

Aboard Sengo



Feeling like salmon...

...running against the tide

Going north: when everybody else seems to be heading south!

SANDY STRAITS

Usual anchorages,
usual walks

TURTLE WAY

Feeling like a pair of
drongos

GREAT KEPPEL IS

No walks, but a bit of an
unexpected splash



Oh for the love of boat life again!

On 2nd of September we were excited to go back in the water. On 30th September we were anchored off Hunter Island along the 'Curtis Coast,' having enjoyed the ups (and tolerated the downs) of being back Aboard Sengo.

In between we had enjoyed pure sailing, grumbled through motoring (and motor-sailing), caught up with a couple of boats, done some birdwatching, a little bit of walking, the usual cleaning and maintenance, and relished the changes in vistas we could make when the weather allowed. We had seen whales, dolphins, dugongs, turtles, dingos and quite a few birds (although admittedly there seems to be a distinct lack of sea birds above the water off shore). We anchored mainly in spots we had anchored before, some for pleasure, and some to hide from the weather. But, we were back to normal - or at least as normal as the weather would allow.

Of course, as it is late in the season most boats we met with, or saw, were heading south, having had their sailing season. But we haven't had ours yet, and we didn't get much of one last year (spending six weeks in Tasmania renovating a house), so whilst it might be late and short, we were still heading north.

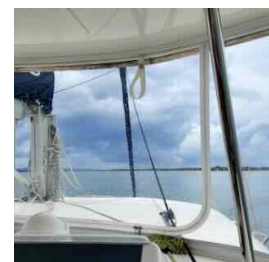
My aim for this sailing season was to walk the length Whitehaven Beach on Whitsunday Island. That gave us a destination to aim for. Whether we would get there was yet to be seen - the weather would dictate our final destination. By the end of September we hadn't quite reached the 'Whitsunday's'- but we were getting closer.



Back in the Water!

2nd September 2022. At 1300 we were being lifted, at 1400 we were backing out of the slipway, and at 1500 we were welcomed back into the water by a dolphin! It has been three and a half months since we were on boat AND on water. And it was good to be back to normal!

We weren't trying to do anything 'exciting' today. Winds had thankfully (as predicted) been calm for launch. This afternoon was supposed to get a bit friskier. Tomorrow was going to be friskier still, so much that it was the sort of conditions we normally hide in. Our 'go to' place on the Gold Coast to hide from a southerly is Tiger Mullet Channel. However, it is preferable that we use a high tide to get in there. Today the time of the high tide at Tiger Mullet coincided approximately with the high tide at The Boat Works. We are a high-tide lift *and* deposit back into the water at The Boat Works. It would take us 1.5 hours approximately to get to Whalleys Gutter. Initially we decided we wouldn't risk transcending the Gutter on a dropping tide, and would anchor at Jumpinpin overnight instead. It would mean of course lifting the anchor tomorrow, in potentially 20 knot winds, something I wasn't really looking forward to. However, on a whim when we got closer to our destination, we thought we might have a chance at getting through Whalleys Gutter today - and made it with minimal depth. This meant that we could relax for the next couple of days. Once the anchor was down we could take a deep breath and ease ourselves back into boat life (as opposed to getting up in trying conditions and moving again tomorrow).



Hiding at Tiger Mullet

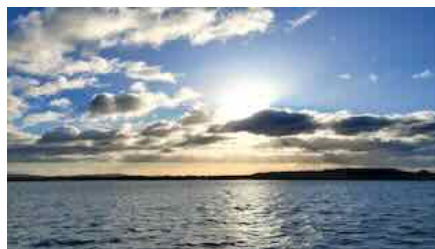
3rd September 2022. We read all morning. We didn't want to do anything else, although I knew there was lots of cleaning and scrubbing to do. There is no point cleaning everything up in the yard, the boat just gets dirty again. But I wasn't cleaning today - let us get mentally back to some sort of normality before we start the usual routines again. We did manage to get reasonable television reception, with minimal interruptions, to watch the two AFL Finals matches in the afternoon

Windy.com had predicted gusts up to 30 knots today; we only saw 22! But we didn't check the gauges all the time.

4th September 2022. I read most of the day today as well, although I did get a bit of work done; a bit of mould clean up, and I started to tidy up the back cockpit.

The skies were dominated by mostly grey clouds today but there was a bit of blue showing through here and there (and quite a lot of blue in the evening). We actually had the side windows open when we could -it was nice to let in a bit of breeze and light and not have to worry about any yard dust coming in as well (just normal dirt!).

There was rain offshore. Today the gusts were predicted to be up to 40 knots! We saw 30 knots - that was enough.



Tiger Mullet to Canaipa Point

5th September 2022. We picked the anchor up at 1405. The usual contingent of pied cormorants and terns dotted the tops of the lateral marks as we headed south from Tiger Mullet through Whalleys Gutter. We were at the bottom end of Whalleys Gutter at 1425 when a bomber did manoeuvres up the main channel, which was a great sight, and then we had to fight our way around three hired houseboats coming the other way up the main channel. We were a little early for the high tide over the shallow bit east of Jacobs Well but cleared it with good depth. Whilst the wind was gusting to around 19 knots we didn't put any sails up until after passing the boat ramp at Jacobs Well proper, and from then on had a comfortable sail with genoa only until we turned into the channel below Macleay Island. We put the engines back on and furled the genoa in before getting to Lamb Island and motored our way to Canaipa Point. Like last time we did this, we could have perhaps persisted with the sail, as after losing wind going through the passage, you regain it coming out beyond the islands closer to North Stradbroke.

It took us a couple of goes to get anchored at Canaipa. Being next to mangroves the substrate is a soft mud and we are out of practice! Our anchor whilst good, requires a bit of settling into soft mud before it holds. We were settled with the anchor down just before dark.



Canaipa Point to Sandy Patch

6th September 2022. The winds weren't going to be strong enough for us to get from Canaipa to Double Island Point in one reasonable go, so we planned on a stop over. My reasoning for stopping at Sandy Patch at the top of Morton Island was simple; If we wanted to leave early tomorrow morning we wouldn't have to worry too much about tide and breaking seas over the fan of sandbanks at the top of Morton Island, we would already have got through that today. So we picked up the anchor and..... motored. There was practically no wind. Well, nothing useful. We motored out of Canaipa Passage with two knots True showing on the gauges.

Turning north we took the usual route, turning to port at the marker with the osprey nest and then eventually to starboard to head north up towards Peel Island. There was practically no traffic to negotiate and the seas were calm. We could see others in the distance had sails up - we suspected they also had motors on.

It wasn't until we had passed the top of Peel Island (with Peel Island to our port side) that we put the main sail up. The wind, whilst not strong, was picking up. Shortly after we put the genoa out and the engines went off. For the rest of the trip there were two short bouts of engine, but they didn't last long; ten minutes at one point, fifteen minutes at another. We weren't sailing at full speed, we had a double reef in the main. This was

because initially we had set the boat up for spinnaker - having expected lightish winds. The spinnaker didn't go up but we left the reef in.

We noticed one boat on AIS sailing behind us and gaining speed. When we noticed it was a mono we grizzled a bit - 'we cant possibly be overtaken by a mono!' However that boat detoured to head past the Bima Suci, an Indonesian Military Tall Ship anchored off the coast of Morton Island. We did eventually get overtaken by a mono, but it was Andoo Comanche so I am not surprised. We first 'almost' came across this racing yacht in 2014, when it was due to rock in to Woolwich Slipway (as Comanche) in Sydney a few hours (or the day, I cant remember) after we were leaving. I do remember the staff (associated with Wild Oats) were excited to welcome it - it was the talk of the yard! We watched this boat on AIS until it came up behind us and we exchanged waves at it shot north west. I



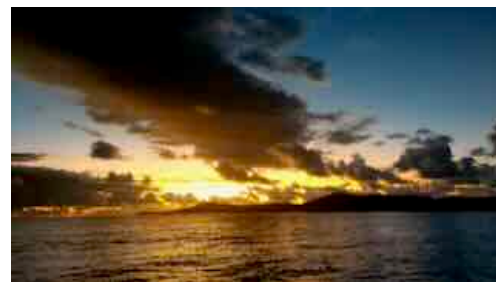
guess because of its keel draft it needed the main shipping channel. Having a shallower draft, we didn't have to play chicken with the big ships on the way out of Morton Bay, *and* we got a better wind angle!

We turned to starboard around the top of Morton Bay in strengthening winds, and shortly after going through the really shallow bit dropped the sails. We probably could have left them up a bit longer as we ended up motoring two nautical miles to our anchorage. There were plenty of campers on shore, but shore was a fair way off. We had passed one yacht going the other way who circled around the corner in the opposite direction. It was a monohull. We heard another boat (we assume mono) hail it on the radio and ask how the conditions were around where they had come from - and to where we were going. 'Diabolical' was the answer.

We didn't find it diabolical - but it wasn't flat and it was the worst rocking we've had since being back on boat. We went to be bed in slightly uncomfortable conditions.

Seasick? I don't get seasick anymore. Well, maybe I do. I had to revert to Travelcalm today. I didn't throw up but my stomach wasn't happy all day.

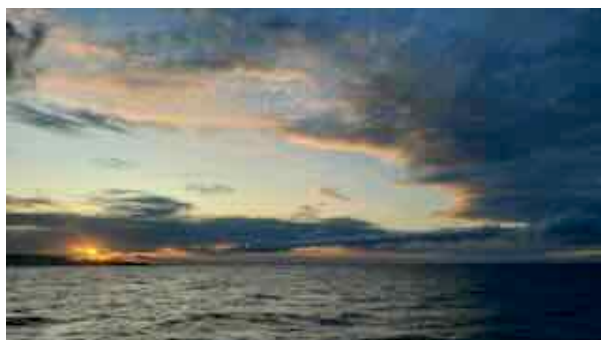




Sandy Patch To Double Island Point

7th September 2022. We didn't quite get the early start I had hoped for, but it wasn't far off it. Today was another motor sail, and whilst there were some patches of pure sailing, the motor was on more than we had hoped. Because of our more northerly start however, and the fact we had kept the speed up (to a certain extent) we arrived at Double Island Point just before dark. There were quite a few boats here already but most were near, or in ,the 'lagoon.' We didn't go near these, we were just happy finding a comfortable anchorage after a longish day.

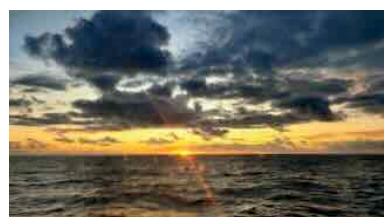
High tide at the Wide Bay Bar tomorrow was early - we went to bed shortly after setting the anchor.



We had an unexpected visit from Great Keppel Island! I was a little confused when I saw the name of this boat on the system. This is actually a border force boat - they asked a few questions; I guess we looked a bit dodgy heading north this late in the season when everyone else is heading south!

The Sandy Straits

8th September 2022. The alarm was on for 0500! The high tide at the outer mark of the Wide Bay Bar was before 0700. We were close on time but we had picked the anchor up an hour and a half earlier.



There was minimal wind, certainly nothing to 'sail' in, so it was a motor all the way north from Double Island Point. One whale emerged to our port side as we approached the 'Bar'. Another whale was just off our starboard side as we started to enter the 'Bar'. We seemed to be the only boat entering the Great Sandy Straits. There were seven boats coming the other way.

My first idea (but not Andrew's) had been to anchor at Pelican Bay. Pelican Bay would give us some protection from the coming winds but would also allow us to get to shore for an afternoon walk - we hadn't got off boat for a few days. However, Pelican Bay is not that deep. One large tri was already anchored there and we didn't want to be too close to it. We also didn't want to stick out too much. There were two anchor marks on our chart plotter where we have anchored here before, in the slightly deeper channels of the Bay. Unfortunately just at



this point in time two fishing tinnies turned up, and proceeded to start fishing in precisely those spots. So the next obvious spot, with potential access to a walk was Garry's Anchorage. This had been Andrew's first suggestion. I am not that fond of Garry's because there is little swinging room - it is not that wide and you can't put out a lot of chain - you are however protected from most winds. The deepest spot is a 'hole' to the northern end of the anchorage, near the Fishermans houses. If that was free then I was happy to go there.

The 'hole' was free (in fact all of Gary's' was free- there were no boats anchored here) but we had to get to it - on a dropping tide, and the depth soundings were scary (at one point one read 0.00). But we found our 'hole.' Now we just had to put the anchor down in the right spot. We were ok for a while but with wind and tide at one point we could have almost stepped from the back step to the 'sand bank' (mangrove mud). We picked up anchor and moved a bit more to the east to centre ourselves, and get away from the offending mud, *and* from where the tide was influencing us so much.

Sea eagles soared in the sky, great egrets and whimbrels fossicked along the shore, and fishermen fished from tinnies and searched the sandbank for bait.



Garrys Anchorage

9th September 2022. It was supposed to rain. I didn't really want to move in the rain, so after discussion we decided to stay one more night here before moving further north. We would be hanging around the Sandy Straits for a while with the wind the way it was predicted to be, so one more night here was not going to make a difference.

Whilst we did get our predicted 'gusting to 18kn' at one stage, there was no real rain and we only got a short couple of showers.

I was in desperate need of some exercise but we didn't get off boat, and got 1/4 of a set yoga session done instead.

Today's jobs included a a bit more clove oiling (C2 Head) and a bit more of the Canada write-up.

The sea eagles were back soaring above today, as were the shore birds. The bush birds calling were wonderful and I have been enjoying these subtle songsters since Tiger Mullet, although the vocalists are different.

The spot of the day however was the two dingos on Stuart Island in the late afternoon. They had appropriately muddy 'fetlock's from walking in the tidal mud.



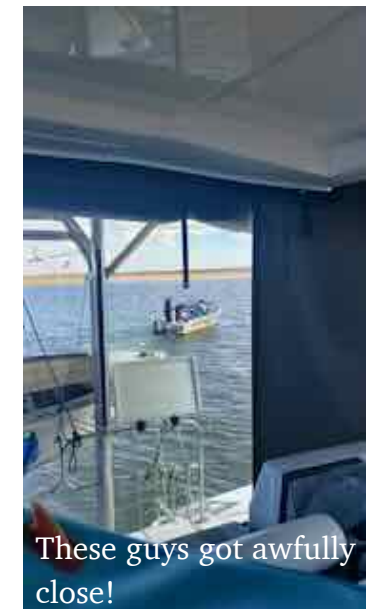
Garry's Anchorage to River Heads

10th September 2022. Whilst we had managed to avoid the 'famed' sand flies at Garry's Anchorage for the past two days, they were out in force this morning. Clearly we had had a honeymoon for the past couple of days with no bitey things. I went out to check the beautiful still morning and came back in with a few black dots! Which of course turned into slightly itchy red dots some time later.

I contacted a friend whose boat is based at Tin Can Bay to see where he was at, assuming he would be further north. Unfortunately he was still at Tin Can Bay (I hadn't been expecting that - I had expected him to be way up the coast) and had we anchored at Pelican Bay when we came through the Wide Bay Bar we would have turned south to say hello. But having come further up than that we continued north. We will try to make contact on the way south.

Today's move was timed for the high tide at Boonyie Point and we decided, after some discussion, and subsequently dismissing the top of Turkey Island and Kingfisher Bay, that we would head to River Heads to cover the weather for the next couple of days. There was a southerly coming and the hole at River Heads gives us good all round protection.

Today's exercise was a short yoga session on boat.



These guys got awfully close!



River Heads

11th September 2022. We finally got a walk today - albeit short. We took the tinnie across mid morning to the boat ramp. Winds were light. Andrew was thinking we would walk up the road to the shops and then walk back via the bush track. I convinced him otherwise suggesting if we bought anything at the IGA that was from the fridge then the shorter quicker walk (were we were unlikely to stop and admire the wildlife) was probably the better option for the return trip. So we took the bush track up the hill. There wasn't much to stop and admire on the way up anyway but it is still a nice little bush track. We emerged with the main road and noticed that there was a market on the other side. Most of the stalls were 'alternate and lifestyle' items but one was a fruit and veggie stall. We took note of what was available, and after a cuppa at the cafe, and checking out the IGA, we bought our fruit and veggies at the market stall anyway. The food looked good and was very reasonably priced - broccoli was around half the price that it was in Woolies but a few days before (and was in much better condition).

On the way back we had a quick chat to a lightwave power cat that we had met a couple of years ago.

The job of the day (our afternoon challenge) was cleaning a head pipe.



River Heads to Kingfisher Bay.

12th September 2022. It was a grey morning and there was little space for the sun to shine through the thick clouds. Despite this, it was warm at the helm station motoring across to Kingfisher Bay, but outside the wind, what there was of it (5 knots) was a little chilly. Yet as we anchored to the north of Kingfisher Jetty around 1200, the sun briefly poked its head out and suddenly it was quite hot.



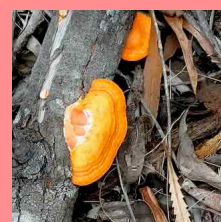
For a while we were the only boat at this anchorage, until a mono we had passed at River Heads anchored to our north a bit. It left mid afternoon.

Low tide was at 1615. We thought perhaps we would play the water level and head to shore before low tide, go for a walk, and head back again at the same time after low tide. That way there was less likely to be any hassles with dragging the Tinnie down the beach. We jumped a bit early ending up coming back to boat just after low tide, pulling the tinnie over the nearly calf-high mud to float again.



Beeribee Trail

A few things have changed since we last walked this short trail to the north of the Kingfisher Resort. Reinforcement of the fence has been established by seemingly putting more mesh over the existing structure and to do so a runway has been cleared along its edge, a new track (or an old one re established) intersects the track half way down the



coast side hill), the old picnic tables have finally been removed at the top, and the bush is growing back, green shrubs and ground cover a delight to see after the barren black and brown burnt vegetation after the Fraser Island fire in 2020.

We only planned for a short walk. Of course we went over near low tide so we squelched through soft mud up to our mid shins on the way to shore so we could put our walking boots on. And the walk isn't that long, it usually takes us around forty five minutes or so. So, even delaying our return by having an ice-cream at the little general store, and chatting to photographers and fisherman on the jetty, we still had to wade through squelching mud up to our shins on the way back to the tinnie. Apparently mud is good for the feet!

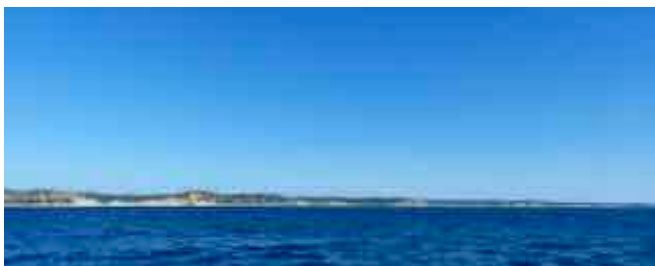
Back at boat I worked on Canada notes and we watched an early movie.

Bush birds had been the early calls at River Heads. It was the calls of whistling kites that welcomed us to Kingfisher Bay. Kookaburras were heard as we walked the Beerilbee Track. The swallows that had been at the previous Sandy Straits anchorages were here as well. Well, maybe not the same birds - but perhaps - we once had a pair follow us out of Kauri Creek to Gary's Anchorage because their 'newly found perch and nesting site' was moving!



Kingfisher Bay to Platypus Bay

13th September 2022. We motored around to Platypus Bay today. Originally we were heading for just north of Moon Point. Apparently there were plenty of whales at Rooney Point. But a south easterly was coming in so Rooney would offer no protection. In the end, we anchored a few nautical miles south of Whatumba. We saw a couple of whales in the distance, but according to the whale watching boats we had been listening to, the morning had been more fruitful for spotting cetaceans.



Platypus Bay to Burnett Heads.

14th September 2022. It was around 46 nautical miles from our anchorage south of Wathumba at Platypus Bay on Fraser Island to Burnett Heads on the mainland, so we needed an early start. The anchor was up 0635. However, the sails weren't up until around an hour later despite the fact the wind was agreeable. We had a most annoying problem. Upon raising the

anchor I had managed to flick it into the wrong side of the bridle. Subconsciously I think I knew it was going to happen, but I managed to do it anyway, in my haste, rather than slow down and come at the impending issue from a different angle. There were several possible strategies to fix this problem. A couple didn't work. And another one would have worked had I been stronger and we had more room through the neck of where the anchor chain comes up. In the end it was a combination of the two of us and a fair bit of grunt that finally fixed the problem And then we were ready to put the sails up.

At 0956 the wind had temporarily changed direction and strength, and one engine went on for a short while..but it was only a few minutes.. before it was turned off again.

In the mean time I discovered we had a blocked head! Just what we need! From then on Andrew spent most of his time trying to fix this situation, ensconcing himself downstairs to eventually pull the hose out and put it on the front tramp to be cleared. Unfortunately the hose ended up breaking! (Or rather my over exertive efforts ended up breaking it) This meant we actually had no working heads on the boat!)

At 1050 we passed the sunken **Tobruk** and five minutes later we were witness to a most beautiful display.

Andrew had seen the back of a whale just off our port side to the front. It turned out to be two whales, a mother and calf, and they provided us with the most delightful display of synchronised breaching that we have seen. Last year we had seen a pair of breaching whales near Marble Island -

but those whales were of similar size. A mother and calf display was fascinating as the big and the small moved in perfect unison. It was pretty special. Their travel was in a south easterly direction - ours was in a westerly direction. We watched for some time until we separated too much and we both moulded into the opposite horizons.

There had been no clouds in the sky when we got up but as we approached the mainland a line of harmless cumulous greeted us along the coast.

Both engines went on around 1400 - we had lost wind strength and angle. The sails were dropped around 1500 before we got to shipping channel, and we motored into the anchorage past the harbour, marina and sugar sheds before setting the anchor down in our usual 'spot.' We were greeted to Burnett Heads by a pod of dolphins.

As per usual pied cormorants crowded the top of the lateral marks along the shipping channel. But they were also crowding the waterway. Every few meters in front of us a cormorant would stick its head up in our path; and then either dive or scramble across the water to get out of the way before we got to them.. Clearly the fishing was good!

Once anchored we lowered the tinnie so we could get to the chandlery before it closed - we

had a toilet pipe to purchase and reinstall. It was fitted within a short time of getting back to boat and a small leak that presented itself after this work, eventually disappeared. What a relief!

After that excitement neither of us wanted to do much. I spent the rest of the afternoon reading and editing my British Columbia document.

Birds seen and heard on our trip across and in Burnett Heads; pied cormorants, whimbrels, white bellied sea eagles and a Brahminy kite.



Burnett Heads

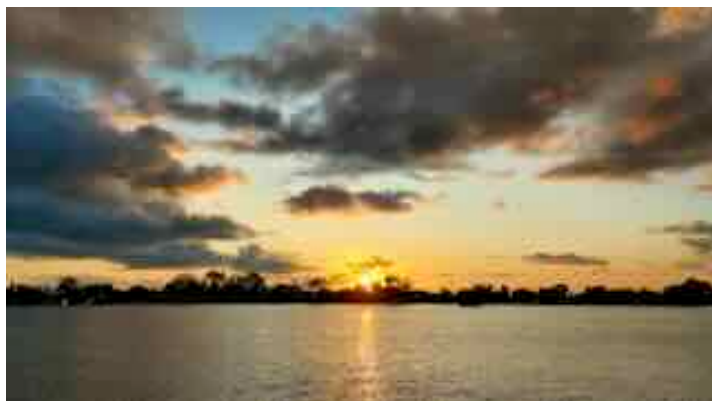
15th September 2022. Today was going to be mostly calm. The coming week however was going to have us stuck here, and stuck potentially on boat. We needed to stock up food just in case we couldn't get off. However because most of today was going to be calm we didn't rush to get off boat.

Today's first activity involved a bit of 'literary' culture; Andrew had found recordings on YouTube of H.G. Wells' 'War of the Worlds.' One was original, one was a later interpretation. And we listened to both of them.

It was around ten minutes to midday when we finally got to the boat ramp at Burnett Heads. We walked to IGA but got the courtesy bus back. We were back on board Sengo around 1330. Because the wind was easterly I was expecting to get wet heading into it on the way to our shop; inexplicably we got wetter on the way back.

The afternoon activities included rinsing the mildew out of more bags from bilge storage, rinsing my sneakers, washing our head floor, doing the dishes, checking our bank account, approving a quote for a back fence and continuing with the British Columbia write up. Andrew managed to find, at his feet at his nav station, a mosquito net we had bought prior to our Canadian trip and had subsequently lost. We ended up buying a new one in Canada but I had spent quite some time trying to find this (very inexpensive) net before we left. At least we know where it is now - but we don't need three between two of us!

Wildlife: A Brahminy kite had soared above us on the way back to boat, and those pied cormorants were everywhere again; lateral marks, rock walls, and fishing in the water in front of us.



16th September 2022

It was windy! I was up around 0700. Andrew had got up before me around 0630ish. We continued packing up the cockpit from all the bits and pieces and mess from the yard. In the middle of this, and in twenty plus knot winds Andrew checked our gauges. We suspected we were dragging, so in uncomfortable winds (20ish knots) we picked the anchor up and reset. It took us three goes and by the time I put a lot of chain out we were in the middle of the river! Shortly after this two lightwave catamarans who had been anchored to our east, picked up their anchors and moved further upstream. I didn't see where they went because they turned around the corner. Was it something we said? Admittedly there was a bit of fetch where we were - it is more sheltered further inland. Most of the afternoon was spent either on BC or on recreational reading. We managed, with minimal reception interruption, to watch an AFL Preliminary Final. Thankfully Geelong won. We went to bed just before 2300.

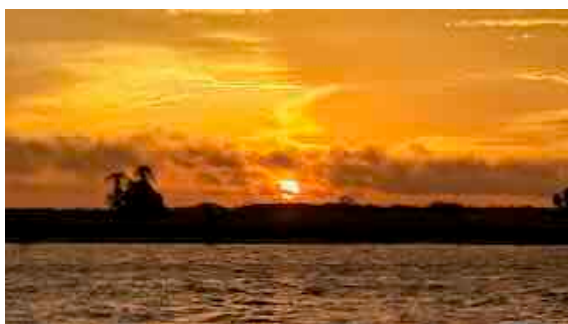


17th September 2022. It was raining when we got up at around 0600. I don't know how long it had been raining for. I wanted to collect water so put a bucket outside - but the rain stopped before I collected enough water to be of use. VMR regular weather reports read out the possibility of gusts to 45 knots possible! What! That's not what windy.com says. Or MetEye for that matter (even if you do the calculation of up to 40% stronger). That is a lot of wind! There was a 90-pc chance of showers. We didn't get as much rain as we expected and the highest wind speed we saw was 22 knots.



A short walk

18th September 2022. The morning was clear. Eventually. Very early this morning when I had first woken up, the morning was pea soup. You couldn't see a thing! Fortunately the sun eventually burnt the fog away. The wind not too daunting. I wanted some exercise. So, I convinced Andrew to motor the tinnie back down to the boat ramp again, and we managed about an hour's walking. Firstly we headed to the marina, a twenty minute walk each way, so I could drop off a couple of books to the book swap in the laundry area there. These were to replace the couple I had taken on the day we had come in, whilst Andrew was getting what we needed from the chandlery. When we got back to the harbour I convinced Andrew to walk to the IGA - another ten minutes each way. The walk wasn't taxing - it is flat ground after all, but after a couple of days with no real exercise it was good to stretch the legs. We had a chat to another yacht on the way back.

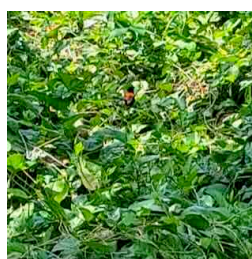


A pair of drongos - a slightly longer walk

19th September 2022. The morning's winds were going to be light. The afternoon's winds were picking up - predicted to be low teens gusting to high teens. There was also a possibility of a small amount of rain in the 1600 tranche - according to [windy.com](https://www.windy.com)

I didn't intend us to be off boat unless necessary at that time. There was the possibility of catching up with with **Annecam** today but we didn't know when, possibly late morning. So I got Andrew off boat with the aim of an early morning walk before perhaps the catch up cuppa. As it turned out the cuppa happened earlier than expected, and we met **Annecam** at one of the cafes around 30 minutes after we got to shore. By 1100 we had said farewell and we were on our walk. The Turtle Way leads from Burnett Heads to Bargara. I am not sure how long the path has been there but I haven't seen it before because I was never looking for a trek that long whilst we were in this area. The official track is from Oats Bay to Nelson Bay and is around 6km. Whoever first reported it to AllTrails did it from the Burnett Heads town centre to Nelson Bay so trekked 8.2km. We did most of the AllTrails path, minus around 400m distance because we didn't do the detour around the Burnett Heads town centre to start with. But we had walked to Burnett Heads town centre from the boat ramp before we started, and we walked into Bargara town centre from Nelson Bay. Plus, we managed to walk a few of these kilometres on the way back as well, so I estimate the day's total walk was around 14 kilometres.

I wasn't expecting Andrew to be so enthusiastic about doing the whole walk. My intention had been to walk some of the distance and then turn around and come back again. But I gave him the choice of doing that, or keep going, have lunch at Bargara, and get some sort of transport back, be it bus or taxi. He decided on the full walk and lunch at Bargara.



This poor photo is a representation of the red back wrens we saw - there were lots of them at one spot - must be mating season.



We sat down at Rick's Restaurant six minutes after the last bus that would have got us to Burnett Heads had left. Only a few busses go to Burnett Heads and always in the one direction, so it would have been a ride into Bundaberg to start with. Oh well, there is always a taxi.

Or there are the scooters. Like the electric bikes you see every where, (we commonly see them on the Gold Coast, and we saw them along the streets of Vancouver, Canada as well), you can pay for the use of scooters along this trail. We had seen several scattered along the length of the path. We had to download an App and enter our credit card details etc, but then we were off. It was fast and it was fun. There is a 'no motorised' section of the path at Mon Repos and we thought we would just manually wheel the bikes through. However the geographic proximity of

these bikes knew where we were and threatened to turn the power off. That was all well and ok if they put it on again at the other end but we weren't sure that would happen, so we left the scooters at the southern end near the visitors centre..there was one already there. Earlier when we had come the other way someone had left two scooters at the northern end of the Park. They were gone now so we resigned ourselves to walking the rest of the way.

The sky this morning when we got off boat had been a uniform grey, after our coffee at Burnett Heads town centre the sun had burnt the grey off to a pure blue. The skies were now grey again. Very grey. You could see rain in the distance. The rain radar looked ominous. We were going to get wet! And I hadn't packed our raincoats! (After all I hadn't expected to be out this late)

The closest shelter was around 2 km away, or around 30 minutes to walk. The rain was going to get to us within 30 minutes. Instead of trying to 'run the gauntlet,' we chose a cassurina to shelter under instead. The locals just walked or biked through. We were sheltered for several bouts of lightening and thunder but in the end we walked out in the rain. The radar suggested the worst was going to pass soon but we were still soaked by the time we picked up a couple of scooters further up the track. My phone screen and my fingers were both wet and not connecting and for a moment I didn't think I was going to be able to access a scooter at all. Fortunately we were on our way soon after. We left the scooters close to the extremity we could take them and logged off. It had now stopped raining and we could see lighter skies coming. We left the



harbour as The Lady Musgrave Experience boat came back into port, and got back to Sengo in calm winds around 1700!

The bird list is extensive and we saw more than I have noted below.

Pied cormorants
 Brahminy kite
 Red backed wrens (lots and lots of them as we entered the Mon Repos park area)
 Brown honeyeaters
 Magpies
 Mudlarks
 Pied oyster catcher
 Lapwings
 Shelducks near the sewerage works
 Moorhen
 Forest kingfisher
 Noisy minor
 Blue faced honeyeater
 Darter
 Pelican
 Great heron
 Crested pigeon
 Peaceful dove
 Turtle dove
 Craven (not sure if it was a crow or raven)
 Lots of smaller birds (particularly on a private pond adjacent the track).

Oh, and....
 A pair of drongos.

20th September 2022. We woke up to clear skies as the sun came up. The next time i looked out the window it was pea soup - like it had been two morning's ago.

We went for an hour's walk again from the boat ramp - the easterly wind ensuring no boats were anchored outside harbour entrance

Jobs today: I worked on a template for a hatch cover, did some of the BC newsletter, managed a large load of dishes and washed yesterday's soaked clothes. I also managed to rinse some of the bags from the bilge (as well as put some away), and give a quick rinsing mush to the front cover from the fender locker..it will probably be a couple of days before i can hang that out to dry. We also spent a few minutes on Spanish.

Bird list

Magpie (who swooped us near the new marina development)

Pied cormorants

Bee eaters

Crested pigeon

Mudlark

Pipit

Blue faced honeyeater

Noisy miner

Pelican

Great egret

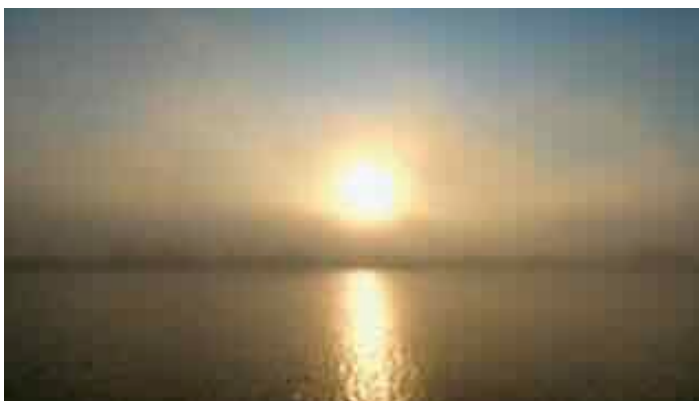
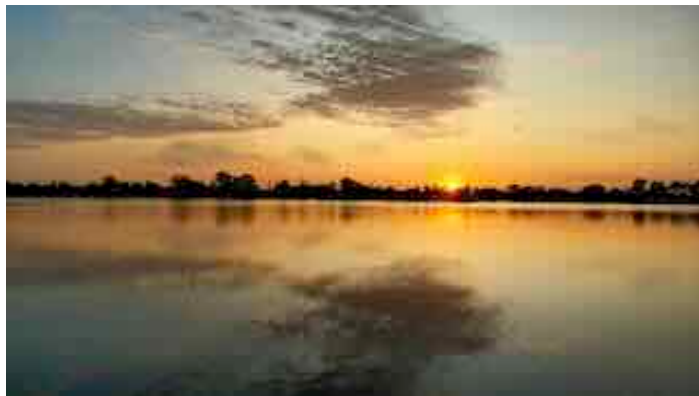
Darter

Brahminy kite



We also heard a koel and possibly a channel billed cuckoo.

The only obvious animal was a kangaroo.





Heading North Again...

Burnett Heads to Rodds Harbour

'A bit more 'exciting' than we expected.

21 September 2022 The alarm was on for 0430. The anchor was up at 0550 after a final tidy up of the inside of the boat, and the mainsail was up in the river at 0610.

We were wondering whether we would get to sail as, at this point, the wind gauge was reading less than 1 knot apparent because the wind was behind us. As we exited the Heads the wind picked up. Engines were off and the genoa out around 0645; we were heading north east.

We gybed 0700 and immediately we heard a whale; a mother and calf emerged on the surface of the water behind us.



We managed a reasonable sail for a while with the normal sails. But conditions were good for a spinnaker run so we put it up. And had a beautiful sail. Originally, on my usual planning of 5 knots, we were going to make Rodds Harbour in the dark. But even though we had been a fair way off the coast due to the wind direction, we eventually managed to ease the sail around with the late wind change, and given we had been travelling at good speeds, there was now a vague possibility we would have our anchor down before dark, or just shortly after it.....

Hope is not always fulfilled!

Just before we got to the rocks off Bustard Head (we were going to split Outer Rocks and Inner Rocks) the spinnaker wine-glassed. This situation is bad enough but it wine-glassed around the genoa furler! To try and jiggle it free we were doing pirouettes. We had turned north before the Outer Rocks and this was fraught with danger, so after some jiggling and a lot of swearing we gave up and motored through the rocks so we had a lot more free space.



And we nearly got it free. We were so close. We were also so disappointed when it being only one wrap from being free, it suddenly wrapped itself back up again. Round and around, and around it went

In the end it took two and a half hours to get the spinnaker down and that involved eventually letting it flap free on one side - which meant some of it went into the water. Prior to this Andrew had been up the mast five times! We had been mucking around in the dark, in shallow and narrow channels, and bouncing around in the swell at times where Andrew was swinging from side to side up and into the mast and furler. And eventually, just when we thought everything was finally going to come together, the strings got caught around the radar!

The upshot was the sail, once we got it all on deck, was just shoved in the front locker so we could deal with it at a more quiet time. The anchor ball didn't go up. Nobody would see it and it was buried under the sail!

We had seen three flocks of black noddies today, three individual brown boobies and a dolphin who stuck around for a few minutes to have a play.



Rodds Harbour to Gladstone

22 September 2022. I was up around 0530. I tried to read but found I didn't have focus and went back to bed. I got back up around 0730. Andrew had got up some time earlier.

Around 0830 we picked up the anchor and motored toward Gladstone. The marina had originally been expecting us tomorrow, but after last night's 'adventure' we thought an extra night near town to sort ourselves out might be prudent.

At 0955 we turned to port above the Jenny Lind Banks (and incidentally saw a Leopard 48 we didn't know heading in the other direction), put the genoa out, and turned one engine off. Around an hour later we turned to again (to starboard), pulled the genoa in and put the second engine back on. The wind had picked up; we were now pumping into 15 knots and hoped it would settle down when we got to the mooring. Andrew went down for a well deserved snooze whilst I guided Sengo up alongside the shipping channel, avoiding the Tugs waiting for an incoming ship, and getting the mooring lines set up.

The mooring was picked up around 1130, and we enjoyed a well deserved shower on shore just after we logged in. It had been a cloudy morning. Despite several patches of rain on the radar however we didn't really get wet; a few seconds of raindrops coming up the Gatcombe Channel. Andrew's job for the afternoon was checking the idle of the tinnie engine; despite having just had a service it wasn't sounding as he thought it should. The threat of rain and thunder to the south put an end to that task.

We spent the afternoon relaxing, and the evening watching a movie - we weren't mentally capable of anything else. Whilst Andrew went to bed at a reasonable time, I had a late night because I started transferring documentation for my BC writeup to a different document, and I started two hatch covers.



Gladstone

23 September 2022. This morning presented us with mostly blue sky. It was hot. Small scattered cumulous developed in the sky in the afternoon.

I got a few jobs done today. I edged the cut out hatch covers, continued the BC transfer, produced a cooked breakfast and sorted the recyclables out to get them off boat.

The main task however today was a shopping run. We took the courtesy bus to Bunnings (in which we were surprised to say hello to Zofia and Supa Trooper, both boats of which we haven't seen for at least two seasons), where both Andrew and I managed to pick up something useful (both items mean 'maintenance' so they weren't that exciting). We then walked the twenty minutes back to Stockland. It was a hot walk. The plan for today was to get the majority of a big shop done, so we spent the first tranche in Woolies getting our groceries purchased. We didn't have much time after this but managed a quick couple of nori rolls at the Japanese food shop for lunch, before heading back into Woolies to do a meat run. We had five minutes to spare before the bus arrived and took us back to the marina.



We had a quick chat to **Absconder** whilst untying the tinnie from the dock but our priority was to get back on boat and put everything that needed to go into the fridge or freezer away. By the time we had finished this, over an hour later, it was around 1500. We were exhausted!

This afternoon the plan had been to take the spinnaker to shore to check out the damage from a couple of night's ago, and then, if we were still there when the festivities started, join others from the marina at a 'pirate' themed fund raiser bbq. Neither of those activities happened. We were exhausted. I had a ninety minute afternoon snooze. I don't know if it was the heat that got to me, or the fact my body was catching up from the excitement of 'our spinnaker adventure'; either way we stayed on boat. The most energy intensive activity I got up to in the evening was a bit of reading.

AFL Grand Final

24 September 2022. We had been invited to catch up for coffee this morning by two other boats. But I got the message too late (although we did meet them on dock) and given the timing we couldn't have gone anyway. We were taking advantage of the courtesy bus to get to the Village Shopping Centre area to do a final food shop, drop off some spare bags to the Vinnies Op Shop, and do a run into Lincraft. Initially we had three things we wanted to get at Lincraft; some elastic for the new hatch covers, some new thread for the new hatch covers, and some nylon to patch the wear holes in the sock for the spinnaker that Andrew had noticed last time he fought with it.

But our very early trip to shore this morning (we tied the tinnie up to dock at 0730) to see just what condition our spinnaker was



in after its adventure the other night, convinced us that perhaps we would let a professional deal with all aspects of the sail. The sock was indeed worn and torn in some places, but the areas were small; the cone at the base was more of a worry. It had split and chipped and we knew we couldn't deal with it, not immediately anyway- and we needed to make sure we didn't catch anything on it.

The spinnaker itself had come away, considering, with comparatively minor damage - although the approx. two meter rip was beyond my skills to repair. That was the main issue - there was one much smaller rip not far from the main issue. Hopefully we can find someone further up the coast to fix it. In the mean time - there will be no more spinnaker use on our northern trip this season.

So thread and elastic was all we needed at Lincraft. We didn't wait for the early afternoon pickup - we walked back to the marina - via the fish shop for some 'fresh fish.'

Everybody we had spoken to since arriving at the marina was not interested in the AFL - they were mainly Queenslanders - and Queensland is a rugby state. Given this I thought maybe the lounge would be free this afternoon for the AFL Grand Final so we could watch it on the big screen. However, Andrew decided he would prefer to stay on boat. We had come into Gladstone after all to be near television reception, not necessarily to be guaranteed the occupancy of the marina lounge.

All we had to hope for was not too much interference with the bow waves from the ferries passing us (the downside of being on a mooring and not in a pen - the upside is that it is quite a bit less expensive). In the end we only got three frustrating interruptions with a blank screen - and none of them lasted long. The first was during the toss of the coin, the second early in the first quarter, and the last the very first few sentences of the Geelong Captain's speech at the end of the Game.

Geelong won by a large margin. I was happy. Andrew, who had no 'skin in the game' would have preferred a closer match.

My activity of the evening was finishing the first hatch cover.

Gladstone Harbour to north of Graham's Creek

25 September 2022. We left harbour today. Because we had only really come in to Gladstone for reception for the AFL Grand Final there was really no further need to stick around. And because we were not going far there was no hurry to drop the mooring, so we got a few little tasks completed first.

The first, and main one, was getting some fuel. Because it was Sunday we had to wait until Complete Angler was open - the fishing and tackle shop manages the fuel pumps. Because of the fuel dock's location we prefer to take gerry cans across to the fuel dock rather than the big boat - although I prefer to take gerry cans across to any dock rather than the big boat if the option is there. We tied up on the main side where a big boat would come in. I had thought about mentioning to Andrew to tie up on the other side, where only a small boat could fit, just in case someone else came in, but I reasoned, if we had our big boat, no one else could tie up there anyway. As it was we had finished filling up the geries when a larger power boat loitered waiting for our tinnie to move. We moved the tinne and loaded up from the other side. We also helped the larger boat in.

After decanting the fuel into our tanks and dropping off the marina keys, we said goodbye to two boats before heading back to Sengo. We were getting hungry so the plan was to have lunch before we dropped the mooring, but on getting back to boat we discovered we had a more urgent task.

As we were doing our normal 'tie up' of the tinnie, whilst lifting it onto the davits, a frantic fluttering sound could be heard. The origin of which could be anything depending on where we were and what conditions we were in; for instance the shaking of the cockpit window coverings could make this sound. However, given the current circumstances we both guessed what it was. A swallow had got inside our covers. He (she) was now inside the helm area where the covers are clear and the animal can see out - it just couldn't get out - every time the bird tried to fly to safety it smashed into clear plastic.

Initially, to work out exactly what was going on, I approached from the outside. The poor individual was clearly hot and clearly frightened. When he wasn't wedged between where the covers met the deck, he was perched on something with his beak open. We had the back door open in the unlikely event it would fly through the 'gloom' and out the back door,



but it was more likely to fly through our windows where it could see where it was going. Of course when I got in the cockpit it tried to avoid me and flew into a 'solid' surface - that was when it was not too exhausted, and I almost picked it up in my hands. In the end I had to open two opposing windows in the cockpit - and it flew out the one of the port side.

That criss over it was time for lunch.

Eventually the mooring was dropped at 1315. At 1325 just after we exited Auckland Creek we



turned north, put the genoa out and turned one engine off. An hour later the genoa was furled again and the second engine went back on.

On our journey north we had passed several ships at dock to the west, and watched eight tug boats manoeuvre two gas carriers into place at the facility on Curtis Island to our east.

We anchored just north of Graham's Creek - still with a partial view to my favourite mountain; Mount Larcom.

The sky was blue and there was minimal wind. And I was grateful there weren't too many midgies.

I spent the rest of the afternoon finishing the second hatch cover.





Great Keppel Island

North of Graham's Creek to the The Narrows to Great Keppel Island

26 September 2022. Fruit doves were the first bird I heard as I emerged out of the back door to welcome in the morning. There was no wind. There were however quite a few midgies!

Having no wind meant we motored through The Narrows. The wind only started to pick up just to the south of Pacific Creek at the north western end of Curtis Island.

It was a north wind. Not perfect for us, but technically sailable if we were prepared to zig zag under sail. As we turned around the point the wind went more north east, and I thought we may have to sail north west and then motor back toward GKI. We put the main sail



up at 1120, between the red marks of the channel (heading north east ish - the wind direction had changed again), which looked a bit odd as the two yachts travelling in the opposite direction already had all their sails up heading towards us. By the time our sails

were up however the wind angle had changed again and was now perfect for a straight run to the west end of Long Beach. The engines were off at 1125 and we were sailing (SOG) at 9.4 knots!

Andrew saw two dolphins and a dugong in The Narrows, we spotted a whale just off our port side as we were sailing, and a turtle swam past once we were anchored. We ended up anchoring off Monkey Beach because the wind angle changed again and was blowing east to south east when we stopped at 1330. Lunch was served at 1350.

The afternoon was spent reading, tidying, rinsing scrappy towels, and edging hatch covers that I had cut out this morning.

The first bird we heard after anchoring was the fruit dove, stone curlews sang their mournful song in the evening, and the sky was clear and full of stars when it got dark.

A 'training' boat anchored in front of us. It was commercial - I didn't really take note of what company it represented but just saw the word 'training.' We thought it would leave but didn't, unfortunately and was lit up like a xmas tree when it got dark.

There were over 25 anchor lights to our north but we could still see stars and the milky way (if we didn't look toward the 'training,' boat).



Monkey Beach to Long Beach

27th September 2022. I was up at 0545. I hadn't actually slept well and I suspect it was the red curry paste in last night's dinner but Andrew likes it so I put up with it occasionally. The sun was rising when I got up. The commercial training boat that had anchored between us and the reef yesterday had gone - it must have left really early. Swallows had landed on the lifelines - life must be back to normal. The sky was blue and there was a smattering of clouds.

I quickly checked my emails and discovered a 'where are you?' This is the second one I've had in the past few months - these are people that actually read my monthly diary notes and are missing them. It was time to get back up-to-date, having finished the monumental task of finding the discrepancy of the British Columbia write-up a couple of days ago, I had had a break from diary notes, but as I have some very old notes to write up as well, I suspect I should get on with it.

Given where we were anchored I had hoped for a morning snorkel this morning, but it didn't happen. Instead we got caught up in starting our research for our New

Zealand trip at the end of the year and the time just flew by. It was 1030 before we made any conscious effort to have breakfast, which was over quickly as we had cereal, and 1200 by the time we really took note of the time again.

We had noticed there were decidedly less boats around now than there had been earlier, and whilst we were rocking a bit, it is not unusual in this spot given that swell often wraps around both the bottom and the top of the island and meets up here. The wind was supposed to be blowing north east. According to the arrow on top of our mast, the wind was blowing from the north. There is not much protection here from the north, no wonder we were rocking!

Given the wind direction we made the decision to move around to Long Beach. Of course as we were motoring around the corner the wind gauges now indicated the wind blowing from the expected north east. To give some protection from both directions we anchored half way along Long Beach in around four meters of water

The water was beautifully clear and Andrew admired a very large stingray stealthily move along the bottom just off the back of the boat. The afternoon was hot but we didn't get off boat. We spent some time with Spanish again and at least managed a 20 minute yoga session.

There were only a few boats at Long Beach when we arrived but several more arrived by late afternoon, some, monohulls, anchoring a fair way out.

The day's other activities included cutting out and pinning up two hatch covers, dishes, making a banana loaf for lunch, starting September's newsletter, and some recreational reading.

In the evening we heard the curlews and a mopoke on the island, and watched the lightening from the storms on the mainland light up the sky.





28th September 2022. The fruit dove was first bird I heard this morning.

I had woken up to the light patter of rain. At around 0430! There was still some washing hanging out across the back starboard steps but I figured it was probably wet anyway so left it. A few minutes later however I lifted the blinds and looked out the window. Thin red lines were on the eastern horizon. It will be a nice sunrise, I thought. I also thought I had better check the rain radar and weather, given that I didn't think that rain was expected. So I pulled myself out of bed at 0500, checked the not too wet drying clothes and pulled them inside, and managed to get a couple of photos of a beautiful red vista.

Despite the clouds and potential light rain I wanted to do something today. It had been many days since we had had some exercise. My paddle-board was ready to go (sort of, the air pressure had been dropped whilst we were away but it still felt 'solid'). Andrew's hadn't been inflated since we had hopefully glued up a couple of leaky holes. So my first job was to blow up his board. We put about 7 psi in it - around half of its maximum, and moved it to the port side walkway of the boat. My board we put straight in the water.

Andrew wanted breakfast before he went paddling, and a coffee after breakfast to brace himself for an activity that hadn't been undertaken for a while. I on the other hand just wanted to get out there, so after

breakfast I got myself on a wobbly board and paddled off, drifting away from Sengo on a rising tide at 0900. My thought was to paddle to the western end of the beach and back, and then if Andrew was game, pick him up, so to speak, and paddle to the closer eastern end of the beach and back to boat.

Not all went to plan. I did get to the west end of the beach, reasonably tentatively but upright - right up until the time I went to turn around. I turned toward shore, not away from it, and the movement of the board and the incoming surf meant my balance was lost - I fell backwards. But it wasn't a quick fall. It was in slow motion; I wobbled on one foot, then wobbled on the other one, as I stepped backward to try and regain my balance. I knew what was happening. I knew I was going to get



wet. I fell into less than two feet of water! Wet and embarrassed I regained my feet, turned around and was about to get back on the board and push it back out but along the beach when I spied a boat I knew. So I paddled over to say hello instead.

After a good chat I headed back to Sengo. By this time I figured Andrew had probably got on his own board. Indeed in the distance I saw someone with a flat piece of equipment resting on the beach. This is what Andrew sometimes does. I figured it was him. I was to find out it wasn't.

However I hadn't made that discovery yet when I found myself heading toward shore on a bit of a sharper angle than expected. Because I had started at another boat I was not close in shore in the first place, so tried to turn the board back towards our boat. I didn't do it fast enough and found myself side on to the incoming surf. Again I wobbled one way and compensated, and wobbled the other way and compensated, and then on the third wobble went side over. The board also went over and turned upside down. I had fallen this time in over six feet of water - I couldn't touch the bottom! I made an half hearted attempt to get back on the board but decided it was easier to kick the board toward shore until I could stand up and then hopefully manoeuvre myself back on top. Wet, soaked and highly embarrassed because I had fallen off not far from the back of a powerboat that I hoped hadn't noticed (I was soon to find out that we knew the owners of this boat). Fortunately they hadn't seen the fall.

Getting back to boat I found Andrew had not actually got off Sengo at all. One of the seals we had attempted to fix still had a leak, so that needed repairing before he could do anything. I got back on board having had my exercise; a 'swim' as well as a paddle!

The rest of the day was spent finishing two hatch covers, getting ready to travel, reading and tidying the boat for guests. 'Drinks' was on Sengo; the guests - *Ilikai* and *Pipon*.

I didn't notice the curlew call tonight until almost 1930. It was now dark. We had missed sunset and twilight as we had been ensconced in the front cockpit with our guests. We haven't socialised with *Ilikai* since 2021, or *Pipon* since 2016 (on another boat). As rain threatened when they arrived we didn't open the front covers (it wasn't forecast until late afternoon but it came in early afternoon)

Officially we didn't set foot on Great Keppel Island this trip, but I guess that depends how you define it - I did stand on the sand under the waterline!

Heading North Again

29th September 2022. By 0700 this morning the anchor was up, we had waved goodbye to Pipon, and the main sail was raised. Leaving around a dozen or so boats behind at Long Beach we motored around top of Half Way Island. We turned south ish and Andrew didn't want to put genoa out yet as there was no wind showing on the gauges. He happily pointed this out to me as several wraps around winch, which were not cleated off, were not doing anything. Until the wind suddenly picked up (we had to catch the sheet) and we had a steady 13 to 14 knots. We still had to head south however to round the bottom south east corner of GKI before we could turn north.

After a 70 degree turn to the north east we turned the engines off. The wind was now blowing 12 to 15 knots. The boat speed after an initial burst had dropped to 5.5knots (ish).

Adjusting further as we rounded east of the lighthouse I put us on to an approximate 'Go To' on the plotter screen. We were now 60 degrees to wind (ish) and sailing mid 7s to mid 8 knots. That was better. As we passed to north east corner of Great Keppel Island we were doing 8.9 knots and as we passed 'Man and Wife Rocks, 9.5 knots!

The engine went on at around 1130. We had lost wind and Andrew had tolerated down to 3.5 knots because I was snoozing downstairs. It was about time I got up anyway - I had worked out I had around an hour and a half until we got to the first GoTo point outside the military practice area. So I got up and put the kettle on. In grey at various points on the horizon were large 'secret squirrel ships. (Well, they cant

be too secret squirrel as they announce their practice)

The engine went off again at 1205. The wind wasn't high



but our 'SOG' was still around 7 knots. The engine was back on briefly at 1235. We had a yacht coming the other way on our rum line....I had to move because I didn't think it had seen us.

The engines were again on at 1246 after yet another boat was passing, again clocking down our dotted rum line - I had turned 5 deg to port to avoid it. One military ship had crossed our bow and was now to the north east of us - a small power boat came out of the bay toward it.

Shortly after this we passed yet another yacht. A Catamaran with a 'Seawindy' shape but looked older and sharper. It wasn't on AIS. It was coming at us from an angle but didn't seem to be changing position. Technically it had wind from starboard and right of way...but we were under sail and whilst it had two sails up it was also under motor. I turned 10 deg to starboard to avoid it. As it passed there was no one in the back cockpit. I would be surprised if the skipper of that yacht even knew we were there! By then the wind had died down again and having resolved ourselves to not going past Pearl Bay today we decided it didn't matter if we were only doing 3.5 to 4.5 knots!

The dulcet sounds at this point during the journey were the slow slopping of water and the navy helicopters doing exercises.

When our forward speed got to one knot however around 1310 we put an engine on. We furled the genoa in at 1400 and motored toward the anchorage at 5 knots. The main came down at 1440.

The anchor was down in Pearl Bay at 1530. The first bird calls i heard were kookaburras. Then bush bird song was heard, and then the sharp call of a crow. Eventually a fruit dove called. And a dugong fed off the back.

The excitement (in one sense) for the day was that a screw came out of boom! It will be reinserted at the first available opportunity - which may mean the next 'town.'

Most of the day had been rainy, drizzly and grey.





Pearl Bay to Hunter Island...eventually

30th September 2022. Fruit doves and bush birds greeted the morning in.

The anchor was lifted at 0605 just as sun was peeping over top of the eastern point of the bay. And after a bit of an argument, and shallowing water in the original path we took to get out of the bay, we eventually motored out the way we had come in yesterday.

We put the main sail up south of Dome Island and the genoa was furled out and the engines off not long after, off the eastern extremity of Dome Island. Sengo was at this point travelling at 5 to 7 knots!

Because the wind had been dropping and the angle changing I had turned 20 degrees to port to pick up some advantage. But the fickleness continued and at 0850 we gybed to north. At 0915 we gybed north west and got the perfect run line. At 0920 I was turning to port again to chase this wind knowing we would have to gybe again to not run into land. Eventually we were on a north east trajectory, in a perfect line for the Loiusiades! Maybe I thought, considering the angle, we could try for Middle Percy instead of Hunter!

In the end the wind dropped almost completely. Sengo is a heavy boat. She doesn't do well with less than 7 knots apparent and to get that with wind from behind you need a fairly frisky breeze. So whilst we were technically moving forward we were wallowing and slapping in the

sea state. Turning in toward the wind there was almost instant relief but in seriously the wrong direction!

So the engines went on at 1200 below Steep Island and we motored for over three hours west to our original planned anchorage at Hunter Island. We briefly considered Hexam Island which was closer - we haven't been there, but Andrew pointed out that the anchorage we were likely to use was going to be open to the swell, so it was back to Plan A.

The gap between Danger Island and Marble Island was full of swirling eddies. Andrew mentioned this reminded him of the Kimberley's - the swirling was strong enough to mean if we wanted a comfortable ride I had to hand steer through here.

The anchor was down at 1530. There were two other boats here; a cat and a mono, and both were rocking side to side. The sea state was a bit rocky but settled down after change of tide. There were practically no clouds at sunset and there was a clear night sky - Jupiter was



particularly bright - Neptune was apparently not far off but I didn't use the binoculars and couldn't see it with plain eyesight.



We read a bit, did a bit of Spanish. I put the drying away, did some newsletter, and, managed to crunch my broken little toe again (serves me right for not having my boat shoes on!)

The bird call of the evening was the mournful call of a curlew.

The end of the month was farewelled by a beautiful large orange setting moon!

