

Aboard Sengo

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June 2020

A change of terrain

Nerang National Park

10



At southern end of Jumpinpin anchorage

And it's Curtains to
that project....

Almost

20

Jumpin' around
Jumpinpin

...Still...

And we're off! Well, not quite. Hang on, didn't I start last month's newsletter with that same statement? On June 1st cruising restrictions were lifted and we could officially move north. But we didn't. We still had a couple of tasks to complete on the Gold Coast but we didn't think we'd be around long. We were wrong.

From the 1st June to 30th June we made a total net gain of, as the crow flies, around 2.3 nautical miles; from the anchorage outside 'Bums Bay' to the anchorage at South Currigee Campground on South Stradbroke Island. We did travel more than this distance of course, doing our usual dance between Paradise Point, Tiger Mullet Channel and Jumpinpin in the Broadwater and Gold Coast areas. Why are we still here? We are, in essence, still waiting for mail – except that this time the mail is a little different – it involves engineering supplies. We have decided to replace our house battery system, a decision we could have perhaps made earlier but an action that is prudent to be complete before we head north into potentially remote locations.

We occupied our time this month doing as much walking as we could in preparation for a New Zealand trip which we will, borders pending, hopefully start later this year. However due to our location(s), we were mainly covering old ground and rarely visited anywhere new. We have to be happy with this; any exercise should be considered good exercise, or so some say; except perhaps when you don't prepare properly (see page 12).

So, as others are enjoying the cruise up the coast, we are twiddling our thumbs until all the widgets get delivered and we can book into The Boat Works to get them installed. Ironically we are still ahead of where we were last year; the end of June 2019 saw us on the Clarence River in New South Wales. Our hope is that by the end of next month we may have got to the tropics. We can only wait and see....



Near sunset, Paradise Point

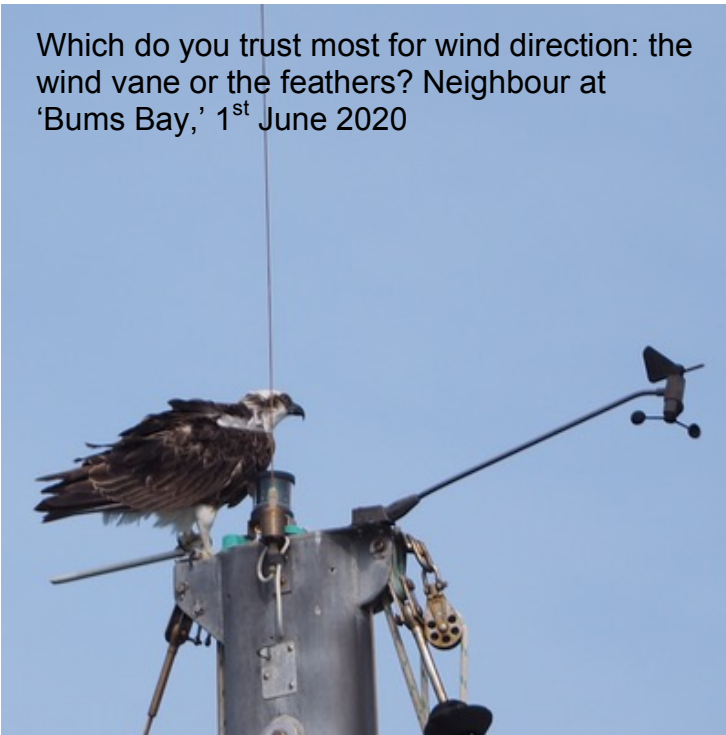


Walking eastern beach South Stradbroke Island, north toward Jumpinpin



Soldier crabs near Jumpinpin

Which do you trust most for wind direction: the wind vane or the feathers? Neighbour at 'Bums Bay,' 1st June 2020



Near Southport

1st June 2020. I got up early and baked a cake. It was a chocolate cake made with a block of chocolate and very little flour. It was Andrew's birthday so I thought I had at least better make some sort of effort. The cake was rich, and ended up being the nicest thing we ate all day. We had thought that if we couldn't get a restaurant seating at our preferred establishment then I'd be making him lunch. Having not secured a seat in late May we almost gave up. We did however manage to find an alternative venue but we shouldn't have bothered. A) the meal wasn't that great, and b) because seating restrictions had been removed starting today, then perhaps I should have rung the preferred restaurant again. We at least know which restaurant we *wont* be going back to. The afternoon got a bit windy and we got a bit wet on the way back to boat after lunch. But at least there was a nice rich chocolate cake waiting for us when we got there.

2nd June 2020. Having cut the ties off my new hiking pack there was now no excuse not to use it outside, however as this was the first run, I didn't load it up, depositing just the usual camera bag and sundries that I usually have in my day pack – and a couple of items from Paddy Pallin that needed returning. We took the tinnie across to the jetty adjacent the boat ramp near us, just

north of the Volunteer Marine Rescue building, and walked down to the Marina Mirage complex, had lunch in a café, and then posted the items back to Paddy via the post office there, before waddling a bit further south, and entering the beach just north of the surf club at Southport. We took the beach north a couple of kilometers before crossing the spit back to the car park and the jetty. The walk wasn't long – just under 6 kilometers

3 June 2020. I never thought I'd be praising Riviera! We had picked up the anchor at Bums Bay around 0750 and we were heading for our usual hidey-hole in Tiger Mullet Channel. The wind was light and there was no chance of putting even the headsail up (sails – what are they?). Because of our location we headed up the Main Channel adjacent the western side of the lower end of South Stradbroke Island, until it of course met the other channel (that passes our usual Paradise Point anchorage entrance) and they become one. There wasn't a lot of vessel traffic. Just north of the Coomera River entrance we waived to the odd small tinnie coming the other way and I noted one vessel that looked official head down toward us and then turn around with speed and head in the other direction. AIS indicated a prefecture of 'pv': Pilot Vessel. What was that all about?

It was about at this time that I happened to look around behind me. OMG! Coming up with possibly the full force of its engines, was a rather large power boat, white water spuming either side that looked, even from a fair distance, like the rather excited front of a tsunami. 'Hold on', I yelled at Andrew who happened to be inside. 'Massive bow wave on the way.' Taking the pilot off Auto and onto Manual I turned forward again to keep focus on where I was going and waited to turn into the tidal wave.....

Which seemed to take an extraordinarily long time in coming....

I turned to look behind me again, and I was amazed to see the white water spuming from behind this boat had reduced and whilst the boat was still coming, its rate of knots was considerably less. Big lettering on the side of

the vessel as it passed confirmed it was a Riviera; the timing probably confirmed one of their regular engine tests; the behaviour however, contrary to normal, confirmed a considerate pilot. After all the bow waves, and uncomfortable rocking back and forward (or side to side if we were anchored) we have suffered because of their testing, I was stunned. And very grateful. We did endure a small bow wave, and as soon as their stern was level with our bow their engines went back on full again, but the situation left me speechless!

Only a few minutes later, just as I was creating the sentence in my mind of 'I never thought I would be praising Riviera', we were passed by another fast boat. This one had come up so fast that I only just got a glimpse of it behind me in as I did a usual 'check behind the boat for oncoming traffic' routine. It was fast. It looked mean with a sharp pointed front on the pilot house, and it created one almighty, and unforgiving, bow wave. There was no slow down here; no consideration of fellow travellers. If I had had an open helm I would have been tempted to yell obscenities at it... or then again maybe not. This sharp fronted, new looking vessel was labeled 'Police'. Perhaps best not to antagonize the skipper...

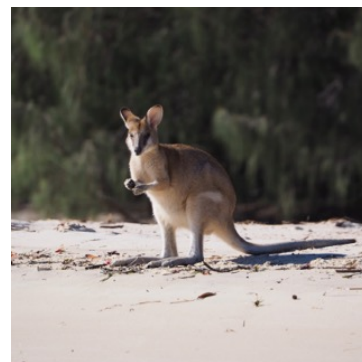
A short while later we passed the pilot vessel anchored at the end of an entrance from behind some islands into the channel. Combining the thought of pilot vessel that looked like he was on a mission and the (excessively) fast moving police vessel heading in the same direction we really thought there was something afoot? We never found out what it was because...

Just north of the southern entrance to Tipplers Passage we passed the police vessel. He looked a bit strange as we came up behind him and there was water churning from behind his stern. There was however no anchor out and the boat wasn't moving. He was on a 'green' section of the chart on a dropping tide. We think he was stuck. We half contemplated hailing him but there was nothing we could do – we weren't going to go over the shallow (and getting shallower) area to try and pull him off – it was probably too shallow for us to start with – and there was no point anchoring to offer a tow with

the tinnie – the tinnie would not have been strong enough. So were they stuck? We don't officially know. We suspected something was up when pv Kallarni came up and called to offer assistance. They were waved off and turned around. The explanation from the police boat over the radio ... they were 'doing jet propulsion manoeuvres.' Yeah right! Ah well. This is what happens when one is a little gung-ho – karma comes back to haunt you!

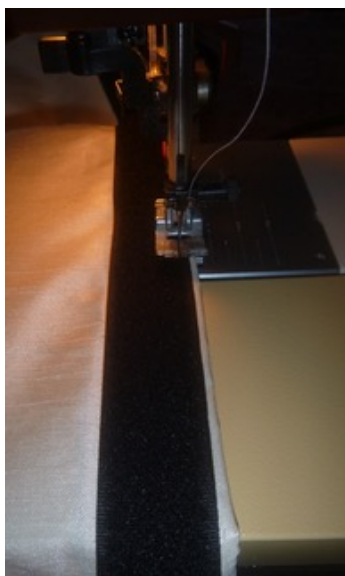


Because of the timing of the tide we again found ourselves heading toward Whalleys Gutter (I've been calling it Whalley's Channel for the last year or so) at low tide, so put the anchor down at our usual spot at the south end of Jumpinpin anchorage to wait for the incoming tide. To fill in time we took a walk to Horseshoe Bay.



Tiger Mullet Channel

4th June 2020. 'Curtains before breakfast!' Not quite but I was working on putting Velcro on a couple as breakfast's pear loaf was cooking in the oven. So after breakfast it became 'curtains before lunch'...and we did manage to get a few more put up. So when it came to curtains before dinner, the side and front windows of the lounge area had their curtains up. Because we'd made the decision to affix the curtains higher than originally planned, some of my top measurements were out and the curving wall meant some stick on Velcro on the starboard front window would have had to be stuck upside down on a curve. Whilst some bits were partially stuck on a curve I didn't stick the most affected pieces and the subsequent sag will have to be fixed with new Velcro when I get around to finishing the back window curtains. By late afternoon I was well and truly over curtains, having made a couple of small mistakes (and broken the support for the top of Andrew's desk lid! He is not pleased).



5th June 2020. I made the decision to have a break from curtains today. The job is nearly done but I am running out of resources (stick-on Velcro is low) and my back needed a break from the angle it almost got permanently stuck in yesterday. To top it off I didn't manage to do any yoga stretches yesterday either so am not doing myself any favours. Before breakfast of pancakes I'd taken some curtains down (the sticky Velcro instructions say you should leave 24 hours before using but we couldn't afford to do that and get the pieces in the right spot so the curtains got stuck up with the sticky stuff – they therefore got left for some time to help). I spent the day washing a small batch of clothes (haven't done any for a week) and relaxed with some well-deserved recreational reading. We managed two small yoga routines today and Andrew made the decision that his pack will be big enough to do the job, and cut the ties to the tags. Now we have no excuse; serious training for NZ, in theory, can start immediately

5th June.
Trying the
new hiking
stove....



Back at Jumpinin

6th June 2020.

4 kilograms of books
2.5 kilograms of water (in bladder)
1.2 kilograms of water in 600 ml bottles
1.7 kilograms of pack
My purse with phone (really heavy, around 900g)
The new rain jacket
Internal liner
Two apples
A container of nuts
A Heavy fleecy jacket...

With mild weather for the next couple of days and the rain predictions low we had no excuse not to start walking. But instead of transporting our packs via tinnie to South Stradbroke from our Tiger Mullet anchorage, we moved the big boat early to our usual spot at Jumpinin (which then meant we only had a short hop to shore) and prepared for a training run. This was to be our first official training run with both packs. How heavy would we pack them and how far would we go?

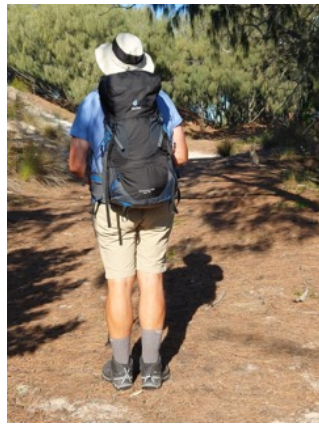
Most of our hiking stuff however was left on board Sengo and we weighted the packs mainly with second hand books (that we will eventually swap or donate). There was also some clothes stuffed around the sharp edges and we both had the majority of our 3-litre water bladders full, plus a few odds and ends. We were carrying in the 9 (ish) kilogram weight range; not the full weight we will be carrying in NZ but enough to start with.

After a couple of teething problems with fit when we started, we felt pretty good and managed a comfortable waddle down to Tipplers Café for lunch, taking exactly the same route we had on the 7th May.... To find the place completely transformed.

Tipplers was packed! Well, okay, perhaps not packed, but compared with the patronage that we'd experienced the previous two times we have been here, when the number of customers was under double figures, today's crowd could be considered a 'swarm'. My guess – around 200 people. The shock was short lived as we realised the timing; not only had restrictions been lifted, it was also a weekend!

Understandably the Café was busy. There were instructions on a board outside the establishment regarding social distancing and rules for booking a sit down meal. Yellow lines were taped on the floor to keep people apart as they stood in line waiting to order and people were juggling their positions around each other. Like a checkerboard, people were standing 1.5 meters away from each other in all points of the compass.

But it was chaos. I had been, as had others, told to wait for the order to be delivered to the window facing the shore, where we had picked up orders on previous visits. However orders were being delivered and handed across from the 'Bain Marie' inside; the announcement of order numbers not necessarily audible over the hum and throng of other patrons waiting for food or in line, or those chatting, laughing or yelling loudly outside. I noted a couple of coffee orders sitting getting cold on the window shelf. This was not the fault of the coffee machine attendant who had a loud enough voice to be heard when she announced their readiness. And I must thank her for her follow-up, twice, noticing that I was still waiting outside she went inside to chase my order. Eventually our number was called. I had been waiting over half an hour, (probably closer to 45 minutes - I hadn't taken notice of the time I started, I was more interested in standing somewhere that wasn't in the sun); I was thirsty and hungry (I had left Andrew at a table a distance down the path but he had access to drinks and the snacks – I didn't). The burger meat and chicken was also no longer hot; not technically legal from a food safety point of view but having waited such a long time to get it after a long walk I wasn't going to send it back. No harm done. Neither of us got food poisoning, but next time we make that journey we will turn up on a day in the middle of the week when our order might still be hot when we get it!



Buzzed by gyrocopters on the way back

The walk back was non eventful, the packs still feeling quite comfortable on our backs. Andrew admittedly probably had an easier run. He was using walking poles after having bought a matching set some months ago. That leaves two unrelated walking poles on the boat but instead of using a mismatched set, I went without. I will organise a matching set soon and donate the singles. Back at boat our bodies knew they had undertaken a reasonable 'hike; (we knew it was 14.2 kilometres because we had measured it last time) but we didn't feel too overwhelmed. The condition of our bodies tomorrow morning was going to be important in assessing just how well we had held up.

7th June 2020. It rained at 0300, and again threatened rain in the afternoon (we could see it on North Stradbroke Island) but the rest of the day was clear. It was also overcast and not entirely conducive to going ashore, with the sun only really making an appearance in the latter part of the day. By then we'd lost all enthusiasm to get off boat (and it was getting chillier). To be truthful we probably didn't have much enthusiasm to start with, and whilst nothing was drastically wrong, we'd both woken up a bit weary with the odd tender spot as a result of yesterdays 'training' session. So today was spent 'resting' although we did do one yoga sequence, which was longer than our usual go-to sequences and did involve some new poses so our bodies will be adjusting to those as well.

8th June 2020. With a new small blind now blocking out the light from behind Andrew above the bed and the side slightly more opaque blinds down, there is not a lot of light entering our cabin. This meant that being darker than normal my system wasn't prompted to rise near dawn and I didn't get up until after 0800, about two hours later than normal. By 1010 we had moved anchorages, back to Tiger Mullet Channel, as there was a little bit of weather coming in, but not a lot, and we fully expected to move again in a couple of days time, probably back to Paradise Point where we could pick up our mail, stock up and most importantly install new start batteries! Then, all being well, we could begin our migration north.....weather pending, of course

The 9th June was spent on boat, researching further options for our potential NZ trip, cutting out and bi-carbing 7 pelmets for the new curtains, recreational reading, and researching freeze dried food options for upcoming overnight hikes. Pre-packed meals have additives (sugar etc) and additions (corn, potatoes, capsicum) that we don't want. Our best option might be combining freeze-dried single vegies with carbohydrate bases, pre cooked rice or quick cooking quinoa but that requires more planning, and more effort at the end of a tiring day. The most common kiwi brand of freeze-dried hiking food doesn't do single vegies. There is a Tasmanian company that does but we will need to get those products through customs. A third company, in NZ, has better quality full meals but the food clashes with our blood type diet. Unfortunately when buying commercial food you don't get much choice and sometimes have to put up with small amounts of the 'bad stuff.' We did two small yoga sessions today and I started to clean the back cockpit up – it has been the epicentre of the curtain making saga. There was 70pc chance of rain today. A little rain came down in the morning and then more after the sun went down; the day had been mostly cloudy.

10th June 2020. 100 % chance of rain was predicted— indeed it rained overnight and we woke up to very little blue sky (0700) and mostly non-descript light grey cloud, some of which obviously had rain in it as you could see it falling over nearby landscapes. The light from a rainbow almost hit the back step but by the time I got the camera to capture this, the chance for the pot of gold had gone.

Amongst the more mundane tasks today (including washing some of the material used to separate sticky non finished curtains) I pinned thirty-three and a half meters of hems for 'pelmet' for the new curtains. These are to be put in place when the curtains are not up so that the Velcro doesn't look so obvious; the only 'heavy duty' stick-on Velcro we could find was black – which is very obvious on white/cream coloured fibreglass.

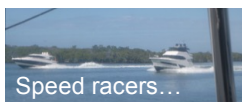
11th June 2020. Yesterdays' forecast for today suggested 100 per cent rain. However by this morning that had dropped to 50% chance with minimal output, and there were large patches of blue sky around... but they still predicted a thunderstorm this afternoon. We had got up late – 0745 - and Andrew, as he put the kettle on (I was still downstairs) announced that 'plod' was chatting the boat behind us.... That got me up and dressed, I didn't want to be caught short if we had visitors... thankfully that wasn't to be and after engaging with our neighbour the police exited silently to the east. We wonder what that was all about?

As we were heading towards civilisation we thought we'd better do something about having a shower. The generator went on to heat up some water (the generator has to go on anyway at the moment to put enough charge in the kaput start batteries) and I headed downstairs to set up the shower; clearing the filter and pulling our ceramic fish (bought in Nelson, New Zealand) from the back of the shower wall. Normally we would shower off the back step. Last night was too cold and this morning despite the sun being out we thought it prudent not to show too much skin. The boat in front of us (the one that was questioned by plod) probably wouldn't care, I get the feeling they are live-aboards. The boat behind us however, and the one that would see us in all our glory, was a hire boat and we thought it perhaps prudent to not upset their expensive holiday with landscapes they just probably didn't want to see!

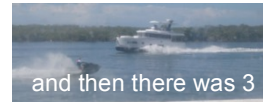
It was a fairly non-eventful trip from Tiger Mullet Channel back to the anchorage at Paradise Point. Except that I am swearing at Riviera boats again! We saw them from a distance - there were two of them and they seemed to be racing! It was enough of a bounce for us when we turned into it... but I was feeling more sorry for the poor fishing tinnie behind us. Of course they stopped just north of us. Really – 'you couldn't have done that a couple of hundred meters earlier?'

The rain predictions had dropped from 100% to 50% again and although it felt a bit muggy there was just a normal cumulous filled sky around 1230 when we were ready to get off boat.

We walked to Hope Island to pick a hire car up; a journey we'd done many times before but I felt like I was flying. My daypack



Speed racers...



and then there was 3

was almost empty and after the 9 kilos in the other pack it felt like I had nothing on my back. We then drove south, picked up some new start batteries, picked up one last order from the National Storage collection depot and headed to Burleigh Heads for some socks. Yes, I know that is a long way for some socks but Andrew has fallen in love with the toed variety and the only store we knew had them was in Burleigh Heads. We also came home with new sand pegs and a pair of 'inexpensive' walking sticks; they are not of the 'hiking' brands but if they last it will be a bonus... We got back to boat as the sun was going down.

Andrew had done all the driving and wanted a break so headed to the computer for some non-thinking time but found his computer battery low. We didn't have enough in the battery bank to use the inverter so put the genset on to keep him happy for a short while. I used the opportunity with the genset going to sew up the pelmet material I had pinned yesterday – now the edges were only 16 meters in length! It was after dinner that Andrew installed the new start batteries – heavy little beasts. It was around 1030 when we finally went to bed



Nerang National Park

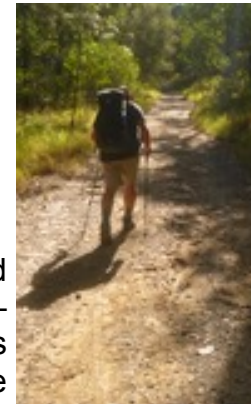
12th June 2020. It was light when we got up, around 0700. After putting the kettle on and grinding some coffee, Andrew's first task was to find the battery charger. By 0705 the genset was back on charging the new starboard start batteries.

I think the weather bureau is just trying to scare us. For the past few days every time we've checked the weather, the next day seems to have 100 per cent rain prediction, but in the morning of the said day the 100 per cent has changed to the day after. The rain per cent prediction had gone back to 30 per cent this morning, the sky was blue with no clouds, and the water around us was glass – MetEye had light green predictions of 15-20 knots – clearly that wasn't quite right.

The first battery took an hour to charge. I did prefer an early start to a proposed walk but given the first battery had only taken an hour to charge and I wanted to go through a lower back yoga session with Andrew to ease some of the strain of last night (although dropping off the old batteries today would probably

null and void that) I suggested we charge the other one – which didn't charge as efficiently – and by the time we got off boat, picked up some mail, dropped the old batteries and some recyclables off to the Helensvale Transfer Centre (back to normal so there was no issue with the number plate of our hire car), picked up supplies at Nerang Coles, it was 1200 when we got to one of the entrances of the Nerang National Park.

The Nerang National Park is hilly, and rocky, and being cynical I would hazard a guess (without proof) that it was only set aside because it was too hard to build on. It is a mountain biker's domain and many official mountain bike tracks are spread across the area. The other official users are walkers and horses (with their riders of course). We stuck to the main dirt access tracks for a couple of reasons; one) there was less chance we were going to get lost, and two) there was less chance we were going to get run over by a mountain bike.



The up isn't obvious



At the top – it was all downhill from here



The missing basket!

Our walk with packs was just over 4 kilometers. As a cool down we headed back up the hill without the packs, the basket from one of my poles had come off somewhere. Andrew found it around 1 kilometer up the track. The distance mightn't sound much but the terrain and substrate gave us a tough workout.

13th June 2020 The Bureau of Meteorology actually didn't change the forecast this morning! When we checked around 0800 it predicted 90 per cent chance of rain today – tomorrow's prediction was 'near 100 per cent'. There was a band of cumulous cloud to the north of the Coomera River but the remaining skies were a clear blue. The water around the boat was again glass. Perfect for a paddle but there was no time. This morning we limited ourselves to a shopping run down to Runaway Bay to get to the major supermarkets, and then after delivering those goods back to boat we returned the car. If we had known the rain would hold off until evening we may have kept the car a little longer and done another walk.... hindsight is a wonderful thing...

We had lunch at Paradise Point - once we'd walked the 30 minutes back from dropping the car off, and did a quick fruit, vegie and meat shop before heading back to boat. At 1415 patches of grey cloud loomed overhead but the rain radar at bom.gov.au showed nothing. The Illiad that had dwarfed us yesterday had left the anchorage and we were again the biggest boat here. We weren't going to move anywhere for the next few days; with the rain predicted we wouldn't necessarily be getting off boat anyway so having an anchorage close to civilisation was desirable if emergencies necessitated. However, all our mail was picked up, and with no completely urgent repairs pending (and provided Andrew could fix the desk lid) we were now in a position to head north..... and hopefully catch up with a few of those already on their way. Rain still hadn't arrived by the time the sun went down.

Jobs of the day: Put the cat photos up and the washed material away that had helped with the curtains. We sat down in the afternoon to watch AFL footy.

14th June. I got out of bed at 0700. The sky was a non-descript stratus grey and it had been raining, although clearly lightly, as we hadn't heard it overnight (the shades across the side windows were wet). The rain radar at the time had a band of rain heading south-east out to sea, and patches inland, but none near us. The forecast was still for 100 per cent or near 100 per cent chance of rain. No wind. MetEye was predicting 15-20 knots (ish). We are anchored on a pixel edge on the screen.

At about 0830 we got drizzle – of course this was just at the time I'd put some washing out to dry but it wasn't directly affected as we were facing north and the rain was coming from the north – the washing was on the line under the shelter at the back davits facing south.

The rain eventually came early afternoon but it wasn't dramatic – just steady rain for a while, then a break, then a bit more, then a break, then a bit more. To the north, south and east of us got a lot more according to the rain radar on bom.gov.au. I added Velcro to the back curtains and we stuck them up. I tried to take the curtain over the door down but the sticky Velcro started to peel off so we left it there to settle. The only issue with this is that we were having a bbq for dinner so we had to manoeuvre in and out past the curtain to a) not put any extra strain on the stuck-on Velcro and b) not get the curtain dirty as it had to be moved by hand every time we passed.

Ditching the books.... and remaining 'uneducated'

15th June 2020. There is a right way and a wrong way to load a pack – and today I chose the wrong way. We ditched the books we were using as pack training weight for some food-stuffs, but whilst Andrew was more careful I just shoved what I had in – I knew it was wrong –and I paid for it. As a result we only walked 7.1 kilometres today. There was a lunch stop at a café $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way around and the distance was all with the loaded packs (as opposed to Friday's (12th June) split round) but had I loaded the pack appropriately we would have achieved my originally proposed 10-kilometre walk without fuss; instead I retired early, uncomfortable in both the neck and the upper and lower back. Admittedly we had tasked our bodies with a slightly different, and potentially harder task; greater weights and harder surfaces (footpaths).

Andrew had swapped his 4.3 kilograms of books for a 5 kilo bag of rice (much more compact and packable). I swapped my 4 kilograms of books for 3.6 kilos of almonds (over four packets), A 400 gram packet of macadamias, a 750 gram packet of goji berries and a 1 kilogram packet of coffee beans. I did take the rain coat out of the pack – there was only 5% chance of rain - but I did have my new heavy(ish) walking poles – although admittedly they weren't on my back. Add to this about two kilograms of water in the bladder and two 600 ml water bottles in the side pockets, a 400 gram bag of trail mix, my purse, fleece top and glasses container. So I had 11 plus kilos on my back - not a smart amount to have badly packed.

Today's domestic jobs included: a small load of washing, starting to empty out the port bow for a clean up, and a clean up of the battery bank area for measurement for new batteries. We have made the (expensive) decision to delay our departure and replace our house battery bank. Andrew started to contact contractors to help with this. I read a bit for recreation, looked at someone's blog for the walk we are hoping to do in NZ (or some of it – it has 118 entries and I can only read so many at a time) and we managed a short (30 plus minutes) yoga session before going to bed.

16th June 2020. Yesterday's weights were disrupted this morning – I raided the goji berries for breakfast muffins. Given its shocking aforementioned organisation, the pack has to be reloaded anyway. When I got up at 0630 the sky was mostly grey. By 0745 it was mostly blue. There was a band of grey to the north and the radar showed some rain over north Stradbroke. Here the Gold Coast forecast was 0% chance of rain. Tomorrow was 40%. I was keen for a walk but at 0930 the wind was blowing 15 knots - not a huge amount of wind but with wind over tide it was going to be uncomfortable

getting off boat – and wet. The wind was also cold. If it got better later I would reconsider. Instead I revised the day's plan and suggested I would be happy with a yoga session or two. Today's accomplishments: made breakfast muffins, continued cleaning out port bow for clean up – clove oiled 8 life jackets, clove oiled the inside of the lower port bow storage section, sorted clothes from storage section from 3 boxes into two, and packed up one old pack and put the water bottles (Gerry cans) away. Apart from putting the other old pack in there, the under section storage area is now done (until next time). I now need to clean out and clove oil the upper section, air the mattress in sun and pack the stuff back. In the evening I made a batch of muesli and we did two small yoga sessions.

Paradise Point to Tiger Mullet Channel

17th June 2020. The anchor was raised to the gorgeous sound of butcherbird burbles. We had the anchor up around 0730, around an hour after high tide. Some tide is preferable to get out of Paradise Point but the main reason I wanted to leave after high tide was so that our anchor was more likely to be out in front of us to the north, and not potentially under the catamaran anchored to the south. There was practically no wind and we motored all the way to our next anchorage; the Tiger Mullet Channel. Jumpinpin gets low

tide sooner than Paradise Point and I realised we were out of planning practice when looking up the tide times; the tide level at Jumpinpin was due to be 1m when we got to Whalley's Gutter. The initial decision was to anchor at our Jumpinpin anchorage and wait until the tide was at a better height to get over the bar at the northern end of Whalleys Gutter but searching willyweather.com.au I found a tide time for Tiger Mullet Channel listed - and this currently had a higher water level. Of course I don't quite know where along Tiger Mullet Channel the extrapolated tide is read but we decided to chance it. Getting in and setting the anchor now would be preferable than trying to pick up the anchor in the predicted higher winds by mid morning. All went without a hitch and we anchored to the haunting calls of whistling kites.

We had timed it well. Whilst the base wind speed was due to be less than 15 knots, the gusts were predicted to reach low twenties from mid morning, and they did - on and off. Getting off boat wasn't an option however, greater wind makes greater waves which means getting wet in the tinnie, so I 'stole my resolve' to continue to cleaning/airing out of the front port bow storage area. The boxes of gear and 'stuff' came out, the fishing gear came out, the fishing rods came out, the heavy cotton throw rug that I use to put under all the gear came out (and was washed), and the single mattress came out. The front port bow area can be used as a bed for

a smaller person (they usually advertise children as the occupants) so you can order an extra mattress to fit. We never ordered the mattress but as this was the very last 48 to come out of the factory with the 'cherry wood' interior, all the other items that went with that colour scheme were going to be obsolete...so I guess they just threw it in the boat to get rid of it out of the factory - we've never used it. The mattress got put in the helm station to soak up the warmth of the sun to sanitise and get the mustiness out of it - the best I could do at the moment - there was no taking the cover off; the zip had seized (and Andrew was involved in fixing his desk so I didn't want to distract him with another job). In the end I clove-oiled the empty space and contemplated a rearrangement of the goods when I put them back.



18th June 2020. There was a few seconds of rain overnight but this morning the sun was out in all its glory. There were minimal clouds at 0800 but we did have 70-80 per cent predicted rain so we guessed the sunshine wasn't going to last. And it didn't. The thick throw rug had been facing the morning sun and was drying but wasn't dry by the time the rain came down and I could not start putting things back in the front port bow top until it was. The old backpack got put away under the



divider in the port bow and the fishing gear made it back to its shelves but until the throw rug and the mattress are dry (and with the rain today there was no way the mattress was going to be ready) I couldn't finalise the top storage area. We did two small yoga sequences - strength and stretch. And plenty of reading.

Back to Jumpinpin

19th June 2020. Yesterday morning we checked the MetEye forecast and the dark green (20-25 knot) predictions for our area were no longer there – however they were still just to the east of South Stradbroke Island so we thought it prudent to stay where we were overnight and reassess. This morning the predictions were for an easing of wind conditions over today and the weekend so we picked up the anchor at around 0900 and made our way back to our anchoring spot just below the starboard lateral mark at the southern end of the Jumpinpin anchorage. There weren't that many boats here but there were seven on their way up. Andrew exclaimed 'the Armada's coming.' Fortunately most of those boats turned off but tonight would be a different story – I have always claimed that weekends start on Fridays (and sometimes Thursdays) around here. At 1005 the rocking began, an Iliad looking boat passed and we swayed from side to side – welcome to popular anchorages.

I finally rang Air Canada. After several emails over a month or so they finally got back to me about a week ago. They could swap the flights for our now 'not going to happen overseas trip' into credits, or if I waited until 15th June I could log in and swap them into a voucher which means there was no time limit on its use and we could combine the values to

apply to any flight. That was a better idea – we could use them to get to Vancouver – as our original flights had been via a different airline through the US, and America was one place I just don't want to touch for a while (despite our wish to perhaps hike a couple of the iconic trails). So waiting a couple of days past the 15th June this morning I logged in to 'manage my booking.' And couldn't. So taking phone in hand and bracing myself for a stunted international call (unnecessarily as it turned out) I rang a number in North America. The line was clear, (and I had pressed 1 on the dial which meant I was speaking to an English speaking assistant (in Canada it could be French)) and asked for help. In theory the Air Canada employee sent both our flights off to be turned into a voucher however by 1120 only one notification had come through. If the second hasn't appeared by tomorrow I will ring again. The afternoon was spent replacing the front bow locker – the throw rug and mattress finally dry – despite some rain the sun was out enough to warm the helm station (or in this case renamed the 'drying room'). We can now see the tops of both spare cabin beds – that is a psychological breakthrough! That took a fair bit of time but other jobs for the day included making a batch of muesli, clove oiling 2/3 of C3's walls and ceiling, reading, a small batch of washing, and we watched the GWS vs Bulldogs AFL match. Andrew spent much of the day tackling the intricacies of fixing the desk I managed to break in the middle of the curtain project!



There are always birds on the marks along Whalley's Gutter – this time there were only terns – usually there are cormorants as well.



20th June 2020. Morning. We can't really complain – they did predict 60-70 per cent rain for the Gold Coast Area and we woke to a slightly rocky wind against tide and a non descript grey and a solid misty drizzle. And in internal temperature of 'too chilly for our liking'. By 0830 it was the heady high of 17 deg C! Outside didn't bear thinking about. We shouldn't complain – there are those south of us in colder climes. Of course the washing out on the line was just as wet this morning as when I'd put it out late last night. By 1030 the rain had mostly cleared. I could see blue sky and at one point the sun shone through but there was probably still 90 per cent cloud cover. There were goji scones in the oven and I was

steeling myself to clean C3's head – another job that doesn't get done very often (it doesn't get used) but as with everything else it does end up with the usual complement of dust from us, or from outside if the window is open.

My second call to Air Canada in so many days didn't quite bear fruit. Sometime between today and yesterday their computer system had been overwhelmed and now the magic date for me to change our flights into a travel voucher is after July 5th. Of course the difference here is that Air Canada has actually cancelled the flight I didn't get the notification for, so there are more complications....the saga continues. On the upside I've had lovely chats with two delightful Air Canada employees over the past two days – both at the end of their long shifts (around midnight Canada time).

Afternoon. The sun and blue sky did come out eventually, but for only a few hours and the wind was still cold. We hadn't been for a walk (or done any exercise) for several days and

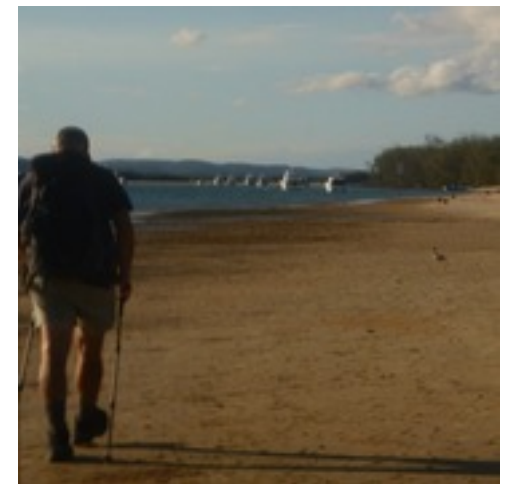
we probably should have gone to shore however we spent the afternoon on boat with more domestics. The C3 head wasn't too dirty and I really only needed to give it a wipe down with a dry dust cloth and conduct a short, well overdue, rust run. Andrew kept at his desk repair and spent time getting his head around our potential house battery upgrade. We had a small yoga session before dinner before watching the exciting/disappointing AFL – Geelong vs Carlton match. Geelong came back from 42 points down to lose by just 2 points.

21st June 2020. When I opened my eyes this morning, the rising sun was popping out over the top of grey clouds and despite the 50-60 per cent predicted chance of rain and a 'misty looking' atmosphere on our north and south horizons early on, the skies immediately around us developed into the classic blue with white fluffy cumulous clouds. A walk was definitely on the cards, although the original idea of a 1000 start was changed, as low tide was about 1400 and a 1000 start would have meant the tide wasn't going to be back up to the same spot (for an easy retrieval of the tinnie) until nearly dark. So we filled the morning in doing practical things; Andrew finished fixing his desk and I did a small run of washing and cleaned out a cupboard in C3. Eventually after an early lunch, repacking our packs and a warm-up yoga session we got to shore and started walking around 1310. We had no real destination in mind; just some exercise and a further attempt at getting 'pack fit.' We started by 'bush bashing' across to the normal cross-island track so we didn't end up walking through an occupied camp ground (which was situated at our usual access point to the track). This exercise also turned out to be good practice for manoeuvring through 'enclosed' vegetation. When we got to the eastern beach we headed south for 45 minutes, turning around adjacent to the Dux Hut Track and heading back, this time using the usual tracks to get back to where we'd landed the tinnie. Birds seen on the eastern beach included two pairs of pied oyster-catchers (we have previously seen three pairs), three white bellied sea eagles and a whistling kite taking advantage of the thermals, and



the odd silver gull. On the western shore of the island adjacent our anchorage we were aware of silver gulls, pelicans, and four beach curlews. In the bushland in between willy wagtails were prevalent and wattle birds (or friarbirds) and brown honeyeaters were heard. Macropods were seen in all habitats. After my disaster of a few days previously (I was still sore in places from that act of packing mismanagement) I made sure I was careful loading my pack. I don't know how much weight I was carrying but as I was still suffering I didn't want to overdo it. I know I packed 2.8 kilos of almonds as well as a kilo of rice; padding was a mixture of clothing. I was also carrying 1.5 litres (kilos) of water in the bladder and 1.2 litres (kilos) in the side pockets, as well as two apples and my purse and phone. My existing back and neck niggles persisted but didn't get worse by the end of the walk – which I count as a successful outcome. And we had the nous enough to do some cool down stretches when we got back to boat. We had walked 9.74 kilometres.

Whilst the day had been clear and mostly sunny, at around 2100 the rain came down. I had noticed a couple of flashes out the port side window earlier but dismissed them as tricks of light as I was turning my head. When around 2100 a larger flash was off the port side I thought I'd check bom.gov.au... and discovered we were about to get walloped! I grabbed everything we had in the tinnie (cleaned walking poles, cleaned brush and pan, walking boots and bag of rubbish we'd picked up from the abandoned camping site) and consolidated items in the back cockpit away from the back mesh. The front was short but strong – by 2130 the system had all but passed



About to get walloped!

Back to Paradise Point

22nd June 2020. At 0630 the sun hadn't yet risen but the skies were clear. There was a pink tinge on the southern, western and northern horizons, which I suspect was light reflecting off smoke. The generator went on early to give us some power and I used the input to make the 'pelmet's for several of the living area windows; those that I had already cut out and edged. I had thought I had made one for the main front window but discovered the longest piece of edged material was not long enough – when I went to make another I discovered why. The piece of material I had cut the pattern pieces from wasn't long enough in itself and the pelmet for the front window would have to be two pieces joined together. In order to construct this I needed the space on the back cockpit table - which was currently otherwise occupied with the cushions and beanbags from the front cockpit so they didn't get wet in the storm. So my next task was to wipe down

the front cockpit and replace its furnishings....

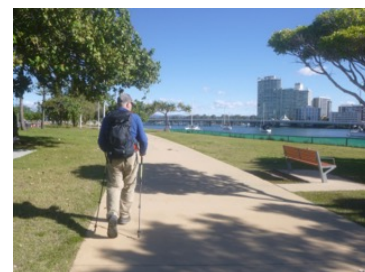
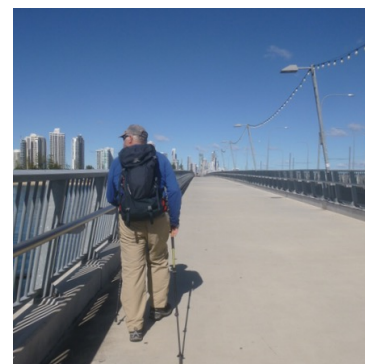
In the mean time Andrew contacted an electrician and discussed an already provided quote. In order to sure up some numbers and get the sparky to get a good idea of the job at hand we needed to get him on board. That meant moving....So the proposed idea of another training hike (14.2 kilometres) down to Tipplers Café for lunch (it was a weekday so our meals should be hot when we get them) ended up being Ryvitas on boat in Paradise Point after 1400 after the electricians had been and had a look at the house battery replacement job. As it was now mid afternoon the atmosphere was chilly and the hour getting late – and the only exercise we eventually got consisted of a late afternoon grocery shop!

Distance not weight. Back to the Nerang Bridge

23rd June 2020. Today's walk was about distance, not weight and we ditched the overnight hiking packs for the smaller day packs and headed south. Of course one of the reasons we ditched the bigger packs was also due to the fact we both had slight back niggles so we wanted to give our backs a bit of a break. The sky was blue and there were few clouds – it was a lovely day for a walk. The winds were westerly and due to peak around 20 knots but the anchorage at Paradise Point is directly protected from the west – there is no fetch – so we weren't concerned about leaving boat. The destination wasn't exactly set, although reaching the Nerang Bridge would be nice. In the end we went further. Having stopped just short of the bridge (because there was a bunch of people on the river lookout at the bridge), we took a brief rest on a park bench overlooked by the Nerang Bridge osprey on its nest. And decided on our next step. Of course it wasn't the 'just a bit further' that was the incentive, it was the 'lets go out for lunch' incentive, and having rung the Southport Yacht Club to see if they had room for us, we waddled over the Nerang Bridge and toward Main Beach to discover we weren't expected... but... 'I only rang up 15 minutes ago!' The place was full, probably stretching their 20

person limit (20 people on the deck and 20 people inside) and we weren't exactly dressed for 'a nice meal out.' Other patrons seemed to be in ironed shirts and smart dresses; we were in hiking clothes and brought our backpacks and walking poles to the table. We were not exactly just out of the shower either. None the less... We both ordered the 18 hour slow cooked beef and thoroughly

enjoyed the meal. Andrew would have liked desert – he was hinting as such – but I couldn't fit it in. We'll save it for a treat next time. He did mention however that this meal made up for the disaster of his birthday on the 1st. By the time we got back to boat we'd walked 25.2 kilometres.



24th June 2020. Considering how we pulled up this morning I was keen for another walk. Andrew frowned. Perhaps after lunch. As the day wore on I got less enthusiastic but we did manage our usual 4 kilometre (ish) turn around Paradise Point before a quick small shop and back to boat. Whilst we were raising the tinnie an ex racing boat came into the anchorage. She is a local and if my information is correct she is used to take ex soldiers with ptsd out for a relaxing day.... But she purposefully sidled up to our stern to have a gawk. When you are discussing someone's home I would have thought the polite thing to do was not step into their yard where they can hear you. They were a bit too close – a bit of decorum would have been nice.

25th June 2020. My back wasn't getting any better from my packing mismanagement episode and this morning it seemed to feel worse; I couldn't even wipe down our ceiling without stiffness and back pain. Clearly it was time for professional intervention. Some months ago I visited a chiropractor (the first in years) whose attitude and methods I was impressed with so I rang the number....to find it was no longer connected! That's a bit worrying - perhaps Covid has claimed this business, or perhaps she's taken the opportunity to retire – she wasn't the youngest. The next closest chiro was on Hope Island but before ringing them I wanted to visit the premises of the cancelled number, and as we approached it, a large 'For Lease' sign was prominent next to the footpath. There was however a note on the front door with a mobile number. I sent her a text. Yes, she had taken a break but would be back next month with a mobile service. My understanding of a mobile service is where the practitioner brings their own bench to your home. That wasn't going to work for us. We continued our stroll to Hope Island.

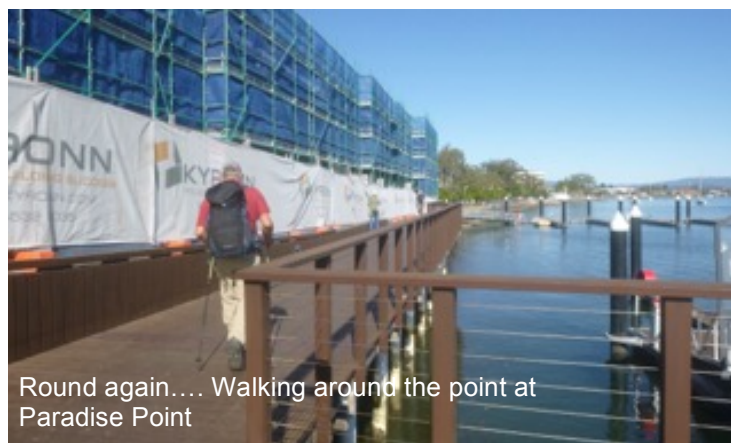
I hadn't exactly expected to be able to get an appointment right away, but if I wanted the chiropractor I was going to have to wait six days – he was extremely popular. What the receptionist could offer me in the meantime though was a massage first thing tomorrow morning. I took that as an interim – it may be the only thing I need. It was a thirty minute walk to the practice one way and after a coffee (at a car wash located opposite) we made a small detour around the streets along a different section of waterway before returning to boat. The afternoon was spent making and finishing more pelmets. The evening was spent sorting out details for our annual boat insurance. Oh, and the Southport Yacht Club rang asking us if we still wanted our booking? Clearly the person taking my booking had stuck us in the wrong day; no wonder we weren't expected on the 23rd! We didn't do any yoga today.

26th June 2020. Whilst I could believe the pain in my lower back as the masseuse pummeled away, I couldn't believe the pain in behind my knee. I hadn't felt it but it was all related. The good news was that the damage wasn't 'serious.' And I was instructed, if I didn't need to come back, to employ the services of a tennis ball for future relief. I was also given a couple of suggested exercises to help strengthen the affected and surrounding areas – lightweight standard exercises that some of the yoga poses attack in a slightly different way. I am going to do both the yoga and the standard exercises. Before returning to boat we caught up with half of **Free Spirit** for a good chat – it has been a while since we socialised (firstly due to Covid, and secondly due to the fact most other cruisers we know are now north of us) and it was a delight to have some good company other than ourselves in the flesh. Back on board, if I was careful I could now wipe down the ceiling with minimal discomfort but I didn't want to overdo it and undo what had just been fixed. We read a bit and spent the evening toing and froing with the insurance company. Andrew was also involved in the details of our new battery system. I touched base with two other cruisers – one to the north of us, and one still to the colder south. Both today and yesterday's weather had been lovely but there was rain predicted for the weekend.

Round again.

27th June 2020. The forecast was threatening a bit of a windy afternoon. However I was getting a bit desperate for some extended exercise. The thought of another tour of Coombabah Lakelands Conservation Park was inviting however Coombabah was several kilometres away – round trips to this location have typically been 14 plus kilometres - what if the weather got particularly frisky and we wanted to be back on boat 'in a hurry.' The solution – to reattempt our circuits of several days ago – around the point to the Coomera River. On the 15th June I pulled out because of my back. I made sure I was carrying a lighter pack this time and had contemplated the normal day pack scenario but theorising that my overnight new hiking pack was more ergonomic than my day pack (a better fit) and weighed about the same I may as well take that. So, leaving the soft clothing at the bottom, I pulled all the packets of almonds out and replaced them with my camera bag. I still had around 2 liters of water in my bladder and put 1 600 ml bottle of water in each of the side pockets. I was still carrying around 7.5 kilos and whilst I did make a few adjustments and insisted on two stops I felt reasonably comfortable. However, three turns of the point wasn't to be again, as this time it was Andrew with his knee issues that pulled us up short. We called it quits at two turns round, at about 8 kilometres distance travelled.

Back on boat it was the usual domestics, a small load of washing, cooking, cleaning etc and reading



Round again.... Walking around the point at Paradise Point

28th June 2020. A non-eventful day. I sorted some more stuff, cleaned up the couch and did a small load of washing. We conducted an exercise session in the morning plus some yoga routines in the evening.

And it's Curtains to that project!

29th June 2020. There was a southerly on the way; albeit not a very strong one and our current location would normally have been suitable. However, our time was up at Paradise Point and we had to move. But we didn't go far. The anchor was up around 0815 and down around 0915 off the coast of South Stradbroke Island just south of South Currigee Camp Ground, opposite the canal to the Runaway Bay shopping Centre. It was a dropping tide and birds were feeding off the sand banks along our journey; terns, pelicans and juvenile gannets.

We had contemplated travelling further north to see if there was any room to anchor off Tipplers – it was a weekday after all – but then we remembered it was the start of the school holidays so the percentage likelihood of any space was probably going to be close to zero.

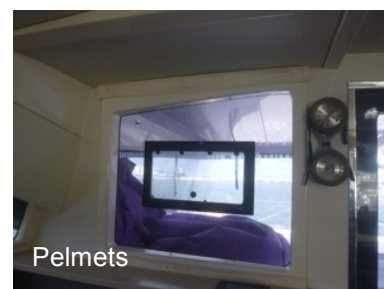
There are often a few semi permanents in this anchorage off South Currigee but there were less boats than I expected (they have probably all gone, sensibly, north for the winter). Depending on the exact direction the 'southerly' was going to come from we could have up to 1.6 nautical mile fetch here but the biggest threat to our comfort was from large power boats going past in the Main Channel. We had anchored 'close' to shore (we were still a way out but not as close to the edge of the channel like we were temporarily in March) and fortunately this location with the eventual wind direction we did get some land



protection. That didn't stop a sloppy wind against tide situation but it didn't last all that long (in comparison). And surprisingly throughout the day there were only a few large boats that made any uncomfortable waves – small boats however were prevalent and we jiggled constantly in their wake.

We were never intending to get off today so the focus was on on-boat activities. Apart from a few minor domestics we read a lot. Andrew regreased some zips so I can finally put our travel bags away (and get access to the downstairs couch back) while I finished the curtains! Yay. Well, almost. All the pelmets are done for upstairs, and the starboard front window curtain has been adjusted to be reasonably flat (any crinkles in it are the result of the two sticky bits of disintegrating backing sticking together and won't be able to be smoothed out – but it doesn't matter. It does the job). Pelmets are done for the small window over our bed but one of its corners isn't sticking so I have to replace that bit of sticky Velcro before the bottom pelmet will be of use. What is left? The small curtain made for the window over the C2 bed isn't in place and its pelmets aren't made; a minor job. And, after discussions with

another boat, we are thinking of experimenting and rolling the curtains up, using a piece of dowel or similar, for structure. This however will be another focussed project and will need to wait for a trip to a hardware store for some wood. The 'good' backing also sticks a little to itself but without the damage when I open the pieces up so I will also look to back those curtains as well – that will wait for another trip to an op shop to pick up some more material. In essence though the upstairs curtains are usable, and when they are not needed, pelmets of a light cream are in place so we are not seeing black sticky Velcro strips against light fibre-glass. 'Tick!' As mentioned in Aboard Sengo May 2020, my last attempt at getting curtains done for my home took a long time and didn't get finished. This one, once I'd started really only took a couple of months (and if you actually just add on-curtain time, it probably only took a week or two). They may not be a professional job, but they will do the job and psychologically, it is a great feeling to get them finished.





Yes I know I have a starboard entrance mark coming out of my head! The Seaway is behind us; the Seaway Tower to the right of the picture and Southport in the background.

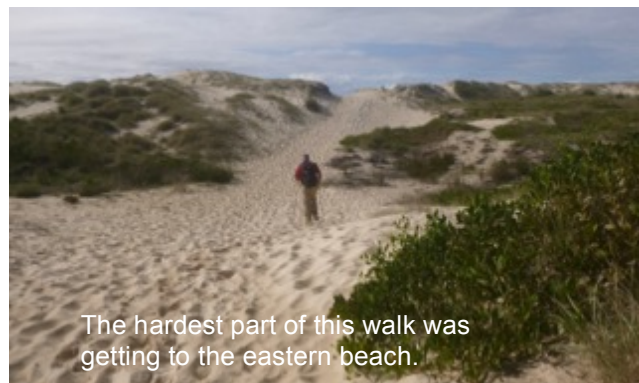
30th June 2020. Grey clouds to the east and north of us delayed the rising sun from showing itself. Looking at the rain radar however I could see why. Two large patches of rain were quite colourful on the screen, thankfully both off shore. At 0700 the sun finally made an appearance.

The generator needed going on again this morning, as it has for the past many mornings and we can't wait to get new batteries. We will also need to factor in a fuel trip next time we move; we are slowly going through our diesel. Whilst there was a 30-40 per cent chance of rain predicted today (and it was already offshore) winds predicted were going to be relatively light (10-15 knots) and I hoped to get off boat for a walk – we hadn't had one in days. However, that would all depend on Andrew's knee – whilst we'd done some general strengthening and stretching over the past couple of days, he hadn't

attended to the knee injury specifically. That was on his agenda for this morning; I just hoped he would fix it up in time for some daily exercise....

By the time we got to shore and started walking it was 1030. There was little wind that had perhaps picked up a smidge since we left Sengo, but heading inland meant we lost it all together – for a time. When we emerged on the

eastern beach the wind was more than expected, the southerly blowing with appropriate strength to make you certain you were travelling into a headwind. Of course this meant we had a comfortable tail wind on the way back. There were still rain storms off shore to the east but the sun was shining on us and we made our way south to the Seaway break wall – the northern side of the channel. Andrew tells me we've done this walk before – but I can't remember it. It took us an hour each way from boat to the end of the break wall but the hardest part was getting to the eastern beach – a good deal of the SSI8 track is through a base of sand and dunes. We had a nibble break on the wall, the structure of which is missing its original binding filler and we had to be careful not to step in, or get our poles caught in, the cavernous gaps. There is also a warning sign regarding the stability of the huge boulders on either side of the concreted 'runway.'



The hardest part of this walk was getting to the eastern beach.



Graffiti on pipe refers to protests on sewerage pipe, Prime Minister Scott Morrison and local parochialism



The SSI9 sign stands like a sentinel along the beach, seemingly not attached to anything, just the last of a line of reference numbers for an emergency. However every other SSI number is attached to the end of a track! Whereis.com has a satellite photo that suggests a track from near the southern end of the eastern beach on South Straddy, across to its western side and then along the beach to the South Currigee Campground. I had only glanced at this on boat however and didn't take a lot of notice where the track came out. And I have been fooled by the images of the satellite photos on whereis.com before. A quick reconnoiter in the dunes behind the SSI9 sign indicated that finding a track here was perhaps not going to be an easy task but given the other tracks a further exploration is maybe needed. The sign itself was apparently put in around four years ago but even one of the locals doesn't think there is a track there. Maybe there isn't. Maybe the track I was looking for is further south, near the break wall, where the work site for the sewerage line is. Next time we come over here I will bring the tablet – that should give us a GPS fix and we can follow the old track; I was however not

prepared to get us lost today.

We were back on boat early afternoon. After lunch we settled down to finish a hiker's blog that we've been following – we've finally read all 118 (days) entries. Early evening had me fighting with the AEC enrolment website and dinner was a dehydrated meal from Radix Nutrition.



SSI9



Cavities along the wall!