

# Aboard Sengo

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September/October 2021

## Heading south – by plane

And this time it's  
not a holiday!

From 4



## Back to the Tropics

Going home, and  
heading south  
again!

From 30

Nearly two months of  
maintenance:  
but not on boat!



## September 2021

September was a non-cruising month in the literal sense of the word. From the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> September we were on boat, but we were still tied to a dock at Mackay Marina. Our two weeks at Mackay had turned into a month but we weren't sailing away yet.

A rental property in Tasmania was due to be vacant on the 10<sup>th</sup> September. We have had it ten years and not done anything to it. It has a kaleidoscope of coloured walls, the main bedroom's cupboard has been turned into a display shelf, and the carpets are atrocious! Contractors are expensive but we left most of the technical work to them. Painting on the other hand is vaguely doable if you know what you are doing, and a lot cheaper if you do it yourself. Of course painting is ninety per cent preparation, five per cent painting and five per cent cleaning up!

I hoped we'd be there one or two weeks - it turned out to be quite a bit longer.



### Mackay

2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021

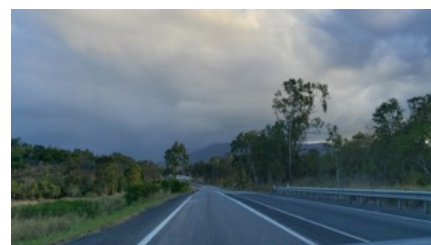
Eungella Mountain Resort. to Mackay Marina

2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021. We were up at 0755 and it didn't take us long to pack up and head back toward Mackay. It was so much easier to pack up out of a room than a tent, and a relief to know we had finished the Mackay Highlands Great Walk yesterday and we didn't have a long hike ahead of us today. The clouds were very low when we left our accommodation and we didn't get clear skies until we got back down into the Pioneer Valley. We took a bit of a detour on the way back to boat, checking out Kinchet Dam and its camping ground. The birdlife looked prolific but the café didn't seem to have anything I could eat – not for morning tea anyway. Lunch was back at Mackay, in the old section of town. We picked up my new spectacles before we headed back to boat.

3<sup>rd</sup> September 2021. Having been given a date when our tenants were leaving we now had to organise the trip down south. It was to be an interrupted trip as Andrew was due to see an eye specialist in Brisbane, so our flights would be Mackay to Brisbane and then Brisbane to Launceston. We managed very cheap business class seats to Brisbane but it was cattle class for the bigger flight. We did a bit of running around today – Anaconda looking for shoes (but we didn't get any) – and a lot of cleaning – wiping down the tent, clothes washing and tidying of the boat.

Heading north –Airlie beach for lunch

4<sup>th</sup> September 2021. The cockpit was full of drying camping gear but we did managed to put the ground sheet away today. Most of the day was spent continuing to clean up but we did take a trip to Airlie Beach. It was a bit of a spur of the moment - 'lets go to Airlie for lunch' thought. I will point out that Arlie Beach is at least 1.5 hours drive from Mackay. We were lucky enough to catch up with **Anapa** whilst we were there and they joined us for a meal. Rain started to fall on the drive back.



The evening was spent recreational reading - continuing *Flight of the Black Cockatoo*, the author of which we had met on the 10<sup>th</sup> August.

Preparing to leave again, and cleaning up

5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021. We finally got the tent and hiking packs dried and put away today.

Andrew spent time on his shelving project, which didn't quite get finished, but we returned our 'surplus to requirements' goods that we had bought for the job back to Bunnings for a refund. To prepare for our departure we put extra ropes and fenders on the boat and pickled the water-maker.

I started cleaning my walking boots and discovered the start of a crack in the front of the boot where they had failed before, leading to my shin splints (previous pair) earlier in the year. I immediately emailed Keens but I don't suspect they will admit there is a fault with the shoe – they didn't last time, despite the fact I had quoted four other individuals I knew with the same (or a very similar) problem.

Other tasks for the day included finishing off the Mackay Highlands Great Walk write up, a large grocery shop so we didn't have to do it when we got back, and an order of Wild Zora from the United States – that should hopefully get to Mackay before we get back. There was also a basic rust run of the taps, a tidy of C2 and more camping stuff was put away.

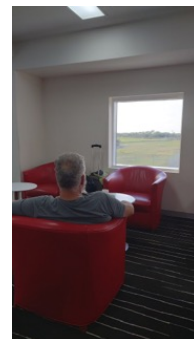


## Brisbane

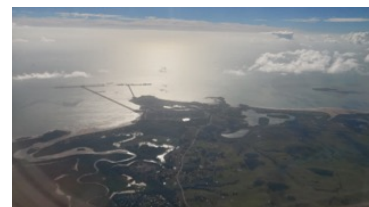
9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> September 2021

9<sup>th</sup> September 2021. We were up early for we had a plane to catch. The flight was at 0810 so it was necessary to be at the airport quite a bit earlier. Andrew handed the car keys into a box at the airport booth, the counter unattended despite the company stating they would be open early.

The Qantas Lounge was open but didn't have a lot to cater ideally for my dietary requirements. We weren't starving – we had had breakfast, but topping up was probably a good idea. We were impressed with the automatic pancake making machine – but suspecting the flour used was wheat, I settled for muesli instead.



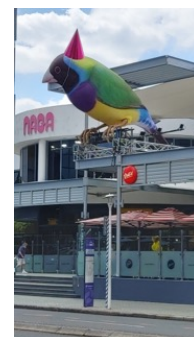
The flight to Brisbane was very pleasant and very comfortable. At Brisbane we gathered our bags and headed for the train, purchasing a return ticket to the city. Thankfully there are no dates on the tickets – we didn't know when we were coming back. On the train people were wearing masks. We knew the directives for the planes and airports but weren't sure of any other requirements. Andrew had taken his off but given that when we got off the train everyone on the platform was wearing masks, I insisted he put it back on again, at least until we found out the rules.



We got off at Central Station and after asking an assistant at the station gates, found the direction to our hotel.



It is a long time since we've wandered around a city – we are not used to that many people, but compared with our recollections of Melbourne the streets were busy but not packed. Out here in the streets about fifty percent of personages were wearing masks. Do we? Don't we?





What are we preferably asked to do? Whilst contemplating this question two police people rocked up behind us on bikes to wait at the traffic lights; he was mask off, she was mask on. 'Perfect people to ask. Apparently the rule was 'wear a mask if you cant socially distance.'

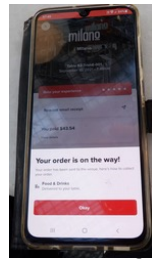
We found the hotel. No wonder it was cheap – there was a major building project going on the other side of the road covered in scaffolding – and being a building site it was fairly noisy. We had a choice. We could take a room with street frontage overlooking the construction site – or a room at the back. We chose the back – although the view wasn't anything to write about – we hoped it would be a bit quieter.

Having dropped our gear off, we headed to K2. K2 is an adventure store and a go to of choice for a couple of our hiking friends. It is not huge and I get the feeling it is fussy about the items it stocks. I wanted to look at alternative hiking boots. I had no idea whether I was going to get any satisfaction from Keens and I needed a pair sooner rather than later. Because we don't normally get to Brisbane it was a case of 'when in Rome.' Andrew tried on some boots as well but I was the only one who came away with a boot purchase. Of course they weren't light boots and we were already pushing our weight limit for the plane. There were no problems with the business class trip on the way down to Brisbane but the flight to Launceston was on Jetstar, and they are normally very fussy with weight limits!

We ended up in a small Asian shop in an adjacent street for a quick and relatively inexpensive dinner.



10<sup>th</sup> September 2021. A new experience. I mention often that I am a ludite. And being away from modern technology and city life tends to put one further away from claiming to be living in the current century. We left the hotel at around 0730 this morning, heading out to the mall for breakfast. We settled on Milanos in the middle of the Queen Street Mall and after booking in via the Qld App we were then told the menu and ordering was on the table. What? A solid round ceramic like disk was stuck at the middle of the table. What do I do with that! Well we worked it out. A QT code gets you to the menu where you just tick the items you want. I was probably old fashioned but I ticked the credit card as my form of payment. I mean, what is Google Play?



There are probably advantages to this way of running your business: you save on labour costs (and confusing backpacker accents getting orders wrong) and in these days of Covid, minimise exposure to others, but Andrew likes bantering with staff and it becomes very impersonal if the delivery staff don't have a sense of humour. Delivery however was very quick, it felt almost instantaneous. Which was a bit weird.

Breakfast over we walked the kilometre or so to the ophthalmologist practice where we arrived early. I don't know whether we were just lucky in our timing or they were very efficient, because as soon as Andrew had filled in his details as a new patient they were ready to see him. The referral must have created quite a stir because in the end, after the first session with the pre checks, Andrew was seen by one consultant, but another was there for observation, and a third, possibly a lower assistant was in the room as well. Although she was more interested in asking me about our travel. These practitioners were a bit surprised the last guy hadn't even checked the 10yo photos and after a comparison of such, and photos taken with slightly different technology and at slightly different angles, concluded nothing much had happened in 10 years and to come back for a check up in 12 months. We were hoping for as much, but best to check.



Taking a break over a cuppa we then chatted about what to do for the rest of the day. A boat trip along the river might be nice. We found one mob but discovered they were now only running on weekends. We were looking at their afternoon tour. No go for us. So maybe we could take the free city hopper and do a walk from one jetty to another for pick up. But these ferries only cover a small section of the river. In the end we bought a Go Card (equivalent of Melbourne's MiKi and NSW's Opal) and put enough money on it for two trips. Trips cost 3.30 in peak and 2.70 non-peak. But on the river that is one leg on and off, so you could travel the whole length of the ferry system (3 hours worth) for that price. However, because we were starting at 1100, we knew we would get off for lunch. Getting on at about the middle jetty we went down river 45 minutes to Hamilton North Shore and came back again on one trip, got off at 1230, had lunch and 1.5 hours later got on another ferry and went in the opposite direction. We were that spot on with our timing we could have got on the same ferry we had in the morning but we would have done the same run as before.

Both journeys were relaxing, although we sat inside for the entire time on the downriver run and most of the time for the upriver run. Outside on the exposed deck was hot in Brisbane; 29 degrees.

Staff on these vessels was a mixture. The conductor on the downriver run (second - there was a change in shift) was interesting, and had his own history blended into some of the industrial sites on the rivers banks. He also had a great sense of humour. The conductor on the other (upriver) trip was a bit more circumspect but defensive when I told him 'did he realise his door was not locked off.' Instead of taking it in his stride, one way or the other, he asked. 'What! Do you want the door locked off?' Well I don't particularly care but as the door shuts and opens by itself when the ferry roars around a bend don't you want to prevent the potential bruising of the public. In defiance he did nothing until about the second last stop. Frankly I thought good seamanship should apply to all vessels. I will note this vessel also did not give three honks when reversing off dock, where others did!

## Launceston

Brisbane to Launceston

11<sup>th</sup> September 2021

### A short heart stopper

We awoke at 0730. Later than normal but we had both had a good sleep. Fortunately all of Andrew's stomach woes had disappeared (he got food poisoning late last evening which we attribute to the seafood restaurant we went to for lunch) and he was feeling fine. Breakfast was going to be the leftovers and the same as last night's dinner, chicken and turkey, cheese, lettuce and filly sandwiches. There was also vanilla yoghurt and fresh blueberries. The strawberries we would eat at the airport.

Switching on morning television found us in an uncertain position. Two cases of community transition of Covid 19 had been reported overnight. The Queensland Premier has been quoted as potentially enacting a lockdown with one case. The press conference was due at 0900! It was now 0830. We had opened our bigger cases to do a bit of weight distribution. Andrew's carry on luggage was over 7 kilos and Jetstar are fussy. So was mine technically but not by much so we weren't too worried about my stuff. There were a few adjustments I wasn't overly happy with, like my camera and its expensive lenses in downstairs luggage. It wasn't in its normal case but all three pieces were very padded with clothing.

When the press conference started, we missed the first minute or so and Channel 7 had a blank screen. But, it was announced there were 5 new cases! But no lockdown yet...unlikely for next 48 hours unless they found other cases outside the cluster. We took a deep breath - we would get to Launceston..... (the last thing we wanted was to be stuck in Brisbane off boat with nothing to do)

'What do we do now?' I asked Andrew. 'We get to the airport and avoid people,' he replied. So we finished packing, walked to Central Station, waited ten minutes for the air train and got to the airport about 10.30. 2.5 hours early! Check in desks weren't

open but stand up kiosks were and a helpful employee weighed our downstairs luggage...but interestingly not our hand luggage.

### Getting through security.

Security seems to be tightened. I had to take everything out of my pockets including dirty tissues and a hanky, and head through a door where I was instructed to stand apeline and side on to the passage. Instead of being given the all clear I was told by the screen attendant to see his colleague. What. 'You've taken everything off my person'. Something had been picked up on my right hip.

It turned out to be a zip tag. At a pocket I didn't even know existed! Then I was waiting for my hand luggage. Three people were standing around discussing the x-ray of my pack. The attendant I was standing next to, a big man of islander extraction who looked rather formidable but clearly had a sense of humour said. 'don't worry, they are just checking out something suspicious,' and then laughed at my look of alarm!

That hurdle over we headed for a cafe/bar establishment for a cuppa. Here we found the electronic payment system again and our hot beverages were delivered almost as soon as I finished ordering them.

When we got to the seating by our departure gate I pulled out the strawberries. After trying one Andrew decided I could have them all, they were a bit sour for him.

I wanted a drink of water. The vending machine at our gate took my money and didn't give me any bottles. I asked an airline attendant if she knew of another machine close by. Yes, just down the adjacent corridor, she informed me. The only issue was the adjacent corridor was segmented - through traffic on the right.



On the left was a plane full of passengers coming in to quarantine (including two individuals dressed head to toe in tyvek overalls). And the drink vending machine – was of course behind the quarantine line. At the end of the corridor there was a third vending machine. By this time I was getting frustrated and dehydrated and stuck a dollar in before I saw the notice on the front – out of order. It swallowed more of my money and I was still without water! Frustrated I retreated back to the waiting lounge.

I filled the rest of the waiting time finishing the strawberries and chatting to a transient Taswegian.

Finally we got on the plane and it took off at 1323. As we were on a Jetstar flight we were in cattle class – a far cry from the comfort and legroom we had from Mackay to Brisbane. Andrew's knees were touching the chair in front of him, and he'd been allocated the middle seat!

This was a standard, generally non-descript flight. The only concern we had was at meal time we had all those people around us without masks on – and one spluttering female in the row in front of us, and one spluttering female in the row behind us. Charming!

We travelled above the clouds for most of the trip and as we descended the edges of high cumulus reflected bright yellow sun. But as we dropped further the clouds turned into a stratus layer that got greyer as the height above ground got less. Eventually we dropped below the clouds, where rain was falling over the area adjacent the airport but when we got out of the plane, descending the stairs to the tarmac, the air was decidedly chilly but dry. But the weather was coming.

It took longer to get through immigration this time than it did in February 2021, although a good chat with the part time doctor was truncated when we suddenly found ourselves fronting security staff. We had to wait for a shuttle bus so we could pick up our hire car off site and once we had the keys we found ourselves scooting along to Hadsphen on recently wet roads so we could get our gear inside before the next

batch of rain. We arrived just after 1700 and the office was closed. I was calling the park mobile when staff appeared. We didn't need to say who we were. 'I was just heading across to your cabin to put the heater on,' she said. Heater on we called a property manager so she could drop off the keys and then I headed to the park IGA to pick up dinner. A bit of newsletter was edited whilst watching the second preliminary AFL final and the evening concluded with discussing tomorrow's schedule.





## It begins

12th September 2021. We got up at 0630 It was 6 degrees! Feels like 3.4! Which was slightly warmer than Maatsuyker Island (always an extreme) at 6.2 feels like - 2.2! A far cry from what we had been used to at Mackay, Queensland, even the cold days.

Our first activity this morning had nothing to do with houses or renovations: we went to a caravan show!

A very small show, but it filled in a couple of hours and we discovered a new brand of caravan (Snowy River) - which of course is built in Campbellfield, Melbourne, along with 90% of all other brands in Australia. We also chatted to a caravan weight contractor and another individual about diesel heaters - this was boat related for us.

We then made our first run to Bunnings, acutely aware there would be many more; paint brushes, sandpaper, cleaning cloths, sugar soap, gloves, and paint rollers. Lunch was at the café attached to the store at Trevallyn. The Trevallyn store is a small supermarket and deli and the attached café is a bit fancy. But we deliberately spoilt ourselves knowing there was not going to be too much time to enjoy a fancy meal for a while. At the end of the meal we took a big breath.... And headed to the house.

This is the first time we have seen the house empty. It was tenanted when we bought it, and the last two times we have been in Tasmania we've had a look (organised inspection) to keep

an eye on the place. To be fair we have had terrific tenants, the first lot only moved because their jobs went to Adelaide, the last lot moved because they built themselves a new house. On searching through old emails I found reference to the last tenants who were interested in buying the property from us, even as it was (a conglomerate of home renovation wall colours and missing doors).

Our first task was to make some sort of calculation as to how much paint we needed. Before we left Mackay Andrew had constructed an excel spreadsheet to help calculate requirements, to a large extent, so we had a basic idea of resources.

It was soon obvious that painting wasn't



going to be our only task here. How much that would influence our time in Tasmania was yet to be seen. The kitchen really needed updating, even given it was a rental. The doors for the main bedroom robe needed to be reinstated; someone in a previous iteration had removed them to make the cupboard a display alcove. The skirting boards and door surrounds were timber; but



despite dating the place, they were in good enough nick to leave as they were.

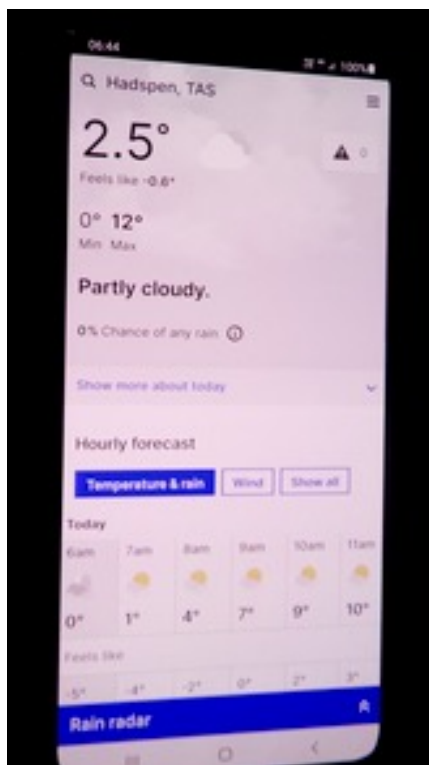
The garden however was another question. One fence line was overgrown with ivy, which was taking over several mature trees. But my priority was the front picket fence. I had put off getting it painted two years ago - to save some money - but I had been expecting to get to it before now. The complication now was we had weeds (including one tree) growing in locations they shouldn't be and needed to be removed in order to repair the fence before I could paint it.



So back to Bunnings for the second time today, we bought a standard cheap ladder (\$80 purchase vs \$80 hire per week – I figured we might be here more than one week), wall paint, ceiling paint, a hammer, a saw and a pair of secateurs. To make things easy we went out for dinner, ending up at a very ordinary restaurant with a very ordinary meal. Our last task for the day was a trip to Woolies to stock up on breakfast and lunch items.

Back at base we discussed our options for the bathroom – the vanity needed changing, and even if it hadn't we needed to remove it – to access a patch of mould at the bottom edge of the shower – the gap too small to be cleaned if left as it was.

It was going to be another cold night. The bed in the cabin has electric blankets – a concept I've not used before. Last night Andrew had used his. My side however was not working and I had managed with three blankets and all my warm clothes on under the sheets!



13th September 2021. We got up at 0630. Hadspen, according to the bom.gov.au App was 2 degrees. Feels like -2.2!

We started work on site at 0900; Andrew reaching for the stars (removing stars stuck to the ceiling of bedroom 3) and I was pulling all the picture hooks out of the walls, including the measuring cup hanger and the cling wrap rack.

The lovely glass shelves were removed from the wall and cupboard area of bedroom one and I started on trying to dislodge the mirror tiles from the display area. In between the sometimes successful, and sometimes not, removal of the mirror tiles, I was sawing at the rogue tree on the front fence line. To change the jobs around I mixed it up a bit with sugar soaping walls, and sandpapering where needed. After several hours we had had enough. We are not used to hard work! We headed off to Target to get some work shoes (we had got scrappy work clothes from an op shop in Mackay before we left) and managed to buy some synthetic slippers as well. They weren't expensive and given the overnight temperatures we were experiencing we figured we would need them.

Then it was back to Bunnings for more ideas!

14th September 2021. Given that I was not having much success in removing the mirrored tiles from the bedroom alcove – they were held on by liquid nails and almost (and often) impossible to remove without cracking (I am not going to guess how many years bad luck I've produced – I don't want to know) we headed back to Bunnings first thing this morning to get a plaster saw. I would saw each tile out via the plaster. This made removal of the mirror tiles much quicker, but meant we now had to add plastering to the list. Other jobs for me today included whittling away at the rogue stump, and washing walls (although only to the extent I could extend my arm, Andrew had the ladder)

15th September 2021. It was cloudy when we got up this morning at 0700. It had been, relatively speaking a warm night – no electric blanket needed. We started the day at Bunnings – this is becoming a habit – at 0845. We didn't leave until just after 1000! And then it was back to site!

### The dreaded lurgi

16<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Andrew didn't sound so good. 'I wonder if I should go and get tested,' he said. But 'What does that do to our schedule?'

'In the scheme of things and Covid. Does it matter,' I said. On the plane down from Brisbane there had been two women coughing and spluttering in the plane – one in the row in front of us, and one in the row behind us. Because we were eating, neither had their mask on! We highly suspected Andrew had picked up a bug from one of these individuals (probably the one behind us) but given that we had come from Brisbane and Brisbane East was now a hot spot, and we had been on a ferry that stopped at Brisbane East, we thought it prudent to get tested.

So Andrew rang the appropriate number, gave all the relevant details and logged in for a test. You cant just rock up here, supposedly, you need to make an appointment. 'Did you make an appointment for me as well?' I asked. 'Nope,' he replied, 'we would have had to give all the medical details again.'

When we got to the drive in testing area however, early, there was no one there. There were three lasses at the aisle we went to. One to take the personal details and confirm what was already in the system, one to take the tests and an apprentice. 'Are you both getting tested?' we were asked. 'Well, no, not officially, but if you can fit me in,' I said. That took a bit of fiddling because although I have been tested twice, both tests were in Queensland and not Tasmania and therefore I am not on the local system. All three girls were surprised I wanted to be tested, even though I wasn't showing symptoms. 'Why would I put myself through it?'

My reasoning was this; if Andrew had Covid it was very likely I would catch it from him and therefore there was probably no need to get tested at a later date (or at least be prepared for testing at a later date). If Andrew didn't have Covid, and just a normal cold or other bug, then there was a very strong likelihood I would get it anyway and if we knew he didn't have Covid then I wouldn't have it either. The test was invasive. Andrew complained. But it wasn't as uncomfortable as the other tests I've had – I don't know what he is complaining about!

As a result of our late morning drive through Covid test we didn't get much done today. Because we were supposed to be 'home' isolating (we were on site isolating) we put off the sparky until we got our test results.

The plumber was also delayed.

The builder however turned up, perfectly aware of our situation and masked, as we were, for a socially distanced organisational chat.

I managed to get the top off the recalcitrant stump that was obstructing the fence, which was an achievement, but there was still a bit to go. It shouldn't have been a hard job, but by the time you whittled the branches and sticks off you had to work really hard to get through the tough bits. I also managed to wash half the kitchen ceiling. Not being used to using my arms washing ceilings above one's head is hard work and tiring work on the arm muscles.

Notification of our negative Covid results came through at 1850.

We headed to a warm base mid afternoon. The evening movie watched was *First Blood*



The Convent

17th September 2021. The plumber/s turned up today. We didn't need much done – a visual of our plumbing to see if all pipes looked okay, change of a couple of faucets, and a request to put stop taps in the bathroom and kitchen. We also got them to organise a new toilet – the old one was looking tired and used. That little job didn't exactly go the plan as the lovely porcelain seat and lid was replaced with a plastic set as the original two items wouldn't stay up. Not a problem for a female – but definitely a problem for any male users. The kitchen task didn't get done – the plumber determined there had been some non-professional welding involved in the plumbing for the kitchen sink. Bless his cotton socks, as he knew we were replacing the kitchen he didn't want to waste our money.

I kept whittling away at the recalcitrant stump, reverting to using a screwdriver as a chisel with the impact of the dollar hammer we'd bought from Bunnings. Thanks also to the plumber who lent me a proper chisel for fifteen minutes before they left.

Andrew spent the day sanding, and putting plaster in the holes in the bedroom cupboard. I headed into Spotlight to get some sheers. Technically the bedrooms have window coverings (bog standard vertical blinds) – but they don't give any privacy and all three bedrooms look out on to the road. Whilst I was in Spotlight I got around to asking some advice as to size of curtains needed for the lounge area. I had bought curtains for the lounge room a few days ago but given this advice I had got one curtain too small. Spotlight Launceston didn't

have the size I wanted, but Hobart did so I ended up organising that to be sent north. As I didn't know how long we would be in Launceston I got the curtain sent to the real estate agent.

Today's Bunnings trip was for doors; one for the laundry – the current one has a window in it and whilst technically an outside door is not coping well, and two to turn the main bedroom alcove back into a proper wardrobe. Hopefully they fit as the original wardrobe had three smaller doors – I am sure the builder could help us out with any alterations to make them fit.

There is a soccer tournament on in Launceston tomorrow and finding cheap accommodation was impossible. We couldn't stay at our cabin on Saturday night – we could stay tonight but we would have to move into another cabin. I chose an alternative and booked us into a convent instead! A large room with a spa. It was a pity Andrew was too sick to use it tonight.

By the time we had finished working today we were ready for dinner. There are no cooking facilities advertised for this room, although we did discover a microwave and some plates when we got there. But given the Soccer weekend we couldn't find anywhere to have dinner – everyone was either booked out or '9pm is the earliest time we can offer.' Too late for us – we were hungry. We got a take away Chinese meal instead.

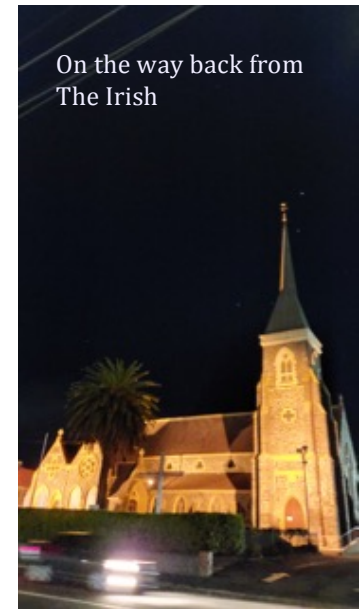
I bought a kettle today (the expensive one in Woolies as the cheap one had run out and by the time I got it I couldn't be bothered going to Kmart to get a cheaper model). We had been using the kettle and plates from the cabin but we had a cuppa before I logged in to tonight's accommodation – and given how fancy the kettle was at the accommodation I probably wouldn't have dragged it off to a worksite anyway.

Andrew was still suffering from the lurgi – and whilst taking his time was still soldering on. However, today had worn him out – he was asleep by 2100.



18th September 2021. Dinner at The Irish – the beef cheeks were fabulous – they just took around an hour to get to us. We had had another full day. And another round of phone calls had us struggling to find somewhere to eat. It was the Saturday night of the Soccer weekend after all. However The Irish, a pub right in town, said they could squeeze us in. To get there we walked; beanie on, down jacket on, and for me, gloves on. The space where we had dinner was downstairs, and had possibly been outside as some point; basic with concrete floors and very noisy. Admittedly it was busy but we were cold and hungry. Of course we had to walk back in the cold again.

We did enjoy the spa tonight .



19th September 2021. Andrew started painting the internal doors today. I continued to sand those that still needed it. I finished off washing the kitchen ceiling and cleaned the laundry ceiling. And of course there was general sanding where Andrew had filled any holes or gaps with filler.

Originally I had thought the green lidded bin on site was for green waste – I was wrong – rubbish in this area is either in a green or red lidded bin – I guess that is related to how old the bin is. So, in order for us to have a usable rubbish bin I emptied the garden waste that I'd been storing in the bin, onto the front lawn. There was going to be a lot more anyway – and several trips to the tip were envisaged.

I was a bit late organising lunch and instead of heading to Woolies I headed to the local Trevallyn store instead – via the back way. I haven't driven this back way for ten years and with the road works I got a bit lost. Andrew got his lunch a bit later than expected. It had been raining on and off all day. Because we had all our gear at the house – transferring between accommodation – I took a mid afternoon run between showers to log back into the Hadsphen Caravan Park – -all our gear open to the rain in



a single cab. Back in Cabin 15. The evening activity for me was working on August's newsletter

### Sanding...and then more sanding.

20th September 2021. We were on site at 0730 because the electrician had asked if he could turn up at 0750. It was as usual cold. My first job was sanding down more (3) internal doors whilst Andrew finished off painting the ceiling in B1 and the kitchen. After discussions with the electrician we made the decision to replace all the down lights; Andrews efforts of carefully going around the light fittings had all gone to waste. Ahh well.

The heater in the bathroom was moved to B2, the down lights in what is going to be the B1 cupboard removed, a couple of power points installed or moved, light switches or dimmers moved or removed and the fixing up of placement of smoke detectors

Andrew also managed to get a bit more plastering done – there are several spots that need patches. And we headed to Bunnings for more paint.

I managed a bit more whittling of the stump at the front fence and more sanding. We were back at Hadspen at 1815. The evening was spent doing a bit of August's newsletter and some recreational reading.



### A day of twos

21st September 2021. Andrew got first coat on two bedrooms and I sanded two short sections of fence. Unfortunately there was more rot than expected on one side fence and we needed to organise some filler to temporarily (at least for a couple of years) fix this up to save replacing the fence. I was still attaching the ivy along the side fence and discovered how large the plant was with the mother vine going up the stringy bark. I also had the secateurs out to trim back the vegetation near the picket fence at the carport. One of these plants I think is a holly but I am not removing it now - there are far more urgent jobs to do on this trip. Andrew spent the day on more painting prep.

We were on site at 0930. We got back to base at 1815.



Having a break outside



That s one thick vine

22nd September 2021. We had a late start to site as I discovered that the door to our cabin doesn't really lock. This is a bit worrying as all our computer gear, plus other important electronics are inside the cabin when we are not. It is also worrying that anyone could have walked in here last week and stolen all of it. So we waited until the maintenance guy could turn up to adjust the latch. We ended up leaving him to it and headed to work before it was fixed anyway, arriving at site around 0945.

Apparently there had been a Force 6 earthquake emanating out of Victoria that was felt in Launceston City. We didn't feel it. Neither did anyone I spoke to today who had been travelling by car at the time (as we had been). I did however get a report of someone who had been in a city building here whose pot plants had wobbled.

The workday consisted of more sanding inside, more sanding of the picket fence, a Bunnings run for paint, and more ivy removal. My elbow is playing up. I am not surprised really, my elbow was playing up before we got to Mackay on 9<sup>th</sup> August and hadn't healed before we flew to Tasmania. All I have been doing is sanding and cleaning – there is no rest for the injured tendon – and there will be no rest for some time.

Andrew spent the day painting the hallway walls, the toilet walls and some of the kitchen walls. It was a warm day and we actually had our break

outside on the deck. Launceston is a lovely spot when it is warm, but we were expecting the cold to come very soon. We were back at base at 1845.

Launceston has some lovely spots of green scattered around and the Cataract Gorge is in Trevallyn. We came across a wayward lost mammal on our way back to base to day; jumping around Trevallyn's streets was a small kangaroo. I hope it finds its way back home.

True to form, I set the smoke alarm off whilst I was cooking at the cabin today (the last time I did this I had the fire brigade out after setting the smoke alarm off from the microwave in Hobart earlier in the year. I haven't written that incident up).

23rd September 2021. A day of small fiddly bits. I took a photo of the Comalco window latch so I knew what I was looking for – we needed two of them – they were no longer on the windows.



24th September 2021. It was a late start. I woke up with a sore throat and a sniffly nose. I wasn't feeling terrible, just had the sense that I would probably be better off staying put. But there is a house to renovate and didn't want to particularly be on my own.

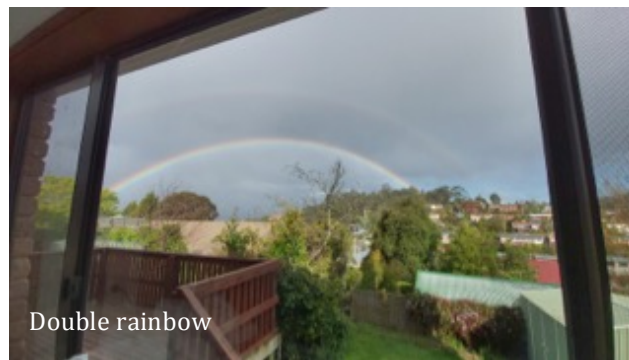
So after a slow morning and a shower that made me feel a bit better (I was expecting it to make me feel worse) we tootled off to Bunnings, then a quick stop at Woollies for bread and coffee, had a chat to the contractor putting in the new kitchen picking up some colour samples, and then picked up (hired) a 2.4m ladder for the weekend. If we had wanted a weekend rate we could have come back after 3.40 otherwise taking it now was going to cost us \$20 more! Coming back would have been disruptive so we took the \$30 hit instead of \$10!



Back at the house, after lunch and contemplating kitchen colours whilst we had the break, Andrew went off to finish off the sanding and plastering of a few small jobs. I went up on the ladder and managed to wash 90 pc of the lounge ceiling. Because of the location of other obstacles the two highest corners need a longer arm. Andrew will wipe them down just before he paints tomorrow.

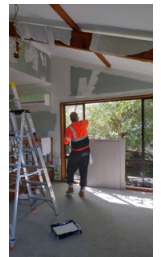
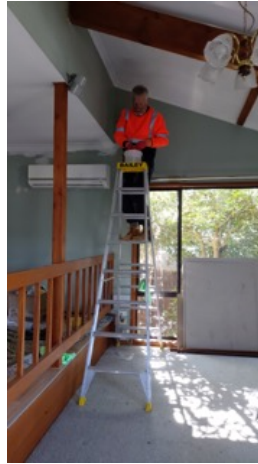
Weather; it was expected to rain. Fortunately it didn't rain until we were just about to arrive at the house and then it was only drizzle. The ladder got a little wet.

We discovered we needed a bracket to fix front gate. Next trip to Bunnings we will pick up another one.



25th September 2021. I was feeling a bit better today and well enough to expose myself to the public, having no mask on whilst I was out and about (unlike yesterday where we were out in the community and my mask was on for visits to the kitchen and carpet places, Bunnings and the hire mob).

26th September 2021. Okay, so maybe I am not getting better. Today I felt bad again. I had no energy, physical or mental and spent the day in a fog. I didn't do anything but hold ladder for Andrew whilst he was painting the high ceilings.



## Lurgy

27th and 28th September 2021

27<sup>th</sup> September 2021. It wasn't really worth getting up. I had definitely come down with whatever bug Andrew had picked up and I knew I wasn't going to be any help, and probably for long-term health I was going to be much better in bed than trying to do anything on site. Andrew had to leave early as the ladder we had hired was due back at 0900 (ish). He didn't get back to base until after 1800

So I got up at 1000 for breakfast then went back to bed. I then got up at 1330 for lunch and then went back to bed and finally got up at 1745 and turned the tv on

My throat wasn't as bad as Sunday night but was still there and I couldn't drink much without it hurting. I had also boycotted the available throat lozenges because they all had a citrus base, guaranteed to upset the autoimmune disease I normally have in my mouth, and doubly so now that I have other issues. However I did manage to feel well enough to watch a movie that ended at 2300.

28<sup>th</sup> September 2021. I slept very well and must have been dehydrated because I was able to drink much more overnight than the past couple of nights. My throat seems to have settled down. I still had a headache in the morning so wasn't pushing it.

I got up at 0900 for breakfast then went to back to bed. I got up again at 1200 for lunch. And then after organising some window clips went back to bed again.

Sourcing items that are almost forty years old from a company that got bought out thirty years ago was an exercise in, in the end, patience. The house was built around 1984. It is fitted with Comalco windows. Clips for two of the front windows were missing (although fortunately key locks were in place for security). I did what most non-industry people would do to source information in this situation; I consulted Dr Google.

The internet informed me that Comalco had been bought out by Boral in 1991. Great. So, who around here supplies Boral? I came up with a company, and according to Google Maps they were on the edge of the city, closer to us than the industrial area in Invermay where most companies for building projects reside. But I couldn't find them. Admittedly I didn't actually stop at the location, it was near a busy section of road, but it looked like the premises was dominated by car retailers.

In the end I looked for a website. The website only gave a Hobart address. I rang them. The lass on the other end of the phone confirmed there was no longer a Launceston premises and indicated it had been gone for some time. I explained what I wanted and she gave me the number of a company 'just down the road.' From her! Useful but not useful. Am I going to have to drive a three hour round trip for a couple of little window clips. Of course as I was doing this whilst I was ill the exercise was stressing me out a bit more than it should have been. One of the last things the lass on the phone had said was that she had only been with the company for three weeks. So, upon reflection, how did she know that the Launceston premises had closed down some time ago? Instead of ringing the company she suggested I decided to ring her back. Surely someone in the office may have been around when they had a premise in Launceston, and perhaps therefore they might be able to suggest a company still in Launceston that might be able to help me. I dialed again. This time I got an older woman, with a slightly continental accent, and I explained my predicament again. Does she know of anyone in Launceston that may be able to help me? Oh no, no she said. And then a pause. Maybe.

The maybe turned out to be useful and I got my part – but not until after ringing their phone number and getting put through to the warehouse in Brisbane to work out if Invermay (yes I ended up there anyway) had the items. 18 in stock! I only wanted 2. Cost \$11 each plus GST. Given that price and the cost of the phone call, it turned out to be a much cheaper exercise than a return trip to the outer suburbs of Hobart!





### Back to the salt mines

29th September 2021. Today I helped Andrew paint the front fence. Technically the entire fence was my job but given the predicted forecast with rain on the way we had to take the opportunity to paint the outside surfaces. This of course meant that the inside painting was delayed. To get out of the sun after a couple of hours I then painted the fence in the portico. And managed to get both coats on today. This was the easiest fence to paint. As it is sheltered it required very little sanding, its wood still in pretty good nick for its age and the paint went on smoothly and easily. The fact there were no fancy shaped tops to the pickets also helped.

Other painting jobs for the day included giving one of the side fences half its second coat and painting the back of the front fence in the afternoon

30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Grey day. I have made no other notes on this day so must have either been exhausted or completely overwhelmed.



## October

As with September, three quarters of October was spent in Tasmania; painting, sanding, repairing and weeding. We were very glad when we got back on board Sengo, but there was no reasonable prospect of cruising further north. Our cyclone line was south of us, and we were two weeks over our cyclone protection. We were heading south.

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1<sup>st</sup> October 2021. The lass from Mitre 10 emailed the quote through for the new vanity we were hoping to install into the bathroom. It was a little on the expensive side which was a pity because the name of style was the name of our Property Manager and I thought it would be a nice synergy. If we had been renovating the entire bathroom we may have paid the extra but we were looking to be as efficient as possible with our dollars.

We tried having a look at Tradelink to see what they had in bathroom vanities but arrived too early for the showroom to be open, so we went off to site earlier than expected. It was a dry sunny morning and I spent the time clearing the fence of Ivy – to a large extent anyway. Around lunchtime however the weather changed and a brief but slightly violent storm came across the city. It affected some buildings badly and when we went back to Tradelink within the showroom hours we discovered their roof had been compromised and the showroom was flooded and closed! Clearly we weren't going to get a bathroom vanity here!

Other jobs of the day involved picking up curtains from the real estate agent (I had got them sent to her from Hobart just in case we had gone before they arrived), swapping some paint over at Bunnings, taking masking tape off from around the edges of some of the walls, and Andrew had a trip to Anaconda and bought some walking shoes.

2nd October 2021. The front fence is being painted in tranches and today one coat went on to the picket fence adjacent the carport. The majority of the rest of the masking tape came off from the inside walls as well. Some vegetation was removed from next to the side fence in the back yard where it had been left after being pulled up/off, and we got the majority of the internal doors rubbed down with sandpaper. We did buy a bathroom cabinet today; from an independent (non franchised) retailer. It was actually a return, having been returned to the retailer because of a small blemish that we could work around, and it was the cheapest cabinet and top combination that we had seen.

Andrew's main job today was putting the undercoat on the bathroom walls and ceiling. He also managed to give one coat of undercoat paint to half the internal doors.

I thought we might go out somewhere a bit different for lunch (rather than have our sandwiches on site) but the Glebe Nursery was a bit of a disappointment – primarily I think because of the time it took to get served – not a good thing when you have a hungry worker!

3rd October 2021. Daylight Savings started today. But the hour difference didn't make much of a difference to us - we had a late start anyway - 1200 on site. This was because we slept in - having watched both *The Man from Snowy River* and *The Untouchables* on the television last night before we went to bed. Both are classic movies but I was at the point of 'Flight of The Black Cockatoo' where the author was travelling through Victoria's High Country and his troubles with brumbies that made the first movie especially poignant. Because of the late start we put a concerted effort in and our only break was a 20-minute cuppa (we had had brunch at Prospect Vale on the way to site). We stopped working at 1700!

I kept clipping and tidying vegetation in the back yard and Andrew did have a break from painting by trying to clean the gutters - but discovered they were completely full and difficult to clean, and that he could only reach a small section of them with the ladder we had anyway. We decided to organise a professional for that job.

The second half of the internal doors got their undercoat on today.

This morning's skies were blue, by the middle of the day however the skies were grey, and some not so far away had black bottoms; it was raining to the south of us at the airport according to the rain radar.





4th October 2021. Rain! I removed the majority of the passion fruit vine from the outside raised decking area but was interrupted when pulling it out from under house. I had a key to pick up!

Yesterday, as we were leaving site, Andrew discovered that the car key would not go into the ignition. It had opened the door with no problem but that was as far as it wanted to go. Upon inspection of the key we discovered it was reasonably fatigued, with slits either side of the shaft and a split developing down the middle, so much so, it has bent the shaft. It was after office hours on a Sunday. No one would be at the depot. The call centre number goes to Hobart. What were we going to do to get back to base? The obvious involved a bit of grunt. We went back into the house, grabbed the cheap hammer that we'd bought from Bunnings on our first day, and gave the key a whack to straighten it. The solution worked and we got back to base at Hadspen.

This morning we didn't go to site until we contacted the car hire mob. And of course I got through to Hobart. But I needed to chat to Launceston! The spare keys for the Launceston vehicles are kept at Hobart at a central location. All well and good from an admin point of view but completely impractical otherwise. The girl on the end of the phone was a bit vague. Could we just keep driving it until we handed the car back next weekend? One, we didn't know if we were indeed handing the car back on the weekend, but two, we couldn't continue to drive around with a compromised key. What if it broke in the ignition? What if it broke in the ignition whilst we were driving? Frankly I had to be a bit terse and explain this was actually a health and safety issue. We needed another key!

Not knowing how long it was going to take us to get a response from the Launceston Depot we headed to site anyway....almost. Because of the frustration with the key I had been a bit stressed

and actually forgotten the site work keys as I walked out the door, so we had to turn around and head back to base for them. It was on this return trip that the Launceston lass rang us. She had convinced Hobart that we need a new key. They were happy to get one cut but they had to be present. As she was the only one in the office/depot at the moment we would have to wait until another staff member was available. She would call him and get him to meet me at a key cutting facility.

It was at the Kings Meadows supermarket key booth that I caught up with the car hire mob representative. The route was not familiar to me and the weather not brilliant; on and off showers. I had used whereis.com to suggest a driving route but I ended up missing Wellington Street and had to negotiate myself around the one way streets through Launceston Central – taking up time I had not accounted for when I told the fellow I was meeting that I would meet him in '15 minutes.' He got to site before I did.

The first thing the key cutter said was he might have trouble replicating the key because he could see it had been hit with a hammer and effectively flattened out of shape. Oh crap! We had had no other choice if we had wanted to get 'home' last night. Fortunately the cut worked! Thankfully – it cost the company \$130.00!

Armed with a new key, I drove back to site.



5th October 2021. Painting isn't exactly the most enjoyable job in the world and it was starting to get to us. To alleviate a bit of steam we had half a day's break. We actually just got in the car and drove, ending up at Pipersbrook Winery for lunch. I could have sworn we'd been here before – but it was not as I remembered it. The lunch was basic – much more basic than I was expecting, but it was nice to not do any painting, weeding, plastering or carpentry for a change. An afternoon stop for a cuppa at Bridport followed – we haven't been there before – before heading back to base.

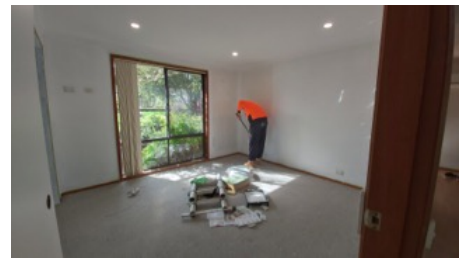


6th October 2021. Because of a late night last night we had a late start. Before we headed to site we dropped off a load of green waste at the council tip (we had packed it on the back of the ute last night). I was painting just after 1030. I stopped only for a cuppa and to head down to local shopping store to get some missing items for lunch, before finishing the front picket fence, well half of front face - all of the back face. Lunch was late at 1530. My final painting exercise of the day was with the small brush I had bought for the plant poison, filling in the tiny bits of the side gate that I couldn't get at with the big brush. At around 1700 I headed out into garden with the saw, (I couldn't find the secures) and started on the bottom corner of ivy; finding a lattice beneath it... and a power point? And one 'mother' of a vine right in the corner where we don't want it to be.

Builders are busy in Launceston (builders are busy in all of Tasmania apparently) and one urgent job needed doing before we could rent the house out; the laundry floor. The builder turned up today for a preliminary scout and informed us the job would be started next week. We really need to be here for this project – I guess we will be in the Island State yet another week.

The evening's entertainment was watching '*Unstoppable*.' With Denzel Washington. Great movie.

7th October 2021. Andrew concentrated on bedroom one and the bathroom.



8th October 2021. Today I sanded and varnished some window sills, pulled up some ivy to rescue the wattle in the front corner of the yard and lopped a few tree limbs off – some were unbalancing plants in the garden, some were overhanging the house and the gutters.

Andrew painted the bathroom and three of the laundry walls and put the second layer of Hogs Bristle Quarter on the walls of Bedroom 1. He also started the topcoat of the internal doors.

We got to site at 0900; we left around 1810. The next-door neighbour is replacing the side fence for us and progress looks great. I took a load of rubbish to the tip.

9th October 2021. More sanding and varnishing of the sills - mostly a second coat for those I did yesterday. I started poisoning some weeds, did a tip run and started to paint the inside of the cupboards.

10<sup>th</sup> October 2021. I have no notes for the 10<sup>th</sup> October.

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11<sup>th</sup> October 2021. One month. We've been here one month! I was hoping we'd only be here a couple of weeks. There is nothing essentially wrong with Tassie, except that it is not home, and in the main and the moment, it is not warm. Although to be fair a sunny afternoon in Launceston is a beautiful thing.

The overnight temp this morning at Launceston Airport was positive 1.2 - feels like negative 3.4. About the time I went back to bed. Andrew's snoring had got me up at 0330. I read a bit to fill in the time.

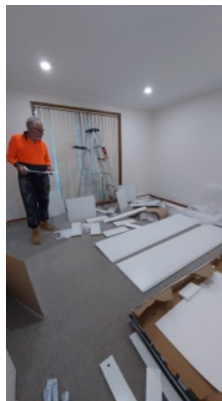
We got to site today at around 0930. We left at 2100. It was a long day.

I started the day by taping up doors and windows with the new tape roll we had bought yesterday. We also prepped and painted external doors and surrounds, the laundry window (but needs more), and the back door railing. I took a trip to Spotlight to check for kitchen blinds and discovered I had missed a sale by a day!

I was late to the local store to pick up gluten free bread for lunch and ended up with an unknown German brand. Healthy Bake, the brand that I find in most reasonable sized alternate outlets (and that is made in a suburb in Victoria that we used to live in) is apparently in lockdown because there was a Covid outbreak at the factory.

We played basic carpenter today, putting a cupboard insert together to go in the robe in the main bedroom. - we had to do something, the last owners had stripped the cupboard out of the room. We spent the day painting to random music; Simon and Garfunkel, Beethoven, and the odd track by Meatloaf and Wings.

We didn't stop painting today until 1740, by which time it was very cold. I was outside painting the balustrade near the laundry and my hands were that cold and nearly frozen in one position I was worried I was going to drop the brush.



12<sup>th</sup> October 2021. It was a beautiful sunny day. I have no specific notes for today. The contractor started demolishing the laundry.







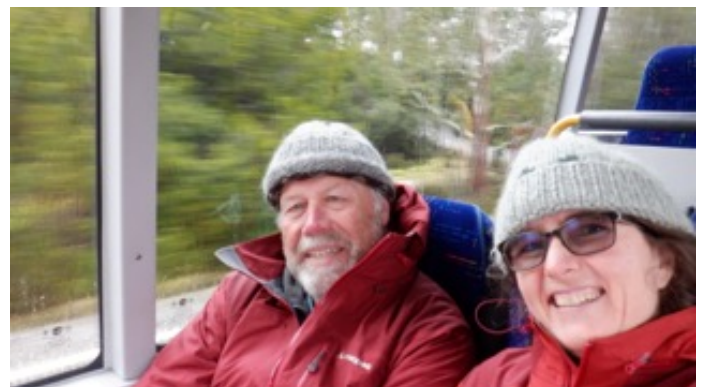
## A mini holiday!

A bit of a break. Launceston to Moina

13th October 2021. It was supposed to be a three-day break from the project but we started the day painting on site, putting the first coat of enamel on the laundry tub. Leaving it to dry we finally left town, firstly swapping the ute over to a much more comfortable XTrail for the three days. We had morning tea at Evandale and lunch when we got to our little cottage accommodation at Moina, right on 1400. We had stopped at the info Centre at Deloraine to get an idea of the walks we might do at Cradle Mountain National Park; around 30 minutes drive from our base. But the weather didn't look promising. We passed one lookout on the way through the mountains and all we could see was cloud. We passed a second lookout – it was a bit better but still mostly cloud. It didn't improve from there. It was drizzling when we got to the accommodation and we went straight in – having been given instructions of how to get inside by the hosts. What I didn't realise at the time was the reception was quite close and was probably open but we didn't say hello – which was very remiss. After lunch I used the laundry on site to do some washing (the first in four weeks) and we finished the

afternoon with a spa.

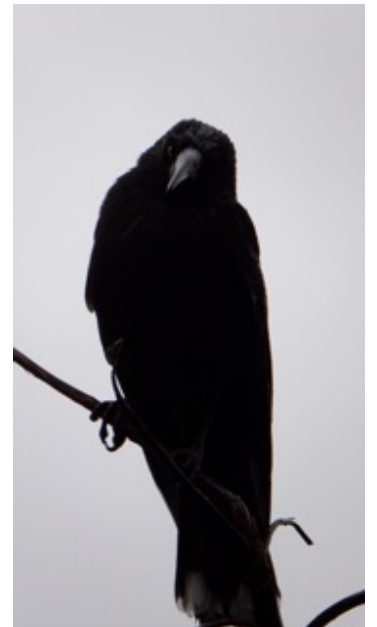
14th October 2021. Drizzling. Outside did not look promising. And it was very cold. We bundled ourselves into the car and drove down to the 'Visitor's Centre,' at Cradle Mountain National Park; a misnomer as it really is only a gift shop with a queue line to pay your Parks entry fee. It was a very long queue line – it reminded me of ferry terminals I've been to. There was one wall of information boards and a





short video, predominantly informing those who would read or watch about the dangers and unpredictability of the weather in the alpine areas of Tasmania. I did learn something; I learnt that a few days ago I was probably on the edge of hypothermia whilst painting the railing near the back door!

We paid our fees and got on the bus. You can no longer drive down to Dove Lake; you take the bus. The misty landscape sidled past us as we were distracted chatting to the bus driver – who it turns out was looking at walking the Tasmanian Trail. We picked up one walker at Dove Lake but as it was raining, and Andrew doesn't start walking in the rain, we stayed on the bus, getting off instead at the Interpretive Centre. Once we had finished there we got back on the bus and travelled back to the Visitors Centre and carpark. It was time for lunch and we were hungry but I couldn't even convince Andrew to go for a short walk. I was keen but he was cold; which was understandable because it was freezing. The café at the Visitors Centre was technically open but due to social distancing we would have had to buy something (very little choice) and stand outside and eat it. We tried two of the resorts along the road – none of the restaurants were open for lunch. In the end we ended up back at our accommodation for a very unsatisfying (compared to a nice hot restaurant meal) lunch. We did however manage to go out for dinner. We had been warned



that the accommodation across the road had no dinner despite being advertised. I rang them. Oh yes, our food service closes at 5.30pm. Do you want to come in? At this point it was 5.10pm. You have got to be kidding. We could have actually got to the premises – we were just across the road – but





the person on the other end of the phone didn't know that. Nope. We would look for other alternatives. We ended up at Lemonthyme Lodge – up a dirt road, the girl on the phone was keen to emphasise to me. Their restaurant is mainly for their guests but if you book they may take visitors – providing they have enough in the larder. This meal was lovely – we were one of six or seven couples dining in their restaurant – their cabins are self contained. On the way back we saw several small macropods by the side of the dark and wet road.

15<sup>th</sup> October 2021. The rain actually cleared up at around 1000. However, by this time we had decided to make our way back to Launceston as Andrew wasn't in the mood for walking. I however was desperate.

We took the road less travelled – sort of. Some of the route we took up the valley today we have driven before but it was such a long time ago that none of it was remembered. We ended up at Port Sorrell for lunch, mainly because I wanted to check it out as a possible anchoring spot – other yachties we know love it. We returned to the Cabin in Hadsden (after getting a flat tyre in Launceston and waiting for that to be fixed) late afternoon.

The lighthouse at Mersey Bluff. The last time we were at this lighthouse we were about to start a 500km walk!



What do you do when you are waiting for a flat tyre to be repaired – wine and nibbles at a trendy eatery felt like just the thing!



Back at Cabin 15

## Back to Work

16th October 2021. It was back to work today. I washed and sanded the top of the carport gutter, and eventually painted some of it. I also cut some vegetation back and varnished the top of the step from the corridor to the kitchen area. Andrew finished off the second coat of the internal doors and painted the outside of the laundry door and window

There was a trip to Bunnings for a towel rack and a kitchen blind and some more green tape. I also, finally, managed to get Andrew to go for a walk and we strolled around the 'Heritage Forest' area in Mowbray.



17th October 2021. We have a list. As we are getting more done I want to make sure we don't miss anything so, this late in the exercise, I have started writing down what I think still needs doing. Some items we ticked off yesterday, some we've marked as started. This morning we made note of those items we hoped to get off the list today. We didn't get them all done. Admittedly we left early, around 1500 but I am now (trying) making sure we get a walk in each day.

Today's jobs included; installation of two handles to the bedroom windows, sand the uneven plaster in the pantry, put some door handles back, put another coat of stain on the stairs, take most of the masking tape off, paint a bit more of the carport and put a second coat on the balustrade near the laundry (what a long and frustrating job that is) and ferret through the garden for any pull-outable ivy.

Our walk today was along the Tamar River to the Tail Race. We were back at base fairly early so watched a couple of movies on television' John Wayne in *The sons of Katie Elder* and a James Bond; *From Russia with Love*.





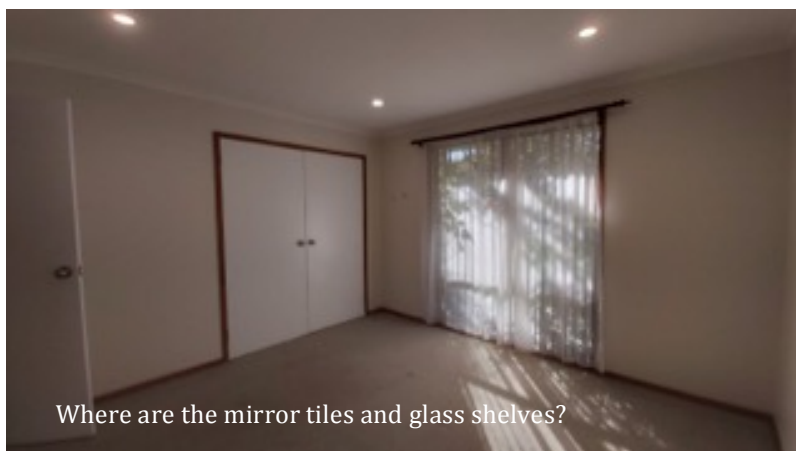
18<sup>th</sup> October 2021

No notes.



19th October 2021. The last vegetation tip run was done today. The builder sent a couple of lads around to deal with an issue with the laundry door. I ferreted for ivy in the bottom corner. Andrew mortared the front step as a quick fix to a hole behind a rustic tile. We sanded the laundry wall where the plaster had been replaced. I also put the sheers up in the bedrooms. There are old vertical blinds on the bedroom windows which are still in good working order. I think, from a landlord point of view, this covers the requirements for window furnishings for a tenatable property. However the bedrooms are at the front of the house and if you open the vertical blinds there is absolutely no privacy from the street should anyone wish to look your way. For around \$20 each plus the wire I thought it a good expense to soften the rooms and make a tenant feel more secure.

Dinner was disappointing at the Jailhouse. They pride themselves on their steak but both our meals came out slightly underdone and then when they came back they were slightly tough. And they had no real taste or smell. They make a big deal of giving you a choice of their special sauces but steak should have a taste of its own. And you should be able to smell it when it's cooked. It was not quite the meal we had expected it to be. When we got back to base we thought it was about time we booked our flights home.



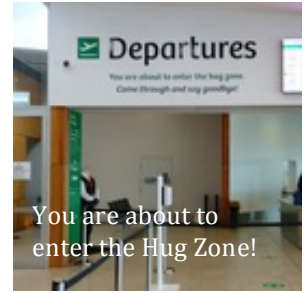
Where are the mirror tiles and glass shelves?

20<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Finishing off the laundry was the main job today; painting the laundry walls that needed finishing off, and varnishing the skirting rails in the laundry as they had been replaced with the replacement of the laundry floor. Anything else today was tidying up.

21st October 2021. We did a last tip run today? All household goods, left over paint etc, fittings and nails and a few odds and sods, most of which was taken by council staff in the recycling centre. We also took a piece of broken asbestos to the tip, officially dumping it in the correct area. The tip run cost us \$11. Dumping 40cm by 20cm of Asbestos Cement Sheet cost us \$55. Most people wouldn't bother but I couldn't with a clear conscience just chuck it in the normal run. It was a scrap dug up when the neighbour was realigning the fence (He put the uprights on our side of the fence not his so he can work on the rest of the fence at his leisure and not disturb our tenants, although at the pace the job is going he will have the fence finished before we actually get tenants). I suspect, given that some ceramic circuit breakers were dug up as well, that whomever replaced his power box from the original just dumped the waste in the front yard prior to the current fence line. I know it belongs to next door – we still have our original power board. Lunch was late and easy at McDonalds - not the healthiest option but under the circumstances it was the quickest.

Prior to our tip run we had actually swapped the cars over and we were now driving the X Trail again, a vehicle much more comfortable than the ute and comfort was what we were looking for – we were driving the car down to Hobart tomorrow. Whilst this was going to cost us an extra \$90 in a one way fee, leaving from Hobart meant we could get back to Mackay in one day – we didn't really want to have to overnight at Brisbane if we didn't have to (and given my last experience of a Brisbane Airport Hotel, I wouldn't be hurrying back if I could help it).

We were in the middle of handing over the keys to the Real Estate Property Manager when my phone rang. Because I was dealing with someone I didn't answer it. It was a local number. It was only after we'd left the property, now without access, that I checked the number. The call was from the mob I'd got to remake the front fly screens. They were ready. What do I do now? We started heading over there until I realised it was 1630 – after they close! I rang their number anyway, got the owner who was offsite but offered to drive back and hand the screens over. We were very appreciative of this service and would recommend him to anyone. Of course now we had the screens we couldn't put them in. I chatted to the real estate employee who said we could come by the office to pick up the keys. It was now peak hour in town. We were over it and despite the fact that Andrew was driving I couldn't get my head around the one-way streets to get to their office. In the end we went back to the property and put the screens under the house. A builder was due the next morning and we just sent him a text to ask him to move them inside. The property manager could organise someone to come in and fit them – we just wanted to go home.



## Heading back to the Tropics

22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021. We left Hadspen at 0655 and arrived at the Hobart Airport at 0940

Whereis.com predicted it would take 2 hours 10 minutes of driving time. Transport Tasmania suggested drivers have an allowance due to roadwork for the total Launceston to Hobart run of 45 minutes! There were none. We were going to be extremely early!

We ended up coming down the eastside of Tamar River and stopped at a small shopping centre to drop off soft plastics to Woolies for recycling. I went into a pharmacy to ask about a good coffee shop. I got blank looks from three faces. So instead of trying to find something local for morning tea, we headed straight to Hobart airport, ironically finding some minor road works along the way (for the overpass near the airport roundabout) - but no reduction in travel time.

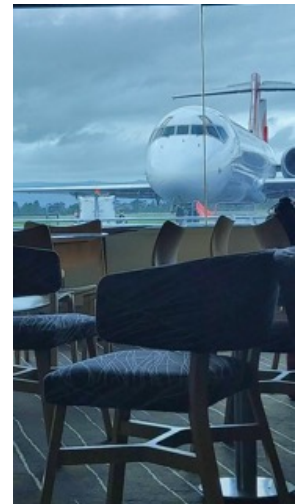
We were officially too early to check in but managed to get the right attendant and the yellow 'early check in' tags went on to our bags before they disappeared out the back.

Given the alarm at Brisbane on the way south I warned security that I might go off re my trouser zip tag. No alarm. They did however stop at my bag again. I think the massager has got everybody confused.

We were delighted to find the Qantas Lounge open; it had been closed until a couple of days ago. They even had gluten free bread...which I had toasted...but I took the option of boiled egg, tomato and cheese for topping rather than just the sweet stuff. The lovely attendant checked contents of the cereal and we found the wheat free ones. At changeover I grabbed a bircher muesli just in case there was nothing suitable for the lunch tranche.

We spent almost the entire time in the lounge sitting and facing a Qantas plane. It was almost teasing us. Go on, I dare you. You will blink first. By the end of the time in the lounge I was almost convinced that I was looking at our plane - however once the luggage trolley wheeled past I knew otherwise, the most recent arrival to the port side of the plane was the one we would be travelling in.

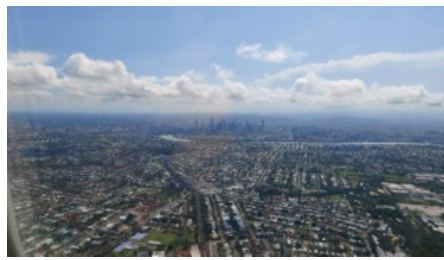
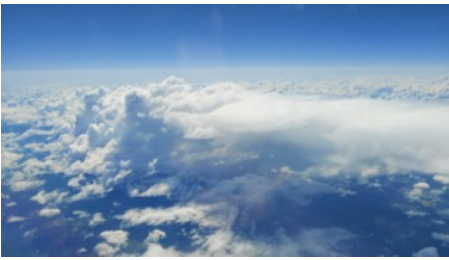
We managed to get the front seats again and were grateful for the leg room. The planes are not the newest but the bigger seats were appreciated. The staff was attentive and wanted a chat, although the mention of a mini tornado having just gone through Brisbane Airport had us on alert. What was



the weather like now? We approached Brisbane through magnificent towering clouds and although we had a bit of turbulence during the journey we landed smoothly on a very wet and swampy airport.

The gap between the flights at Brisbane Airport wasn't really enough to do anything useful. The Qantas lounge here was large and busy and any attempt to get in line to get some substantial food was likely to eat up all the time we had. In the end we took a seat at the edge of the lounge

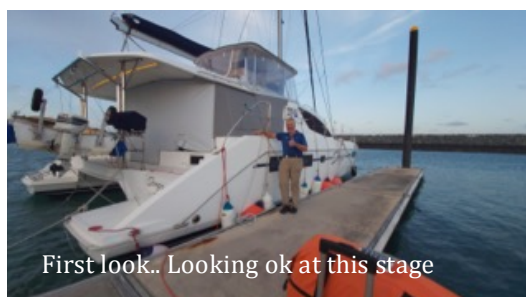
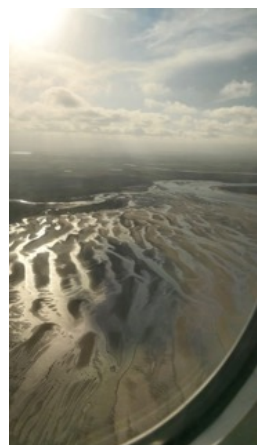




and nibbled on the gluten free biscuits I had picked up in Hobart. The plane we got to Mackay seemed older than the previous flight but it did have individual televisions and I got distracted trying to work out how to use them when I should have been looking out the window. When I did look up I tried to ascertain where we were. I came to the conclusion that the first area I had seen was the delta of the Fitzroy River and then I think I recognised Thirsty Sound – things look quite different from that far up in the air if you haven't studied them.

There were a couple of great thunderheads coming into Mackay but it was another smooth landing. The wait for our luggage was longer than expected; it seemed two flights had landed at once. We got a taxi back to the marina around 1800 just as it was getting dark.

Given the weather the marina had had in the past few weeks (reportedly 67 knots and golf ball sized hail!) Sengo didn't look too bad. There was no obvious damage on the dockside so we figured the fenders had done their job. But we would have a good look at everything in the morning in the light. The shock came when we went downstairs and found that several hatches had leaked and our shower sumps were full of water. Lovely! Not really what you want to face after an extended absence and an urgency to get away from dock. It had been a long day, I didn't want to think about leaky hatches or anything else and we decided that we didn't want to cook dinner either – there was practically nothing in the house anyway. Our first choice for dinner was booked out and we ended up at the Sails Bistro. Unfortunately the lady that took the order forgot to allocate the buzzer on the docket and so when they were delivered they weren't exactly hot. We weren't going to send them back – we were hungry.



First look.. Looking ok at this stage

23rd October 2021. When I had notified the marina that we were actually flying back to Mackay I had booked one of the marina cars for half a day so we could run around and restock before we left. Our first stop this morning was the health food shop, and then the supermarket, and then the butcher. We actually handed in the keys early but there was no point trying to organise an excursion, we had plenty of work to do on board. We walked to the Surf Club for lunch and had a very mediocre meal before heading back and paying for our final stay on dock, picking up a parcel from America that had been waiting for us for some weeks. We ran into the local who will clean the hulls for you, put stuff away on boat, did a load of washing at the launderette, had an afternoon snooze, put more stuff away and decided to delay our departure to fit in with the dive guy.

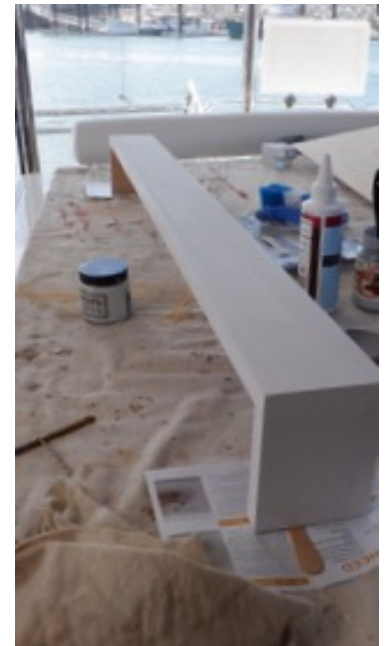
I also washed down the clears, fiddled with the ropes and 'tried' to relax with some recreational reading.



Getting close to departure.

24th October 2021. The big job of the day was getting some fuel. I wasn't all that keen to get Sengo to the fuel dock so we headed across, in two trips, to the bowzers with jerry cans. The marina doesn't like you putting fuel in from jerry cans so we stored them under the cockpit table until we were to decant them. I did two loads of washing today and painted the shelf project.

Our exercise was a walk to the end of the breakwater; the first time we'd done it during the day.



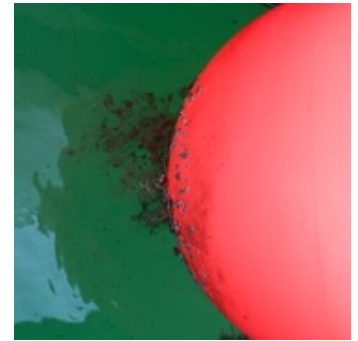
## One final Mackay walk

### Walk to the Weather station

25th October 2021. I actually wanted to head north for our walk this morning – but we were frustrated with official tall wire fences and do not enter signs. So we headed south west, back along the access road to the marina and then up a side road to the weather station. The weather station sits on a knoll with a view over the marina and to the south.

There were quite a few birds spotted or heard along the way: Drongo, brown pigeon, channel billed cuckoo, blue face herons, orange footed scrub fowl, white ibis, mudlark, lorikeets

Back at boat we washed the boat, got rid of our rubbish and recyclable items, I scrubbed the barnacles off the fenders and the hull cleaning guy cleaned the hulls. I also paid the bill, we sorted our passage plan based on the weather for the next seven to ten days (as much as you can with weather predictions) and relaxed with a bit of recreational reading. Dinner was at the Thai place – better than the last time we were there, but still could be improved.





Goodbye Mackay

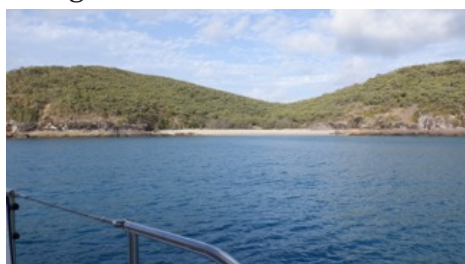


## Leaving Mackay

### Mackay to Curlew Island

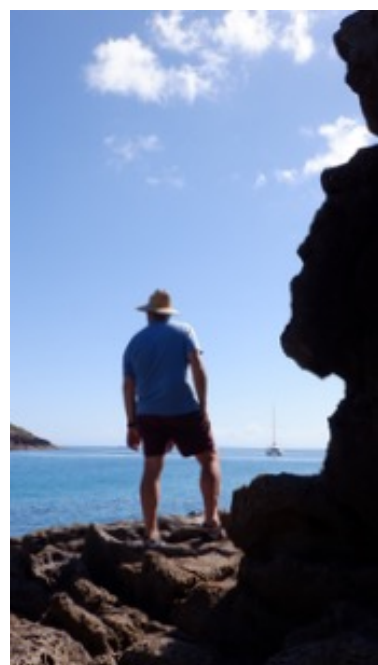
26th October 2021. We got out of bed at 0530. Just after 0600 Andrew was adjusting the docking ropes to help facilitate our departure. We were off dock at 0640. The main was up at 0650 (just after heading out the harbour and heading straight for Slade Island). We had two possible plans for today – to Middle Percy Island or Curlew Island. We put the engines in neutral to see if we needed them. The trajectory to Middle Percy was giving us 3.6 knots. Not a lot. Changing the autopilot to 'wind' gave us 5.5 to 6.0 knots but we were now travelling in a more southerly direction. The engines were off at 0700 and we zig zagged through the shipping anchorage on our way to Curlew Island.

The sea state wasn't particularly rocky, and whilst we avoid rough seas we have been out in a lot worse. I was sitting at the helm station thinking that considering the time we have been off boat, my stomach was doing reasonably well. I think this positive thought was my downfall because all of a sudden I wasn't feeling well at all. Perhaps I should have been thinking of something else.



### Curlew Island

27<sup>th</sup> October 2021. A lazy day. A short walk on the beach and a swim. Another boat came in and to shore but we had only the briefest of conversations. Either we've lost our gift of the gab or they didn't want to talk. We were not in the smoothest anchorage with regard to the wind and tide but it was good enough, although wind against tide got a little uncomfortable. We couldn't just do dayhops straight south as one would involve landing in either Port Clinton or Island Head Creek, both of which were out of bounds due to military activity. We would anchor here, by ourselves if necessary, and enjoy being back on board, until we had a window to travel







## Curlew Island

28th October 2021. When we got back to boat at Mackay there was only one hatch cover remaining on our hatches; the cover over the back cockpit hatch and that was thin, worn and ripped. All the others had been blown off (may the planet forgive me) probably on the day that Mackay got golf ball sized hail stones and 67 knots! So I am now back to making more hatch covers, one of which I finished off today. All my previous covers were made by hand. At the moment I only have the material to make three covers and these also will be made by hand, predominantly because I cant be bothered pulling the sewing machine out.

Jobs of today included putting the diesel in the tanks, putting the jerry cans away, and Andrew converted his tinnie fuel cans from one size to another. I also started another picture display with the materials I have (left over from the last picture project).





## Curlew Island to Hunter Island

29th October 2021. The anchor was up at 0600. The main sail was up immediately after.

Although the anchorage had not been exceedingly uncomfortable, in hindsight we should have moved yesterday. We passed the anchorage we would have gone to as we headed south – it was visually magnificent. There were three other boats there but there was plenty of room. Next time!

Today's wind blew between being extremely fickle and a really good strength, and our SOG ranged from 4.7 knots to 9 knots. We did contemplate traveling further to reduce tomorrow's run, but decided to stick with Plan A.

The sky had been mixed...about forty per cent coverage with clouds of various sizes. All cumulous.

Overall it was a smooth trip and we anchored at south end of Hunter Island...eventually. It is a gorgeous little spot but we were the only boat of the three that anchored here overnight that didn't go to shore.

Anchoring took us an hour. Why? Firstly because of a knot in the chain and then because my frustrated efforts to alleviate the situation made it worse. In the end I had the chain jammed in the windlass at one end and jammed between the aluminium housing of the motor and gearbox at the other! I couldn't move it either way. Andrew was not happy! Hammers, chisels, screwdrivers and swearing. And the threat of angle grinding the chain off and losing the 25m we had out was to say the least, a bit stressful! In the end a lot of persistence swearing, silicone spay and luck released first the top of the chain (undoing the top of the windlass so it would in theory free flow didn't work....typical, over the years it has given me jip because of its propensity to do this and just when we need this to happen, it

doesn't)

Subsequently with a broken sleep, a long day and a stressful anchoring scenario Andrew went to bed mid afternoon. I started another hatch cover.

## Hunter Island to Port Clinton

30<sup>th</sup> October 2021. We were up around 0500. The anchor was up and the mainsail out by 0610.

The genoa was out and both engines were off as we passed Danger Island around 0630.

We had a pretty good sail around the top of Townsend Island and down the coast, passing to the outside of most of the other boats that had left before us, either from our anchorage at Hunter Island or the anchorage off the west coast of Marble Island.

The winds were consistent and comfortable for most of the trip but the expected stronger freshness of the afternoon started up just as we were coming into the anchorage

We had sailed toward the outside of the Clara Group to get a better wind angle but this meant goosewinging it afterward for a short time because the expected north wind change hadn't happened. We decided however, that we had plenty of time to angle away from the coast to get better angle and then gybe our way in. Looking at windy.com we expected northerlies before the southerly change and our planned anchorage for the nasty southerlies could handle a bit of light northerly. But we supposedly had 24 hours before this happened. We hadn't been to the northerly anchorage just inside Port Clinton before so we thought. 'Why not?' 'Somewhere new, even if it was only for a night.

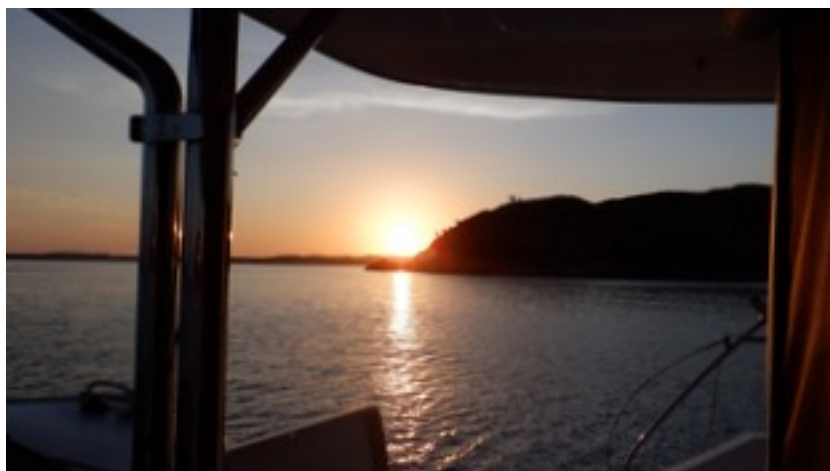
It was a pretty anchorage to enter. One cat was in here already. There was a mono moving toward us from the next bay but he ended up heading out.

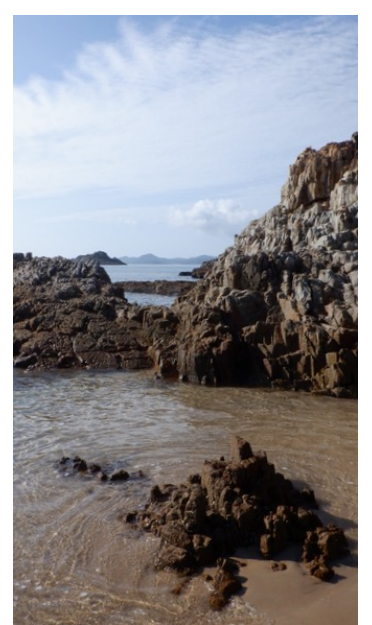
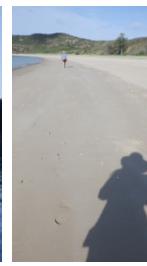
The anchor was down in four meters of water in the north anchorage at Port Clinton at 1330.

The day had held mostly blue skies with cumulous clouds at the horizon extremities and over the mountain range north of Island Head Creek. The landscape along this sail is such a fabulous section of geology. On the way up we had seen whales frolicking here. We are way behind the whales on the way south now.



Because the stronger wind had come in just as we were anchoring, it was a bit frisky for an afternoon beach walk. Perhaps we will get a morning walk in before we shift





### Port Clinton: Northern anchorage to Mount Flinders anchorage

31<sup>st</sup> October 2021. The beach where we were anchored overnight was not that big so after strolling along its length I suggested to Andrew that we take the tinnie around to the next bay, where a much longer beach awaited us. It wasn't the experience that we expected. Landing the tinnie was fraught with frustration as the sand was sloppy and soft, feet sinking significantly just to get ashore. Walking along the beach meant a constant lookout for harder sand, often walking at the perceived height of the high tide to ensure our feet didn't sink, but that meant on hot sand and not cooling the toes in the lovely cool sea. We got back to boat and moved (motored) to the main anchorage area at Port Clinton to await the coming southerly.

Jobs for the day. I put the elastic in the second hatch cover that I had made, and then we tried to make water. We hadn't made water when we got back to boat because we were looking for clean seawater. The incoming tide at Port Clinton should give us pretty clear water to desalinate. The water was clear. The desalinator however didn't want to play. What do we do now? We hadn't filled the tanks up at Mackay because we were expecting to make water. Suddenly with potentially a week of sitting out in an essentially remote location we were down to water rationing. 'Just another challenge about living on a boat!'

Clouds had built up slowly during the day and the southerly change came in around 1600. We don't know how strong it got but we did see 28.6 knots on the gauges.

I started and completed a third hatch cover. Andrew went up the mast to temporarily repair a fraying jackstay (by tying a knot in it). I glued some shells onto my next wall project. We spent most of the day however recreational reading and conducted a short yoga session in the evening. We had pear loaf for lunch and chicken mix for dinner.

Wildlife spotted this morning included a wild boar on a beach near Mount Flinders and lots of mating turtles.