

Aboard Sengo



**Waiting around,
and into...**

**...the dreaded
Slipyard!**



On 1st October we finally left Port Stephens to head to the Gold Coast, and the dreaded annual maintenance. Except this time it was more dreaded than usual - not only did we have the usual antifouling and engine maintenance to sort, we had a big fibreglass job scheduled, and, the unplanned bit, we had an insurance claim to deal with and damages to be repaired. Instead of our initially booked 'week' on 'the hard,' we were two weeks down and counting by the time we got to the end of the month.

Days were hot, and as we were not conducting any of the maintenance ourselves, (or very little), we escaped up into the hills for day-walks when we could.

Moving States

Port Stephens, NSW to Gold Coast Broadwater, QLD

1st - 4th October 2024

1st October 2024, The mooring was dropped at 0630, the main sail was up at 0640 and we were motoring towards the entrance to Port Stephens at 0645. The wind was 10 knots True.. ish.. less than we were hoping for, but we were still inside the Port - perhaps the wind would pick up outside.

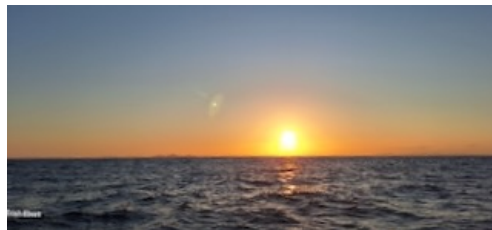
One engine was turned off at 0830. At least 7 dolphins entertained us for ten minutes at 0910. At 0930 the second engine went off. Not long afterwards we saw the first of many pods of whales.

Most of the day was routine and we had our normal shift swaps.

2nd October 2024. I took over the midnight shift before midnight, at which time we were approximately 25 nautical miles south-east of Crowdy Head. The wind was blowing 16 knots when I got to the helm. I turned off-wind 5 degrees to make the ride more comfortable. Boat Speed was a consistent 5 knots; our Speed Over Ground was less - around 3! According to graphics we were, well and truly, in the current.

Andrew had heard a whale 'shoosh' (his words) before I took over but he didn't wake me... he said he didn't think the photos would come out!. Well, no, they wouldn't, but my anxiety levels just went up! We are heading north - the whale migration is heading south - what can possibly go wrong in the dark, in the middle of the night! Fortunately, as it turned out, nothing.

The night sky was clear. The stars were magnificent. Later into my shift, and looking west, I may have discerned a layer of cloud just above the horizon...shown up by the light pollution (assume settlements?) seen at various spots along the coast. We were sailing approximately 14 nautical miles off-shore



At 0119 a dolphin somersaulted in front of the boat. Seeing it with a green tinge from the starboard light gave me a fright. Perhaps the animal just wanted to make sure we knew it was there! I suppose where there is one dolphin there may be more, but I was not going out in the dark to check.

Andrew took over at the usual 0300 but he let me sleep in until 0700 (I usually take over at 0600). When I got to the helm, given the boat angle, I wanted to gybe but Andrew suggested we stay on the current line to take advantage of the 'current.' Speed Over Ground was now around 5 knots. I didn't argue, and he went straight to bed.

Some shearwaters were spotted, and the sky to the west was grey. I noticed it was raining at 0845. It didn't last long but more grey clouds were threatening from the shore-side (port), and at the starboard side the blue sky was now clouding in as well.



The wind had picked up since I took over but dropped just after 0900 - Earlier I had seen up to 24 knots True on the gauges.

I went downstairs to get Andrew for a gybe to take advantage of the dropping wind angle. Of course, by the time he got dressed, the wind had picked up again and remained steady in its south-east direction. We gybed non-the-less around 0920, and whilst the result meant that the 'northing' was not so good (i.e. not so 'north') and we were heading for the shipping lane, it was better than getting side-slapped by 2-meter waves.

A blip of reception had come through and I got a message from **Anapa**. We have been isolated for so long I am looking forward to socialising again. At least for a little while, before I get sick of people again.

3rd October 2024. Wednesday went without a whale, and sadly, we only saw a few shearwaters.

Around 2100 we again assessed our arrival into Seaway. The wind was down to 8 to 10 knots True..it had been 'high teens' earlier. It was coming from behind us - and this boat doesn't do well with low wind speeds directly behind us - unless we run the spinnaker. We were against the current and the sea state was not good; this low boat speed was with engines! An earlier moving calculation indicated that there was no way we were going to make sundown at The Seaway. And we certainly didn't want to enter in the dark! So, for a dawn arrival, 'ish,' we had to adjust our speed down...to 3 knots!

What if we turned the engines off? We should have done this sooner, and whilst SOG did drop, it was nowhere near enough. On Andrews shift at 2100 to 0000 he furled

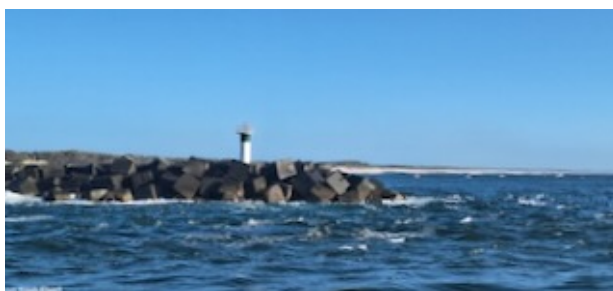
the genoa in a fair bit, and when I came up on board at midnight we were wallowing around 2 knots. We had gone past Tweed Heads at this point. There was only 11 nautical miles to go to get to our cursor mark on the plotter outside Seaway.

4th October 2024. We were around 6 nautical miles south from Seaway when I swapped shift at 0300. Instead of sailing past and having to come back...Andrew 'hove 'the boat' to' (we will ignore the grammatical rule about not splitting infinitives), and so we were in approximately the same position when I got up to where we had been when I went to bed. Once both of us were awake just after 0600, we headed for the entrance.

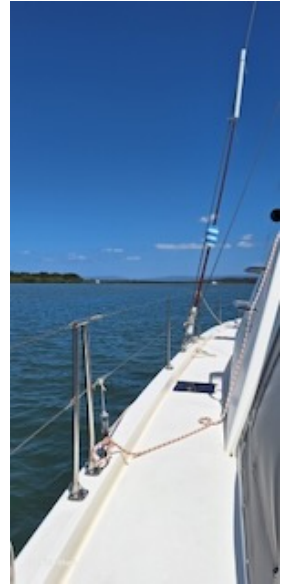
Whales were spotted just before the Seaway. We were Inside the Seaway at 0707.

High tide at Seaway was around 0900. High tide at Whalleys Gutter, thinking it the best place to sit out the grumpy weather for the next two days, was 1022. There is 13 nautical miles from the Seaway entrance to our usual Tiger Mullet anchorage... 2.5 hours at 5 knots. We travelled under motor (the shortened genoa having been furled completely at 0600 when I got up and we headed in), and we were gaining the advantage of the still incoming tide for most of the way...Boat Speed was 7 knots.

Whilst not at high tide we made it through Whalleys Gutter with no issues; anchor down in usual spot around 0930.



Now it was time for a 'snooze,' actual or metaphorical. Andrew was tired, having had only three hours sleep overnight, and after a cuppa and a wind down, he went off to bed. I did some washing, put the nick-nacks out, did the dishes, and did a basic wipe-down of the hatch covers and the helm clears (but they will need another go). I was conscious that I will need to wipe the lifelines and stanchions as well, and I put the hose out to hose down the boat when I got the energy, when Andrew re emerged into the land of the living - I didn't want to wake him up.



We weren't entirely expecting wind over tide at our anchorage, and whilst not uncomfortable, we found at around 1400 we were doing semicircles on our anchor. The wind at this point was north east - the tide was outgoing. We had anchored in our usual spot allowing for full stretch with a northerly wind. We didn't intend to move for a couple of days.



We had seen a darter, little pied cormorants and pelicans on the way to this anchorage. I had heard a whistling kite and lapwings after our arrival.

Tiger Mullet Channel

5th October 2024. We were both up around 0630. Channel-billed cuckoos were heard - and then bush birds. At 0930 we headed over to **Roo Bin Esque** for a cuppa. We haven't seen this boat for several years; we had a lot to catch up on but there are only so many stories that can be relayed in a couple of hours. We were back on board for a pancake lunch.

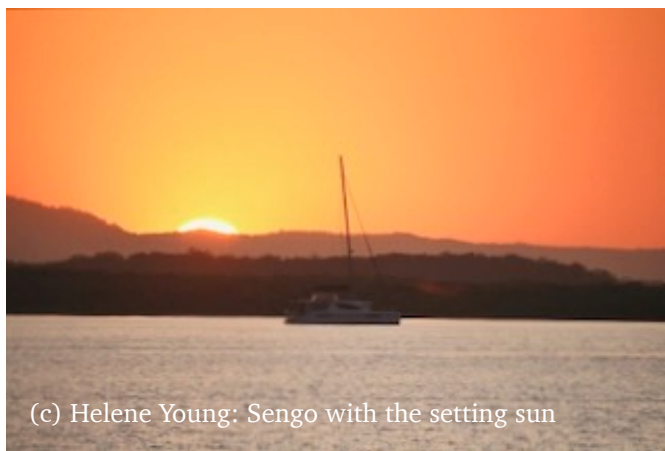
The rest of the day was spent reading, although we did clean up a bit. The wind picked up in the afternoon and reached 22 knots before it got dark. The gauges indicated a reading of 31 knots at 2030.

Birds spotted near Green Island during our visit; Whistling kite, white-bellied sea eagle, Brahmany kite, pied cormorants, and unidentified shore birds.

6th October 2024. The sun was well and truly up when we pulled ourselves out of bed at 0600. I spent the next hour starting to wash the salt off Sengo but only managed the helm roof and sides, and the back third of the top deck, before taking a break at 0700 - at which time I started to think about breakfast. We had forgotten to make yoghurt last night and the mince wasn't thawed enough to be a savoury mix. Small pancakes to the rescue - again.

In the afternoon we tried for a walk on South Stradbroke Island - but we didn't get there. Our anchorage was calm. The anchorage at Green Island, where *Roo Bin Esque* was, was a bit lumpier - but heading from there toward the channel was impossible. It was 'a good idea at the time' - but exercise was going to have to wait.

White-bellied sea eagles and white-faced herons were the most noted birds today.



(c) Helene Young: Sengo with the setting sun

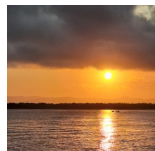
Tiger Mullet to Paradise Point

7th October 2024. Fog. Complete Fog. I had suggested to **Roo Bin Esque** that we go for a morning walk on South Stradbroke Island - a make-up for the exercise we didn't get yesterday. However when we got up we were fogged in, and most of the morning stayed that way. Mid morning **Roo Bin Esque** came over for a cuppa (we could see a little way at this time).

At lunch time we 'up-anchored' and headed south to Paradise Point. And what chaos was afoot on the way there! Boats, jet skis, run-a-bouts, large gin-palaces - and everything in between; travelling everywhere from a slow 6 knots, to a 'goodness knows what' (some parts of the journey allow a 40 knot speed limit - very uncomfortable if you are not going that fast yourself). Welcome back to the Broadwater!

The aim was to anchor at, or in the vicinity of, Crab Island, and head into Runaway Bay Centre for a food shopping run. We would then retreat to our gutter anchorage. This all happened. **Roo Bin Esque** also made the same journey and we found **Anui** already in our overnight spot. RBE and Anui caught up for an afternoon cuppa - we were also invited to the catch up, but as they had journeyed together earlier in the year we left them to their reminiscences - we would catch up with **Anui** later.

I spent the latter part of the afternoon trying to get through a Bryce Courtney novel. And decanting the bilge.



Paradise Point back to Tiger Mullet Channel

8th October 2024. There was fog? overnight. And the smell of smoke in the morning at 0600. Perhaps it was just smoke. A burn-off somewhere perhaps?

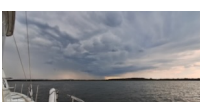
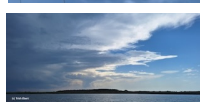
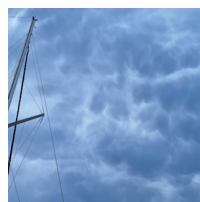
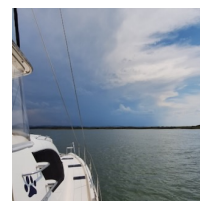
We were off boat at 0815, heading to Paradise Point for our usual Paradise Point 'stretch the legs jaunt' - plus a bit - adding an extension to the walk to Columbus Drive. Fishermen on the jetty were hoping to catch ray, and there was one dachshund to pat on shore. Bird count included lots of pigeons under the bridge to Ephraim Island, lots of black swans (with teenage cygnets), little pied cormorants, a darter, magpies, noisy miners and rainbow lorikeets.

We did a tinnie fuel run to Runaway Bay before we headed back to boat to move anchorages again. The three boats that had been in the anchorage with us overnight had all gone (we knew the destination of two of them).

The anchor was up at 1030. We were back in our Tiger Mullet Anchorage a bit over an hour later. There was, unusually, a boat already in 'our anchorage,' but there was enough room for us to put our anchor down at the spot of the anchor symbol on the chart plotter.

Mid afternoon we were serenaded by thunder. First lightening was seen at 1425 - with a count of 11 seconds between lightening and thunder.

Whistling kites, egrets and bush bird calls could be heard between Thor's rumbles.



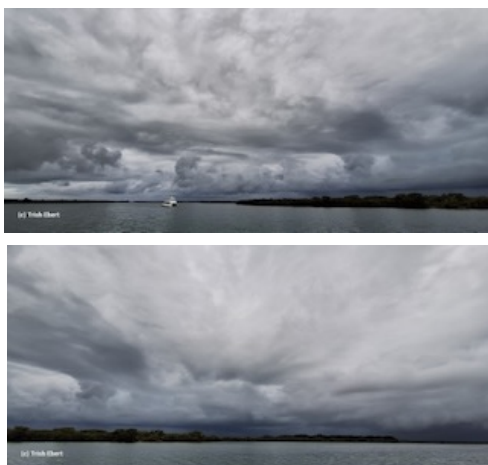
9th October 2024. It wasn't raining when I got up. And the sun came out - eventually. But only around the clouds. The rain radar showed rain on the way at 0730 from the south east ..rather than west as the direction from whence yesterdays storms had come. The wind was up but we didn't turn our gauges on until 0830.



I have given up on Bryce Courtney's *Four Fires*, which is a pity because I had invested an incredible amount of time into it. Not that I like his writing, I think his craft is dodgy, but I wanted to say I had read it. But this morning I am happy to move the opus into the op-shop pile; the dodgy craft from the first half got dodgier (harder to read) in the second half.

At 1645 a thunder boom heralded in the next tranche of storms. The system was bigger this time; more widespread, more rain. And more wind. We had seen 24 knots on the gauges this morning. We saw 31 around 1700!

As usual the weather didn't make sense. According to the rain radar the rain was coming from the south west. Wind observations had the wind direction coming from the south east!



Tiger Mullet Channel to Dux Anchorage

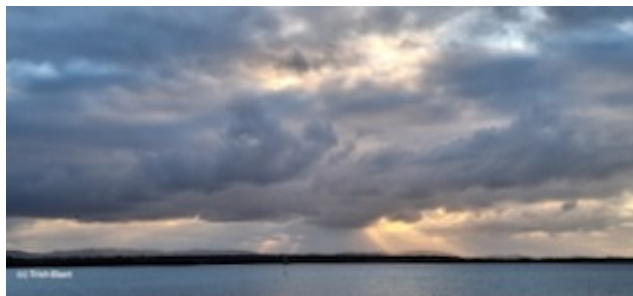
10th October 2024. It was blowing 27 knots just before 0630 this morning. I had woken up overnight wondering why we hadn't collected the rain for the toilet so when I got up around 0545 I put a small bucket out. The rain and wind was coming from the east. Not the best direction for us as we get some fetch here, but all in the sequence, as rain for the past few days has come from south west, south, south east, and now, east.

The rain stopped around 0900. By midday about a quarter of the sky was blue and conditions were calmer, although the wind still had its moments and white caps were coming up from Whalleys Gutter... fortunately we were out of their trajectory.

I made an almond flour loaf for lunch. Afternoon jobs included clove oiling a bit of the kitchen, and changing some accommodation for NZ. Of course, I also read a bit (I have a large number of books that I've picked up around the place and want to read them and move them on - the boat will be significantly lighter!)

We were contemplating when to move and decided to join **Roo Bin Esque** at Dux Anchorage. We are generally not that keen on Dux. It is the 'go to' place for the Southport Yacht Club and can be extremely full. Add to that it is a small anchorage and there is not enough swinging room for us to put more than 30 meters of chain out. We moved at the top of the tide. Anchor was down - on the second go - at 1615.

Birds; swallows at Dux. Sea eagle, white-faced heron, great egret, little pied cormorant, (crested?) tern on mark, Koel heard at Dux



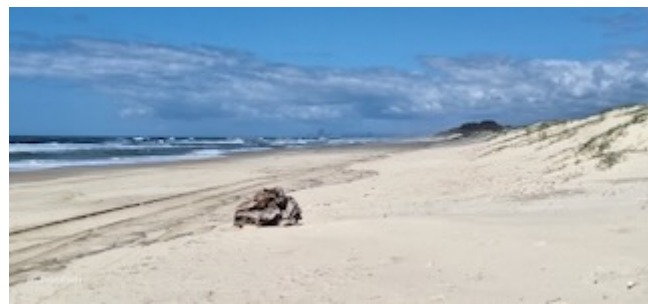
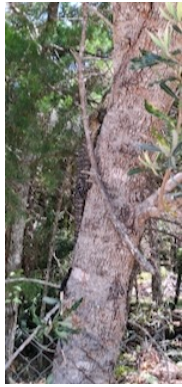
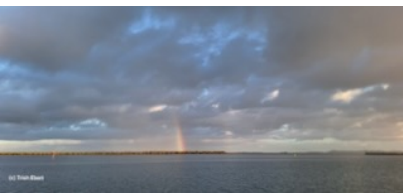
Dux Anchorage to Paradise Point

11th October 2024. There was a rain shower at 0530. Bush-birds called at 0700, including koels and currawongs. Conditions were calm.

We were picked up by **Roo Bin Esque** in their dingy at 0930 and went for an 8 kilometre circuit walk on South Stradbroke Island, including a stop at the cafe Tipplers. We were back on board Sengo a couple of minutes before 1200.

Birds spotted on the walk included sea eagles and two species of tern. Animals spotted: one wallaby and one monitor. A whistling kite was heard at 1205.

Around 1400 we picked up our anchor and headed back to our gutter anchorage opposite the Coomera River; anchor was down at 1515. A Brahminy kite had been spotted along the journey.. Birdlife heard here included koels, whistling kites and sea eagles. Swans were spotted. And a dolphin swam past. Surprisingly there didn't seem to be much boat traffic.



Pine Ridge Wander

12th October 2024. Morning conditions were expected to be very comfortable; wind speeds 0 to 5 knots. Sunny skies. Forecasts however had possible rain from late morning. Stronger winds were also on their way, and wind speed observations south, down the NSW coast, were up. When we had checked MetEye yesterday we had seen some predicted slightly grumpy weather coming up the coast; but indications suggested the winds would be from the south-east. This morning's MetEye predictions however included some slightly grumpy southerlies - a wind direction where we have quite a large fetch. The one positive was that whilst the winds were due to be grumpy, we would be experiencing an incoming tide - therefore there would be no wind-against-tide rock. However, given the fetch, the build up of wave height might be giving us a rock of a completely different kind. And it was to be in the very early hours of the morning!

As is per usual these days I had woken up early and got out of bed around 0530. Oyster catchers had called as they flew past and there was a small group of black swans near the shoreline of South Stradbroke Island. Boat traffic seemed light but I did notice around 0630 that a fisherman was leaving the area. And then I noticed the crab pots! I think the fisherman must have been using an electric motor because I didn't hear him. His pots were closer than I would have preferred but as the closest was 49.5 meters away to our east and we weren't expecting a strong westerly, I figured both the pot and our boat would be ok. I didn't yell after him. And he came back to remove them all at around 1230.

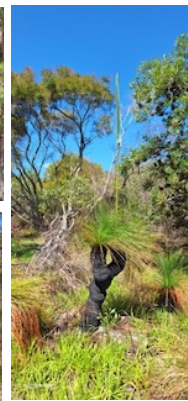
We were off boat at 0815. We were back on board at 1130. We had spent our time stretching our legs and wandering around Pine Ridge Conservation Reserve, visiting old paths and exploring some new ones. And getting lost along what turned out to be (probably) animal tracks (or very old, unused human paths). We saw one kangaroo and lots of birds.

Of course we didn't have the binoculars. And of course I didn't take my camera - And of course, whenever that happens birds seem to present themselves within close proximity for delightful portrait images that I will just have to remember for prosperity - there is no physical evidence of them..

Birds noted at Pine Ridge: rainbow bee eater, fig bird, little friarbird, magpie, mudlark, craven, kookaburra, pied butcherbirds, noisy miner, rainbow lorikeets.



The afternoon excitement was the visit from a dugong at 1230!



Bathurst

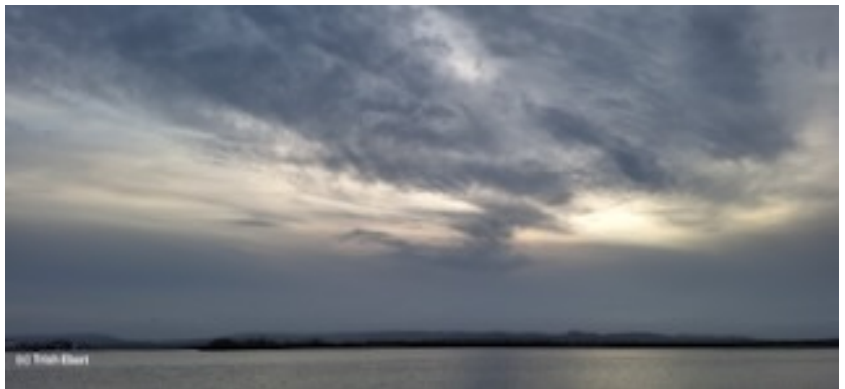
13th October 2024.. Today was always going to be spent on boat. Bathurst was on and the race is a 'must see' for Andrew. I expected to fill in the time reading or doing something else equally non-taxing. As it turned out I spent most of the day in bed. I felt sick; emotionally and physically. I am not sure what was wrong. Was it the impending lift into the slipyard (always guaranteed to increase my anxiety levels). Was it the stress of the overspray and its consequences - the existing damages to Sengo and a possible insurance claim (also guaranteed to increase my anxiety levels). Whatever it was, most of the day was a right-off for me - I only emerged in the final laps of the race.

Winds outside were strong.

Paradise Point walking

14th October 2024. A simple day. A simple exercise. Our usual Paradise Point jaunt.

Birds: a brush turkey, osprey, sea eagle, (heard) whistling kites, terns, around two dozen swans, swallows, martins.



Up the Coomera River!

And the rain came down

15th October 2024. 'Do you realise there's a dirty storm coming this way,' was the question our water maker contractor asked as we were heading toward where we were originally going to catch up with him this afternoon.

Yes, we replied. It wasn't predicted when we lifted anchor. Not only had the storm become large, it was coming fast, necessitating anchoring in the speed boat area adjacent Hope Island on the Coomera River, somewhere we haven't anchored before. The best deepest spot was taken by a houseboat. We settled for second best, and whilst there was a light drizzle as I started to lay the anchor, rain was pelting down by the time the bridle went out, less than a minute later. The navigation anchor light went on. I was not staying out to put the anchor ball up.

Lightening had flashed up river whilst I was dropping the anchor. The wind at this time gusted to 22.9 knots. And the wind was against the tide!

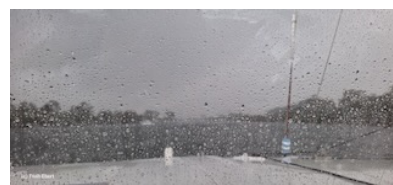
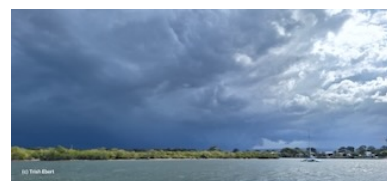
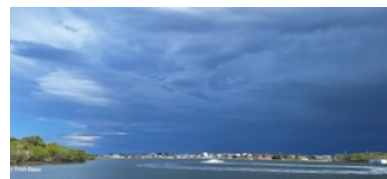
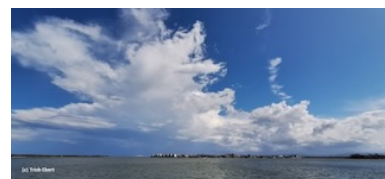
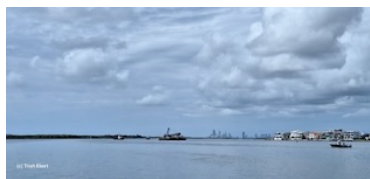
The morning, fortunately, had been a touch less dramatic. We had got up reasonably early. The first job I insisted we do today was make a list of boat jobs to be completed whilst we were 'on the hard'. Of course, it remained to be seen whether they actually got done - invariably other priorities always get in the way in a boat yard.

We also contacted a couple of contractors including our water maker service guy who has changed company; the plan was to anchor outside The Boat Works for the night. Head up on a rising tide, etc, etc. We could meet him at 1530.

The Bom.gov.au App prediction looked like we might miss the storm with just a smidge of white predicted..and then it changed. And then the predictions changed again. And then the phone call. Goto give 11 out of 10 for this contractor. He cares for his customers...

Research Hindsight is frustrating....

I discovered today that I could have saved \$40 a few months ago. In February, I was only aware of the 12 trial sites in Melbourne for soft plastic recycling. It turns out that there are several supermarkets on Central Coast NSW that would have taken a small amount, even the supermarket I shopped at. However my mind was focussed...I was not looking for soft plastic bins... and I ended up sending the plastics that I found in the bilge, that I had forgotten to deposit whilst we were on dock at Werribee, to a Melbourne supermarket instead.



The Boat Works

16th October 2024 until....

We had scheduled professionals to undertake the necessary annual maintenance jobs so we had time to spare. Or not - As we hadn't been here for a while, I scheduled in a whole heap of medical appointments across the first week of our time on the hard. But - the aim was to only be on the hard for one week. That didn't pan out. First we extended the time due to the ordering of a part from Sweden. And then there was an extension due to insurance. At the end of the month we were still at The Boat Works.

16th October 2024: Haul out day. In the scheme of things, compared with previous occasions, today's haul out was relatively painless. And as soon as Sengo was in place we went to work getting off the recalcitrant barnacles (that had defied the boat yard lift wash-down). We spent the rest of the day picking up a hire car, and working out how to schedule the next few days.

The polisher turned up on boat today to have a look at his potential job, and gave me a few tips on removing some of the more awkward paint spots. Regarding the sides and smooth areas; given the situation, he didn't know if he could polish it out but could only give it a go.

I tried his suggestions for the odd bits in the evening; the method worked to some extent. So maybe I can get the fibreglass on deck done and we just leave the sides to a professional.



17th October 2024. I spent around 1.5 hours this morning with the eraser removing a number of paint spots from the large fibreglass curbed area over the port bridge-deck-window. Whilst it had looked like the perpetrator had removed most of paint spots there, there had been a couple of obvious missed spots. On closer inspection this morning, with the right light, it seems that really all he had done was dulled them down a lot. Now that I was focussed on cleaning as much of these spots up as possible I was looking very carefully.

What stopped this job was a call from an insurance assessor...who rang to tell us the name of another insurance assessor who will be helping us. Who is currently on holiday and not available until Monday! What!

Don't these people coordinate anything? I am sure the broker will have informed the insurance company of our haul-out date. We really needed someone on the ground then. Without contact we could be waiting about for weeks and that is not on. Having made our own contact with the polisher I am now in a quandary. Do I continue. Do I not?

The afternoon activity was a pre-scheduled optometrist appointment for both of us. Andrew's eyes were about the same as last time. Mine were better than last time. I am happy with that! We drove back to boat via Whitworths in Southport... purchases were minimal.

To Brisbane City

18th October 2024. Over the years there have been contractors in the yard with dogs. Usually the dogs are mid-sized and active breeds. We got introduced this morning to a yard Dache! It made our morning. (Extremely friendly little dog that insisted you keep patting him if you stopped)

Andrew has an extra eye check-up that is supposed to be yearly. It rarely is, but the results don't change. The complication when we do get to see the specialist is that the practitioner is in Brisbane City. Last time we took the car part of the way in, and the 'trained it' the rest of the way. This year we caught the train at Coomera, only a five minute drive away from the yard. The train trip took around an hour - and that was with an express train. There was nothing unusual about the trip until a boy got his arm stuck through the door with the train moving! He was with his mother - I am not even going to contemplate how that happened!

We were back at boat mid-afternoon. I had spent half an hour this morning washing the boat. I continued the job when we got back from Brisbane. I was looking for potential damage from the overspray that was on the starboard side, specifically I was looking for crazing of the starboard side Windows. I was of course hoping not to find any. And fortunately I didn't. However, I did find paint spots. This I was not expecting - this side was on the opposite to where the paint had come from - but wind does strange things with aerosols and apparently it had been a very windy day when the damage occurred.

19th October 2024. A few days ago, Andrew had dropped the outboard engine to the tinnie off to a workshop in Nerang for a service. This morning at 0730 we were off to Nerang to pick it up again. (The service mob had fitted it in as we were only expecting to

be in the yard for a week). We had requested the courtesy ute for an afternoon pick-up yesterday but had discovered it had been booked out for the weekend. However, when we got back to boat we were told the booking had been cancelled and so we got the ute for the weekend. That could be useful!

We were not back long from the tinnie engine pickup (less than 10 minutes, we hadn't opened the boat up yet) when **Anui** came to say hello. After our catch up chat I went out again for a shop, heading to Paradise Point health food store for some flour and two loaves of bread. (I also stopped at the Hope Island Woolies on the way back). The idea had been to use one of the loaves of bread for lunch, and put the other in the freezer for a later date. Lunch ended up being part of both loaves. We were hungry so we ate them but half of each loaf of bread was mouldy. Of course we didn't know this until we were halfway through each loaf!

The afternoon excursion was to Harbour Town to pick up some spare charging cords for Andrew's shaver. Andrew insisted that we had brought his existing charger cords home from our Europe trip but we couldn't find them. We were delighted when the shop gave us the charging cords as spare parts for free.

I spent the late afternoon washing the outside of the starboard hull so it was clean for the insurance assessor to inspect tomorrow. There was still the odd paint spot - I wasn't expecting this - I thought the perpetrator said he had cleaned this side - clearly not.

We pulled the jerry cans out of our locker in preparation to do a diesel run, and ended up doing two!. And then we almost ran over a whistling tree duck on Dreamworld Parkway on the way back - in the dark!

Tullawallal Circuit. Most of it. Twice!

20th October 2024. My daypack was loaded with as many hard covered and heavy books that I could shove into it. This turned out to be 13 kilograms worth. To get Andrew walking with me I suggested a short circuit - the Tullawallal Circuit - without the middle curly bit. He made one circuit and then retired to the car to read. I did the second circuit on my own. Estimated distance walked (for me) was around 8 kilometres.



We had left boat at 0900 and we were on the track at 1000. We were back at boat at 1400.

The first bird seen on the track was a spectacled monarch. Other birds noted included brush turkeys and lots of little birds but they were too fast to identify before they disappeared into the foliage. We heard several male whip birds; some had girlfriends, some without. A couple of whipbirds had two girlfriends - greedy avians! Catbird calls were prominent. As was the call of a wompoo pigeon.

I spent the afternoon washing the underside of the boat - it took me 1 hour and 45 minutes. And I found some paint spots there as well!



21st October 2024. The insurance assessor, D, turned up today. I can't say I was looking forward to this - 'insurance' is a word you just don't want to have to deal with in reality - and you hear disheartening tales of rejections of claims and people have lost everything. I was pleasantly surprised; the assessor wasn't as nearly as scary as I had expected him to be.

The afternoon activity was another medical; our 'annual' skin check.

22nd October 2024. We were up at 0530. The polisher was expected at 0630, although due to completely understandable issues, he turned up a smidge later than that.

We both had a doctor's appointment at 0830. Given the expected 'peak hour' traffic we left at 0730. We were early and surgery wasn't open so we had to sit on the seat outside for 20 minutes. I was fairly straight forward. Andrew had a few more things to do. After a breakfast (we had fasted so we could get bloods) we headed off to get my neck x-rayed. It still plays up a bit from the crunch on the jetty in Paynesville in May, but I don't think I am going to be able to do anything about this. We made a quick shop on the way back for snags for a bbq we had been invited to, and to extend the car.

Back at boat I didn't do much. Andrew spent his time chatting to and organising our existing contractors as well as interacting with a 'struts' team - the payment for re-gassing the struts is probably going to be the cheapest job on the boat.

Clothes washing was my major job today. My recreation - due to heat, was re-reading a trashy Clive Cusler et al novel.

Andrew had an afternoon appointment with a physio

23rd October 2024. The alarm was on for 0630. I was up at 0530. I spent the early morning playing with photos for the September newsletter but my main priority for this morning was a Breast screen. Of course I left early as the appointment was for 0900. Traffic was surprisingly light, except in a couple of spots, and I made the breast screen place nearly an hour early. I was in and out within 20 minutes. I popped into the animal welfare op-shop warehouse at Helensvale on the way back and then got rid of some co-mingled recycling on way back to boat.

24th October 2024. The day was very hot. We both had a dentist appointment today. They were reasonably early in the morning, and like our early doctor's appointments we left the yard early to avoid the traffic.

Also like our recent early doctors appointments, we were early. We spent the waiting time in the park.

I didn't feel well during the day - I suspect it was the heat.

The only boat job was dropping the chain and scrubbing the anchor with the wire brush.

Andrew thought the antifoul guys were going to check-in every morning to see what our status was - now we had delayed going back into the water a bit - but it seemed that they decided this morning was a good day to paint the hull. Given the upcoming forecast - rain next week - I suspect this was prudent..

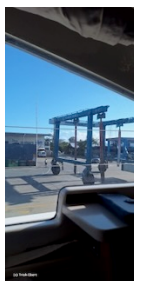
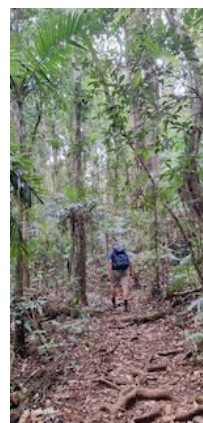
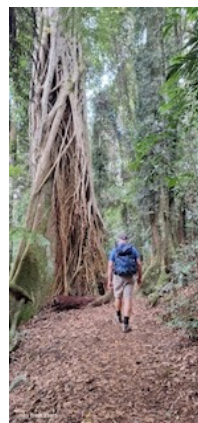
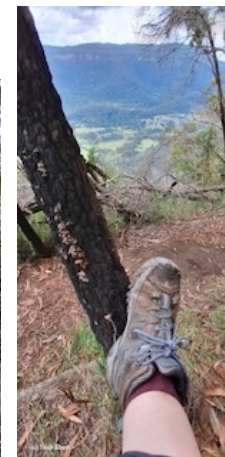
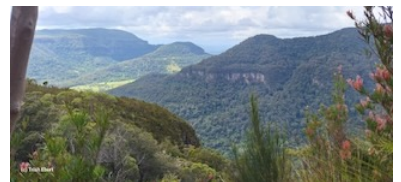
Near dusk the yard manager came across to warn us that the shed across the way was going to start its works tomorrow morning at 0400. We were expecting the compressor to wake us up.

25th October 2024. Hot! We slept with the fan on all night. I woke up at midnight and all was quiet, I woke up at 0500 to discover three cars parked in the spot next to our cabin. I hadn't heard them come in and the only noise I could hear was the fan. Getting up and looking outside I heard a distant koel. And then I heard the traffic.

The first compressor heard was at 0530. That is not to say it didn't go on earlier - it is just that we slept through it. The smell of paint was obvious outside.

Dave's Creek Circuit

26th October 2024. The usual National Park (Lamington). The usual track. For the usual time. I was loaded up - but only with my day pack - I haven't yet got around to pulling out the overnight hiking pack. But to my credit I still had the 13 kilos in my day pack - made up mostly of second hand books. I was hoping to sit on the rocks at Numinbah Lookout for lunch but the small lookout location was occupied by a rowdy family with quite a few kids - so we took the next available, 'flat-ish' looking rock on the side of the track.



Pine Ridge - a circuit of sorts.

27th October 2024. On my own I walked a brisk three kilometre. Pine Ridge Conservation Park circuit from the car park this morning - and still with 13 kg of books - ish on my back. Birds heard and seen were the usual suspects - noisy miners and cravens, and a lot of little twitterers in the scrub. The delights of the walk were however hearing olive-backed orioles and channel-billed cuckoos.

I did a fruit and vegie shop on the way back to boat.



Getting ready to leave - or are we?

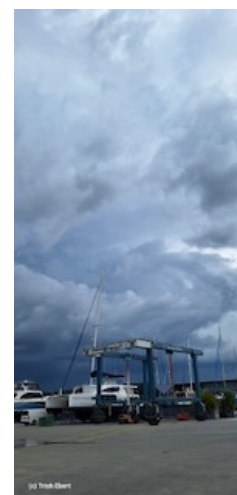
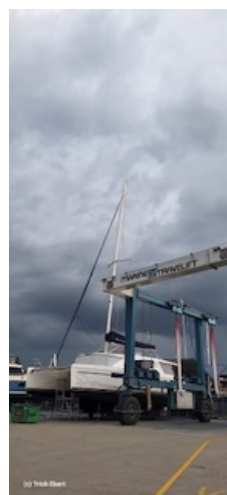
28th October 2024. If we had been in our usual 'opposite end of Coomera River anchorage we would have had one of the magnificent vistas to the oncoming storm.' But we weren't, and on 'the hard' the sloped roof at the back severely blocks the view. The only flash of lightening I saw was walking across the yard coming back from the bathroom facilities. The first rain drops fell at around 1620.

The day had pretty much been one of getting ready to get back in the water. After a followup medical. Then there was dropping off the car. Then there was the insurance assessor....

...who let us know that the polishing quote had been approved. So now what do we do? If we go back in the water it was going to cost over \$1000 to get back out again (plus my usual stress).

Bless his cotton socks but as it turned out we couldn't get hold of the polisher until after the office closing time. By which stage we had moved our splash in. A quick conversation with the assessor put him back to suggesting the original time. Now we had to get hold of our contractors - mechanic and antifoul - and now we had to also wait until the morning to see if we could get back in.....

The late afternoon was full of storms. We help **Koolsid II** onto the lift dock (soon to be **ex-Koolsid II** (at least from our perspective)).



Machinations

29th October 2024. This morning Andrew said he didn't want to go back in the water. I agreed with him. I couldn't see the financial sense of the operation (it was cheaper to cover 'the hard' for the next week than it was for another lift), let alone my usual anxieties regarding getting onto dock. The concern was the antifoul. The haphazard solution was to water it down occasionally each day. Of course, I had packed up the hose last night - now I had to put it out again. The green hose went out and the hulls were wet down around 0700.

So we confirmed the stay with the insurance assessor around 0700, and sent a text to the polisher, and to the antifoul guy. The mechanic we didn't have to panic about as he was turning up at 0800 this morning anyway, for a different job.

Now what do we do about a car? We had handed the hire car back yesterday, and whilst we didn't technically need a car for most of the next week - we did need some assurity of transport for a follow up medical on Thursday. We investigated an alternate car-hire mob.

Arrgghh! - With regard to responsibility for our damaged boat....Unfortunately, no one is willing to take responsibility and the perpetrator (who wasn't insured) claims that we used the product he left us - which we haven't - and that we created the window crazes - which, clearly, we didn't. The owner of the boat that was being painted (who sent back an uninsured contractor to fix up his mistakes) apparently gave our insurance assessor a 'less than gentlemanly response.' Some people should just not be on this planet!

I finally got around to dealing with the photos on the Olympus camera today - at least September's for the diary notes - the European photos have been put in storage and just going to have to wait until I have time, and the headspace, to look at, and deal, with them.

The afternoon exercise was a shortened version of our favoured Paradise Point Walk

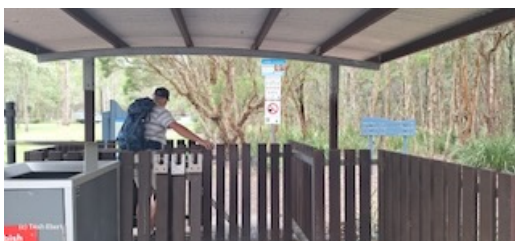
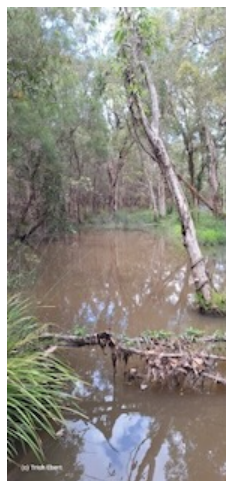
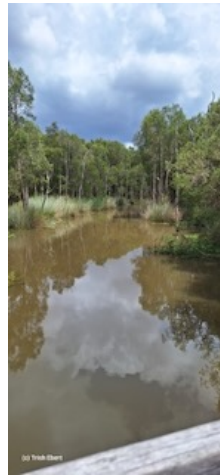
Karawatha Forest Park

30th October 2024. Today's excursion wasn't a long walk. But it was an easy one. Not really ideal for me as I was looking for longer and harder trails, but, if I wanted to get Andrew walking, bearing in mind there was yet to be a physio diagnosis, I had to find a track or trail that wasn't going to put too much strain on his knees.

So I picked up the AllTrails App and filtered walks by 'easy.' I came up with a couple of marked options at Karawatha Forest Park, around 45 minutes drive away (via the M1) to the west of Logan. I chose between two indicated possible options at this park - one was dismissed immediately as the description had a comment mentioning a couple of short, steep, up, bits. The settled-on stroll was pleasant, even though we did walk up hill at the start of it.

The park is known for its koalas but we didn't see any. There were a few birds flying and calling about; the predominant being cravens

Boat jobs included wetting down the hull and decanting three jerry cans into the port fuel tank. Non-boat jobs included recreational reading and starting to get my hiking stuff together.



31st October 2024. My overnight toilet run was an interesting experience - water had been cut-off in the facilities building!.

I got up for the day at 0600. After our usual Brexit You Tube (now really a UK politics You Tube), we started on some clean-up jobs. My first job was to put the fenders back in the front locker. Andrew started on an indoor job....he was servicing the 'head.'

'Can you make sure you don't put your head in the toilet from now on,' Andrew asked me. Technically it was a joke, but practically he had just pulled the toilet apart and was cleaning out my hairs, wrapped around parts they shouldn't be. I blame the last few months of not eating well, but lack of iron consumption probably has something to do with it. I left Andrew to get to the nitty gritty. The cleaning of the actual toilet bowl (which was outside on the tinnie fuel locker) was left to me and by mid afternoon It was mostly done....

But time was ticking and a shower was prudent before we headed off to Andrew's physio -there would be no more toilet cleaning today. This left the head floor covered in everything from scrappy towels to tools - but we weren't using the facility anyway - when on land - you take the land-based facilities.

I paid for the deposit for the polisher today - which equated to the excess for our insurance. We are up-to-date in paying the contractors who have given us invoices but the biggest invoice is yet to come, and the bank balance is getting to the point where going 'back to work' seems like a scary proposition. Hopefully it all balances out and we get out of here not having to have done anything too drastic.

Of course today is October 31st - apparently the last day to lodge tax returns if doing them yourself. We don't - mainly because I can't get my head around the laws and rules, but it is a good jolt that perhaps I had better start gathering the relevant documents together. I spent the early evening on the tax spreadsheet.

The clouds were magnificent as we were heading home from Andrew's late afternoon physio appt. The first grumble of thunder was heard when we got back to the yard. Most of the opal on the bom.gov.au rain radar however went to the north and south of us and the heaviest patch of rain came down around 1845.

