there was the commonly referred to cloud to ground bolts, but also present were cloud to cloud strikes - those that produce arcs of electricity without ever touching the ground - U shapes in the sky. However, having earlier rescued the shade that we put up over the outer helm door, we were made perfectly aware of the army of mosquitos that would have had me black from head to toe had I spent anymore than a few seconds outside. I will have to mae do with the memory. The morning after was clear, sunny and hot.

As the upper reaches of Davenport Creek are a marine reserve we packed only our binoculars (leaving the fishing rods on board Sengo) and headed out. It was early in an incoming tide so the water was quite shallow, paddle-able in some instances, but occasionally it was necessary to source deeper channels. A lone seal, whom we had seen the day before, headed upstream ahead of us but at one stage appeared at the back of the finnie to check us out (it was too quick for a close photograph). There was at least one stingray frolicking on the surface, as well as





many crabs underwater, fish of various sizes (thousands of fingerlings) and water birds including flocks of pied cormorants, pelicans, white-faced herons, great herons, hoary headed grebes, and two sacred kingfishers.

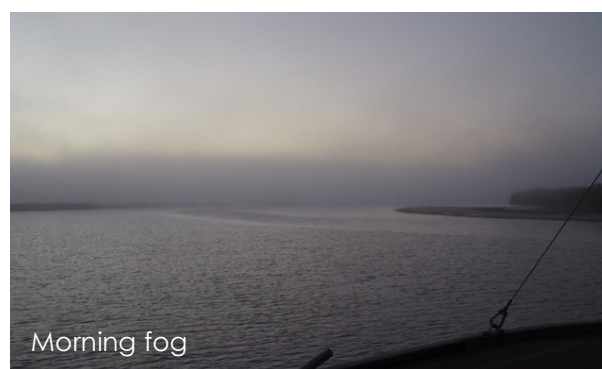
The shallows just upstream from the boat looked tired and I didn't know whether the sea grass and the slimy substance that surrounded it were in a life and death battle (in some places the sea grass was 80-90% (my guess) covered and dying) or in a regular cycle (in other places there was lots of smaller younger sea grass plants poking out amongst the drab coloured sludge). Further upstream however the water was clearer, the sea grass beautifully bright and thick in depth and breadth, and occasionally other more intricate salt water plants appeared. No wonder the birds and fish love this place; there is plenty to eat and plenty of vegetation in which to hide.

The upper Davenport is lined with mangroves, as is most of the length of the waterway, and access to land beyond is not obvious (we didn't see any opportunity to go for a walk where we motored past). This area so much resembles some of northern Queensland that Andrew said it as I was thinking it: *'I can't stop looking around for crocodiles'*. Snapping out of it ('not sure if that pun was intended') I reminded myself I could technically go for a swim in here – if the water was only a bit warmer!

What's wrong with this picture?



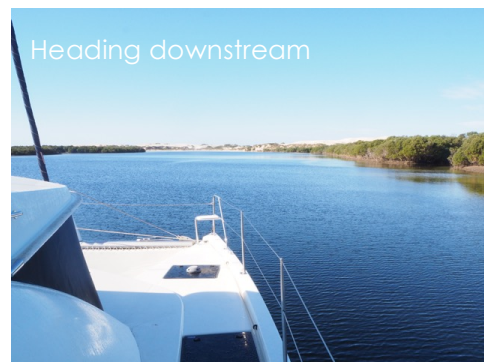
22nd April 2018. It might seem a bit desperate to be hacksawing through the shackle that holds the anchor chain to the boat but that's exactly what we found ourselves doing today. Well Andrew was doing the hacksawing, I was trying to hold the shackle and chain combination steady against his movement whilst not getting my fingers in the way of the descending blade.



The morning had started out simple enough. We were to move Sengo toward the end of the creek first thing after breakfast (an activity that was delayed because of extremely thick fog) and then we were either going to go exploring up the upper reaches of Tourville Bay or fishing in the allowed areas, or both. What actually happened was something else. We did



Morning fog



Heading downstream

move Sengo downstream, and just past the campers we put down the pick. Fortunately it held because what came next consumed most of the rest of the day. The bridle was duly put on the anchor and as I was letting it out the chain suddenly stopped. There was a clink, a jolt and then nothing. I tried the 'up' and 'down' button of the hand held panel. There was an electronic noise but no movement. I looked back toward the winch. It had slid sideways. That's not supposed to happen. Further investigation upon opening the starboard front locker to look into the anchor locker had us both speechless; the motor was no longer attached to the winch; it had fallen on top of the yet to be deployed chain.

Somewhere intermingled with the mix of chain were four

bolts that had sheered off and a thin rectangular piece of metal that aligns the top of the winch to the motor. Somewhere down in the anchor locker also, which is nearly impossible to access (we had to use tongs to eventually get the bolts out) was the drainage hole. The first thing we did was launch the tinnie and put Tessa tape over the hole from beneath the hull – we couldn't risk any of the missing bits falling into the water. All bolts were eventually accounted for and the rectangular piece was found and rescued before Andrew removed the top of the winch. The sheared bits of the bolts were still in their holes. This was not a job we could do here. We needed an engineering shop. Which meant we needed civilisation.



We were only 16 nautical miles away from Ceduna and whilst it had bigger sand patches to try to drop the anchor in, it is a bit exposed to the west. Streaky Bay was 60 nm away, had only two small spots to drop the anchor in but was protected from most winds. Both places had engineering shops. Both places had jetties

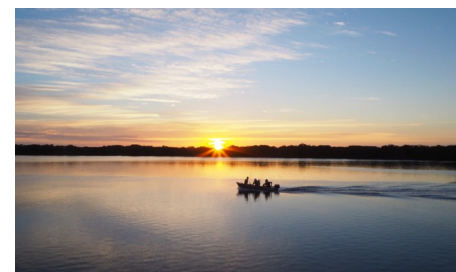
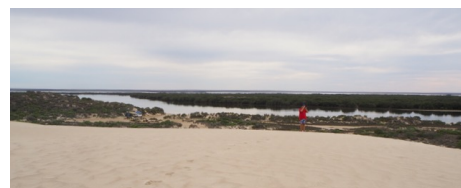
that might be an option with barge boards to tie up to (with difficulty – tie off cleats are restricted on one, and awkward on the other, despite the notice on the side warning of vessels less than 30 tonne). Either way it was going to be an uncomfortable experience. As it was Sunday and no commercial businesses were open for discussion anyway today, we put off that decision until later and continued with the situation in the anchor well.

The chain had to be fed through the anchor well and through the winch and then fed back in to the anchor locker again. The shackle holding the chain to the rope tied to the deck had corroded onto itself and would not budge so the first action was to cut the rope. As the newly released shackle wouldn't fit through the holes in the deck the hacksaw came out. Once that was cut to pieces, the chain extricated from the winch and replaced in the locker, and temporarily tied off, we retreated inside for a cuppa. It was 1500. We had done no exploring and we had done no fishing! We had however, done a fair bit of upper arm work....anchor chains are not light!

23rd April 2018. I was hoping for a nice sunny day but didn't get one. It was overcast when we got up and it continued being overcast throughout the day. Despite the mood of the sky I did convince Andrew to go for a short excursion to shore in the morning and we headed over toward the campground to check it out. Camping here is free – the only requirement is that you need a 4wd to get here. All rubbish must be taken home but there are a couple of cages for aluminium cans – a fundraiser for a church in Denial Bay. After having a chat to a couple of campers, and swatting the persistent mozzies away (we put insect repellent on after this) we wandered up the incoming vehicle track to get a view of the surrounds. Originally we thought we might walk to the external surf beach; its persistent crashing could be heard all the way up the creek, but upon coming to a



peak where we could survey the surroundings we decided that might be just a bit too far. We were back on boat not long after and for a while the sky got darker. It didn't rain but the sun didn't come out until around 1600; a little too late to head out into Tourville Bay for 'an explore or a fish.'



Davenport Creek was first recorded by Nicholas Baudin in 1802 but named by Bloomfield Douglas in 1858 after Samuel Davenport (emigrant; pastoralist; horticulturalist and South Australian parliamentarian).

Making the move.

24th April 2018. What do you do if upon waking you realise you are touching bottom with a dropping tide? If you are a keel based catamaran with the rudders and props above the base of your keels you would probably just sit tight and wait until the tide rises again. We would – under normal circumstances. But these weren't normal circumstances.

I knew I had woken up a bit late and I had that funny feeling that something wasn't quite right. It was still – too still. We were due to leave this morning anyway, but we were going to wait until slack tide, when hand pulling the anchor chain in should be slightly easier. According to the tide tables from bom.gov.au we still had some time until slack tide. So why was it so quiet? We have since realised that the tide station readings on our chart plotter are somewhat different to the tide tables downloaded from bom.gov.au and bottom of the tide had probably already occurred. Not realising that, and reading that the water level under the keel (where the reader is) was 0.1 (10 cm), I duly went into a minor panic. You see, only the back starboard corner was sitting on the bank – the other $\frac{3}{4}$ of the boat had around 2m depth beneath it. If the tide had dropped much further it would have been a somewhat uncomfortable and lopsided situation.

We hadn't yet devised a way of getting the chain up by hand and we had to do it quickly to edge Sengo into deeper water. In the end it was a two-stage process; the first was a tug of war effort between us and the anchor chain and that got us to mid stream. The second engaged the use of the spinnaker halyard where we would pull several meters of chain up at a time, lock it off and feed the slack into the anchor locker. And then repeat the process. We did better than I had feared and it only took us an hour!



Using the spinnaker halyard to raise the anchor



Stripping the winch so it can be taken for repairs...

Motoring across to Ceduna we were painfully aware of the thunderstorms to the north of us; lightening jolted down from a bleak looking sky and as we got closer it looked like we were going to get wet. 'Please not whilst we were setting the anchor.' Fortunately the rain did not

eventuate, although without the sun out it was very hard to see the sand patches amongst the weed. We needed to find a sand patch; we could not afford to miss and have to pull the anchor back up to reset. Fortunately we managed to get over the top of a good patch of sand and with no wind to push us off Andrew successfully lowered the anchor. A bit of light reverse and manual release of chain eventually assured us of a good holding. Then ironically, just as we turned the engines off, the sun came out!

A phone call to Ceduna Metal Solutions had us arranging to deliver the pieces of the winch that needed attention into hopefully the right hands to fix them up. With the winch handed over we relaxed, shouting ourselves to a glass of soothing tippie at the Community Hotel (with a couple of caravaners from Perth), before returning to Sengo around 1700. It had been an exhausting day! The rain had missed us three nights in a row at Davenport Creek. It eventually caught up with us at Ceduna but unfortunately it wasn't enough to wash the remainder of last week's dust away.

Beer, bladder and Bundy: Booze before breakfast!

Anzac Day in Ceduna.

25th April 2018. After making our own 'beach landing' (in the dark but without the resistance) and not knowing exactly where we were going this morning, we started walking north toward the Soldiers Memorial Park from our normal landing spot near the boat ramp at around 0625. Fortunately it only took us around 15 minutes to get to our destination. The Ceduna RSL Sub Branch is in the south west corner of the Soldiers Memorial plot of land and when we arrived the building was open and setting up for breakfast. The cenotaph outside in the grounds is a rectangular piece of stone (granite?): with a plaque representing both World Wars on one side and the Korean, Malaysian and Vietnam conflicts on the other. On three sides of the paved area around this monument are seats and they were duly filled for the service. Apart from one local policewoman, all the people we spoke to were caravanning tourists so I am not so sure of the mix of visitors to locals to this Dawn Service. The service was due to start at 0700 and RSL members were handing out the proceeding's pamphlets. They duly collected these at the end and as there is no date on the paper I assume they use them every year. BUT... it was like going to a Christian cult church. Most of the 'speeches' were hymns and there was no real reflection on particular aspects of any of the conflicts. As the poppy is used as the symbol of war, particularly WWI, (and there were many knitted poppies around the grounds), perhaps John McCrea's poem 'In Flanders Fields' would be a much more suitable, non-sectorial piece of prose to recite, with other suitably aged works of his, or



poems of similar ilk. The *Last Post* was of course played (in its current 75 second long and mournful form and not the

original 45 second form it was written in in 1790 as just one of the last notes of the military day) and the fourth stanza of 'For the



Fallen' by Lawrence Binyon (the first and the fifth stanzas relate to England (as the poem was written in 1914 for the English dead when England had been at war for only seven months) and would not therefore be universally relevant). I was surprised, and somewhat disappointed that whilst the congregation seemed to sing heartily to the biblical hymns, Andrew and I were the only ones we heard singing to Australia's National Anthem! The minute's silence was filled by the calls of singing honeyeaters, willy wagtails...and a car carrier heading up the Eyre Hwy (at least it wasn't a rubbish truck like the service we attended in Nelson Bay at Port Stephens in 2015!!)

For a \$5 donation you could get a bacon and egg sandwich, but the tea and coffee (and I believe the toast and vegemite) inside were free. And of course in the corner of the building, gathered around the bar were a group having a morning drink. I didn't see the brand of the beer, but the chateau-de-cardboard was *de Bortoli's*, and the rum was *Bundaberg*. And all this before eight o'clock in the morning! Some people like a tippie early. But then again, most people in this group have probably earned it!

We didn't attend the parade and later service. Back at boat I got stuck into some cleaning- I was still trying to get some of Denial Bay's dust off the roof.

An incredibly large television screen at the Foreshore Hotel entertained us after lunch with the Anzac Day Collingwood vs Essendon AFL football match. We seemed to be the only two who were purposefully there to watch the footy. In fact the main part of most of the other patrons when we arrived were sitting over in the area with the racing and betting television screens and during the minute's silence at the AFL match there was loud barracking for a particular horse. I suppose this is a pub after all, and not everyone was going to appreciate the timing of the AFL game and its telecast! At about half way through the second quarter the crowd did increase for a while, and got a bit loud and raucous. I suspect these patrons had come from other venues and were having a drink before they went home.

Because of the newcomers' volume, we couldn't hear the commentary. But we didn't need to - the quality of the football playing was somewhat atrocious on Essendon's part and Andrew gave up at ¾ time and we headed home (Essendon lost the match by 49 points). We were back on boat before sundown.

* * * * *

And just as we thought that was the day done we get a 'message from god.' Well, at least we get an individual that got a message from 'his god'. At around 2100 there is a knock on the hull. We have heard no boats. We have seen no lights. One particularly brave (or otherwise) lad has been told by his 'deity' to jump off the jetty into the dark and start swimming. We don't know whether he had been drinking prior to this. Or, indeed, whether he had been smoking anything. We gave him a towel to dry himself off with, a hot cup of tea and as he seemed to have lost all his clothes minus his underwear he went home with a pair of Andrew's shorts that had a hole in them. Andrew took him back to jetty to get the rest of his gear and hopefully he disappeared safely back into the night! (The extent some people go to say hello!)

28th April 2018. Yesterday morning (27th April) had been perfect. Practically no wind, and blue skies where barely a wisp of cloud could be seen. It was sunny to the point of being hot if you stood still out of the shade. The repaired top of the winch was delivered to us along with a small jack that we were borrowing to help

reassemble it. We just had to work out how to do it. The jack was needed to lift and hold the motor in place whilst Andrew fiddled getting the bolts in (in the access space for our anchor locker there is no room for two people) – it's just that the anchor locker floor is not flat. We needed a flat surface to put the jack on.

Eventually Andrew decided that a few pieces of timber were what he needed (to make a wedge), so we headed off to Home Hardware. We were very fortunate to be offered a few scraps of timber of about the right size. Of course had we had to buy a piece of timber I am not sure how Andrew expected to get a six plus foot piece back to the boat (he did say he was expecting to carry it on his shoulder but the limited options were all very heavy) and there were no cutting facilities that we could see on site. Of course, I had been the one with the foresight to bring the trolley, and as it is the trolley that Andrew finds un-ergonomic, I was the one to wheel the timber home! The sun was still out when we got back to boat although the wind had picked up a smidge. It was however after 1500 and we expected this to be a long job. The decision

was made to start it in the morning.

But the morning brought a sky of dull overcast stratus grey. It had rained lightly overnight. It was raining lightly when we got up and a check of bom.gov.au indicated there might be a few more hours of rain to come yet. The atmosphere wasn't very inspiring to start a major fiddly job. However, in the light mizzle and just before it got a bit heavier, I managed to haul the anchor chain out of the locker onto the deck. This unexciting job was clearly going to be completed in small sections between rain showers.

The next step was to feed a new piece of rope to the deck to eventually tie the anchor chain to. This took around two minutes. Again between bouts of rain.

It wasn't until around 1630 when the rain actually stopped. It was still overcast grey but we continued the task constructing the wedge on which to place the jack. Eventually though we ran out of light.

29th April 2018. What a contrast to yesterday. Sunshine – and again, not a cloud in the sky. But there was a nip in the air. Today was a challenging day and it took some hours to work out how Andrew was going

to contort himself enough to manipulate the motor to get it in place to put the top piece (winch baseplate) back. Between the constructed timber wedge, the borrowed jack, strong string wrapped around the engine (threaded through the hole where the chain normally goes and tied to the anchor locker cleat), and the spinnaker line we managed, after several hours, to put everything in place. And then we discovered we had an issue, took a break for lunch, disassembled all the pieces and tried again. By the time this was done it was mid afternoon, the wind had picked up and it was close to freezing if you were exposed to it (which being at the front of the boat we were). We retreated to shelter. We would finish the job later.

30th April 2018. All the top bits went back on the winch this morning. The jack was removed and the wooden wedge had to be destroyed by sawing through it because now the engine was back in place, there was no room in which to extricate the props (we were lucky we could get the jigsaw in the gap). All however was finished by lunchtime. We headed across to town to return the jack, drop some recycling off (Ceduna has a

great range of bins near the Bowls Club in town if you don't want to walk four or



five kilometres to the tip) and had a celebratory lunch at the Ceduna Foreshore Hotel. After this it was simply a quick food shop in preparation for the next week as it was quite possible the predicted winds would dictate another sheltering stint at Denial Bay.



Full Moon Rising: 30th April 2018

