

# Aboard Sengo



## April on high

Less rain, some elevation...  
and a lot of too-ing and fro-ing

We were on dock at the beginning of April, but fortunately not for long; moving out into the familiar Broadwater at the earliest opportunity; spending our time between our usual gutter anchorage near Paradise Point for access to medical appointments, and Tiger Mullet Channel for wind and weather protection. We have done this dance for the majority of the past four months; I am looking forward in the coming weeks to be doing something different, and hopefully new every day.

There were mixed experiences this month; some plusses and some minuses. We braved the crowds at Paradise Point over Easter (I had to defend our patch from a couple of rich boat owners) so we would have a spot there with the expected calmer days after the holiday break. We didn't get our calmer days; we got bullied out by a Bums Bay (drunk and drugged and highly abusive) refugee. Some you win - and some you clearly lose!

There were very few new excursions to report, although the SkyTower was a bit of a touristy treat. April's highlight however was the special avian visitors that graced us with their presence at the end of the month.





## A DRIVE NORTH

1st April 2022. The sunset was lovely. Well, that was deduced from the brief glimpse I had got of it, a brief portrait view of a riverway topped by bushy sides with grey cumulous clouds hanging silently in the fading night sky, all with rosy-red bases. The poignancy of the moment assured by the location on top of an historic gateway bridge over the Brisbane River between Indooroopilly and Chelmar.

I didn't have time to appreciate it however for two reasons; firstly we were travelling at 60km per hour, and secondly, we couldn't afford to miss the next turn off. We had already missed two turnoffs on this drive; and the first had led us into Brisbane City - during peak hour! For a brief moment I entertained the thought of finding our way to K2. We were going to make an online order from them tonight anyway, and indeed our misplaced route took us within four blocks of their location, but the idea of finding parking in the middle of a foreign city, in peak hour on a Friday night, quickly put us off that. So we followed what we thought was the way out of the city, missed another turnoff (the intuitive move was to stay left to turn left, but the left lane led to an over pass and turned right) and ended up heading west up the river instead. There was no obvious way to turn around and so I had to define a route back to the Gold Coast by hopefully not turning onto the Logan Toll Motorway! Of course the reason we were in this situation in the first place was because we were trying to avoid the Gateway Toll Way to save money. In the end it probably didn't matter because the detour through Brisbane's western suburbs had driven us over

our daily mileage limit. We will probably be paying for extra kilometres anyway!

The reason we were driving through Brisbane was because we had gone visiting. The day was fine with minimal chance of rain, and therefore no real risk of leaky hatches. We hadn't caught up with *Anapa* for four and a half months and as they were expected to head further north soon, and therefore it is likely we won't see them again until towards the end of the year, which will be, for us, a long time between visits, we thought we should make the effort. So, despite a two hour drive each way, we took the opportunity to catch up for lunch.

Our delightful time together ended way too soon.

The only job of the day happened before our road trip; posting my recalcitrant good camera down to Sydney for a repair/service/replacement-whatever it needed would be determined when it arrived at the service centre.



Quirky modern technology: The lunch order was done on line via a QR code. But where was desert? Even the cook was surprised desert wasn't listed on the QR site. Fortunately there were blackboard menus giving us options!



Our two missed turnoffs meant we were returning to the Gold Coast in the dark!

## A LOCAL WALK.

2nd April 2022. The weather was still predicted to be fine (ish) today and most of the day predicted to be rain free, so the opportunity was there for a local walk. I didn't want to go too far, and indeed we had to manage the break in the rain showers. With Andrew's recovering black toes he didn't want to walk too far but he thought he would be okay for a few kilometres. To try something new I consulted the AllTrails App and came up with a route that was clearly someone's local jaunt covering open paddock, footpath and access track. All up it was just under six kilometres but unfortunately, by the time we had finished, this was long enough to aggravate Andrew's foot again. It wasn't bad scenery, and it did traverse through a couple of very small patches of rainforest-like terrain, although the loop at the end was around a suburban rugby field. The bird spot of the day belonged to Andrew - who saw a kingfisher. I missed it unfortunately.

Heading back to boat we dropped a load of recyclables off to the tip and managed a final load of shopping. The evening was spent doing several loads of washing (and some drying)



## BACK ON THE PICK.

3rd April 2022. 'Back to normal boat life and checking tides. We were helped off dock at 0730 by S, A and T.

At 0830 we were still motoring down the Coomera River - against the tide. At 0845 we had turned north into the main channel and were lifting our main sail. There was no real wind for sailing, although it may have been strong enough for a slow sail had it been in the right angle. Instead we were motoring into the wind so we could raise the sail and get the expected water out of sail bag, given the 300mm of rain that had fallen the other day (28th-29th March). But there was no expected waterfall. Nothing. The sail was fully dry. Andrew did mention he had pulled the jack stays up reasonably tight after the last time we cleared the deluge out of the sail bag, but even he didn't expect it to be this dry. We then dropped the sail.

We would have had the anchor down much quicker had we turned around and headed back to our gutter anchorage, but Andrew suggested Tiger Mullet Channel. Because we needed to head back to the gutter tomorrow for an early morning car pick up on Tuesday, the compromise was Jumpinin. But this took longer to get to, and although we had had a very light breakfast our stomachs were

indicating they could do with something to eat. So whilst Andrew was in charge of helm at 0925 I was inside the cabin cooking an omelet. Breakfast was eaten as we headed through the narrow bit near the turn off to Jacobs Well, and the anchor down just before 1000.

The day was a mixture of small boat jobs (wiping down the window mesh of the back cockpit, wiping down some deck, putting the lines away used for our dock tie up (they were covered in dew this morning so I waited until they were dry) and cleaning the Coomera River gunge off the bottom of a couple of fenders. The day also included recreational reading and an afternoon snooze.

The anchorage was popular this morning but most mid to large powerboats, all jets skis, and most tinnies had gone home by late afternoon. We almost had the southern end of the anchorage (south of the southern starboard mark) to ourselves. Unfortunately during the day a large rental houseboat had come in full of young adults and anchored next to us. I suspect it is going to be a noisy night.

On the plus side, we will get our first expansive sunset for some time.

The front covers came off today for the first time in ages. Andrew even spent some time in the front cockpit reading. It was so nice to let the light in and have full vision, and full air flow through the boat.



4th April 2022. The wind picked up a bit overnight, the boat joggled and I could hear the whistle of the rigging. Fortunately our young bunch of neighbours hadn't been too noisy. By the time we went to bed, clouds covered most of the sky, there were only a few spots between them where the stars could be spotted.

I got up this morning around 0530. Twilight was on its way. The days are getting shorter.

The grey skies eventually turned to sunshine and the day was looking up. Andrew unfortunately still has a major toe issue because of the sand getting into the wrong places in his boots on the WA hike, and although better today he was still not foot fit for a walk. It seems I was just going to have to put up with admiring the view.

I spent the morning wiping down the back mesh, the back walkway and a couple of steps. I also rebooked our potential PCR tests in Vancouver, cooked breakfast and lunch, conducted an email discussion regarding a refund from a Canadian accommodation provider and some more editing on the WA Plodding Along blurb.

After lunch the anchor was up at 1330. We motored south in minimal breeze to put the anchor down in our gutter anchorage at around 1445.

We had dugongs pass us on way down and there were a couple also frolicking in the gutter in the evening. Andrew had another practice run with his drone and we spent some time constructing our menu for the next week.



5th April 2022. The skies were clear, the wind non-existent, the smallest of waves because of the incoming tide running into the anchorage, and a lovely hue of pink glossed over the water in the pre-sunrise. The sun shot itself over south Stradbroke island around 0605, just under an hour after I had got up.

We were on our feet most of today and I was surprised just how un-tired my feet felt at the end of it. I was wearing my new sneakers: nimbus from Asics. They are apparently the most comfortable shoe they have from a spongy base point of view. We had bought last year's model because they were \$30 cheaper than this year's model and at the end of the day my feet felt as fresh as they had been this morning.

The only walking I had expected to be doing today was to the car rental place, and I almost expected to do it alone. Andrew's toes were still recovering from their faulty shoe sand egress incident in WA and I didn't know how he would feel for the forty odd minutes of pavement walking from the Paradise Point Jetty to the car hire mob, given that our slightly longer walk, but slightly softer walk (not all if it was on concrete) last week had re-aggravated the injury. But with taped toes he joined me. After picking up the car we went visiting a fellow yachting's computer guru. I needed some tech advice for a new computer (from someone who didn't have an invested interest in selling me what was on the floor) and I was hoping the info on my now very dead computer could be salvaged. It turns out the disk was still fine and we now have it in its own hard drive cover waiting for me to extract the old information from it. As for a new computer, we got one of those too, from Robina Town Shopping Centre: a huge shopping mall in the Gold Coast southern suburbs. By the time we got there lunch was the first priority but we had mixed success. We chose the Thai Restaurant and I ordered off the standard menu. Andrew ordered off the lunch specials and wasn't nearly as impressed; the Hot Beef Chilli was apparently not hot at all. My chilli chicken mince dish was however enough to leave my mouth tingling, although admittedly I have a milder palette than Andrew and it doesn't take much to get my mouth tingling. After lunch we had one specific task to complete. And it wasn't getting me a new computer!

Despite the fact we didn't think we would need them, we were on a mission to get International Drivers' Licences. Just in case. Most of our upcoming booked car hires are in major centres in a

Commonwealth Country so we shouldn't have an issue. But it is better to be prepared.

To get to Camera House for some passport photos we had to basically walk to the other side of the shopping centre from where we had eaten lunch, go downstairs, and walk halfway back again. To get to JB HiFi where we bought my new computer we had to walk almost back to where we had started. Then we had to walk back to Camera House to pick up the photos, back almost to where we had started (this time via a different route) to find RACQ to get the licences and then back to where we started, but one level down for a well earned cuppa. Our last journey inside the shopping centre was going up the nearby stairs and exiting the building at the same door we had come in, over three hours before.

I had read on a couple of websites that an international drivers licence was not needed in Canada if the licence was written in English. Somewhere Andrew had seen a comment to the contrary. When we got to RACQ we explained to the young lad behind the counter where we wanted the licences for and that we probably wouldn't need them. Pulling the info up on his computer

Canada's main states (provinces) are listed as recognising our licences. But not all of Canada's provinces were listed (at least two of them are referred to as Territories so perhaps this is relevant) and of those missing, one is where we will be hiring a car. Perhaps this little exercise was prudent after all.

Up until today the international drivers licence was one of the only two payments we had made for our Canada Trip last time (2 years ago in 2020) that we hadn't got a refund for. Given the confusion at the time when Covid was cancelling everyone's plans we didn't bother chasing such a small amount of money: asking for it would have required a car (which would have cost more than the refund) and a trip back to Robina, a trip that was banned anyway, because everyone was asked to stay in their local suburb (mind you that didn't stop a lot of yachties shooting north. We did the right thing. We stayed put).

We had managed to get refunds from airlines (although they were originally credits), car hire mobs that had been prepaid, and day tours that had been prepaid. We had however left our money with the two biggest hosts knowing we would rebook the same activities once the pandemic was back to a manageable situation and travel was again permitted. Admittedly we did expect that to be last year. The only money that wasn't voluntarily returned to us was from an accommodation provider to whom we had only paid a deposit; their policy to keep the money as a down payment on a future stay. That was fine with us. However when I went to rebook Canada this year and contacted the company, the email response was a little disappointing. They wouldn't know until April what the situation was and they were thinking of selling. Where did that leave us? When I fully rebooked our trip a month or so later I left this accommodation off the itinerary. Thinking we would not see our money again I emailed them anyway. Yes, they were selling most of their cabins, keeping only one, the available dates for which they provided. Even if I was still looking for accommodation in that area the available dates were not suitable and could perhaps we organise a refund. So began a brief email conversation as to how to get our deposit back to us

(minus whatever transaction fee that entailed). The upshot was after several rejected options that I walked into the Mudgeeraba Post Office this afternoon and withdrew the money from Western Union. So all in all the only money we didn't get back from our original booking was the cost of the now expired International Driver's Licences and the fee to get this accommodation deposit back. Given other people's experience and losses that we have heard about, we think we got off remarkably well.

By the time we did a week's worth of shopping at the Hope Island Woolworths store and got back to Paradise Point it was early evening. It was still light when we got back to boat around 1730 but the sun was low in the sky, behind cloud. I spent a few minutes outside appreciating the stillness (it was change of tide and there was no wind and no boat traffic) before the mozzies sent me inside. Despite my feet feeling lively, my brain was tired. We had headed off boat around 0845. We got back nearly nine hours later. It had been a long day!



## TO TIGER MULLET CHANNEL

6th April 2022. I got up at 0200 to write up yesterdays diary notes. At about 0330 I went back to bed again. The alarm went off at 0530.

It was windier than I expected this morning, but not by much, and conditions were still fine to launch the tinnie. We were on shore at 0655 and as usual early for my eye appointment, sitting in the car park for 20 minutes before the clinic opened. The trip back to return the car involved a detour to the transfer station where I deposited my old computer at the e-waste section (where most things chucked out were old tv's. All seemed reasonably modern to me. Maybe we could have upgraded ours). We also had four bags of commingled recycling to drop off so it was good getting that off the boat.

We made good time walking back to the Paradise Point Jetty from the car hire mob, including a stop at the post office to check on a text Andrew had received about post he never ordered (text went to wrong number) and within 35 minutes of heading back we were in the tinnie heading to Runaway Bay Marina. After filling up three jerrycans with unleaded we headed back to boat arriving around 15 minutes after I had originally planned.

Normally this wouldn't matter but banking on our usual 1.5 hour trip to Tiger Mullet I was conscious we were going to miss high tide for Whalleys Gutter. Thankfully the wind had increased a bit since earlier this morning and whilst we had both motors on, the journey was assisted by having the genoa out, the extra speed enough to get us to the channel fifteen minutes after high tide.

The genoa was dropped just after we entered Tiger Mullet over the shallow bit and the anchor down soon after. By this time it was around 1250. Roast mushrooms had been prepared and eaten on the way up so we were no longer hungry. It was time to relax and settle in for the afternoon, Andrew catching up on some Motor racing and me playing with my new computer. The Pages program on Apple is similar to Word but I am yet to work out its subtleties.

7th April 2022. 'Morning,' Andrew said poking me in the side. I jolted out of whatever dream I was having. 'Morning,' I replied thinking it was pre dawn as it was quite black outside. No hang on. Is that rain. I leapt out of bed, headed for the towel cupboard and then retrieved the shipwright's buckets from out the back in the tinnie. I moved the hats and blankets off the top of the cupboard and put the water catching devices there instead. I moved the bathroom scales and floor mat and put a towel and bucket there instead. I unwrapped the vinyl sheet that was sitting on the couch and placed a towel and bucket there as well. I also made a quick dash to C3 to make sure the towels and buckets were set up there in the right places. The hatch that was leaking profusely (waterfall) when we had arrived home at 2100 on 28th March had been swapped with the hatch that was above C2 so hopefully there was going to be less leaking.

By this time the shower has stopped and I looked at my watch. It was 0330! And Andrew was still in bed. Next time I will jolt him awake and he can do all the dirty work!

Another quick downpour went over at 0420. I had been filling in yesterdays diary notes so I was still up. I could hear the wind pick up outside but the bom.gov.au rain radar showed a smallish system. I didn't think it was going to last long

No boat jobs today. Just a lot of writing. I continued to work on the Cape To Cape Writeup, and continued to learn the nuances of the Apple word processing package. I am having trouble at this point adding photos and working out how to manipulate them on the page.



8th April 2022. After having put everything away that I'd scattered in the rain panic at 0330 yesterday morning I was up at 0030 this morning pulling it all off the shelves again. I didn't know how long it would rain or how intense and I hoped I had put the buckets in the correct positions. The hatch in the head was an unknown because we had swapped it with the hatch over C2 so whilst it had also been tested as having bowed over its 8 year life, it was under cover and the seals less likely to be damaged. Would it leak at all? Fortunately the rain periods over night were short and not too intense (they sounded a bit more than light) and at 0630 there were no obvious leaks on the starboard side.

The day was spent getting the February and January newsletters transferred across to the new word processing package. The evening was spent watching the AFL Geelong vs Brisbane game.

9th April 2022. It was a grey morning and the first thing I noticed looking outside was the double rainbow. It rained on and off all day - fortunately not heavily (most of the time) Andrew spent the day watching the F1 Qualifying. I spent the day clove oiling the helm station ceiling, and fighting my computer and the new word processing document.

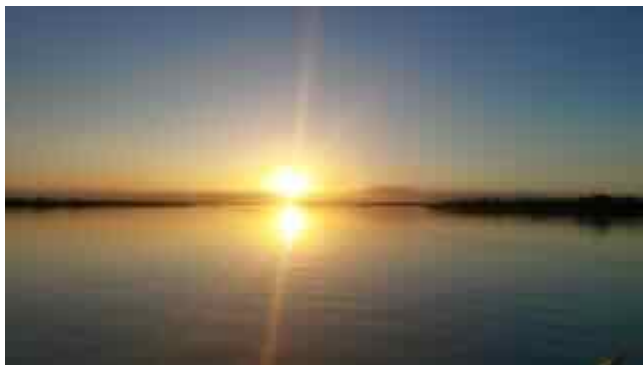


10th April 2022. The morning bird song wasn't as loud as the surf pounding on the outer side of the top of South Stradbroke Island. There were mostly clear skies at 0600, with just a hint of clouds on the horizons

I spent the day writing up Cape To Cape Capers. Andrew watched Grand Prix



Job of the day was rinsing the really grungy rope that had been hanging in the Coomera River whilst we were on dock (I had forgotten about it until today)



## TO PARADISE POINT.

11th April 2022. It was a still morning. The bush birds were singing and the sun popped over the horizon around 0600. Because there was no wind it was midgie heaven and my hands were almost black with the tiny insects as I was trying to pick the anchor up. The photo of the houseboat is of a 'Coomera Houseboat' vessel that is anchored on 'the 'purple line' on the electronic chart. Right in the middle of the channel! I am not sure if you need a boat license to hire these vessels but a bit of navigation nous would be useful. I guess that is technically up to the hire mob - really!



12th April 2022. There was the usual walk to pick up the hire car today. We expected our usual Accent. We got a bus! Andrew's foot was a bit better but still had issues. None the less our shopping excursion was for new walking boots for him. Keen have not got back to me after my complaint of late March and early April. Unfortunately. So at this point that brand is now off the list. He found a suitable pair of Merrells. In an attempt to find the best price for them we hit the internet. We found a better price. The outlet store wouldn't come down. They lost the sale.

Getting the best price for the boots meant we ended up at Robina so lunch and an afternoon cuppa, was spent at the shopping centre. Other purchases included packing cubes and a book.

Peak hour traffic was slow - heading north as well as south. The accident that caused this was on the south direction section of the road; our traffic jam was because of rubber-neckers

By the time we did our food shopping run at the Hope Island Woolies it was getting dark. We were conscious that we hadn't turned our anchor light on when we had left this morning. As it turned out we didn't need to worry - we had forgotten to turn it off!





13th April 2022. The icky item of the day was that Andrew's toe nail fell off. The repair item of the day was that I was able to get a jeweller to put a new latch on my necklace (see Plodding Along). The frustrating item of today was our leaky hatches; after all the tooting and froing with the fabricator who said he could have a 'couple of day turnaround,' to not checking measurements whilst we were away so we came home to internal waterfalls in a 300mm 24 hour rain event, to saying he would need four weeks, to revising that to two weeks, to revising that back out to six weeks, Andrew actually rang him today. Sorry, I'm too busy. What! What do we do now? Such a deflating situation. And we are the moment totally lost.

This morning there were grey clouds in sky with some blue to south west. We took our rain coats for the walk back from returning the car but we only copped a drizzle when we got back to Paradise Point. It didn't last long. There was another brief drizzle around 1130

When we got back to boat we noticed a power-cat inshore of us. We might look like we are on the eastern side of the channel but the anchor is more in the middle. When the tide changes we might be dancing cheek to cheek. We suggested our spot between the islands. They were there for a short time before moving on

14th April 2022. When I got up at 0700 the sun was out and the air was filled with the chorus of the local butcher birds.

I didn't notice them much after that as I opened up our covers, clove oiled the front cockpit ceiling, put the plethora of stuff back onto the cupboards, put the mat back into our head that had been cleared for towels and buckets last night (there was very little rain and no leaks) and opened up the side windows on the port side. There was a little rain out east to sea but nothing imminent and that side of the boat was desperate for an air and clean up.

At around 0930 the wind picked up and the classic strong wind against tide Paradise Point dance began..one minute we were lined up with all the other boats along the shore...the next we were over toward the other side of the channel nearing the large houseboat (who had come into this anchorage after us but was a safe distance away).

At 1115 there was a mad rush to close the outside covers, close the windows and reinstate the buckets just as a bout of rain came down. It wasn't heavy and when I finally got the chance to check the radar, didn't look like it would last long, but I still didn't want to take the chance of leaks on material

Two cats came in to anchor near us. The one going for the outer side of the channel I yelled across and told him we swing across at change of tide. So do we he said. I am not sure what he meant. He tried a spot further north and ended up back adjacent us where he had been anchored before. Sometime after 2000 in the dark we heard his anchor come up. The houseboat to the north was moving around a bit on anchor and we had indeed swung to the



other side of the channel. We don't know how close he actually got before picking the anchor up. We did tell him.

A smaller cat who seemed to have been stuck on a sandbank most of the day attempted to anchor in front of us coming to rest just over 20 m to our south. I've got 25 to 30 meters out I yelled. You need to go further forward. They moved to behind the power boat to our north but we did notice later that there were torches out on either that cat or the one behind it. Perhaps they were a bit close there as well

Earlier in the day a small power boat had tried to anchor inshore of us off our starboard bow. He was 38m from us. I think me coming out with the golf ranger gave him enough excuse to move on.





15th April 2022. A Morning walk. When I got up there was a full blue sky. The weather predictions suggested 40 per cent chance of rain. It was supposed to be blowing early teens and gusting to low twenties but instead the conditions were reasonably calm first thing in the morning. It was still calm(ish) as Andrew got up a bit later so we went for a walk; the usual Paradise Point jaunt. Surprisingly we didn't see a dachshund until half way round the circuit, but we now know where the local group meets weekly. It was a bit windier as we got back to boat.

During the day I had to defend space from several power boats who wanted to anchor inshore from us.

On our walk we had espied *Skellum* and invited them over for afternoon cuppa. Whilst distracted with visitors a mono sailing boat anchored in front of us. We were socialising in the front cockpit but had the covers down because of the on and off showers.

We should be alright. Maybe. Andrew stayed up until 11pm to check our position. The wind was light and we weren't at full stretch. I had pulled three fenders out of the locker just in case; at full stretch we may have been dancing cheek to cheek.

16th April 2022. Like yesterday the wind seemed to pick up a little after 0900. But we hadn't been for a walk this morning. In fact Andrew was only just getting up at that time.

The skies were mostly clear but they filled in and produced light rain in the afternoon. I spent the day defending our spot, packing for Canada, polishing my walking boots, wiping down some of the front cockpit (despite being behind covers most of the time it gets quite dirty), read a bit and did the dishes.

The creative document for the day was constructing a review document for walk we had just done. The company leaves a two page 'tick the box' questionnaire for you to circle the answers that best fit.... but I had a few points I wanted to convey that needed a more formal format.

17th April 2022. I had mentioned to Andrew yesterday that I wanted a walk today...but early to fit in with the lower winds predicted. Around 0700 would be good. I hadn't actually expected Andrew to get up before me. But he did. We made shore and started the Paradise Point jaunt around 0710. We didn't see a dachshund until around 0755 this time, and we only saw one for the entire circuit. There had been clouds in the sky when we started - the forecast was for 30 per cent chance of rain. And it did - just as we were getting back to the jetty. You think it could have waited another five minutes! We didn't get too wet, and the overhanging solar panels extend our shelter out the back so we were under cover within a short time. Of course though just as the tinnie was secured, the rain stopped.

I spent the day fighting two recalcitrant boats - don't they realise that boats swing across the channel here. One boat had a master 5 in charge of it - he eventually moved to the centre with the cat that had to move a couple of nights ago - maybe we should have gone there, it would have saved a lot of my angst (not Andrew's - he left me to it). The second a family who argued, told us we were blocking the channel, told us to pull some line in and then parked near us anyway.

Andrew went to bet at 2300. I had an early sleep and got up around this time, and finally went to bed at 0030



## RETREATING TO THE GUTTER

18th April 2022. Butcherbirds were calling over a quiet, calm morning. We hadn't hit the recalcitrant boat overnight and it was now in front of us. I had originally had plans to be paddling at around 0700 but I only got up at that time. Andrew was still in bed. Crows cowed in the back ground.

I got on the scales; I am down another kilo so am pretty happy with progress of the current eating regime,;although I am about to combine two theories.

Andrew wasn't up to go for a paddle when I wanted to at 0700. And when he did get up he wanted breakfast first. So it wasn't until 0935 when we were drifting away from boat. The recalcitrant stinky left at this time (although he was back again less than an hour later). Andrew managed 15 minutes, on his knees. Not bad after a very long absence. I started on my knees but ended up on wobbly pegs paddling almost to the jetty before turning around. The conditions weren't quite as smooth as before but I think I did fairly well, collecting Andrew from the beach on the way back.

In the end we moved today. After fighting recalcitrant boats who were clearly not aware of this anchorages 'foible's we ended up getting bullied out by a Bums Bay refugee. But when the boat puts his anchor down where we are going to swing into him, refuses to move, abuses us, and he is a big steel boat, then prudence is the better part of valour. I had fought off boats through the weekend so we could have a couple of nice calm days for paddle boarding in the protected area of the Paradise Point anchorage. Clearly it was not to be.

Of course when we did move it was close to low tide but we made it through the shallow bits. It was a calm evening in the gutter.

One of the small blisters on my right little toe that I got on the WA walk has progressively got bigger (without bothering me) and the outer layer of skin peeled off today.



19th April 2022. I was hoping for a very early paddle at low tide at 0530 but didn't wake up until 0740. Not long after this the fishing tinnies and jet skies started going past so I gave the idea up. Later of course bow waves at high tide would be a problem. As it was, Andrew's board decided it wasn't happy so we now need to find a fix for that. So the day was spent not defending the anchorage; instead the mundane jobs of last nights dishes, swapping moisture absorbers around, eye exercises etc.

## SCENERY AT 77!

20th April 2022. I hadn't exactly planned to go to SkyTower today so I didn't exactly read the fine detail when I came up with the Q1 building in a rush this morning when looking for something different for brunch for our 20th wedding anniversary..

Yes, they are open for breakfast (as I had picked up) but unless it is school holidays (which we had just missed), then not on Wednesdays (which I had clearly not picked up). On top of this after parking downstairs we went to the wrong reception desk (the Q1 Resort and Spa reception desk not the SkyTower desk - it wasn't obvious which way to go after coming out of the lifts from the car park) and completely got ourselves mucked up. After explaining our predicament to the lass behind the desk she gave us a discount card for breakfast across the street. 'Just tell them your room number.', she said But we are not staying here. Oh well - go over anyway. We got a buffet breakfast for \$20 - a substantial breakfast for a very good price.

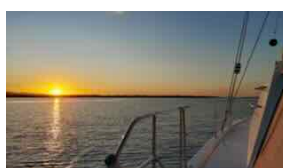
What do we do now? Well it has gone 1000, we may as well go and look at the tower anyway. The day pass with a food voucher is better value than the day pass by itself but we had just had a big breakfast so lunch was not going to be on the cards. So after waiting in queue (Andrew does not do queues well) with an occasionally coughing Islander behind us, we found ourselves shooting up the 77 floors in 40 something seconds (complete with virtual lift shaft graphics). The day was beautiful. The view was magnificent and had we paid the \$2 to look through the binoculars we probably could have seen Sengo in the distance. After admiring the view we sat down on a couch with a window view and had cuppa and gluten free cake. Well, we had cake immediately - the cuppa took over twenty minutes - and that came with another cake - which we sent back - we were that full!



Leaving the touro spot we visited the Spit - it has been such a long time since we've been here. Bums Bay was chock full of boats, the sun was out and the beach shone back in typical QLD summer colours. A detour to Harbour Town ensued before handing the car back and walking back to Paradise Point.



The lasses at the post office initially had trouble finding my Paddy Pallin parcel but all was well in the end. We were back on boat around 1700. Winds were calm. Skies were clear. It had been a magnificent day.



## TO TIGER MULLET CHANNEL

21st April 2022. We picked up the anchor at around 1045 to head to Tiger Mullet Channel. It was late in the morning because we were taking the top of the tide up to get the best possible depth at Whalleys Gutter. The anchor came up clean, which is a first from this spot.

There was a bit of wind blowing - 10 to 15 knots on occasion - but the angle was such that it was behind us, and whilst the stronger gusts may have helped to sail, the lighter winds became too light 'apparent' for them to be useful.... We motored all the way. There was a bit of traffic out. Most of which we had seen coming south in the morning, but we suspect as there is another long weekend coming up that there will be a lot more boats out heading north this afternoon.

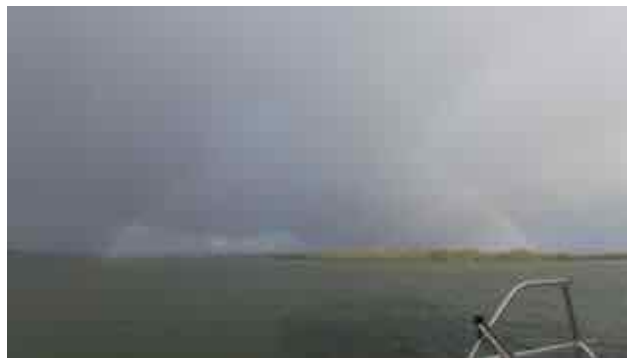
We have been having our breakfasts quite late. In fact we have almost been turning them into lunches but we were getting nibbly. The planned meal was a turkey bog sauce but I wasn't going to be cooking that on the way north. Instead I made a simple interim salad and cooked the bog once we had anchored, not long after 1200.

The rest of the day was spent reading, cleaning, cooking and on Feb's newsletter. I also managed some eye exercises.

It rained lightly a couple of times during the afternoon

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22 April 2022. It was a grey morning when I got up at around 0630. There was also a bit of wind outside. But at this point no rain. It had rained lightly around midnight and I had leaped out of bed to place all the drip containers under our leaky hatches. Fortunately there wasn't enough rain to be a problem and no water seeped in.



23rd April 2022. We didn't see much over 26 knots on the gauges, but neither did we check all the time.

It had rained overnight but I hadn't heard the drips. Andrew had, and a bucket needed decanting this morning. It rained all day. The delight of the day was that a rainbow made its way toward us; I felt I could have touched the pot of gold.

I managed some photo organisation, finishing the washing that I had started yesterday, Canada research, eye exercises (two at night), cooking dinner, dishes, recreational reading. We also managed to glue the rupture in Andrew's paddle board - I hope that works. In the evening we had enough reception to watch the Dockers vs Blues AFL footy match.





24th April 2022. Looking out the window when I got up around 0630 I could see a section of blue sky. The sun was up somewhere and that brought a smile to my face. By the time I had alighted the steps however it was raining. There goes that I thought - but the rain only last ten minutes.

I wasn't feeling all that well today. I had a couple of short sleeps throughout the day and went to bed early. Apart from that I didn't do much; recreational reading, dusted the living room floor, cooked breakfast and dinner.

I managed to watch one AFL footy match but I went to bed at the start of the second one. Unfortunately my team had played earlier in the day and that match had not been televised.



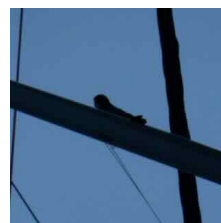
25th April 2022. I missed the Dawn Service. Not exactly intentionally; I just slept through it. Although my hips had been hurting for quite some time overnight so it was possible I was tossing and turning in discomfort at the time I could have got up for it. When I did get up at 0709 the sky was partly cloudy partly blue, partly rain and the wind was blowing cold. I had thought of at least rolling up the back door; I left it down.

We didn't do much. I wasn't interested in anything to do with World War I; I'd had my fill of all that misery when we visited the European Australian War Memorials some years ago; there is only so much grief one can absorb. We did however watch the entirety of the Collingwood and Essendon AFL match. Surprisingly it was a good game. The last game I remember having watched with these two teams on Anzac Day is etched, for the wrong reasons, into my mind. We were in Ceduna. We were in the pub. We were watching a very big screen with a local crowd who were, symbolically I think because of the link to Port Adelaide's original nick name, going for Collingwood. Essendon was getting trounced. It was the day Andrew gave up on the Essendon side, and the day we actually walked out before the final siren. Funny the things you remember. Other recollections of that day included attending the Dawn Service, at the local park, (which unfortunately turned into a bit of a christian-type religious sermon) attended mostly by transient grey nomads (land based, we were the only water going cruiser in the area) and hosted and run by the local constabulary. I was in contact with a few of the police persons for a while after that. They were a great bunch of individuals!

## BACK TO THE GUTTER

26th April 2022. Of all the birds we have had land on Sengo, I don't think any have been as special as this evening's visitor. Of course the albatross who ran into us in Bass Strait has usually topped the list, and several ospreys have been pretty special (including the individual that looked down at me with such amusement late December last year (see Aboard Sengo December 2021) but, surely, you can't beat a peregrine falcon! We don't know how long he was there as he left soon after we spotted him, but we were delighted to have been privileged with his presence.

I had picked up my camera from the post office this afternoon but was waiting to finish the book I was reading before embarking on unpacking it. So of course I didn't have it primed for a close-up shot. The best I could do with short notice was the little waterproof camera and I trust that photo, when I download it, will be fuzzy.



The day had been grey with a chance of showers. The wind was predicted to be calm, or less than the 15 knots that we motored in to on our way south to our gutter anchorage. And we had got some exercise, our usual Paradise Point jaunt after lunch. The walkers were few, their moods sombre, getting only a couple of greetings from those walking in the opposite direction. There was only one chatty chap, who scooted past us on an electric scooter, and ten minutes later returned the way he had come. And no dachshunds! What is wrong with the world? This is normally dachshund central!

We got back to boat just as a few drops fell from the sky. But that was it in terms of precipitation.

Jobs of the day; emailing hotel in Canada to make sure they would be open when we arrived, transferred some money to pay for a new fence in Launceston, Andrew contacted someone who can hopefully help us with our hatches (this long saga requires a book!), read a bit, cooked breakfast, put the now dried washing away, and did my eye exercises.



27th April 2022. We could have gone to shore today. Maybe. This morning the winds were relatively calm. As predicted. And they stayed relatively calm. As predicted. The sun was up when we got out of bed and it wasn't raining...on us at least. I would have liked a morning walk but the rain radar indicated rain was on its way. Potentially. Indeed throughout the day we could look either west, south or east and see the rain coming down. It wasn't far away; somewhere up the Coomera precipitation obscured Mount Tamborine and its foothills, and to the south, at one point, we couldn't see Southport; it was just a mass of grey. I don't know if the rain got as close as Paradise Point, I was busy all day with eye exercises, recreational reading (finished *Shardik*), dishes, March's newsletter, chasing information for Canada, relearning how to use my camera, washing the clears and the top of the helm station roof and admiring the jet fighters, who spent a good fifteen or twenty minutes doing circles in and out of the rain clouds to our east. What I do know is that Sengo didn't actually get wet; there was no rain on top of us. For exercise we got half a yoga session in. Andrew's task involved some packing strategies, re water-proofing our daypack rain covers, and charging some batteries.

There were no unusual animal visitors today; the usual contingent of swallows trying for a good place to make a nest (they got shooed away), and a turtle emerged to take a breath off our starboard side. The usual local birds were seen; white bellied sea eagle, pied oyster catchers, terns, pacific gulls, egrets.



28th April 2022. At 0615 I took a photo of the impending sunrise. At 0615 the rain started. It wasn't heavy. It just reminded me that I haven't checked the weather this morning.

Five minutes would have been nice-later or earlier, it was hard to tell. Just after we heeded back to boat in the tinnie from the Paradise Point jetty it started to rain. A little at first and then it got heavier. We had our coats and put them on but we got soaked. The bags got soaked.

We took the route along the mainland inside the Sovereign Islands and just as we rounded the islands into the Coomera River the rain stopped. The cloud above stayed over the mainland; there was blue sky over Sengo, although as we approached we could see that the boat had been rained upon. The sun was behind the horizon and it was getting dark.

Today was an eye appointment day. So we had walked to the car hire mob and headed south but had diverted to take a hatch cover to yet another contractor to see if they could produce some more. To reduce the chance of water getting in the boat we had taken the hatch above our bed. Next week we are going to have to remove several hatches -Andrew has a plan to seal the gaps up so the open areas wont let water in - hopefully a little more successfully than the current sticky plastic.



29th April 2022. I had thought about catching up with another boat this morning but by the time that thought had crossed my mind it was probably too late to organise it. So it was a casual morning on boat before we headed off to a 1030 optometrist appointment.

In theory we were after peak hour but the traffic was still pretty



thick on the motorway. We were a little early so a quick visit to Wild Earth for a couple of pairs of socks for Andrew ensued. The optometrist was running late and my appointment probably didn't help. The upshot was that by the time we headed north we were running out of time for the car hire. The main reason we headed into the Robina Town Centre on the way back was to look at ways to carry my good camera during our upcoming trip. However it was also lunch time and we were hungry. So lunch was a priority. After that time was that scarce we knew the car return would be late. So we whisked into Camera House to get the one thing I knew I wanted (clips for camera strap) and left any technical decisions about other equipment until next week. We diverted via the transfer station to get rid of some commingled recycling before the car got dropped off. Early afternoon was a catch up with *Joule* before meat shopping and administration in Paradise Point Shopping Centre. We were back on board before sunset today.

30th April 2022. I was delighted that Andrew had suggested a walk today on South Stradbroke from North Curragee campground, but as the morning wore on he made no effort to start that excursion. We listened to two youtube episodes of 'a different bias', and watched several from a travel youtuber about Canada and Vancouver. By this time it was after 1200 and so it wasn't until after lunch that we finally got to shore, and that was with me insisting that although we couldn't get a long walk in before sundown we would at least get some of a walk in.. Andrew had looked at tomorrows wind predictions on bom.gov.au and suggested the winds looked okay for a longer walk then. The problem with that forecast presentation is that there is usually a bigger range involved and 10 - 15 knots could mean a doable 10 knots or a more uncomfortable 15 knots. I like windy.com because it is more precise, and according to that prediction model today was definitely the better day to get off boat.

It was low in a dropping tide when we approached the floating grey plastic square at the end of a short jetty walkway. We put our shoes on and then managed to manoeuvre the boat to the side without standing in the mud. The campground was filling up but we didn't stick around, turning left at the main north-south South Stradbroke Island track. Given the time my idea had been to walk this track for a certain time one way and then turn around and reverse the trek. Andrew usually likes to do a loop on these excursions but that usually takes some hours which of course due to the lateness of the day, we didn't have. We walked for around 40 minutes, past the turn off to Browns Road, which we assume leads to the lagoon just to the south of our anchorage, and turned around where we disturbed a macropod, approximately at the same latitude





where we would be anchored. Couran Cove Resort I figured would take another 40 minutes one way on foot from this point - so not today.

The track is a sand 4wd track cleared between what seemed like mostly banksia forest scrub. Birds included parrots (rainbow?), pied currawongs, kookaburras, and lots of honeyeaters too quick to be recognised. The most prolific animal type was crickets - a multitude jumping on and off the track. I saw one spider. Kangaroo prints and a dog paw prints were spotted along with a possible goanna trail.

The demand for the jetty was high when we got back. We had taken our shoes off just in case we had to wade in the mud but we juggled the jetty use for a more comfortable entry into the tinnie; between a paddle board launch and a fishing boat waiting to pick up its passengers.



We were back on boat by 1600. Just as I was about to put the kettle on a friend rang. Chatting away we heard a squawk near the boat. ‘Terns?’ Andrew questioned. I went out to investigate. Long story short I hung up the phone to go get my camera set up. The peregrine was back. With a friend. Of course just as I got the camera ready to take photos they both flew off toward an adjacent boat, one stopping in its spreaders and one flying toward the island. But they came back and were there for some time. We thought they were settling in for the evening. Perhaps there would be a couple of messes to clean up in the morning? Just as long as they weren’t thinking of construction a nest and moving in!

We also had a dugong ‘sail’ past in all this skyward awe - but he didn’t stick around to be admired - perhaps he knew our admiration was elsewhere tonight!

