

Marmaris to Fremantle 2007

Affinity 473 – Beneteau Oceanis 473

Skipper – Mark Loader

Crew Member and Affinity Owner – Leo Killigrew

Passenger – Denice Kilpatrick – (*Marmaris to Suez and very sea sick*)

Passenger – Reg Wells – (*Thrown off at Maldives, had Hashish and Valium on board*)

Departure – 12am Sunday 19th August 2007

Preamble

Affinity 473 is an Oceanis 473, 3 cabin version owned by Leo Killigrew and his family and some of his staff. He purchased her around 3 years ago, he traded in his Oceanis 411 that he had purchase a year before in France on her. Leo also owns Providence, an Oceanis 57 that is currently on the hard stand and winterized in Spain.

Leo contacted me through Stan and Glenda Duffy who have cruised and assisted in the managing and all things nautical on Affinity for the last few years whilst it has been in the Mediterranean. Leo wanted to bring Affinity back to Australia for family and friend use out of Fremantle and to perhaps do a round Australia trip including some time in the Kimberley.

Leo needed at least one other crewmember for the voyage so I contacted Reg and Denice Wells to see if they were interested in the trip. We wanted Reg to do the whole trip if possible, as we didn't want any of the fairer sexes for the nasty bits like the Gulf of Aden. Reg was keen and Denice keen to do from Marmaris to Suez or Said, then Reg would do the rest of the way. I advised Reg that we would pay for his airfare and food, and if for some reason he couldn't do the whole trip he would need to pay back the airfare to Leo, he agreed. In a conversation a few days later Reg told me that he had decided to do some tourist stuff and got to England and France as well, I advised him that Leo would pay him the amount that my fare cost as I would be taking the least expensive direct way to Marmaris via Qantas to Singapore and Turkish Airlines to Dalaman via Istanbul.

Marmaris - Turkey

I arrived in Marmaris on the 14th of August, I had left Onslow 4 days before for the 300 km drive to Karratha, overnight there then fly to Perth, overnight at my parents, then a Qantas flight to Singapore, 2 hours stopover, 12 hour flight to Istanbul, 7 hour stopover, then 1 hour flight to Dalaman and then 1 ½ hour bus to Marmaris.

When I arrived at Dalaman my bag wasn't obviously available, I then heard a girl calling my surname and although I had passed through customs in Istanbul and got a visa stamp, my bag from Perth hadn't been through customs. They took another older couple from Jerusalem and myself to the international terminal where we picked up our bags, a uniformed customs man looked at my passport and ushered us towards the exit door, no probs. The bus to Marmaris arrived within a few minutes, it was a modern air-conditioned bus that wasn't anything like the poultry filled 30-year-old clunker I expected it to be, no goats, and no lady sitting next to me with a chook on her lap. It was only a 1-½ hour but trip to the bus depot/car park thing at Marmaris, Leo was there just after I arrived and we headed off to find a taxi that wasn't asking for 30 YTL (Turkish Lira) for the trip. We found one that was happy with 20 and off we went to Marmaris Yacht Marine, about 15 km from the center of Marmaris.

The Marmaris Yacht Marine has about 1000 pens and probably 300 or so hard stand spots and looked pretty full. Affinity was on Alpha Jetty almost at the far end, a long walk but open to cooling breezes from the north so not a bad spot.

Affinity is a very tidy boat with good electronics; standard fridge and Leo had fitted a Danfoss unit to the cold box to give us a proper freezer. Water maker had been fitted but not working as the membranes had dried out due to no return valve on the seawater inlet, Leo had the membranes replaced. Non-return valve fitted and valves installed to allow cleaning, flushing and pickling of the membranes with Sodium Metabisulphide and Acetic Acid.

After I stowed my bags at around 5pm we had a couple of beers and set about relaxing. I didn't suffer any jet lag and quickly got my body clock into local time.

Over the next couple of days prior to Denice & Reg arriving we started provisioning, first with a reconnaissance of the local supermarket in Marmaris that proved to be able to provide almost everything we needed, then at a few fishing shops, chandleries and hardware stores. Affinity's fuel tank capacity was 260 litres in one tank and water 600 litres in two rear tanks and one bow tank plus the water maker that can make around 50 litres per hour. Fuel usage is around 6 litres per hour when doing high revs and around 8 knots, should be around 4 motor sailing and keeping the revs to around 1500 or less and doing 6 knots. With the estimated long legs of around 2000 from Cocos to Fremantle, 2200 from Maldives to Cocos, 1300 from Suez to Aden and 1800 from Aden to Maldives we would need to carry a lot of extra fuel in jerry cans. At a conservative 4 litres per hour at 6 knots and allowing fuel for motoring ½ the legs we would need 432 litres from Suez to Aden, 600 litres Aden to Maldives and 732 litres from Maldives to Cocos and around 660 from Cocos to Freo. With 260 in the tank we would need an additional 470 in jerries or 12 40 litre or 24 20 litre jerries. Leo had purchased a decent pump and fuel filter separator with fittings to use to pump and filter the fuel from the jerries into the tank. After a bit of thinking we decided to try to convert the bow water tank of 200 litres into a fuel tank, this would then give us 460 litres in the tank and then we would only need around 300 litres in jerries. We planned the install, drained the front tank and disconnected it from the water system, bought a pile of hose clamps, 11 metres of 10mm fuel line (it was all the

shop had) a joiner to lengthen the 10mm hose by a couple of metres as Leo already had a couple of lengths of fuel line, a 12 volt switch and some cable and we had all we needed. The hardest part of the install was running the hose from the bow through all the lockers and the head to the tank under my bunk in the stern port side. The install went well and would later after we put some fuel in the front tank prove to work fine. Leo already had bought 10 x 22 litre jerries and had another 120 in 2 x 20l and 2 x 10 jerries so a total of around 740 litres. Electronically I had installed my AIS box and put a couple of cables in series with the yachts masthead VHF antenna so that I could connect either the VHF or the AIS box to the antenna from the nav station. My notebook had Maxsea and Software on Board installed as well as my marine library, celestial nav stuff, Noonsite web pages and cruising and routing guide updates.

Reg and Denice arrived ok but stayed in a hotel the first night as Denice had copped a stomach bug and needed very quick access the toilet. We met them on the evening of the 16th for dinner in Marmaris and arranged to meet them the next day at the boat and to finish our provisioning then.

We provisioned in a couple of stages, dry goods one day and then with the help of the supermarkets “yacht service” a truck carried us and all of our veges, cold stuff, meat, beer & other drinks as well as milk and fruit juice all the way to the boat with trolleys and staff to push them.

Leo moved most of his gear out of the front cabin to allow Reg & Denice to have the front main cabin and en-suite for the journey to Said. We had some other things to do like fit the ICOM 802 HF and temporary antenna but time was passing and we wanted to get on our way so we met with the Marmaris agent that Leo had arranged, TMS, Foonda, a multi lingual very helpful and friendly lady took us to customs and we handed over all of our paperwork and passports/ A very friendly man advised us of the costs EU\$125 for departure, this included a new transit log (Turkeys cruising permit) as the old one had expired on the 1st of August. When we asked the office staff about getting some diesel (not too much, it's AU\$2.80 per litre, they advised that they had run out and the next delivery would be at 3pm on Monday so we decided to go across to Netsel Marina on the way out and get our diesel there. We picked up the completed paperwork at 6pm and needed to depart the following day or at latest early in the morning on Monday the 20th August, Sunday morning looked good to us.

Departure

By 11am we were underway and arrived at Netsel at around 11:30am, put 150 litres into our newly converted bow tank, gave it a test by pumping around 70 litres into the stern tank and yippee it worked. Reg and Denice picked up some lunch and we were underway.

We motored into a light southerly headwind out through the channel that opens into the Mediterranean Sea, took a few photos and we were off. The wind was light and we motored for an hour then put up some sail as the wind increased and veered from SW to

W and then to the NW and increased to around 20 knots. We for around 4 hours sat between 8 and 10 knots in relatively calm conditions before the wind eased again and we fired up the motor again. We motored through the night and most of the next day, a brief increase in the wind allowing us to sail, shut down the engine and check the water and oil and then around 2 hours later firing the engine up again and motoring through the night. It is now 07:00 on the 21st August; we are 126 miles from Said, still motoring in a glassy but slightly lumpy ocean. We bought a heap of fishing gear in Marmaris, 100kg line that was hard to find, trace wire, skirt lures, hooks, swivels & sinkers, Reg picked up a couple of Rapala deep diving lures as well but so far even though we launch the lines before dawn and retrieve them just after dark we have had no interest yet.

The next day we were still motoring, very little to see, no wind but a lot more interest in the fish department, we caught 4 nice size about 5kg Tuna, two we kept and two we let go. We had some pickled in balsamic vinegar, soy, lemon juice and some herbs that afternoon and then we barbecued some for dinner; it was lovely and very white, as we had bled them very well.

Said - Egypt

We arrived at Said at first light on the 22nd August, the shipping lanes on the way past Alexandria and the mouth of the Nile were very busy but with radar and AIS things were pretty easy, a couple of unlit fishing boats added to the excitement.

The Port Fouad Yacht center is being redeveloped, there were no obvious toilets or showers, no facilities at all, the only power available was nearly 50 metres from the boat so we bought and made up a power cable so that the fridge and freezer wouldn't flatten the batteries. The marina if you can call it that opens onto the eastern canal, the city is a free ferry ride across the canal, lots of wake and all the dirt from the canal blow into the marina, the water is oily and dirty but the locals still do swimming lessons with their kids in the muck. We met some others in the marina, Ningaloo, on the way to Brisbane arrived from Marmaris, we had met them there and Mark the delivery skipper was looking after the delivery for Mark the owner and Lordes and American lady was a volunteer helping with the delivery. Simon from SOB was arriving the next day to get on the ketch El Oro and Jean Michelle and Paula his partner were delivering a Fontaine Pajot called to the Seychelles.

We weren't planning on doing any provisioning in Said just fuel and water and hopefully on our way the next day. We were all prepared to go when three US fighter jets flew over the city, the usual first sign of a warship that is going to transit the Suez Canal. Sure enough our transit was cancelled until the following day, bugger. We didn't have much to do, we went over to town to pay our agent fees, the Felix Company offices were really plush and they proudly took us to their new building adorned with lots of expensive looking wood and glass with Pharos etched into them.

The day before Reg & Denice were ripped off by a guy from the marina, they changed some US to Egyptian pounds and were given a counterfeit 100 pound note ie US\$20.

Add comments about Reg's performance about the ripoff of \$20 and the later frypan scratching episode

We left Said just after 11am on the 24th August 2007, the 45 nm trip to Ismailia not too exciting, lots of big ships, security buildings at regular intervals & lost of deserty looking sand.

Ismailia - Egypt

We arrived at Ismailia just before six, what a difference. A clean and newish looking complex, the "Suez Canal Authority All Gaming and Yacht Club". Tying up was a bit weird, there were a heap of well spaced buoys that the pilot advised us we reverse into, pick up the buoy with a boat hook and loop a long bow line through, reverse to the jetty and tie up. Firstly the boat hook didn't fit the eye on top of the buoy, then very clearly the metre diameter metal buoy was far too heavy to lift, it was very apparent that the pilot hadn't been there before. I jumped of the bow and looped the end of the roll of 18mm pre stretch through the eye, tied a long bowline to simplify departure, jumped back on board & we reversed in ok.

A small café that sold ice, power near the yachts and water available, bonus. Our pilot did a reasonable job, we gave him some cigarettes and a "Present" of USD\$20. That night Mark and I went and bought some nibbles and cheese and we had a party and snacks on Ningaloo until nearly 5am. At eight am the pilots hadn't arrived by 10am we had decided that they weren't coming but at 11 we got a message that there was another warship and that we would be leaving Ismailia at around 1pm. At 12:15 the pilots arrived, people from both the catamarans were off doing some shopping, we were ready so we took off, the cats both motored quicker than us so they would catch us up for sure.

The second part of the Suez transit was about the same as the first, at the south end of Little Bitter Lake a ship next to us suddenly reversed dramatically and our pilot wasn't to happy with him, spitting in the direction of the ship that we later on found out had engine trouble, more likely rudder trouble and didn't want to cop a huge fine for breaking down in the channel so he hit reverse to back out of the narrower canal.

We arrived at Suez at around 8pm, the club put us between two moorings, a rope from the stern & from the bow. We tidied up the boat a bit and the club do everything person "Karkar" came alongside and in pretty good English let us know about the facilities, no bar, some showers, food in the evenings (we think), laundry, fuel water etc all available.

The fist night in Suez, Leo & I decided to go to a restaurant, not the el cheapo one recommended by Mark from Ningaloo, one that the Suez Yacht club man recommended, El Moesli. We walked out of the club and hailed a cab, it was a fairly banged up heap of junk driven by an old man not in much better shape than his car. He acted a bit vague but seemed to know where the restaurant was and off we went. We went up and down a few narrow streets before he attempted a left hand turn at an intersection that had very little

turning room and a car parked either side of the street we were turning left into. The driver made what sounded like cursing sounds as he tried in vain to turn between the two cars but unless he could come straight at them he was not going to fit through a gap that probably would take out the mirrors on all three cars. There were two younger men standing on the side of the road near each of the cars, one on a mobile phone, the other chatting to a shopkeeper, both had noticed our drivers plight but neither seemed very interested, perhaps they weren't the owners. As our driver got more and more flustered he shouted more and more words, passers by gathering to watch and laugh as he spat the dummy. Then a young man decided to help and started giving our driver guidance by waving his hands and motioning him left, right and forward. There still was not enough room and we must have been millimeters from both cars, finally the guy on the mobile finished his call and decided to move his car, just as well, I am sure that if we had hit either car there would have been some kind of physical happening between driver owner and probably spectators. Off we went to El Moesli. When we got there we paid the traxi driver, he pointed to a building and said El Moesli, it didn't look right to us. We walked closer and it looked like a butcher shop, it actually was the kitchen of El Moesli, over the road behind us was a door that looked far more like a restaurant and the name above the door agreed. Not much to say about the restaurant, the food was good, I had beef, Leo chicken, a bottle of water was delivered without asking followed by the food, both with pitta bread, what looked like light coloured creamy hommuss and salad, quite nice.

Nothing else particularly exciting happened at Suez, we arranged fuel, including 5 extra jerrys to give us a total capacity of 900 litres. The modified water tank was working fine, we could pump 200 litres from the front tank via water separator & filter to the back tank (230) litres. On deck an array of different sized containers full of diesel. We shopped the day before departure, finding a supermarket for most of our stuff, then visiting a night market for our fruit and veg, not finding much green stuff, potatoes, onions, garlic aplenty and mangoes, apples and nashi pears at a small veggie shop. Whilst at the market I touched the leaf of a large cauliflower looking plant and the man sitting next to it went ape shit, cursing in Arabic at us and Karkar who was acting as our guide & translator. We didn't find out what the story was, probably than an Infidel had touched his sacred vegetable but it all quietened down when Karkar motioned that he was going to get a policeman.

We departed Suez at 06:45 in the morning on the 26th August 2007, we had dined the night before at the Red Castle Hotel, the service was slowish, food average but it was a nice evening, Jean Michele and Paula from the Fontaine Bajot, Mark and Julie (his new crew member) from Ningaloo and the three of us from Affinity. Reg complained about the food, the service, the lack of wine (there was no alcohol at all), and then didn't pay all of his share of the bill, I was left to sort out the difference from Leo's boat money.

We took off at 06:45, none of the crew of the other yachts were stirring, El Oro with Software on Board's Simon had arrived from Ismailia while we were looking out the window at the Red Castle, they would be stopping near Abu Tig to do some diving and as we will have left around 48 hours before them from Suez we probably wouldn't see them

again. The trip down the Gulf of Suez was very busy, ships bumper to bumper. We covered around 170 miles in the first 24 hours, a fresh to strong Northerly giving us a good push along. We as of today, the 28th August 2007 have caught a fish but some have tried and got away so we are hopeful of some joy soon. The radar stopped working just after dark last night, AIS saw all of the ships so we weren't too concerned. I just tried the radar again and it is up and running, we suspect a bad connection in the antenna on the cable that connects it to the display, next time up the mast we will have a look. Our current position is 27 17N 34 21E, Saudi Arabia on our port, Egypt on our starboard.

Reg has been acting more and more unusual over the last few days, since he balled me out when he thought I was smoking on the boat in Suez in front of Jean Michelle, Mark & Julie (Ningaloo's new crew member. He has each day become more withdrawn, he sits by himself on the bow a lot, eats breakfast alone just in front of the dodger on the leeward side, wears his headphones and glasses all day and mumbles discontent at almost everything, the heat, the diesel fumes etc etc. The other day I let him sleep in rather than wake him at 6am for his watch, he got up and said in a very negative tone, "did you forget to wake me". A few days later when Leo woke him up on time for his watch, he said to Leo, "why do I need to get up there's two of you on already". He refuses to clean or cook and on a few occasions has made comments like, "wheres my dinner, I'm hungry", "I've gotta eat etc. Leo and I had discussed that we thought that he may not turn up in Suez, and were surprised when he did, Denice clearly didn't enjoy the trip across the Med and was sea sick for most of the trip.

When Reg and Denice turned up in Suez, Reg had bought a Hooka, the drug smoking type, not the diving kind and put it on the boat without Leo or I knowing, he announced its presence when we were a few days down the Red Sea. I commented that something like that would attract Customs or Quarantine attention to the boat and that I thought that having a drug smoking implement in your possession was either illegal or entitled officers to search more thoroughly than normal, Reg shrugged this off with mumbles of it's not illegal, it's not for drugs its for special tobacco and herbs that came with the Hooka. We made no further comment, it seemed pointless.

We are now at 25 21N 35 42E, lots of ships, a few problems with a my PC and the Radar that we have now solved. We caught a bonito earlier and had half of it with some salad (tomato, onion, cucumber, fetta cheese & mushrooms) for lunch, yummy. This evening we will eat the remaining bonito and salad followed by a mango fruit salad with chilled long life cream. We may be able to find a bottle of wine to wash it down with if we are lucky. Around 900 miles to Babel Mandeb, then another 100 to Aden, eta at present is around 148 hours or approx 6 days.

The Bonito was not as nice cold, but still pretty good, the fruit salad good and improved with some chilled long life cream. We have 908 miles to go to Aden and my calculations of fuel assuming that we are using 5 litres per hour gives us a motoring range of 900 miles so we shouldn't have a problem getting there even if the wind dies for a week. The next leg to Male in the Maldives will be more interesting with nearly 2200 miles to sail, fresh food will be a problem as will fuel if we have to do too much motoring. We cant

really carry any more jerries, there is currently 440 litres up there to make our total of 900 litres. It's beautiful tonight, not too much shipping, a 15 knot NW breeze pushing us along at around 5-6 knots with just a partly furled mainsail.

A couple of fairly quiet days followed, Reg lost the last of his two lures, he landed a nice yellow fin and the next strike after that saw a second trace break and the culprit steal the lure and scarper. Then the rot set in, two plastic bags in two days, we were living off the frozen Tuna but things could be worse.

It is now 20:35 on the 31st October, we are halfway down the Sudan coast on our starboard side, the border of Eritrea is around 160nm south, and on the port side another 350 or so miles of Saudi Arabia until the border with Yemen and our next stopover for re-provisioning Aden, another 200 nm around the corner out of the Red Sea and into the Gulf of Aden.

Today was the 1st of September, not a lot happened, our batteries are holding less and less charge, even after many hours of continuous engine running they drop very quickly to under 12 volts. We suspect a combination of causes, they were left flat when Affinity was on the hard in the med for 9 months when the batteries were almost new, the house 2 x 140 amp batts and the start 110 amp batt have been left in parallel since new, I suspect that the start battery got the better deal when charging. Another problem is that the alternator is not fitted with a smart regulator and only puts out a max of 13.6 volts not enough to boost the batteries and also when 20 amps of load is applied the volts only get to around 12.8-13 volts so perhaps the alternator is either not a 70 amp or it has a lower output than it should. After doing some reading we have decided that the main problem is that the alternator has a "car type" regulator, it doesn't put out more than 13.6 volts and therefore doesn't boost the batteries, it should put out 14-14.4 volts to really top them up. With the fridge and freezer drawing 5 amps total, the nav lights a ridiculous 75 watts or 6.5 amps, VHF, Nav equip & misc another 2 amps, we are using around 15 amps at night time and 8 or so in the day. The solar puts out only 7 amps (one panel may not be working), the wind generator needs 10 knots to output 2 amps and 25 knots to put out 8 amps and apparent wind is only around 12 knots. So we lack power and the house batteries may be tired, they are 3 years old.

We played with the solar panels today and discovered that the port panel wasn't even connected we plugged the wire in and kapow, double the amps from the solar panel. We are now 170 miles from Bab El Mandeb, 270 from Aden, it's Monday the 3rd September 2007. We have lost another lure and had two hooks snapped off, there's some big fishies out there.

A couple of quiet days followed, the only drama the bolt holding the top of the spinnaker pole to the snorter car fell out and the spinnaker pole crashed to the deck, its fall being broken by the port safety rail, it lay 90 degrees on the port side, the only damage a bent fitting at the base of the mast that the outer end (or bottom end when on the mast).

We decide to give the gun a test, Leo had bought a Lumar Semi-Automatic shotgun as a bit of a warning/deterrent to would be pirates more than a serious blow the crap out of them weapon (we hope). The shotgun hold 4 shots in it along the barrel magazine and one in the chamber, 5 shots can then be fored off in succession, each spent cartridge falling out on the deck after firing. We prepared the gun, worked out how it worked (no manual), and Leo let off a couple of rounds, blood loud and dangerous, perfect. Leo stored the gun away with 4 rounds in the magazine and no round in the chamber, preparation for firing would be insert 1 cartridge, take off the safety and ready to Rambo. We decided that we would see if we can find any military looking garb for Leo to wear to make him look even more dangerous than the gun did.

We passed through thte 10 mile wide channel at Bab El Mandeb without problems, current varied from 2 knots with us to 2 knots against us but didn't seem to tie in with the state of the tide. We caught 3 Mackerel Tuna and one Blue Fin Tuna before we reluctantly pulled in the lines. Reg set about filleting a job that he is getting very efficient and skilled at. We put a board on the seat behind the wheel, Reg stands on the sugar scoop facing forward and does his buchery, the blood runs down off the seat and is easily washed out the back of the boat with the freshwater hose. We decided to put one fish in the freezer whole, guts and all to give to a deserving individual in Aden.

I have just radioed Port Aden Port control and given them our eta of two hours, we called them on VHF 16 and they asked us to change to VHF13, they have asked us to radio when abeam the breakwater just short of the Prince of Wales Pier.

We anchored just in front of the Prince of Wales Pier after radioing in to harbor control at the breakwater. The anchorage, about 7 metres deep had three other yachts at acnhcor, two ketches and one sloop, the two ketches had cruising couples on them, one South African and one couple German. We launched the dinghy and Leo took me to shore to do our paperwork. The procedures and formalities were simple, visit Customs and Immigration, each in it's own small lacking in maintenance building at the SE section of the pier. The main building at the pier is the entrance, security guard at a table at the gate and the "Post Office" where we would meet Nadier Kahn, an Indian man who was very helpful and who acted as our pseudo agent for the two days we would be in Aden. I handed over the passports and received three crew passes in return, the cruising books said that these needed to be handed back each day but that was not the case, we kept our passes and they kept our passports until we left.

After one trip ashore with Reg, we returned to the dinghy, Reg said to me just go around to the side of that boat, he pointed to a wooden boat parked on the outside edge of the pier I motored around to the outside of the boat and the man there appeared to know Reg, Reg said he can get us some scotch, I though this strange as we had already had problems trying to find beer, everybody says "I am a Muslim I don't know where to get beer". After a few moments the man produced some green leafy plant and reg said yes and some scotch, man said yes scotch but what Reg didn't understand was that the man wanted scotch in return for the drugs that Reg was trying to purchase, I was not impressed, "Reg just said, I just want to try it just to see", the man realizing that Reg had no scotch,

removed more than half of the green stuff, Reg bought the rest, I don't know how much for and we returned to the pier, I assumed that he would chew the drug ashore and that would be the end of it, I later found out that he took it on board and when queried got very annoyed saying it isn't a drub, I don't like it anyway I spat it out it was bitter. Later again when asked about the "CAT" as the locals call it he again got very shirty and said "I got rid of it okay, okay". I wondered if he had, and even if he had if traces would be on board when customs searched the boat in Cocos and or Fremantle. Reg was getting to be a real pain in the arse, I wish I hadn't asked him along it was a bad mistake but he had not been this weird on the trip on Intermezzo, I wonder what had changed his personality and behaviour so much.

Provisioning was done at Lulu's Hypermarket, a totally out of place modern supermarket complex that not only had the Yemen equivalent of Woolworths, there were also bundles of speciality shops selling mobile phone cards, taylor made Birka's for the fashion conscious Muslim socialite, pizza's, Burger King, you name it, it was there. We did all of our provisioning, other than eggs at Lulu's, the eggs and a spare start/house battery for 16,000 rials and we were organized. We fuelled up before going shopping, Aden Bunkering Department quite an experience, pull alongside, go to office, request fuel, take order to to blue building, when stamped as paid, take receipt back to first building, then go to boat and wait for arrival of "worker" who would fill the boat. We guessed at 320 litres and paid US\$200. The tank wasn't quite full when the 71 gallons or 320 litres was reached, the pump was shut off, we guessed that another 20 litres would fill her up but the process involved meant that we had to repeat the paper chain, get an order, take it to cashier, take receipt back bla bla bla, we couldn't be bothered, the jetty was dirty the fuel hose putting black shit everywhere and passing boats were making the possibility of damaging the boat a reality so we cast off and went back to anchor. We then took off to Lulus and did our shopping. When we returned and got the food to the boat, it was time to visit the harbour master to get a port clearance, this was done in a taxi that Nadier arranged. We visited the harbour master & got the clearance, then returned to the pier and strolled down to the Seamans Club where Reg & I had had a couple of \$7 beers the night before. As Leo & I arrived the publican was busy beating up his wife, hard slaps across her head and screaming abuse. When this was over he greeted us in a very friendly manner and he and she carried on as if nothing had happened. Strange place. We had our beers and then returned to visit immigration to hand back our passes and retrieve our passports. This was done and no Baksheesh was asked for as they had already been given US\$10 each when we arrived. Leo had tipped Nadier a further US\$50 and the takis another US\$50, everybody was happy, we had given Nadier some tuna the day before and we also gave a whole tuna to a guy catching little fish on the jetty. We ran into him again the following day and he thanked us on behalf of his wife and 7 children for the wonderful feast we had given him.

We got away on the 7th September 2007 at 09:00, calling the harbourmaster on VHF16 on the way out, he thanked us for visiting Aden and we returned out thanks for their hospitality. That night was uneventful, the following morning the 7th of September was a great day for fishing. 3 Mahi Mahi were hooked, all around 5-6 feet long and all flying out of the water, tail dancing and apart from the third one, getting away just before being

able to land them. Number 3 a 25kg 5 foot monster came aboard without too much drama and he now lives in 10 bags in the freezer, each enough to feed three hungry people. Bugger, we had enough fish with the remaining tuna to get to Male so fishing was now at an end. It is now 17:00 on the 8th, we are at 13 00N 047 47E, preparing for nightfall and possibly the most dangerous part of our trip.

We survived the night, patches of shipping and occasional patches of nothing. Next morning the 9th September, we checked our diesel secondary filter again, the last two times we had checked the water separator it had been full of muddy looking water/diesel, followed by clean diesel on top. The filter was the same, 10mm of mud & fresh diesel on top, it looks like the main tank has got some shit in the bottom.

Today is Monday 10th September 2007, it's 22:45, I came on watch at 22:00. We have been running 2 hours off and 2 hours on in the night and three and three in the day, this means that we rotate watches over a three day cycle and it keeps things interesting. We just passed a ship heading towards Suez. We are north of Socotra, we had planned to turn towards Maldives earlier but the strong 20-30 knot southerly is very side on if we turn south so we are continuing a course of around 75 degrees hoping that the wind and seas will abate in the morning or that the more east we get the more likely that the wind will swing to the south west as it should at this time of year and allow us to turn more south with the change of directions and swell. We had tuna with pasta, cabbage and corn for dinner, the half cabbage that we purchased in Aden is doing quite well but will need to be used over the next couple of days before it turns brown and ugly. Food is holding out well, we bought 60 eggs and have only used about 6 so far, we have meat for 1 meal every 2 days and still around 9 packs of tuna and mahi mahi that should see us easily to Maldives but we would really like to chuck a line in again and catch some more fish when the supply reduces a bit further. Our current position is 14 10N 53 07E, about 1350 miles to Male and a couple of days off.

Not much has happened in the last day, it is now Wednesday the 12th September the wind was 30 knots during the night and we were at times doing 10 knots with a ½ knot current with us, a nice change from the 1 ½ to 2 knots that we have had against us off and on for the last few days. We are now 1102 miles from Maldives, about 7 days if the wind keeps up.

Three more days have passed with not much activity, winds are starting to mellow, often stronger at night and lighter during the day. Today is Saturday the 15th September, we are 741 miles from Maldives.

A happening that needs mentioning occurred today, Reg's computer wouldn't charge from the 300w inverter, it seemed to have surges where the inverter would overload, cut out and then try to run again, I let Reg know that we couldn't charge his PC, if it was really needed my Targus 12v adaptor would work it ok. So Reg needed to charge his ipod via a USB port and on three occasions so far he has done that after asking me if he could plug it in. I always said yes, there wasn't a spare USB port but I just told him to unplug my USB 512MB thumb drive which he did. No problem, when Reg was asking about ipod

connectivity I told him that it was just a hard drive with a little processor to manage & run the music and I showed him his ipod directories on my notebook and then showed him that I could download his music, 49 directories labeled F1 to F49 which with his permission I did and then played one of the songs, I told him that I didn't know which songs were which as the ipod must maintain the directory info and song & album info. Also no probs, he charge the ipod and the next time I came to the computer it was gone. The next day I looked in the directory that I had created under c:\temp called "Reg's Ipod Music" or something similar, also in the directory was a "contacts" directory", I thought that this might contain some indication as to some or album names but to my shock when I opened the directory, thumbnails appeared of what looked like nude women. No probs, I opened one of the photos to find that it was a photo of Reg's wife giving him (I assume) a head job, I opened another and it was Reg, naked with Denice. I backed out of the directory and deleted the files. I thought better of mentioning this to Reg, I was pretty sure that I hadn't transferred the files, Reg may have done it after I created the directory, I cant be sure but 24 hours or so had passed since I transferred the music. Reg had been playing on my PC a fair bit and each morning Reg would complain that it had crashed, I suspected that he had been playing, I was annoyed that he might have put his dirty pics on my PC, particularly with it being illegal to have pornography in most Arabic countries. So he had illegal pictures, a hooka and had bought the hash/cat in Aden, I had nearly had enough of this crap, combined with his attitude and behaviour, the fact that he doesn't cook or clean or really do anything useful and then complain that things aren't good enough for him I really hope that he will get off the boat at Maldives.

Write up water maker failure, engine fuel filter problem, trip to bottle shop with Mark to get Johnny Waler at Ismailia, bits about food, drinks, flying fish, night life, etc.

Reg seems to spend a lot of time in the toilet, never takes a leak over the side and consequently the hand pump squeaks a lot, he knows that the normal practice is to put some cheap cooking oil in the toilet to lubricate the seals but he doesn't do an menial tasks. I queried him the other day after he spent an unusually long time in the toilet as to why the freq visits, he replied "I'm just a bit bunged up" the following day it sounded like he had severe diarrhea the sounds of splattering mud filling the cabin, he again said he was blocked up. I mentioned that if he had stomach problems I need to know, any gastro probs can be very quickly transferred to the rest of the crew if hygiene is not kept up and increased when problems were apparent but he shrugged it off, as he seemed to do with most things.

Wednesday 19th September, 224` miles to Male, sailing along at 01:15 in the morning, no moon, a 2 knot current that is on the beam, pushing us northward and only slowing us by about .3 of a knot.

It is 08:45, we are now just 5 miles from Male, here was lightning in the distance all night and a bit of rain, and we caught a little in the tanks, more for the exercise than the amount. We have been calling Coast Guard Maldives for the last two hours, we have tried the three agents listed in the Indian Ocean Guide, we had to add a 3 in front of the numbers, the stupid book was wrong again. We haven't had an answer on VHF or the

phone so far. I SMS'd Jon Sanders, he said that he just went in and anchored and that customs never seems to answer the radio but that they will find us eventually. We are going to drift around the anchorage & see what happens. A few more calls on the radio and a well spoken voice replied and asked us to go to channel 25, he announced himself as Alpha Nova Tango or something similar, we later found out his company was Antrac, ships agents, he asked if we required an agent we replied yes, gave him some details of Affinity and crew and he advised he would call us back. A short while later he called on VHF and advised us that he was arranging the officials and that they would come out to meet us between Male and Villigili Island (the one to the west of Male. We waited around two hours before they called us again and we then had a rendezvous with them. We checked in ok, they came out to us in a 30' wooden boat, black boots all over the boat. The various forms, including gun declaration, health, customs, etc etc, took around ½ hour to complete. We told the Antrac man that we would like to get water, fuel and provisions and be on our way on the 22nd if possible, this would later become the 23rd as things including the agent were not open on Friday, all restaurants, cafes and any other food places were not open after 6am and before 6pm due to Ramadan. Formalities over we expected to be advised that we could go and anchor in the lagoon near the airport but the agent said he would call us in 1 minutes, nearly an hour went by after the officials had left with no call, we called the agent and he reluctantly said that we could go to the airport lagoon, we weren't sure what the hold up was & never found out. Leo and I had opened a beer to celebrate our arrival, Reg had continued to be anti social, didn't have a beer and sate away from us. When the officials were aboard, he made a point of standing right near the end of the gun, in it's case and kept pushing it away from himself as the official was holding it, why he didn't just sit down and get out of the way we don't know, his facial expression as he pushed the gun away seemed very childish and highly over acted, I once again refrained from reprimanding him as I didn't want him to create a scene through a childish outburst in front of the officials.

We motored around in the lagoon before deciding on a spot to the south of the lagoon entrance in about 8 metres of water. Reg manned the anchor and dropped around 30 metres; he then left the cover open, didn't put on a snubber and went below mumbling to himself. Soon after anchoring as Leo and I opened our second bottle of beer (this was a celebration after all), Reg stuck his head on deck and said "got a problem if I heat up that fish from yesterday" I replied no problem, I thought he was going to make us all lunch but I was mistaken, he heated up the fish, opened a tin of corn and then made a point of sitting in front of me with one leg up on the cockpit seat and eating "his lunch". I smiled and ignored his again childish attempts to provoke me. Leo and I had been up for most of the night navigating into the atoll between reefs and islands, Leo now had fallen asleep on the port cockpit seat and missed most of Reg's latest behavioral offering.

When Reg had finished his lunch he abruptly said to me, what is happening about provisioning, are you going ashore or what, I replied that I hadn't thought about it, as Leo was asleep I thought that I should stay aboard, I would be happy if Reg go out of my face for a while and that is what happened, in his standard aggressive tone he stated that he was going ashore "to check out the provisioning he then stood on the back of the boat in his underwear (this had been his standard dress since we left Suez), waving at passing

dinghies, trying to get a lift, within 15 minutes a boat came up to the back of Affinity, Reg asked them to wait and then spent about 10 minutes below grabbing his gear, first from his cabin, then the rear head, this didn't seem to be the preparations of a man going ashore to "shop" for an hour or two, I suspected that he wouldn't be back, not tonight perhaps not at all.

The real Reg drama's started the next day, when I got up there was a message from Reg from the previous night, "won't be back on board tonight staying in Male" or something similar, at around 9am another message, asking me to ask Leo to ring him, I SMS'd back to Reg, "you ring Leo" and attached Leo's number. It was about three hours later that Reg rang Leo, apparently he was very emotional, and stated that he was not continuing, and that his reason was that the boat was not safe and the I am an alcoholic, oh dear, I'm a 2 cans a day alcoholic. We figured that this was his way of bailing out and saving face, take me down and tell people that we were drunk on the boat and Reg looks rosy. For the record we took enough beer on board at Marmaris to get us to Aden, two drinks of beer per day, 3 people, approximately 2000 miles, 20 days, 120 drinks, 5 cartons, we bought two dozen bottles, 1 carton of EFES 500ml cans and two cartons of EFES 330 ml cans. This beer lasted until Maldives, and extra 2000 miles, the last two bottles being drunk the day after Reg left how the hell could I be an alcoholic on 2 cans per day, I always drank with Leo and he had exactly the same amount as I did, 2 cans per day, my standard happy hour fare.

The anchorage was pretty good, white clay like mud on the bottom held the anchor very well, we put out 40 metres of chain while the weather was good and added another 20 when rain squalls were approaching.

Over the next 24 hours Reg sent various messages initially to me, in particular one SMS where I had replied that I couldn't call him but he should SMS the agent in Maldives phone number and address because I was due at an AA meeting, Reg replied with a misspelt SMS saying "somthings shouldn't be joked about", I replied that some things are a joke and that "personality disorders that come from substance abuse I definitely wouldn't joke about", Reg then did not send me any more SMS's but the stream to Leo's phone continued. I sent Reg one more SMS after Leo received one from Reg stating that as he now had all of his gear his agreement with Leo to not spread any more lies had lapsed, Leo responded asking then for the return of the airfare as Reg had not completed his contact to deliver Affinity, my SMS said if the agreement had lapsed I assumed that he was going to continue spreading lies but if that wasn't the case I would be happy to send him the photos of the trip that he had asked me to transfer to his IPOD but we just hadn't got around to it and I asked where he would like me to send them first. His response was to Leo and said "do you know that Mark is blackmailing me with intimate photos of his wife, stolen from his IPOD" . Stolen, he put the bloody things on my computer, illegal pornography that could have got us into serious trouble in Aden or almost any of the countries we visited and he blames me, I cant believe this fruit cake. I tried to explain in an SMS that we don't have the smut that he is referring to and that I was trying to but there was no response to me or Leo, I give up.

Add info about departing Maldives. attempt to get beer at Club Med & then Kurumba where I bought 4 cans @ US\$5 each, then Bandos

Today is Thursday 27th September 2007, we have traveled just under 150 miles per day since leaving Bandos Island at Maldives our current position is 04 00N 082 28 E, 540 NM East of Bandos, 1591 miles to Cocos via our easterly route to around 97 degrees east, then south easterly to around 93 degrees east then SSE to 4 degrees South and then a slight turn south again to get us to Cocos. Directly from here Cocos is 1300 miles away but attempting to go direct would see us in South Easterly winds before we reach the equator and then 1000 miles on the not, not a lot of fun. Last night we passed within about 4 miles of a fishing boat he was very small on radar but had a really bright working light, the day before we saw two fishing boats in the afternoon and the day before that a ship that came within a mile of us, we backed off on the throttle to avoid a collision, he didn't respond to many calls on VHF 16 despite using his ship name, MMSI and call sign from AIS.

We caught a Mahi Mahi yesterday arvo, not a big one but about 4 small feeds for the two of us, very nice, we put some straight in the pan with some fried sliced potato and I made some garlic bread, I have made garlic bread a couple of times but noticed that Leo didn't seem to eat it, I turned my back and had a look out to starboard last night and when I looked back most of the garlic bread had gone, I suspected that Leo may have tossed it over the side and when I enquired if he liked garlic bread Leo replied that it gave him indigestion so I think that it may have gone swimming, I commented that I won't make him any more, but I have about 6 more bread rolls in the freezer and I will be making it for me for sure.

We have been sailing since just after dark yesterday, 15 knots of wind on the beam, calm seas with a 1 metre swell rolling in from the South, very nice:

For most of the trip the SOG has been a lot lower, often over 2 knots, than the speed from the log, a 2 plus knot current flowing to about 300 degrees doesn't agree with any of the pilot books or Visual Passage planner, I suspect there is a calibration problem. I reset the log to the GPS, we may have some current but we can't really calibrate the log with a times measured run out here. Also I suspect that the fluxgate compass attached to the auto pilot is out by as much as 5-10 degrees, this combined with the log error has probably made any current that we do have exaggerated at least, also it means that the log for the trip is over reading, we have our paper and Maxsea logs anyway. We will need to calibrate the log and fluxgate when we get an opportunity.

Today is the 28th September, it is 08:30 in the morning, an hour or so ago, Leo got up and commented that in 20 knots of wind on the beam, we should be doing more than 6 knots, I replied that the apparent wind was at 50 degrees and the true wind well in front of the beam, he then said that thought that we had too much sail up, I had reefed as he went to bed at 6am down to a double reefed jib and quad reefed main, the smallest it can go. Leo

said, "well you're the skipper but " so I went on deck and started to reef the headsail, Leo came on deck and helped and we reefed it to its number 4 spot, furlled that far the jib cars don't go far enough forward and the leech of the jib is very loose, our boat speed has subsequently dropped to around 4-5 knots. At this rate it is another 2 weeks before we get to Cocos, boring but safe. Within half an hour the wind picked up a bit more and we were on our way at 5-6 knots again.

The freezer is having problems, it looks like it needs gas, yesterday I noticed it wasn't frosting on top of the brine tank as much and things had started to defrost. It appears to be cooling but only just, we will have to use up what we can, I have put the 3 packs of Mahi Mahi and one pack of mince in the fridge freezer compartment, there is cooked fried chicken, salami and cooked spring rolls that we need to be used in the next two days or we will have to chuck them. Gas is still holding out but I don't know if it will last 2 weeks, we will have to see, it could be room temp tin food 's for a week if we are unlucky. Its later in the day, 12:45, the freezer is now a fridge, it is unlikely to freeze anything but will keep the veges cool, only problem is that it needs to run full time just to be a fridge and that will use too much power, we may have to use what we can, put the rest in the fridge and shut it down.

Email sent to Julie, Marg & Ida 28th September 2007

All is still well, plenty of fuel and water, gas we aren't too sure about, around 724 miles from Maldives, 1400 to Cocos. We are at 03 53N 85 35S, doing around 7 knots in a 20 knot SSE, we hope thie winds will shift a little more south west tomorrow so that we can commence turning more south before a sharp turn south at around 93 to 94 east.

We have had some problems with muddy mirky fuel coming out of the water separator on the secondary oil filter (for some reason the primary doesnt have a water separator), the mirky stuff looks like it is in the bottom of the main fuel tank and whenever we have rougher conditions it sloshes around and comes through in the fuel. We have been draining the water separator after every engine run to keep the stuff from the engine. We may have a problem when we go from starboard to port tack, the fuel tank is on the port side, the outlet is in the middle of the boat ie on the starboard side of the tank, this mans that the gunk is sitting in the low part of the tank away from the outlet, when we tack to port the gunk will sit at the outlet and there

is a risk that it will fill the water separator and get through to the engine, this would be bad. We have 500 miles until the turn so we will think about it but most likely we will tack the boat and sail on port tack and pump out some fuel into a jerry can until it becomes clear, this may get rid of most of the stuff if we are lucky.

The freezer has decided to become a fridge, it needs a re gas by the look of it so we have shifted everything we can to the little fridge freezer and will shut down the freezer when we have used the meat that is in there. Small problem this morning, whilst checking the oil we found the starboard front engine mount nut completely undone and about to fall off the top of the shaft, we tightened it and checked all the others that were ok, We had run the engine at idle out of gear for much of the night trying to resurrect the freezer and the vibration probably caused the loose nut, the last thing we need on board is anymore loose nuts.

It's nearly three o'clock, Friday 28th September, Julie & Dylan are heading to Perth tomorrow I assume for the school holidays. We have had an email from Cocos Tourist Bureau, I sent them one asking a few questions:

Pam, you may remember me emailing you last year regarding the Splash, charity yaching event, nothing has eventuated with the Splash but I am hopeful that I can get some interest in the future. I am on a yacht, Affinity travelling from Turkey to Fremantle and we are due to stop at Cocos in around 2 weeks time, ie: around the 7th of October. We have heard that visiting yachts often take a lot of produce that leaves the locals short of supply and wanted if possible to pre announce our arrival and perhaps have the provisions that we need catered for. We dont have a very specific list but as a rough guide, we have two crew only and will take approx 2 weeks to sail to fremantle from Cocos, we would like:

*Somewhere between 400 and 800 litres of diesel
Fresh vegetables, mainly,*

1 x lettuce, 1 x cabbage, 2 kg potatoes, 2 kg green
tomatoes, 2 kg onions, 1 kg carrots
Meat from any or all of the following:
Bacon, sausages, mince, steak, chops.
A couple of cartons of beer
A couple of cartons of cool drink
Some tinned food
Some sugar
Some flour

Sorry to bother you but yours was the email that I had and
I have only limited connectivity with a satellite phone,
could you please forward this email on to the appropriate
people. We have advised Cocos customs/police that we are
coming but perhaps you could also forward this info on to
them:

Yacht Name: Affinity 473 - Australian Registered 47'
Beneteau Yacht
ETA Approx 7th October
2 Crew
Mark Loader - Australian
Leo Killigrew - Australian

Thanks for your help.

Mark Loader
Delivery Skipper - Affinity 473

Hi,

I'm sorry for the late reply - your message didn't get
through the
spamfilter and I accidentally deleted it! Pam no longer
works/lives on
Cocos Islands, but your message has reached the right
place.
You will come into port at Direction Island, so an order
needs to be
placed with the Home Island Shop were you will be able to
get fresh
vegetables. Any alcoholic drinks will have to be purchased
from the West
Island Shop (or the club on West Island) - you do not have
to ordere
that in advance, nor do you have to order standard goods
such as canned

foods.

Fresh fruit and veggie orders need to be faxed to Home Island shop the Tuesday prior to delivery at the Supermarket on Saturday. If you could give us a name and date, ie. which Saturday in October, you would like these goods I will put the order in for you. Regarding fuel: you will need to contact the Cocos Island Cooperative Society on Home Island about the Diesel and petrol you wish to purchase - their telephone number is 08 9162 7637 or fax. 08 9162 7575.

If you have any more queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards,
Iris and Luluk
Tourims Officer

Mark Loader at Sea wrote:

Thanks Iris & Luluk, your reply was very prompt, we only access our emails once per day anyway. We think that we will arrive in around 12 days, that would make it Monday the 8th October, if we are still on schedule next Monday we will email our requirements to you then. You didn't mention meat but I assume that frozen meat is available, we will send our requirements a take what we can get no probs. I also forgot to mention that we need to fill our gas bottles, the ones we have are "european" type and may be a problem to fill, is it possible to buy bottles, around 4.5 kg size in Cocos if the ones we have cant be filled? Thanks for your prompt response we are looking forward to visiting and a few days off.

Regards
Mark Loader
"Affinity 473"

Dear Mark,

There is frozen meat is available here on island.

I have just been in contact with the hardware store manager and he assures me that you can not fill european type gas bottles as he came across this before. We get our gas bottles from Australia so the fitting might not be the same. There are 9kg empty gas bottles available here at a cost of \$60AUD each (empty) and to fill you pay an additional \$54 AUD.

Should have any other concerns please do not hesiate to contact us.

*Regards
Luluk Sloan
Tourism Officer*

Add note about solar panel brackets & scupper valves to catch rain

Some Reg comments from memory:

She's gone and booked tickets to go to Tasmania at Christmas when I'm supposed to be getting the boat ready for Quindalup, I'll have to divorce the bitch, I've done it before, it cost me though!

I was tested and found out that my body is 10 years younger than my age, I rang Denice and told her "you've got a toy boy on your hands", she was pissed off because her body was the same age as she was.

She has decided that she doesn't like cruising, I've spent \$400,000 on the boat and the bitch doesn't want to go cruising, I have had to put up with her horses for 12 years, now it's my turn, if she doesn't like it I'll go without her.

To Julie, 20 year old crew member on Ningaloo, at Suez, just after Denice left: "I've got a huge yacht that I have spent over 1/2 million dollars on, why don't you come sailing with me, I have a farm at Gidgeganup and few other properties", Reg showed her photos from his IPOD, Reg stayed talking about himself to her and when she got bored and went to sleep in front of him he immediately went to bed.

"I look after myself, I don't need to exercise, I would be really disappointed if I lost my shape."

"Typical Boutique Investments, they don't know how to run a company"

I haven't felt like a beer not with "the company" but I would really like a red wine.

Denice was really pissed off and left the restaurant in France, I send two bottles of \$70 wine back and they weren't happy, the manager came to our table and said that often that

particular wine company didn't store the wine well and it was off, I was right, before the manger came he said, " I am an Australian expert in Wine, these wine are corked, if you don't like it I will call the police".

I just looked at the date and realized that it has been since the 11th August that I have been away from Onslow and in all that time, 49 days or 7 weeks, not one meal has been made on the boat that I didn't prepare Reggie did absolutely nothing, not one piece of toast has been made for me, not one egg cooked, nothing other than a couple of offers of "do you want any cereal" , it takes the fun out of cooking when you are expected to do it for every meal as well as do the same watches as everybody else, add to that the Reg saga with him demanding to be fed and I have decided that for future deliveries:

My Future Rates

My rate is \$200 per day for skipper, if they want me to be the cook another \$50 per day and if they also want me to be the engineer, another \$50 per day, not too expensive for a Skipper, Cook and Engineer, I will draw the line at cleaning and force a roster, a person on each day as cleaner and dish washer, an occasional wipe down with a cloth of the walls & furniture and at least come cleaning of the heads wouldn't go astray.

It's 13:30, a big black line squall caught us up pretty quickly we just had time to put the main away, roll up the jib to hankie size and put in the weatherboards when the wind hit 50 knots, not much rain yet, we are almost bare poled and doing between 6 and 8 knots, if it is like the Timor Sea line squalls it probably won't last too long.

Well, it is Monday the 1st October at 07:05 am, we have turned a little more south but the wind is almost hard on the nose, we expected this, we will have a few hundred miles of fickle wind strength and direction before we get into the proper south east trade winds at around 2-3 degrees south. The winds have been between 15 and 40 knots, seas are getting quite large and occasional rain puts a real damper on the fun. We are about 130 miles from the waypoint at 94 east 2:30 north where we are supposed to head towards the south and cross the equator at 95 east but if the wind doesn't change, (we do expect it to shift to the south west), we may keep easting closer to Sumatra and hope for a SE change that we can tack in and head for Cocos, another two days to the east might just do it, we hope.

Email that I sent to followers.

It's windy, 15-45 knots from the south, lumpy, 3 metres seas, rainy, water coming from the sky, but Affinity is handling the conditions very well. We have a tiny bit of headsail and a smidgin of main out, wind is at about 50 degrees apparent, we are doing 6 knots. We could head more south but the lumpy seas make going uncomfortable and we then need then to motor to keep height so we will keep to our plan and head for our waypoint at 94:00 east, 02:30

north, now about 130 miles away, we may continue east if the wind direction doesnt change, the large high pressure heading for the WA coast should give us easterly winds south of the equator if we can get there quickly enough. We are now at 02:46N 91:47E, doing 6.5 knots COG around 100 degrees.

We fired up the HF last night at 01:15 and received the Mean Sea Level weather chart for the Indian Ocean, we are north of it's coverage but it gives us an idea about what is likely to happen in the next few days, we recieve GRIB (dont know what it stands for, probably Geometrically Round Ink Blots), weather files on email every day for the following 3 days and these have been remarkably accurate for the whole trip so far. Jest so ewe no, I occasionally run the spell chequer butt it found know problem with this sentence so it is hardly worth while

We had Stan & Glenda Duffy's famous Pasta with Garlic, Olive Oil and Whatever Hot Salami or Pepperoni you have dish for dinner last night, it is famous across the Pacific Islands, Malacca Strait, Singapore Strait, the South CHina, Java, Timor and Andaman Seas and now, the Meditteranean, Sueez Canal, Gulf of Suez, Arabian Sea and wherever we were last night. Usually it is enjoyed with a Cabernet Merlot or Metho and Orange but we had our solitary beer some hours before but it went down beautifully with a 2007 Schenker Cabernet Watertank.

Leo claims to have seen three fishing boats last night, well he said he did, I dont believe him, I think he has been at sea too long, perhaps its the high heels and lipstick, i'm not sure.

A limerick to end the message and to make the email worth reading:

There was a young man from Japan,
Whose poetry no one could scan,
When he was asked why,
He gave his reply,
It's because I try to fit as many words
in to the last line as I physically,
possibly and actually can.

Till tomorrow
Leo (who sees things) and Mark

*Email Reply from Ida Killigrew
Hallelujah! God is great! Enjoy your cold beers and hot
showers! Make
sure you have a shower before your reach Freo! I will be
waiting with
cold beers (or do you prefer a nice West Oz red/white?)
Onya Mark.
Cheers, Ida*

It is now 16:00 on Tuesday the 2nd October 2007, we passed our 94 degree east point a few miles back and have decided as the wind is still roughly from the South South East to continue tracking slightly south of east hoping to get into some proper south easterlies before tacking and heading for the equator. I spoke to Julie earlier and she told me that Lois Maxwell Marriot, Miss Money Penny from the James Bond movies had died, she lived in Perth with her son Christian Marriot since coming to Australia in 2002 and getting deep vein thrombosis. We met her at one of our Splash Functions and she spoke at a United Way lunch and RPYC Commodores "James Bond" Ball. Also today, Chris Mainwaring died of a suspected ecstasy overdose; he was Eagles footballer turned TV commentator.

Not much has happened in the last day, we have 15 knot south easterlies and aren't quite far enough east to sail towards Cocos so we are motor sailing, tacking each time the wind favors the other tack, hopefully we will get better, more easterly winds when we get in the southern hemisphere, now just 50 miles away.

Yesterday we had a bit of a drama, Leo called out to me to quickly come below, I did and flowing from the rear head was a waterfall, across the floor to the galley. As Leo turned off the pressure pump I opened the door to see the sink tap wide open and gushing. It looks like the can of room deodorizer that was sitting on the basin had knocked and turned on the tap, I had only turned on the water pump to fill the kettle a few minutes earlier but a lot of water had been wasted and with a water maker that is erratic at present we really didn't need such a loss of water. Oh well, lesson learnt keep turning off the water pump when not in use. I think that a time pressure switch or timed electric switch on the water would be a better idea to prevent losing all of your water, a split hose like on Callisto or a hose blowing like on Even Star can easily and often happen and could spell disaster if you don't have enough water in reserve

Sunday the 7th October, it's slow going, 595 to Cocos, straight to the south of us, 20 knots of SSW wind making it really hard to go where we want to, too strong to motor in to it and too on the nose to sail at a good angle towards Cocos. The engine is smoking more every few days, we had to turn on the nav lights for a ship last night and with the stern white light on it looked like the back of the boat was on fire. It doesn't look half as bad, as the engine is running beautifully and we don't appear to be using any oil we suspect crook or dirty injectors are causing the problem. We had a curry last night with some

leftover sausages, the instructions on the Masaman Curry said three tablespoons, I used 3 desertspoons and it still would have stripped paint, I strained all of the juice and most of the curry off and added another tin of coconut cream, this made it a lot cooler, still very warm but at least edible, note to chef, 1 deserts spoon would be hot enough.

Don't forget to add the scraping the fry pan saga and the rust all over the boat drama and some comments about his emails to Denice, what a load of crap. Salami Sandwiches, not enough food, me living on beer. Taking over the gally, his no existent offer to cook, losing weight. Comment about owners doing nothing, Liar Liar Liar

Email again to our followers:

We are now 399 miles north of Cocos, in an 18 knot SE wind, doing 5-6knots with a triple reefed main and headsail. We had very strange winds during the night, 35 kntos from the east that had us triple reefed doing 8-9 knots, then nothing and a nasty roll with swell from the SW and SE and wind waves from the east, then the wind totally unpredictably picked up to 12 knots from the west for about two hours before dying out again and then returning to the SE. In between the wind changes were some heavy showers, with the water maker still needing more of our attention we filled to overflowing the tanks by opening the lids and blocking the scuppers and the space between bulwark and coach roof with a rolled up towel.

After looking at the setup with the scuppers and the water inlets (they are right next to each other) we have worked out a simple way to fit a changeover valve in each of the stern cabin wardrobes that redirects the scupper water to the water tanks, that will save having to go on deck in the pouring rain to open the water tank and install the towel after enough water has washed the salt away from the deck. In fact we have come up with a heap of relatively simple modifications to quite a few things that would make cruising easier, McGiver eat your heart out, although, we will have to use real equipment and things will really need to work, not like McGiver who can build a scud missile with a piece of chewing gum and a lacky band.

ETA is still Thursday morning at present, the Nav software says we will be in late on Wednesday at our current rate but we do expect some more wind changes, lack of wind at

times and occasional 35-40 knot squalls before we arrive, they should slow us down a bit.

We have emailed an order through to the Tourist Office on Cocos who will forward it to the store on home island, they order on Tuesdays from Perth and the provisions arrive on Saturday. We have ordered fruit, veg and a few dairy things, meat and bread are available without ordering, and we have ordered a gas bottle, the european ones 3 x 3kg cant be filled at Cocos so unfortunately we have to buy a 9kg bottle and regulator that wont fit in the gas locker, we will need to strap it to the pushpit.

We had the last bit of meat yesterday, Halal minced buffalo it tasted like they look, with a tin of bean things with chilli in it and a tin of corn chucked in for colour, a bit of instant mashed potato with milk and egg and hey presto, very average indeed.

We did catch a Mahi Mahi yesterday, yes Stan, on a pink skirt lure, they seem to catch anything anywhere, so we now have a couple of meals of fish. I baked some bread rolls the day before yesterday, the flour we bought in Male turned out to be brown flour consequently the bread rolls didn't rise as well as usual, I will try again tomorrow and add a bit of white flour as well.

Till 2 morrow

Leo and Mark

Email to & then from Cocos Tourism:

Mark Loader at Sea wrote:

> Luluk wih regards to the reprovisioning of Affinity 473,
> we have a new eta
> of Thursday 11th October, still dependant upon the wind,
> we would like to
> order fruti & veg for pick up next Saturday 13th October
> as per our
> previous email, below is what we would like:
>
> 1 x lettuce
> 1 x cabbage
> 1kg carrots
> 2kg potatoes

> 2kg brown onions
> 1 bunch spring onions
> 1 bunch celery
> 2 kg tomatoes (very green if possible)
> 3 dozen eggs
> 1 kg cheddar cheese (black & gold, blue & white, whatever)
>
> 1 kg green apples
> 1 kg red apples
> 1 kg mandarins
> 1 kg pears
>
> Could you also advise the hardware that we will definitely need a 9kg gas
> bottle with regulator and filled please.
> We will contact the cooperative on arrival re fuel, we will probably need
> around 400-500 litres of diesel.
> We will contact you re laundry etc on arrival as well.
>
> My details in case you need them are:
>
> Mark Loader
> Drivers Licence:1866977
> Passport No. L3940597 Australian
>
> If you need credit card details please let me know, otherwise we will pay on
> pickup if that is ok.
>
> Would you also mind notifying the police of our expected arrival, we have
> sent our 96 hour advice to Customs already, and could you please send me the
> police mobile number, then I can SMS them with updates on our expected
> arrival from my Satellite Phone: 0147 148 153.
>
>
> Thanks again for your help.
> Regards
> Mark Loader
>

Hi Mark,

When you arrive it will be Hari Raya celebrations on island and the Home Island supermarket will not be open. I will try and get your order through however you wont get it till next Tuesday on West Island. There will be limited shop opening times for this coming week.

1 x lettuce
1 x cabbage
1kg carrots
1 bunch spring onions
1 bunch celery
2 kg tomatoes (can only get red ones)
1 kg green apples
1 kg red apples
1 kg mandarins
1 kg pears

Will place order for these items above

2kg potatoe
2kg brown onions
3 dozen eggs
1 kg cheddar cheese

These can be obtained from the shop - no need to order

I will get in contact with the Hard ware store and get him to supply you with the gas and you can pay for it when you get here.

Customs is also AFP on island they do both jobs.

I will get back to you about the vege order.

Regards
Luluk

Email to followers again:

Tuesday 9th October 2007 08:00 Cocos time:

Well our days and days of easting paid off, we have had 2 days of solid trade winds, slightly east of SE at between 12 and 25 knots, lovely stuff and we are doing 150 miles

days. 267 miles to Cocos bearing 188 ETA Thursday morning, 52 miles to the 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone around Cocos ie: Australian Waters, we expect a fly over from Customs Coast watch in the next couple of days, we could be boat people, hey after 2 months we are!!.

Current position 07 37S 097 28E. For the last 2 days I havent been able to send the updated position to the Pangolin web site, I try every day but it just says "unsuccessful connection", the postcard seems to go so the info at the top of the page is hopefully up to date.

We have been advised that most things are shut in Cocos this week, the Hari Raya celebrations, this means that our fruit and veg, if they can order it, will arrive next Tuesday not this Saturday as originally thought. The problem is the store on home island is closed this week so they cant order anything, the Tourist Office is attempting to get hold of the store manager to get our stuff ordered otherwise we will be without fresh stuff to Fremantle and that would be bad, tinned food is ok at the end of a voyage but not for the whole trip.

We are not too fussed about the slight delay, originally we thought that we were going to be in Cocos today and departing Saturday when the provisions arrive, arriving now on Thursday and departing early (hopefully), the new schedule will mean 1 extra day in Cocos but we have a few things to do:

Provisions

Fuel

Water

Clean the boat

Change engine oil, oil and primary and secondary fuel filters and filter between front and rear tank

Fit spare alternator to see if we can charge the batteries properly

Defrost the freezer

Pick up package sent by Ida from Perth

Find possible air leak in water maker salt water inlet path & rectify

Wash all of the towels sheets and clothes

Shorten and re fasten the mainsail outhaul rope (we did this once before to prevent it snapping at the boom turning block due to wear)

Tape up the window at the Nav station, it has a slight drip when waves crash over or in heavy rain
Have one day off to do nothing, see the sights, we haven't done one touristy thing on the whole trip so far

Thats about it I think, maybe a couple of other small jobs.

Till tomorrow

Leo and Marko

From Luluk

Hi Mark,

I have just been in contact with the Hard ware store and he tells me that the gas bottle is available and he will fill for you, however he doesn't have any regulators available. The other point of contact is Dieter Gerhard who runs the dive and tackel shop on West Island. His email address is dieter@cocosdive.com, he is out on the water for the whole of this week. Alternatively you can call him at home on 9162 6515 and Karen is wife should be able to help you out (phone booth available on Direction Island where you will be anchoring).

Regards
Luluk

To Dieter

Hi Deiter, the Luluk gave me your email address we are arriving on the yacht Affinity tomorrow morning (Friday), we have only european gas bottles on board and all three are empty, the hardware can sell us a 9kg bottle but they dont have a regulator, can you help, we are happy to by a second hand one if that is available, or is there any way to fill the european ones??

Regards
Mark Loader
Affinity 473

To Followers

49 01S 96 47E, just 64 miles to Cocos, only about 49 to North Keeling unfortunately yesterday someone told the wind where we wanted to go and naturally it started blowing from there, we have had 20 knots on the nose for most of yesterday and all of last night, it is 08:15am here and it continues to blow 20 knots, this unfortunately will delay our arrival until tomorrow, saddest thing about that is that we drank our last 2 cans of beer yesterday assuming that we would be propping up the bar in Cocos today. We ate the last of the Mahi Mahi yesterday the freezer now looks pretty bare. Havent hooked any more fish yet but the sea life continues to increase, a lot more birds yesterday and more dead flying fish on the deck again yesterday. I will send one more email tomorrow assuming that we arrive early in the morning, we will dawdle around until first light and then head for the anchorage off Direction Island.

Leo & Mark

Add early arrival & drifting around hove to for 6 hours to:

We arrived at Cocos at 08:40 Friday 12th October at the anchorage, we contacted Customs on the way in on VHF20 , they didn't use CH16 no one seems to here. Another visiting yacht Swanya heard us on the radio and Mark the skipper gave us a call, he asked if we had been here before and if not would we like him to come out and guide us in, we replied that we are allergic to running aground and would love his help, about 15 minutes later Mark appeared in his Zodiac and came on board, we handed him the helm and in went. Just as well, if we had cut the corner as we planned to it would have been an awkward trip in, the skies were cloudy and the sun low in the sky and bommy spotting would have been very awkward. We saved the track on Maxsea I also had the log in Maxsea on 1 minute logs so we have the track twice. Customs tried to call us on CHF20 while we were tidying up and we missed the call, Mark gave us a call on 17 (the channel that we had been using with Mark) and let us know that Customs would be on board in about an hour and a half. Mark was also awaiting them giving him a clearance, he has been in Cocos for 6 weeks and is planning to leave in about a week, they cleared him out at the same time as they cleared us in. Zac, the Customs man was on his day off and consequently didn't have incoming passenger declaration cards or his stamp to stamp our passports, I had some declaration cards so we filled those out, we will have to visit his office on West Island on Monday to get stamped in. Ramadan ended Friday, today is Saturday and normally things would be open, but when Ramadan ends they have a huge celebration Hari Raya, shops are shut, the ferry doesn't run from Home to West Island, nothing, apparently Monday is a public Holiday, no sure what for, so fuel may not be available until Tuesday, we will dinghy to Home Island today and try to find out what the story is. We fuelled up from the jerries yesterday, rear tank is full, we need to put a few

more jerries in the bow tank and then get the jerries filled up, we have to carry jerries with the tender so it will be 5 at a time, 1 mile trips unless we can hire a local to cart them for us. We replaced the fuel filters yesterday, the primary looked like it had never been changed, dirty rusty, full of water and grit, it all fell out into the bilge as I unscrewed it, the secondary was a lot better but still not very good. We looked at changing the alternator to solve the charging problem but the belt cog is a different size and belt groove and we have no spanner that fits the nut on the bolt on the pivot side of the alternator so we cant get it off anyway, we will have to manage, keep the power use at night to a minimum, only use nav lights when there are ships around etc etc.

COCOS (Keeling) ISLANDS

Fuelling

Food

Anchorage & Moorings

Customs

Sonja, yacht club & pelican

Cocos Club (K & Ash)

Departure

Thongs, burning of our rubbish

06:50 Thursday 18th October

We are now 50 miles south of the bottom of Cocos, about 60 miles from our departure point at Direction Island, heading 195 degrees at about 6-6.5 knots, lumpy trade wind seas, two weeks of this I am afraid.

08:05 Friday 19th October, 15 03S 096 36E 1464 miles from Freo, 1130 from Onslow, winds are still naturally SE at between 12 and 20 knots, seas are not too large and going is fairly comfortable. The winds are gradually creeping to the east with the movement of the high pressure cell to the south of us. We hope that tomorrow and perhaps Sunday will give us a little more easterly breeze and a good couple of days of southing to get us closer to the south westerlies that will blast us to Freo when we reach around 22 degrees south. At around 16 south we will cross the old sailing route from Singapore to Melbourne, the basis of our planned track to Freo although we expect (hope), to be a little more east of the old square riggers line.

Email to Followers

Water maker still no good, we are sure that the problem is air being sucked in with the salt water when we motor and probably as we go over larger waves when sailing, if we get really short of water we could drift bar poled for a couple of ours and I suspect get a bit of water made if the seas aren't too rough. We had a couple of Ida's Cornish Pasties that Ida had flown to Cocos on the way out of the anchorage, with a couple of chilly Melbourne bitters it was a very pleasant change to the tinned food and then cold tin food

and no cups of tea when the gas ran out at Cocos, if it wasn't for the very friendly Kiwi Mark and his American wife Kimberly on the S&S 44 Swanya' (pronounced Swan Yay), making us a cup of tea each morning we wouldn't have survived. .

Freezer has been playing up but I just poured some hot water over the frozen pipe that leads into the cold plate and hey presto, the cold plate is starting to frost up again, it looks like the pipe from the thermostat sensor was frozen and not allowing the gas through, we will keep an eye on the area and pour a bit of water on it every couple of days, I didn't get a chance to defrost the freezer in Cocos as I usually do at each stopover.

Email to Followers

1390 miles to go, current position 20th October 2007 at 12:40 Perth time, 16 58S 96 23 E, gusting to 30 knots plus and heavy rain squalls for the last 24 hours, not very comfortable at all, bugger, we are motoring to keep course and have a tiny bit of jib and equally tiny bit of main out, doing around 3.5-4 knots to keep from banging over the waves, seas are about 2 metres, swell up to 4 metres in sets. Not much to say really, this wasn't in the brochure, where are the hoola girls, drinks with umbrellas and a cabana boy for Leo.

Sunday 21st October 2007

At 07:05 Cocos time, 8:35 Perth time, we are at 18 24S 096 08E, 175 degrees over the ground at around 4.5 knots, wind mellowed just after dark last night to a more comfortable 20 knots, the seas fairly quickly abated and we had a fairly pleasant evening. The wind varied between 12 and 20 knots and veered and backed regularly enough that combined with the strength changes made each sail alteration or course direction wrong and needing to be fixed. The wind has gradually moved east and now occasionally comes from around 110 degrees, shifting to about 125 at times. The large 1032 high that is directly south of us will move east over the next 24 hours we should see the barometer fall a bit from 1021 at present and we may get a little north east before the high passes and the winds do a southerly swing before the next pressure cell moves to our location. We don't expect any south west winds until we get another 400 miles to the south at around 25 south, then if we are lucky we will point Affinity at Cape Leeuwin and do a large arc to Fremantle for the last 1100 miles home. Not a lot happening on board, we are going sailing today should be fun.

Tuesday 23rd November 2007

All well, 1215 miles to Freo, we are at 21 50S 096 06E, winds are still from the south east as expected, hoping for some change in the breeze in the next few days then we may be able to head for Freo, then 7 days and we are there, still no ETA we really dont know, until the change, when we will arrive. Winds vary fom 5 to 30 knots but the direction stays mainly the same, barometer has been on 1021 for the last few days, water temp has dropped from 27 at Cocos to 21.9 here, a lot cooler than the 33 degrees of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

Leo received an email from Ida this morning that a Beneteau called Spyglass with 4 people on board including a D White had left Fremantle on the 19th bound for Cocos on the 1st November, they had arranged with Fremantle Sea Rescue to do a daily sched but had not been heard of, didn't answer their satfone or raido calls. We estimate that at closest they will pass 400 miles east of us in a couple of days, we called on 16 and 4125 at 08:05 and again at 10:05 am with no response we will monitor 4125 and have disconnected our AIS and reconnected the VHF to monitor VHF16 as well.

23 40S 96 07E, we are south of the Tropic of Capricorn (Marg you smartie), sailing at the moment to run the watermaker (yes it works when the prop isn't causing turbulence and air at the intake), we motor sailed for most of the night, light winds, fairly calm seas, cloudy with a bit of rain on the horizon.

Ida advised us that a Beneteau called "Spyglass" with 4 crew aboard that departed Freo on the 19th and that is due in Cocos on about the 1st November hasn't been heard of since leaving Freo, despite making arrangements for a HF sched at 17:00 each day with Freo Sea Rescue. We estimate that they would have been around 200 miles west of Carnarvon yesterday, at least 700 miles from us, we have been calling them on 4125, 6215 and 8291 every few hours and particularly around 17:05, apparently one of the crews families is concerned, the other family says that they are probably just slack, given the conditions that we have seen we suspect the latter but we will continue our calls just in case until such time as they are located. They have a satfone but it must be off, I wonder if Telstra can check

with Iridium or Globalstar if the phone has had any activity, the phones say "Registering" so you would think that there would be some kind of record if the phone has been at least turned on.

Over 700 miles now from Cocos, 1155 nautical miles from Freo as the albatross flies (there are no crows out here), around 1300 nautical miles to go on our southerly and great circle arc that will take us to 28 south before a port turn towards Freo. We havent run out of anything yet, we still have a few meals of meat left and five of Ida's Cornish pasties in the freezer, apples, potatoes, onions and other vegeis are holding out nicely. The only thing lacking is a bit of fish but we continue to put the lines out at first light and bring them in at sunset, the only interest from an occasional passing booby or occasionally a nice pair of boobies, they sometimes land near the lures, have a look and then go back to wherever boobies go when they aren't on show perhaps with the Robin Red breasts or the Tit mice. No dolphins since Coc, osvery few flying fish, the only ones we see are the Japenese Kamakazi Flying Fish that we find on the deck some mornings. it's about 5300 metres deep here, can't quite see the bottom, must be the cloudy day, if we were to sink here it would take Affinity about two hours to reach the bottom but we don't have time to hang around and watch so we won't bother.

Until tomorrow when we will be even closer.

Thursday 25th October 2007

We are 900 miles west of Dirk Hartog Island, cant quite see the cliffs from here current position is 26 16S 096 48E, we altered our watches a couple of days ago to 1 hour earlier than Perth time, even though we arent east of 97 1/2 east where the next zone starts because the 1 1/2 hours Cocos time makes it very awkward at 2 in the morning to work out UTC it is much easier to take 7 hours off than 6 1/2 hours when you are half asleep. The fishing drought ended yesterday with the landing by Leo aka "Reg Hunt" of a 10kg Mahi Mahi, gold gold gold, el dorado, the bedazzeled creature was quickly dispatched to meet his maker, converted to 7 bags of boneless fillets and a container of Susme, or Savishi or in english, pickled fish, two fillets were then pan fried in olive oil and serverd with a freshly (about to be) tossed green salad and sauteed potatoe slices followed by a nice cup of pommie tea.

The lines are out again now we would like to arrive in Freo with a heap of frozen fillets to share with those who beg and grovel at our knees enough to taste the succulent white flesh of Leo's magnificent catches.

Amazing how catching one fish can make one waffle so much.

We have had almost no wind for 24 hours, we put 80 litres from the jerries into the rear tank yesterday with conditions still calm we will add some more today, if and when the winds come back it is unlikely that we will have any more opportunity to re fuel easily before Freo.

Thats about it, with every mile we travel we get 3/4 or a mile closer, sad isnt it, sometimes we feel we are going erehwon.

kraM and oeL

18:40 Thursday 25th October 2007

We have been calling Spyglass regularly, Ida advised Leo that they still have not heard anything at Freo Sea Rescue and that when she asked the supervising officer if they had notified Police or Coast Watch of the yachts status was given the reply "it's not in our jurisdiction to report them missing, it is up to the families". I gave Julie a ring this morning and she will report the yacht to Sgt Mick Hayes at Onslow Police, he is also a major part of the Onslow Sea Rescue group and they can take it from there. A fly over the path by Coast Watch on one of their regular flights would certainly be a good idea with yacht unseen or heard of for 6 days since leaving Fremantle.

08:00 26th October 2007

960 Miles to go, the home run, well walk more like it, we are motor sailing, not a lot of breeze, about 6 knots from the south, we hope the next high will bring us some more wind but it will most likely blow between south and east, about where we want to go, so we won't be making any massive progress, the chance of any SW in the wind at least for the next 3 days is pretty remote.

Lines are out, no fish at present but we have our fingers crossed, sun is out. Last night was pretty calm, full moon is tonight so at least there is something to look at during

the night watches, yippee the ocean. Current position is 26 26S 98 28E, so we are actually in the time zone that our watches are set for, -7, at 112.5 degrees east we go onto Perth time, just 14 degrees more east. That's about it for today, once again we are going sailing, nice day for it.

Sunday 28th October 2007

Things aren't the best, the wind and the seas haven't yet done us any favours and we now have a fairly serious engine problem. For the last few days the engine has been a bit unmanageable, the throttle does erratic things the engine stalls at idle and when you put on a few revs the motor will race, when you back off the throttle it continues to race and eventually, maybe reduces in revs, usually to just stall again. If you manage to start the engine in neutral as you pass thorough idle to go into gear it will stall so the only way to get it into gear is to crash it into gear whilst the revs are high and before they drop and the engine stalls, this of course is not good for the gear box. We suspect that the bad or lack of fuel filter replacement over the last few years has resulted in corrosion in the injector pump and that it's total failure is imminent and then we will have no motor at all. The wind generator and solar panels are working fine so we doubt that we will run into serious power problems, if we are careful we should be able to keep navigation and the freezer running, shutting off the computer most of the time and not using radar or nav lights at all. Our current plan is to motor if we can, if we can get it running again, get a few days closer to the coast and then if the wind still is not any help head for the nearest sailable port, that may be Exmouth or Carnarvon, you never know maybe even Freo but at present north of Geraldton is about where we could sail to with the current wind contitions. We will require a tow in wherever we end up as it is almost impossible to do slow manouvering speeds and totally impossible to go from slow forward revs to reverse.

We also are investigating a water leak, it is dirty saltwater so most likely exhaust water, not gushing but annoying and in need of regular pumping.

It is hard to do emails in these conditions, i will SMS Julie twice a day with our position, speed and course over the ground and try to email when i can, you can call her on 0417973303 for an update.

On the bright side it is a lovely sunny day.

29th October 2007

We have been sailing since just after dark yesterday, we have been doing around 5-6 knots over the ground at around 100 degrees, not quite Freo but not far from it, 712 miles to go. We have discovered that we can start the engine in gear, this solves the stalling issue when we pass through idle on the throttle, we haven't run the engine since yesterday we will save it for when it is needed. If we can sail another day we will have easily enough fuel to motor to Freo if we have to. Batteries are holding up well with solar & wind & not using nav lights or the computer and keeping all other power usage to a minimum, we had ice in our bundy and coke's today so the freezer is happy to be solar powered. Winds have been around 20 knots from the SSE a little more south and we could point at Freo. Will send again tomorrow if the weather and power permits.

Tuesday October 30th 2007

A mere 631 miles to go, wind is doing the right thing, so is the motor, we ran out of wind last night and got it started and doing around 1100 revs. The GRIB files show the winds going on the nose for the next couple of days but last night weather map disagrees, the winds should stay south perhaps a little to the south west and as the high to the west of us passes we may get a little northerly breeze, whatever happens the winds look like 15 knots or less so lets hope the map is correct. The water we are taking only happens when the motor runs and hasnt got any worse, we may try to locate the leak again today if we feel like pulling all of the bunks to bits again. We will try to top up our fuel today, rear tank is half empty front about the same, we have 250 litres in jerries still on deck and might as well see what will fit in the tanks, it is much better to do this before any rocky seas so we dont end up with a tank full of salt water, that would be bad.

Fishing lines are out again, quite a few birds around so maybe the underwater wildlife is more active here as well.

08:00 Wednesday 31st October 2007

Have been motoring for 12 hours, the wind died last night and the motor has been behaving beautifully, we have very

little control over it though, it is off or on, it decides its own revs and we leave it in gear to start and stop it so that it cant over rev and do itself harm, it's a bit psycho really, watch out for the new release movie, "Revenge of the Volvo" or perhaps "Planet of the Perkins" or maybe even "Star Wars 5, the Engine Strikes Back". We refuelled the front tank is chokka as is the rear (a total of 430 litres) and we have about 60 litres in jerries so we havent used half of our 900 litre total yet. Things in the freezer are frozen solid, we are making ice for the happy hour drinks and in the cooler water and weather the fridges freezer is also making ice. Our engine water leak has slowed to a dribble but we as yet haven't discovered the source but arent too concerned. The weather fax at 03:15 this morning showe that we are almost at the middle of a high, the glassed off ocean at first light confirmed that fact, the wind has increased slightly now (08:00) from about 160 degrees but is still too light to sail in. More birds around, a giant albatross hung around for a while yesterday then a mollymawk albatross visited for a while, there are mutton birds for most of the day, or are they lamb birds dressed up as mutton? Thought about going for a walk yesterday but I think I have been just about everywhere local that there is to go. Current position 29 22S 105 52E, 3-4 knots heading 112 degrees.

08:30 Thursday 1st November 2007

Around 425 miles to go, the wind has turned on the nose, naturally, we are getting winds from around 110 degrees and we want to head around 110 degrees, onya Hughey. Motor is still managing, revs set on about 1300 and we start and stop it in gear. Still plenty of fuel and we haven't changed to the full port water tank yet so we have at least 200 litres of water plus probably another 50 litres in various bottles and containers. We had packet creamy mushroom pasta with added onion and pepperoni for dinner last night. The fishing lines aren't out at present as it is a bit lumpy but if the wind mellows later we will try our hand at getting a bit more fish in the freezer. Our current position is 29 59S 107 49E, we have just tacked and are heading at around 175 over the ground at 4.5 knots, we were trying to motor sail more to the east but our boat speed dropped to around 2 knots, that's eight days to Freo if we were heading straight for it, I don't think so. With a bit of luck the wind will mellow or perhaps even start to give us some SW in the afternoon but we aren't holding our

breath. Shower day again, second time this week, yippee, the trouble is that by the time you have washed and dried you have half a dozen bruises and a mild concussion from being banged around the walls, clean but crippled. We spoke to Jeff Chambers onboard Mooney this morning on 4125MHz, they are off Lancelin and hoping to make two rocks or Mindarie this evening before a short hop to Freo or Rotto and then on to Mandurah so we should be able to talk to him for the next couple of days, we have arranged to do a regular sched at 08:05 and 20:05 each day.

Until then.

Red Aol and Werg Illik

09:00 3rd November 2007

35 knots on the nose during the night, didn't make a lot of headway, about 10 miles in 12 hours, should have got out and walked, doing better now, wind has swung properly east and we are heading at 150 degrees at 5 knots, bearing to Freo is about 110 we are continuing our hunt south to try to get some SW winds when we get a bit closer, a front is approaching and we may get a little bit of north and then hopefully some SW, it would be nice to be doing 7 knots in the right direction for a change. Lines are out, we are still trying hard to catch some fish for you all but at present Rex Hunt would disown us. Big greenies breaking over the boat last night, a few times at the wheel we were up to our knees in water until it drained out, took quite a bit of water through the main hatch as well, guess that means we don't have to wash the floor today, things aren't all bad.

09:50 WDT Sunday 4th November 2007

At 09:35 Sunday 4th November 2007, Affinity 473 crossed the EEZ and entered Australian mainland waters for the first time in its short life, there was much revelry aboard, the final 2 cans of beer were opened and the crew discussed what tin food would be eaten at the big feast and party this evening. On a more serious side, there isn't one. As we crossed the line we expected fish to strike the lines but alas none came forward, will will fish even harder for the next two days to get you the fish we promised. We are currently pointing directly at Fremantle, doing 4-5 knots in a light SSE wind, not a cloud in the sky got the sun in

my eyes..... cause i'm on top of the world looking down on creation and the only explanation I can find, bla bla bla, you can never find a carpenter when you need one. One more day of typing rubbish into my computer, yay, and yippee, set em up bartender. Current position is 31 39S 111 24E

07:00 5th November 2007

Ladies and gentlemen, this is the captain, we are on our final approach to Fremantle currently 123 miles to the west, I will switch off the cabin lights so that you can enjoy the lights. Our current track will see us passing to the south of Cape Vlaming on Rottnest Island before passing Parker Point and then turning slightly to the north to pass close to western south passage transit beacon (it would be sad to hit Champion Rock at this stage), before turning east again to pass close to the "Welcome to Fremantle" sign on north mole around sunrise tomorrow before turning south to head for the entrance to Fremantle Sailing Club. Please bring your seats to the upright position, fold away your tray tables, fasten your seat belts and enjoy the touch down, please remain seated until the life jacket sign is turned off. Thank you for traveling with Affinity Sealines we are sorry that we ran out of beer, water and fresh food but as they say, shit happens.

The sun has just risen on our last full day at sea, a ship bound for Jakarta has just passed 4 miles in front of us, heading for Jakarta and coming we assume from Melbourne or Adelaide. The wind is blowing 10 knots from the South West we are motoring as we have been for the last two days, we have around 100 litres of fuel left, a full main on a preventer that is giving us about 1/2 knot extra speed, we are heading directly east at around 5.5 knots over the ground, about 1/2 a knot of current slowing our speed over the water of around 6 knots. Not far to go now, one more night, one more night ooooooooooooooh. Even though it has been a slow trip from Cocos, we have only had 2 days of roughish weather and the stongest wind only 35 knots of apparent so we have been quite fortunate. given our early expected arrival tomorrow this will be the last email and web site update, thanks for following our journey and for the wishes and all of your support. We have a 40 odd page log of our voyage and a heap of photos that we are happy to share with anyone who would like a copy, we will knock up a

DVD when we get settled and copy our ships log pages and any other stuff that might be interesting.