

# Aboard Sengo

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October 2019

## The Great Barrier Reef

A short trip to Lady  
Musgrave Island

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## Just a 'little' wind

Storms in Tin Can Bay

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## High and Dry

But, but... Our haul out  
isn't until next month!

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Sengo at Lady Musgrave lagoon © Tony Flintoff

# We made The Reef! But not the Tropics...

A journey north and a journey south; the zenith for the 2019 sailing season was reached in October and the southerly progression has now begun. Sengo and her crew finally made it to the Great Barrier Reef – just - but being so late in the season, and with the northerly wind systems starting in earnest, it was time to change direction - the Tropic of Capricorn, so tantalisingly close, will have to be crossed next year.

From a health perspective the crew had a good month. Tiger had no vet visits and very few stomach upsets (most of them fur ball related). There were no medical visits for the rest of the crew, and enjoyable 'exercising' experiences included paddle boarding and walking in and around varied scenery; from familiar islands to suburban walking tracks. Sailing experiences were mixed, as was the weather....(see 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> October).

My small camera lens has malfunctioned again and has been sent back to Olympus. This means that photographs were taken mostly with the zoom lens, the wide angle lens, or the small water-proof camera. I have also included photos from fellow cruisers as well; for which permission has been thankfully received.

Being on the move has meant we have caught up with more boats this month; thanks to **Annecam**, **Anapa**, **Anui** and **Double Bubble** for their company.

19<sup>th</sup> October: 165119<sup>th</sup> October: 1704

Photo © Tony Flintoff

19<sup>th</sup> October: 1709

Photo © Tony Flintoff

Off South Currigee Campground, South Stradbroke Island  
Photo © Chris Danger

## Bobbing around in the Burnett.

1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019. The first few days of October were pretty non-descript. The very early morning (0430) of the 1<sup>st</sup> threatened rain and I got up in the dark to secure the cushions out of the way – but even with a little precipitation recorded the biggest airborne substance was still smoke. Later in the day the wind picked up, a front came through with 25 knots, and with a combination of wind and tide we spent the afternoon moving around in circles. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> October, after a last trip to Bunnings, a vet, a book exchange and Hinkler Shopping Centre for

food we returned the car and spent the afternoon in similar circles to the day before. We were starting to wonder about our itinerary and whether we should be turning south from here? There emerged however a small upcoming window of opportunity to head north, and so on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October we prepped the boat for a trip to Lady Musgrave Island, cleaning the anchor chain of its vegetative growth and packing the boat up. After a farewell to *Annecam* we went to bed early for what was expected to be a 10-12 hour journey to the reef.



## To Lady Musgrave Island

4<sup>th</sup> October 2019. I should have guessed. Despite spending around an hour scrubbing the growth off a section of the anchor chain yesterday so I wouldn't have to do it this morning I had forgotten that the last time I did this, safely tied up to a dock, I had also discovered later that there was more than one section of garden along its length.

Subsequent to say, I spent another half hour scrubbing the second section of garden off the metal and instead of leaving our Burnett Heads anchorage around 0030 it was closer to 0100. Did this have any bearing on the wind, or lack of it, that we experienced on our trip to Lady Musgrave Island. Maybe. Perhaps.

We motored out of the river, and turned north after the number 7 starboard mark before hoisting the sails. It would have been preferable to raise the sails whilst in the calm of the river, as had

been our original idea, but there was no wind blowing at the anchorage (only 2-3 knots) and if that is all that stood outside on the coast then our main sail would have flapped around to no purpose. So instead we raised the sail when we thought the wind appropriate, Andrew bobbing around and hanging on to the boat in the swell (and dark), and we turned north with the aim of a calm and slow sail. In the end it was mostly a motor sail, some delightful quiet bouts of sail punctuated by an on again, off again engine, when the wind speed and direction didn't make for a fuel free opportunity. The last twenty minutes or so could have probably been under sail only, the wind speed a consistent 11 plus True but by that time we were keen to get to our destination, the anchorage behind the island and reef already occupied by half a dozen or more vessels and we entered the entrance shortly before high water slack, finding a relatively bommie free area to put down the anchor.

Having held unusual hours we coped with the upset body clock of the journey in different ways. Andrew managed several hours of reading before heading off to bed mid afternoon. I oscillated reading with several small clean up jobs before too heading to bed around 1700. It was close to dark when I got up; the sun had journeyed below the horizon. Tiger took many vantage points of rest before he decided it was time for dinner – his journey probably more disconcerting to his body clock than ours; after all he didn't know what was happening and it has been more than a month since we sailed a slightly swelly sea.

We saw one whale on the journey- or rather we saw the massive aftermath of its leap – a giant splash just south of Lady Musgrave Island



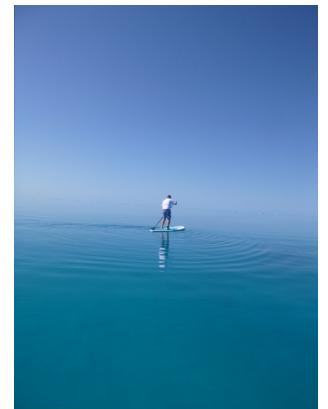
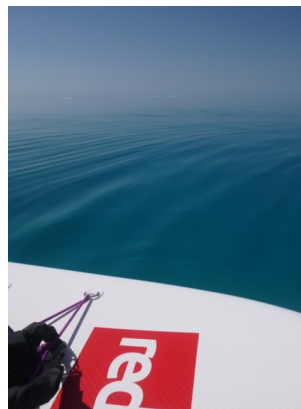


## Lady Musgrave Island

5<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The morning was hot. And calm. And had no horizon! Perfect conditions for a paddle board although we didn't go far. We headed across to **Anapa** and ingratiated ourselves on board for a morning coffee. There was a vague idea of a longer round about paddle back to boat but our legs decided that a couple of hundred meters was enough – a far cry from the 2 nautical miles we did to and from Mackenzie's Jetty when we were anchored near Kingfisher Resort on Fraser Island.

In the afternoon we went ashore. High tide was at 1324 and we didn't get to shore until 1300 but we got a decent walk, weaving through the forest, around one section of the outside of the island and back through the forest again. Whilst gentle with stops it was still a ninety-minute stroll, exercise well overdue. We were back on boat mid afternoon and after convincing a small shark cat not to anchor just off our starboard bow (our anchor was around 30 meters off to that side and had we swung around we would have taken them out) we settled down for a quiet afternoon.

We had noted the campground in the island was the fullest we've seen it. There were no bridled

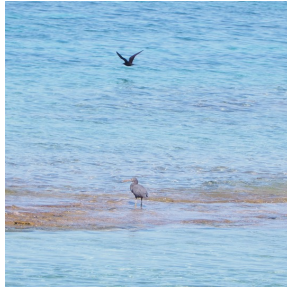


© Tony Flintoff



terns obviously nesting on the ground and some black noddy's were pairing in nests but it seems it is the start of season and most birds were still gathering nesting materials. No shearwaters were seen in their burrows. There were however, plenty of banded rails. One white reef heron was spotted inland and one grey reef heron along the shore.

Turtles were seen swimming in the water and fish frolicked below the boat.

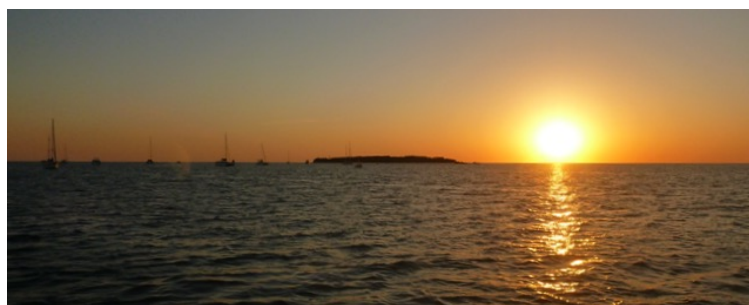
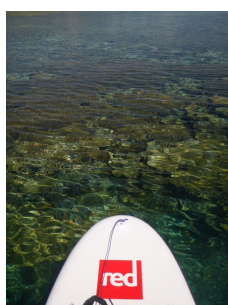
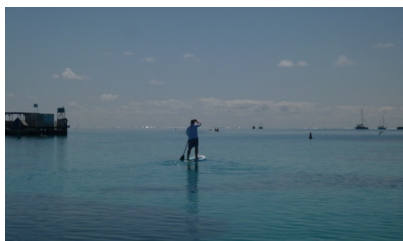






And a bit further.....

6<sup>th</sup> October 2019. It was another beautifully calm morning and again the sea and the sky almost melded into one at the horizon. And the conditions gave us another opportunity for a paddleboard. This time we ventured a bit further, padding across to Lady Musgrave Island and back – standing up all the way. We didn't go ashore as it was lowish tide and we had no shoes with us; the coral-based island would have been too harsh on our bare feet. We did however accept the offer from **Anapa** (who we un-expectantly saw on shore) of a cuppa on the way back to boat. Prior to our 'exercise' I had spent the morning doing very small bits of the greater clean up of the back cockpit and after we returned I continued this until lunch time, breaks in between taken up with a Robert Ludlum novel found in an op shop and one I hadn't actually read. I wasn't complaining about buying it – it cost me all of 25 cents!



After lunch we both got in the water; Andrew to examine the grime on the bottom of the hull, which had remarkably mostly dissipated on our trip up from Bundaberg (the antifoul works!) and I to test out a theory I'd been working on for quite a few months. Part of the anxiety I had not getting my dive certificate, apart from the fact I couldn't control my buoyancy, was that my mask was constantly getting invaded by water because I couldn't hold all of my hair outside it – I just couldn't control each strand of hair on my fringe. So thinking ahead to this year I have let my fringe grow and the hair that remains on my head can all now be tied at the back - there are no stray follicles - and I had a solid seal on the face mask as I stayed face down off the back of the boat for some time (probably looking like the proverbial dead body). Stray hair sorted – tick. Now we can go snorkeling with more confidence. The hooker system is yet to be utilised but Andrew has to fix a regulator before we can both enjoy that.

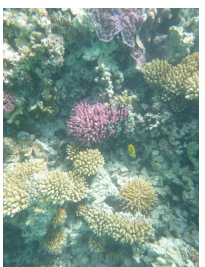




7<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The wind was up and the water was lumpy. But it didn't matter for what we intended this morning. Low tide was at 0914 and we were going snorkeling. The sun, out of the wind was hot. The wind however was cold and I tossed up putting on a wet suit rather than just the stinger suit. We settled for the slightly thinner option but we did feel it, spending around an hour in the water; swimming from shore, around the edge of the inshore coral. Whilst some of this, certainly the area next to the island, is not all that spectacular, there are still signs of life and plenty of fish species to identify. My photos were a bit rushed, and hence not all in focus, but I was more excited about the fact I didn't have water rushing into my mask around the edges. I did have other water issues but we get over our issues one step



This is why we wear Stinger Suits!!! We may have had an hour's snorkel but we then spent an hour removing the 'tentacles/stingers' from Andrew's Stinger Suit legs!







Anapa leaving the Lady Musgrave lagoon

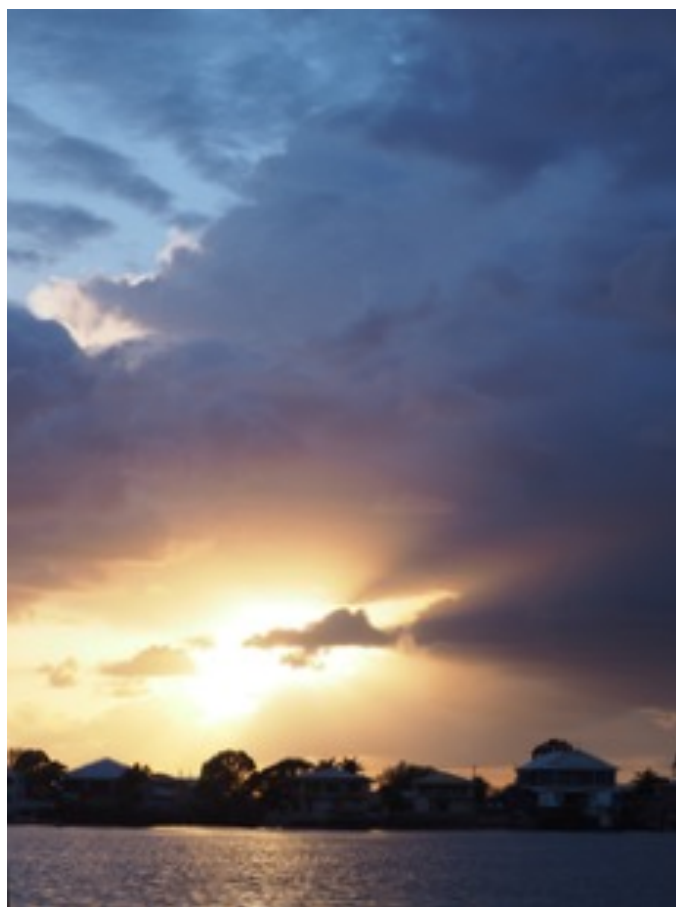
### Lady Musgrave Island to Burnett Heads

8<sup>th</sup> October 2019. We started hauling the anchor up at 0630 and we were out the lagoon entrance at 0700, the contrast from smooth lagoon waters to rough swell significant and I got wet standing on the top of the roof at the base of the mast as the waves crashed over the bow. Ideally you would put your sails up in calmer waters and in an ideal world the water inside the lagoon was perfect – however it was a dropping tide inside a reef filled area with bommies, and putting sails up in those conditions is not a very good idea. Instead we suffered the roughish seas beam on, motor sailing with one engine and the genoa until we got south and into the lee of Lady Musgrave Island. There we raised the sails, putting a reef in main but furling out a full genoa. Engines were off at 0745.

We had a delightful if uneventful sail - all the way until the Sugar Sheds in the Burnett River (deciding that dropping the sails in the river would be a lot less rough than dropping the sails outside with a swell that had reached near to two meters), and we anchored a smidge upstream from our last anchorage at 1600. Wildlife along the passage was minimal; one turtle in the lagoon on the way out, one turtle close to the entrance to the Burnett River. We must have been blind: **Anapa** behind us saw whales, dolphins and sharks! There was the odd flock of pelagic bird but sadly we didn't take too much notice of them.

9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

The forecast for two days indicated south-east winds up to 25 knots in Harvey Bay – it was not something we wanted to be traveling into. So we spent the time reading and conducting minor chores; washing, scrubbing some of the black snow off the decks, making more liquid soap, etc. A drop in wind intensity had us on Thursday, after making a loaf of bread, heading down to Burnett Heads, where we took a new path to the IGA and found a great place to watch birds. The land is pretty dry and the vacant block next door has been sold so I hope this patch is still here next time we visit. The rest of the day entailed a quick farewell to **Annecam** and **Anapa**, before spending the evening tidying up the boat for the hop south.



## Burnett Heads to Big Woody Island.

11<sup>th</sup> September 2019. We started lifting the anchor around 0630, the main sail was up in the river by 0705, and we motor sailed downstream and out through the start of the shipping channel, turning south when the water was deep enough. The swell was bigger than we had expected, and indeed another cruiser had sent a text suggesting we delay for the swell to die down before we departed. Unfortunately I didn't get the text until three hours later!

The wind was further to the south than was forecast and stayed further to the south for longer than expected, which meant we started with a slow and sloppy sail, requiring awkward tacking for the first few hours. The wind direction did eventually change through east to north east, and the winds speeds through respectable to slightly uncomfortable (at one stage we had 24 knots apparent and put a reef in the main) but by this time we were too far west and we required a tack back north before we could line up with the fairway buoy at the south end of Harvey Bay. There was one short stint of motor around the eastern side of Big Woody Island to miss a starboard mark but we sailed until after 1700 when the wind died down and we were being carried along predominantly with the tide. Whilst thunder had been heard two thirds of the way down Harvey Bay we didn't really see any rain until within 10 nm of our destination and the anchor was put down quickly lest I get too wet.



## Big Woody Island to Kingfisher resort

12<sup>th</sup> October 2019. I had assurances from another yacht that it was only blowing 4.6 knots on the north-east side of Big Woody Island. The yacht in question was undertaking a slow and steady sail and their destination was off Kingfisher Bay Resort. The weather forecast kept changing but the northerly was going to turn into a southerly and Kingfisher was the best place to be – it was just that the expected time of the change varied in subsequent MetEye forecasts from this afternoon to tomorrow morning. In the end with a rainstorm on the mainland, we decided it was best to move. The aim had been to motor all the way across – 4.6 knots was not enough wind to sail in. However as we lifted anchor the wind picked up to 6's and then 7's and then 10's and I suggested furling the genoa out. The skipper opted to wait until we had passed the bottom point of Big Woody Island (sensible) and the wind gauge was indicating around 15 knots at the time we got there. And then in a matter of seconds it shot up to 30! Apparent winds got up to 37 knots and at an angle, had we wanted to keep sailing, that would head us straight into Picnic Island. We had to move fast! The adrenalin raced. There was no room to turn away from the wind without hitting a sand bank and there was an enormous amount of pressure on the sail – in the end we tacked to a complete change of direction, pirouetting in the channel and turning right off the wind enough to roll the furler in. We would stick with motors from now on. Of course during this hub bub, the weather system that had clearly come across to us from the mainland had brought rain, so we were now very wet as well. Fortunately the rain had stopped by the time we made it down to our previous anchoring mark, around half way between the resort and McKenzie's Jetty.



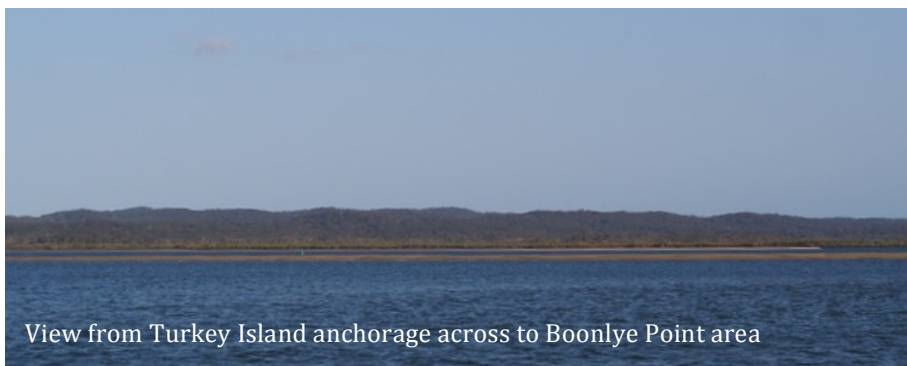




## Kingfisher Bay Resort

13<sup>th</sup> October 2019. I knew I was going to lose Andrew to the Bathurst car race from late morning but we needed some exercise so I suggested a morning walk before hand. **Anapa** joined us for the Beerillbee Trail for a pleasant two-hour stroll – after we landed the tinnies on the adjacent beach to our yachts and waded to the resort (high tide). The company meant it was a social occasion and not a bird watch however there were lots of bird calls. The only real spot of the morning however was a handsome male satin flycatcher. The tide was thankfully low enough so we could walk on sand on the way back to our tenders. We got back to boat and the television was turned on...and the race had started! Skipper was not overly impressed - we had forgotten we were in Queensland – the start times are an hour earlier here than the broadcast times because there is no daylight savings! We should have known better – we've done this once before....for the Sydney to Hobart yacht race start in 2015 – Skipper wasn't impressed then either. Whilst A was engrossed in the race I continued with small jobs and some reading.





View from Turkey Island anchorage across to Boonlye Point area

## Kingfisher Bay to Turkey Island.

14<sup>th</sup> October 2019. Having turned south we deemed it best we keep going. There was however no wind this morning with which to sail but northerlies were expected in the afternoon. If we left to take advantage of the tide, we were going to have to motor, and the trip down to the south side of Turkey Island took us until around high tide. In theory we could coast the tide down from here (near Boonlye Point in Sheridan flats) but there was still no wind until around four hours later so we would have been motoring. Tomorrow's forecast winds however should take us the next step toward the Wide Bay Bar.

It was probably just as well that the main reason we were coming out of the water at Boat Works was for the rudder bearings.....at around 1645 there was, as there had been for some time, a slight chop. Except that all of a sudden there was a stop at the end of every second one of them. The gauges indicated we had 0.6 and 1.1 m below our keels – then why this bump? We were not in the bigger pond as preferred but according to the chart plotter, and indeed according to our gauges, we had enough depth beneath us. The only explanation we can come up with is an anomaly – like our fishing mound in the Fitzroy River (see Aboard Sengo -August 2018), with enough substrate in the right height to get the rudders and nothing else. Fighting the persistent midgies I headed out front and we pulled the anchor chain in a few meters to get us away from impacting the substrate.

At this time it was officially a rising tide, but clearly low-ish for our rudders to bump.... But the timing didn't stop three boats heading through the Sheridan Flats - although none were mono hulls with a large keel to worry about. Half an hour later we got neighbours. They were originally a bit further away but after two attempts eventually put the anchor down to the north west of us. At least some of them on board were newbies, I could hear the lesson on why the anchor was doing what it was doing – and no

one was in the helm at the time! This situation reminded me of the Kimberley's – and the sheep mentality – figuratively speaking – they were anchored effectively on top of us....- I just hoped the four souls on board weren't too loud, and that the anchor held when we turned with the strong wind overnight!

At around 2015 I stepped outside the cabin for a few seconds. Whilst the outside temperature was mild the doors had been closed to minimise invasion of midgies. It is quite sheltered inside and there was no noise from outside. As I opened the door I was surprised by the squealing and jocularly on the adjacent boat...and they sounded like they were swimming and splashing off the back. Whilst I didn't actually confirm this by using binoculars (that would have been a bit rude at night), if they were splashing about they are pretty brave souls (whilst the official crocodile area extends north from Gladstone (seems to have been changed from Rockhampton), there are signs 20 nautical miles south of here at Tin Can Bay, and the Mary River has the occasional *porosus* visitor – and that's just around the corner!

Jobs done today – clean leaking soap underneath bathroom sink, clean binoculars, put washing away, and conduct a small rust run – the midgies eventually stopped any other outside jobs



### Turkey Island to Kauri Creek.

15<sup>th</sup> October 2019. Today was definitely a case of Plan B. Plan A had been to sail down to Pelican Bay at the top of Tin Can Inlet and take tomorrow morning's high tide out the Wide Bay Bar before the journey down to Morton Bay. The predicted swell across the bar was acceptable and the winds from the 10-15, 15-20 and 20-25 knot range for the journey, all from the north so the ride should be brisk but not necessarily overly uncomfortable. There were a couple of downsides to this; the swell further south was going to increase and there was a strong possibility that the wind was going to get beyond 25 knots when we were going to be anchoring....so, on second thoughts, perhaps not.

We lifted the anchor after 1000 and sidled out from our 'close' neighbours and past **Anapa**, who had just arrived, to take the dropping tide from Boonlye Point south. At times the tide gave us over 3.5 knots but we made comfortable time with our speed over ground in the 6's to high 7's (with the occasional 8). We weren't the only ones heading south. At least three boats made their way out of Gary's Anchorage as we passed, one actually passing us doing 7's to mid 8's but I do note that it was a lighter swifter boat that was performance designed. All vessels were on genoa only. Checking MetEye again as we got close to our original destination of Pelican Bay had us rethinking our journey. After the next couple of days of northerlies, there were southerlies expected, but when it turned northerly again on Saturday, there was a doable window (providing it didn't change) for us to get

down to Morton Bay in slightly less wind. If we waited for that we would be hanging around here a few days and if that was the case we didn't need to get to the now filling, and probably slightly uncomfortable in the conditions (wind had gusted to over 23 knots), Pelican Bay anchorage. We would have had to have moved closer to Tin Can Bay township for the southerlies anyway. So we changed tack (around 90 degrees) and headed into Kauri Creek instead; a location that would afford us pretty well all-round protection. There is a very shallow entrance to Kauri Creek and one should enter on a rising tide when there is enough water under the keels. We were on a dropping tide and we knew it was going to be close. There were a few heart stopping moments of 0.00 under the keels but we were still moving, and we anchored just after 1300 with the wind blowing 20 knots one way, the tide pulling several knots the other, and an anchor chain that didn't really know where it was going when we put it out. However, it held tightly and we jiggled around with wind against tide for a short while.

Apart from me enquiring to Olympus via email about inspecting a dodgy lens, there were no jobs done today. We'd been up early and I was tired, and managed an afternoon nap before arising to watch a very pleasant sunset. Andrew spent the afternoon reading.



Sunset Kauri Creek



16<sup>th</sup> October 2019. Not a very active day. The small bedroom rug was brushed and shaken (and left to the strong wind to remove any more dirt), some towels were washed, a small plumbing problem in relation to our port bow shower sump was sorted, our bedroom walls were clove-oiled, muffins were made, and we read a bit.

17<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The sun was officially up but behind clouds. The cooing of doves gave way to the peeping of bush birds, which gave way to the call of a whistling kite. A turtle graced the water around the boat with its presence but of course every time I went for the camera it would dive below the water level. I was up around 0500 and by 0600 had brushed out the other bedroom rug and hung it up to get blown clean (except there was no wind until mid morning), clove-oiled the starboard kitchen shelf, walls and windows, and wiped the dust off the shelf plastic liners.

By 1000 I had washed the living room floor. Other jobs included cleaning the top of the front hatches so I had a clean area to work the big rug. Brushing out the big rug was a huge job and only 2/3 done by the end of the day. It is also very dirty and desperately needs a wash – thankfully I know a laundrette in Southport that has a big enough machine!

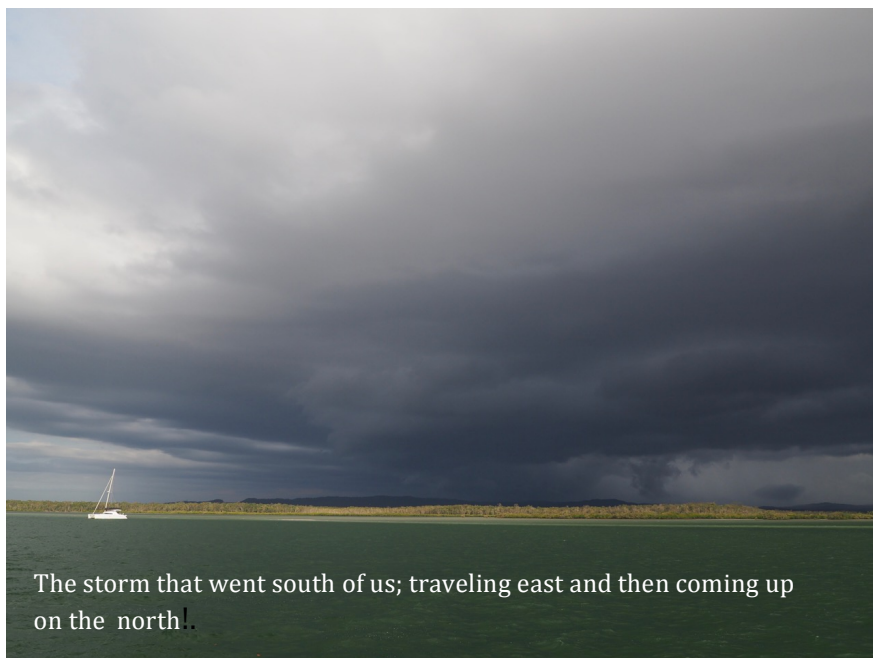


18<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

What wind! This morning was calm and winds were light. A boat who had come in yesterday afternoon and anchored close to the river's exit, we suspected too close to the northern bank, moved around 2100 last night (a strong light pointing our way alerted me in the dark) but it didn't move far. It was still anchored in the creek this morning - although I suspect it is still in an exposed position for the south-easterly change. By the time sunset came in yesterday we had seen over 27 knots on the gauges. By the time we went to bed at around 2130 we had seen over 33 knots and had experienced the pirouetting with conditions attached to a passing front – fortunately the tempest of rain that was associated with it (a line of storms from the southwest to Childers when checked on Met EYE in the late afternoon) had dissipated.







## Kauri Creek to Tin Can Bay

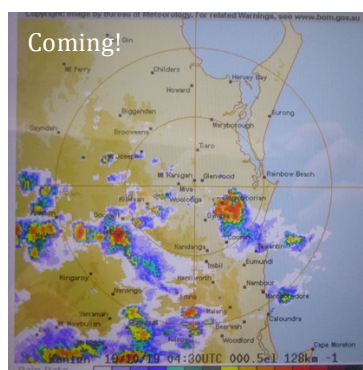
The morning was a case of little wind: the afternoon, however, was something altogether different!

19<sup>th</sup> October 2019. High tide at Inskip Point was due around 1137 - but we didn't need all of it to get out of Kauri Creek. Andrew had calculated we would make it (without scraping the bottom) across the creek's entrance around 0900 so at 0840 I went outside to attend to the anchor. The morning sky had been grey; to the east of us Fraser Island had looked enshrouded in low cloud or rain. To the west of us, upstream Kauri Creek looked the same. At 0840 they met above us and light driplets, small at first, started to fall. In a few moments they got bigger. Perhaps we could wait a little longer.

It didn't take long for the rain to stop and we proceeded to lift the anchor. All happened as per normal until we got to the last few meters of chain. As usual, when the anchor got close, I locked the chain off and asked Andrew to drive the boat out. But it didn't happen, and after a sustained effort he eased the throttle and we considered an alternative course. We were

stuck reasonably fast; at least we knew we weren't going to move in strong winds! Allowing time for the boat to turn more with the tide gave us a different angle to apply pressure and contrary to expectation considering the circumstances, the anchor eventually came up clean.

There was no wind at this stage and we motored all the way, scouting around the multitude of tinnies around the entrance to Kauri Creek (perhaps there was a fishing tournament on) and south down toward a grey sky and the Tin Can Bay settlement. We anchored downstream of all other boats (except one) ...in the





rain....which of course started again just as we got to the anchorage. Fortunately it didn't last long.

The plan for the afternoon had been to get across to shore, go shopping, return to boat to decant and then later to catch up with **Mara** on shore for dinner. That didn't quite happen. And as it turned out, it was just as well.

Whilst the forecast was for northerly winds at 5-10 knots, it was blowing over 15 when we started to leave and despite the swell coming from behind and an uncomfortable launch of the tinnie, that is not what stopped us from the afternoon/evening activity. In the midst of all this stress the tinnie engine decided not to work – again (what is it about our tinnie engine and Tin Can Bay?) – and after three unsuccessful attempts to get the engine started we bounced back on board, hoisted the tinnie and rang our friends to say we wouldn't be coming. Given the conditions, the issue was not going to be investigated until the morrow although by mid afternoon the sun was about to go down the wind had decreased and the swell had dropped to almost nothing. In the mean time however thunderstorms were raging across the country to our south (the current thunderstorm warning area on [bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au) just encompassed Tin Can Bay Inlet) and one even popped north again on the coast at Rainbow Beach to our east. Thunder had been calling for several hours and the sun was heading west to Thor's beating drums.

It was late afternoon when Thor decided he would pay us a direct visit! The storm to our south was picturesque and I spent some time on the front of boat clicking away with the camera, noting to Andrew that the gorgeous green in amongst the clouds was possibly an indication of hail – a fact I had just read in the Cloud Appreciation Society's Cloud-A-Day. You can imagine however my



changing sense of anxiety as the system that I had so reliably assumed was heading east started to head north-ish and the distant lightening that I was never quite quick enough to get a photo of (and would have been fuzzy anyway taken from a jiggling boat) was travelling our way. As was the panis. As were the clouds! As the system crept closer I could see a curious wall of opaque sea-green heading in our direction. And then came the noise. And then I realised it wasn't just rain that was about to hit us, it was the hail as well! Tiger who had been sleeping in the front port bow suddenly appeared up in the living area; the noise probably a bit too much for a easily upset pussy cat who couldn't see what was going on – and he had been so relaxed earlier in the afternoon.

But it was the wind that really took our breath away. Within seconds the wind speed had gone from below ten knots to over 54! We were in 8 meters of water. We had around 50 meters of chain out. We were probably pushing it. Thankfully we held.

Within the tempest the rain was that thick you couldn't see through it, the wind was creating waves to rival Bells Beach (well, not really but it felt like that at the time), and we had no idea what was going on around us. Our concern was our neighbours. This anchorage has a lot of unmanned boats on anchor and only a couple of days ago we had overheard the radio conversation with Marine Rescue Tin Can Bay and their rescue boat whilst inspecting damage on one boat caused by another which had dragged its anchor. What, if anything, was coming our way? We had no way of knowing – we couldn't see a thing!

When the rain finally eased enough so we could actually see through it, our neighbours had changed. Two sloops (one blue (green) hull and one yellow hull) had travelled to congregate near the sand bank to our west, one steel sloop was behind us downstream and we were decidedly closer to a small monohull to our port side than we had been before. In the pouring rain I extracted some fenders (which means there will now be water in our bilge) to put down our port side just in case this small boat got any closer, only to discover whilst I was doing this that we had turned around and the boat now threatened the starboard side of our hull. In the end I put fenders down both sides of our hull and had three tied to our davits out the back for an emergency.

At the conclusion of the first tempest I got a phone call from **Anapa** checking up to see how we were. They were anchored a bit down stream, had survived the storm but informed me that the catamaran that was anchored behind them was now



This little boat came for a visit! It was taken away by the Coast Guard

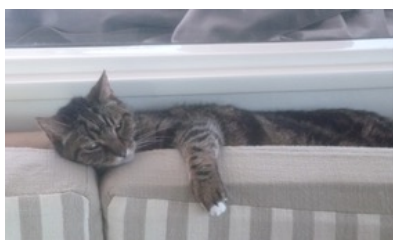
travelling on its own, without lights, toward Inskip Point!

I reported all the recalcitrant boats to Marine Rescue Tin Can Bay and sat down to expect a long and stressful night. The Mount Rescue 2 boat was terrific; checked on all reported boats and moved those that needed moving – via their anchor chains as without permission to actually board the vessels they are open to being litigated against (silly really). They did a terrific job in the conditions (and the dark) and I felt a bit sorry for them; they didn't quite make it back to base before the rain of the next system came in. By the time the second system had gone through though, whilst lightening was still flashing to the east, the rain was light and the wind was back to around 10 knots!





20<sup>th</sup> October 2019. Despite Andrew's diligent efforts from 0630, at 0830 he was still no closer to sorting out our tinnie engine problem. He had actually diagnosed what he thought the problem was (air in the fuel line), it was just a matter of determining exactly where the problem was in the system. We were out of fresh food and I left Andrew to his mechanical issues and accepted the assistance of **Anapa** who took me to shore and went shopping with me. A trip to the chandlery ensured Andrew had new fuel line and primer bulb but he didn't have time to install both when I got back. Within minutes of arriving back on boat the southerly change came in (a couple of hours earlier than predicted) and after an initial higher gust (speed not noted but Double Island Point got to 33 knots) we settled down to a consistent 18-20. Of course it was wind over tide so all wasn't as smooth as preferred, and we did nearly lose the bits Andrew had pulled off the engine in a rather big gust (to follow the mechanism to spin the carburettor to start the engine that sprang off into the drink several hours earlier!). We managed to save all the bits, get the tinnie back up on the davits and retire inside for an early lunch. Given the wind conditions it is quite possible we will not be working on this problem again for three days! Just before sunset the Coast Guard boat arrived to pull the yellow boat off the sand.



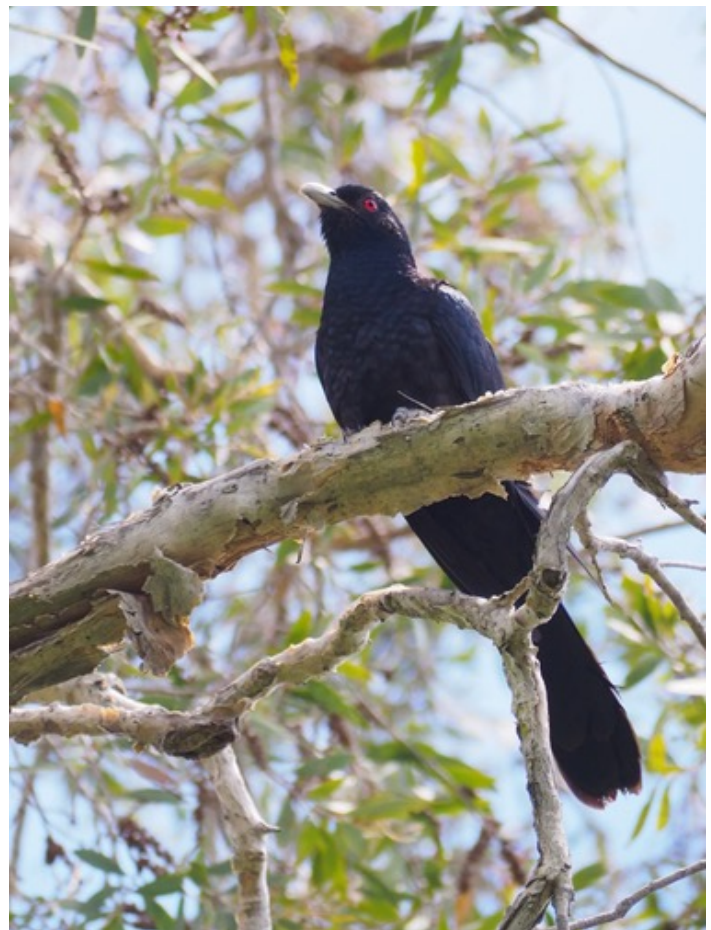
21<sup>st</sup> October 2019. South-east winds still raged today; as expected. The forecast was for 15-25 knots all day. We hadn't been keeping a constant eye on the wind gauge reading but we were reading less than Double Island Point which hadn't blown less than 22 knots since midnight and was gusting constantly between 25 to 32 knots. Unless you are desperate there is no point getting off boat in these conditions, it would be very uncomfortable and possibly dangerous, and particularly here where the neighbours aren't necessarily secure, you need to be on board to fend off potential interlopers. Andrew spent most of the day reading. I spent it on small jobs, or starting big ones; cleaning the oven, rinsing dirty rags, doing the dishes, and scrubbing some of the deck. It was only during this last activity that I looked up from the back steps and noticed something not quite familiar hanging from our spinnaker line out the front. During the first few minutes of the storm on the 19<sup>th</sup> I had noticed something black shoot past our boat on the wind. I had assumed it was a poor bird caught up in the tempest, but now realise it was probably half our anchor ball! We still technically have a ball hanging over our deck – it is however only now obvious from one side. Having been distracted for a couple of days I thought this might be a good time to check the decks for hail damage – fortunately at first glance there appear to be none obvious.



22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019. 10 knots. Relatively calm. We had been invited to join **Anapa** for a walk and the hope was we would travel to the public jetty in our own tinnie. Despite Andrew's diligent efforts from 0730, and although the new primer bulb seemed to work better than the old one and some new fuel hose was fitted, we were still without a working engine (except if the choke was all the way on). So it was a slow trip across in **Anapa's** tender with four adults. The morning sky was a lovely blue and filled with friendly fluffy cumulous. It was warm but not exceedingly hot although by the time we got back to boat a few hours later my skin was probably wrinkling a bit more from the exposure than it should have. The aim of the walk was exercise, a cuppa and a quick shop. Both boats also wanted to check out the access to the fuel dock at the marina – I am still not sure if I am happy to head down the fairway at the Tin Can Bay marina to the pumps – it will be an exercise in pivoting.

Andrew spent the afternoon you-tubing choke engine problems; I wiped the jade plant from bugs. Sun downers was on Sengo with **Anapa** and **Anui**.

Bird spot of the day was the two Eastern Koels in the park behind the IGA.



23<sup>rd</sup> October 2019. Cleaning, polishing, scrubbing, reading: that was about my day. Andrew's was fiddling with the tinnie, research on the interweb, and reading. Morning tea was on **Anui**.





### **Wide Bay Bar to Morton Bay**

24<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The anchor was up around 0800. Before 0900 it was down again at Inskip Point near Pelican Bay. There were five boats when we arrived at Pelican Bay, there were 9 when we left – there had been over 30 last night and most of those had exited the bar this morning. If they had all logged on with Coast Guard Tin Can Bay the staff would have been overwhelmed – fortunately only a couple did– we didn't hear this, all boats were out the bar by the time we turned the radio on. Last minute jobs in preparation to a jump to Morton Bay included cleaning the bbq, strapping the paddleboards to the top of the tinnie and a general tidy up. There was no realignment of waypoints on the chart plotter needed - the suggested Wide Bay Bar marks haven't changed since August. **Anapa** was over for a final cuppa before our pack up of boat in preparation for the trip south.

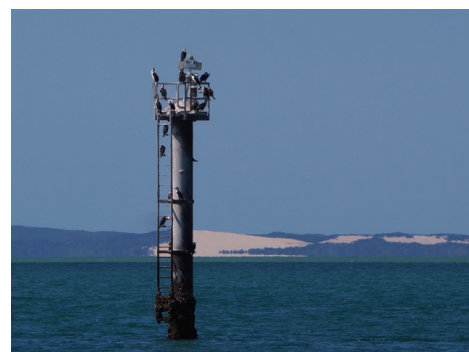
Anchor was up at 1430 (ish). By the time we hauled the sail up (with a reef in it), fought against a still incoming tide, and bumped and jostled along the 'mad mile' and out the bar, it was 1645. Tiger had lost his breakfast and then some and was probably partly dehydrated for the first part of the trip but he was feeling too hang-cat-ish to do anything about it. Of course he made up for it later and when he felt better he would bug me for food every time I went inside.

At around 1800 I was hailed by a fishing vessel. Firstly, I was surprised he was actually on AIS and then that he bothered to call at all. We weren't necessarily on a direct line but we were close and I don't know if he was operating lines because after trying to discern his words through his accent I figured he was trying to ascertain my intentions (Andrew was off shift and snoozing). I did ask what he wanted me to do and after a long pause he came back with the question of 'port to port' or 'starboard to starboard'. My preference was for the latter – we were almost

doing that anyway but I explained I was under sail and preferred to turn into the wind. I would turn 5 degrees to port. Of course all this happened in a flurry of confusion and on Channel 16. - Apologies to all other vessels listening.



The sail itself was very mixed, starting from achieving around 7 knots boat speed and then down to 2's, the latter of which I wasn't too worried about as I knew the wind was going to pick up further into the sail. However as Andrew discovered the battery power was low, an engine went on at 0230...and didn't get turned off until 1330 on the 25<sup>th</sup>.....11 hours later! The final two hours sail was a reasonably respectable (considering the wind speed) high 4's to low 8's (although we were getting overtaken by another (performance) cat doing 9's – he did have full sail up). We anchored in Deanbilla Bay south of Dunwich on the suggestion of **Zofia**. Unfortunately we were too exhausted to row across for sun downers.







Bugs Bunny always forgot to turn left at Albuquerque; And so did we!

26<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The call of the bush birds this afternoon was beautiful over the noise of the wind; it was a pity we couldn't concentrate on them.

After a fitful 12-plus hour sleep (minus the usual Tiger interruptions for me) we got up to a sunny and warm day. We hadn't really noticed the high tide roll overnight at this anchorage – we were just too tired. The anchor was up around 0730 and after leaving Deanbilla Bay we sailed, genoa only, for the entire journey, turning on the motors, just as a precaution, for the W's and under the power lines at Rocky Point. Boat speed varied from the 4's to the 7 knot mark depending on our direction and the only traffic we really needed to be aware of was the ferries through the W's – a very thin channel with sharp bends that you really don't want to share. A couple of jet skis near Steiglitz got closer than I would have preferred – but they were sticky beaking and not threatening.

Our destination was somewhere new; on the north side of Kangaroo Island below Eden Island and Crusoe Island. As it turned out our memories won't be of 'Eden,' but like Robinson Crusoe we were (temporarily) stranded.

The tide was dropping but the channel should have held enough depth, even if it was only minimal. But in a brief moment of distraction around 1115 (furling in the genoa) we missed a very thin section of indicated deeper water and ended up grounded. There was probably a double mistake in this. On the chart plotter we have there is always a purple line feeding its way between channel markers. In theory the purple mark is deemed the best line through the area. However – in this particular channel, the purple line does *not* follow the channel markers at all and runs through an area of supposed deeper water! We were following the purple mark



– when perhaps we should have been following the channel markers; there is a large yellow sign as you enter this channel indicating the possibility of shoaling. No kidding!

There was a desperate attempt to dislodge the boat but to no avail, and as there was nothing we could do at this point we just had to sit and wait it out – unfortunately though to get the tide at the same level meant we were going to have to wait until after 1730 – when the sun would be very quickly heading for the horizon..

It was our understanding that the port side keel was stuck (reading 0.00) as the starboard side depth gauge was oscillating between 0.00, 0.2 and 1.2m (!!!)

As it turned out it was the starboard side keel that was stuck in tougher, and ultimately higher, mud/sand – the port side being constantly undermined



with moving sand and thus by the time we got to low tide we were on rather an interesting angle. Tiger kept moving his place of rest to spots that weren't sliding across the floor!

On the bright side, as Andrew pointed out, I didn't have to put up an anchor ball – we were technically not anchored. We were in fact only

around half a nautical mile from where we did want to anchor so we had some northerly protection from the coming rampage, just not quite as much as we had hoped. The other slight awkwardness was that we were stuck side on to the wind, the jostling of waves could potentially knock us off our perch – so it was 'keel' watch for the afternoon.

Of course this all happened adjacent a fishing boat and we won't be surprised if we end up as a joke on social media – it was just quite simply 'a tad embarrassing.....'

It is a matter of note that several days before this the subject of grounding had come up in discussions with other cruisers; and the fact we had hit a sandbank due to distraction sailing with our genoa out at the Gippsland Lakes; we didn't however expect to be repeating the experience.

At around 1445 Andrew exclaimed 'the crab pot's disappearing.' This meant the tide was definitely coming back in, but we had to wait another 2.75 hours before we could move, with a push, despite a couple of false hope moments half an hour beforehand. The deeper water was so close but Andrew decided to back up the boat to the point where the marks branched off and he threatened to go and anchor outside Steiglitz. We have anchored there a very long time ago and we found ourselves on the edge of a sand bank then, and the location would be open to the predicted strong wind. The closer option, and one that was going to give us more protection from strong northerlies, was the anchorage we were heading to in the first place...so pottering through the marks (still with very little clearance) and further along the channel we arrived at where the anchorage symbol was on the chart. However, we weren't overly happy with the location and a deeper hole further up gave us minimal space to anchor with the required drop. So back we went up the channel we had come, to anchor mid channel at about the same longitude as we'd been stuck in the first place. By this time of course it was well and truly dark !

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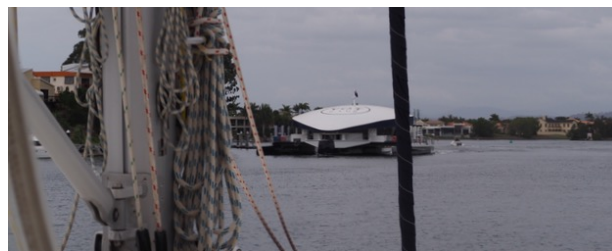
27<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

It had been a pleasant night's sleep. We got up as normal, picked up the anchor and moved east, past our originally planned anchoring spot of the night before, past the houseboats seen in yesterdays' fading light and out the Whalley Gutter toward Jumpinpin. Despite the fact it was supposed to have been northerly overnight the anchorage was still busy and the one spot easily available was nabbed by a small power boat just before we could get to it. Turning around we eventually anchored off Tullen Island - after three goes because the current seemed to be going the wrong way and taking the anchor with it for the first two! Most of the day was spent tidying up and cleaning. We had **Double Bubble** over for afternoon tea and went to bed early



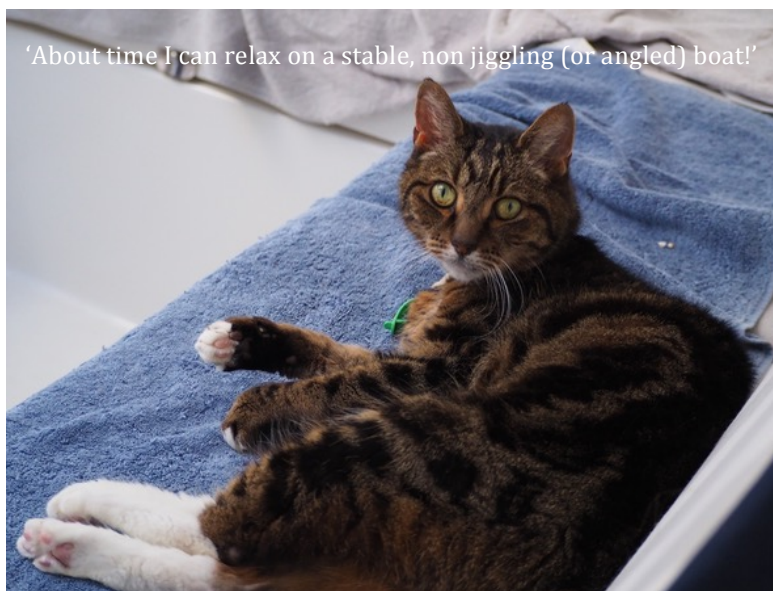
28th October 2019. The plan had been to motor down to Boat Works (there was no wind due in early morning) anchor outside, be cheeky and borrow their boat ramp for a couple of minutes whilst we dropped the tinnie engine off to an outside contractor (rowing the tinnie of course), pick up anchor and go and find somewhere to spend the night (there were strong-ish southerlies due from late morning). However, the only part of that plan that actually got carried out was the motor down to Boat Works. Whilst picking up the anchor (in the slimy, greasy, grey green mud) the top of the windlass moved to the side under pressure. This is not good. This is what happened at Davenport Creek 16 nm from Ceduna in April 2018 just before the motor and gear box assembly fell off! We fear the bolts have sheared again. Of course the top of the windlass is the only part of it we didn't replace in Strahan !

So, there was going to be no option to anchor again. We just hoped Boat Works had a berth for us. Fortunately they did. And fortunately the girls remembered my anxiety about pens – they found us an end berth. The motor up the Coomera River was essentially uneventful until we were passed by a floating restaurant (I guess that what it is - it is wider than most houses), and Loretta – a huge three master who had Maritime Safety Queensland helping out with 'traffic' control. This delayed our arrival for a few minutes which meant we arrived when yard staff seemed to be huddling in a meeting. After 15 minutes floating around we got them to move someone else's tender, which was on our located dock, and we were assisted alongside. As it was senior staff that assisted, they also remembered my anxiety, and our initial issues in February 2016. Ironically we have ended up on dock looking onto the location of that small disaster. *I am* over it – I promise.



We found ourselves on dock in the new part of the yard. The amenities are palm-covered portables, neat and clean but don't quite have the luxurious feel of the solid building in the original part of the yard. However the showers are warm and relaxing.

Not expecting to be on dock this early, (we are booked to haul out on November 12<sup>th</sup>), we spent the time sorting out contractors not already contacted for some yearly, and not so yearly, maintenance. One poor fellow became central to our needs; we went in for some plumbing assistance and he's ended up with the job of sourcing the solution to the winch (a lot easier to get a contractor to do this with the industry contacts than it is for us to muck about again and possibly not get the same advantage). The evening was spent shopping for chicken breast for Tiger (I've run out of it) and a slide-out kitchen drawer – I have no drawers in this kitchen – which is a bit silly (they've fixed this up in subsequent models) but it means getting the cutlery is a pain. We discussed this option last year but didn't have the energy to do anything about it. We have since seen a boat with all slide outs- which looks fabulous. We won't go to that extent – at least not this time, but whilst we are here the cutlery issue is going to be solved.



'About time I can relax on a stable, non jiggling (or angled) boat!'



## Ticking things off lists!

29<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> October 2019. We spent two days pottering around the boat making sure we listed all the things that need doing, and lined up contractors to cover them for when we get on the slip mid November. We got a canvas guy to fix up the zip on Andrew's bean bag and repair the ripped thread at the zip for our side covers. A gas inspection revealed that we will at some stage need new gas lines fitted; the existing ones are probably fine (the reason this came about was a lethargic burner on the stove top) but they are unfortunately not up to Australian Standard, so a simple fix has just turned into an expensive replacement exercise. In the middle of talking to people who will charge to get things done we spent a bit of elbow grease ourselves; the fridge was defrosted, small sections of the hull were polished, and washing was done. Whilst waiting for a response regarding the winch Andrew unbolted it from the deck (removing those bolts that remained) and discovered the problem may not be what we thought it was; there was instead reminiscence of Ceduna (the bolts were coming loose and corroding, stripping the threads out this time rather than the sheared bolts we had in April 2018). After determining that replacement parts from Italy would take weeks to get here, the end fix was eventually to install helicoils to rebuild the threads and we are very grateful to *Stella Marine* who provided labour at short notice for this so we could get off dock and reduce our costs. There was a trip to Helensvale to pick up a fancy bit of timber for some cupboard work (Andrew didn't want to use plain pine from Bunnings) and to drop off my small camera lens at the Camera House franchise in Helensvale Westfield so it can be sent back to Olympus for assessment (and repair or replacement). The tinnie engine had been returned early afternoon on the 30<sup>th</sup> so at this point there was no reason to stay any longer. A food shop at Woolies Helensvale should keep us going a few days. Tiger, as usual, spent most of the days sleeping. We spent time in both evenings with ***Double Trouble***.



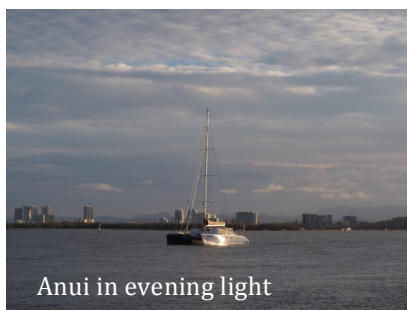
### Overlooking the Gold Coast

31<sup>st</sup> October 2019. Whilst the wind wasn't expected to be too bad today, the hope was that we would get off dock whilst it was blowing in the early 5-10 knot range and not the 10-15 range predicted later in the morning. The early morning entailed the usual 'ready to depart' activities – reef the plants, put the decorations away, ensure there was nothing to wobble off benches etc. I had received a text notice that a delivery from Australia Post was due today but the lass in the office expected it sometime this afternoon. No matter. We would get off dock and anchor off until the mail came in. This would give us a chance to a) check out the winch and b) test the tinnie engine. It was around 30 seconds after dropping the lines we got the phone call re the delivery! At least in this case we could anchor and pick the parcel up, as opposed to receiving back my camera lens in February which arrived back at the store two hours after we'd left the anchorage in Geelong, and we couldn't turn around due to oncoming inclement weather and an exit out Port Phillip Bay toward Tassie. (in that case I picked up my camera lens some days later in Strahan).

The anchor winch worked, the tinnie engine worked, we picked up the mail and said a temporary farewell to

**Double Bubble.** And then we motored downstream. The plan was to head toward the Sea Way where we would stop and make water and then find an anchorage for the evening. Everybody talks about Paradise Point and although snug there seemed to be room when we sailed past under genoa (the headsail having been furled out when we exited the river). All went to easy plan until I put the anchor down near the bottom of South Stradbroke Island. During the works yesterday on the anchor winch, a towel had been put in the anchor well on top of the anchor chain to capture any falling debris or parts. Once the job had been done all the rags etc used on top had been taken away. The towel was still there this morning and I moved it to on top of the back-up anchor next to the anchor well. What I think must have happened is that it's rocked off this space into the anchor well as we negotiated the violent wake of several power boats on our trip south. Of course I didn't know this as I was putting down the anchor and all of a sudden I had a ball of orange towel stuck in the top of the windlass and a ball of orange towel jammed underneath. The anchor had thankfully taken (there was around 30 meters of chain out) although for some time we thought we were drifting back to the Seaway – which of course just added an extra element of stress to the drama. The only way to get rid of this obstruction was to cut it out. Access was not easy and in the process I have broken my good 'dress making' scissors. With Andrew working from the top and me from the bottom using material scissors, kitchen scissors, sharp knives, screw drivers and a hammer we eventually freed the chain. This was a very frustrating hour. After which we sat around for another hour or so making water, watching the Southport Yacht Club evening yacht race and waiting for **Anui** to enter through Seaway.

After we'd filled the water tanks to an adequate level, we moved to a more appropriate overnight anchorage around 1700, just off the Currigee campground, South Stradbroke Island – Paradise Point was too far away to contemplate – particularly at dead low tide. Dinner was on **Anui**.



Anui in evening light