

**Affinity Darwin to Queensland June, July 2011**  
**Affinity 473**  
**Beneteau Oceanis 473**

Crew  
Skipper Mark Loader  
Crew/Owner Leo Killigrew

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 14:00 arrived in Darwin with Leo on Qantas  
Affinity in good nick, air con has been working fine, needed anti fouling, this was done by Darwin Shipstores at Cullen Bay. New prop anode, I got the water maker working again after it had been pickled before I left last August, it works fine and water tastes good.  
Provisioning, Woolworths and Coled, \$750 of food first go, \$280 of wine, beer and cider and a couple of bottles of Bundy.

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2011

09:45 departed Cullen Bay Marina at 09:45

Travelled 50nm, tomato soup and bread rolls for lunch and anchored at Beatrice Bay, north of the Adelaide River, south of Cape Hotham

Rissoles, salad and corn on the cob for dinner

Watched a movie again and hit the sack after a couple of bottles of red.

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2011

05:30 departed Beatrice Bay towards first waypoint, 4.5 nm towards Hotham then 029 and approx 55nm to Cape Don

16:30 Arrived at Popham Bay near Cape Don, lovely sail, bacon and egg burgers for breakfast, sailed all day in 10-20knots of easterly in the current doing 10 knots, 5.4 knots of current near Cape Don.

Haven't caught a fish yet, not much life about at all. A yacht is just passing to the north of us on its way to Cape Don tried to call them on 16 but no response.

We tried a bit of fishing with some pork chop but no joy, not a lot of life about. Then wen it got properly dark lots of little fish came around and a few gardies. We spotted a squid so set up a jig on one of the rods we bought in Exmouth last year, withing an hour Leo had caught 3 small squid, not enough for a meal but they should make good bait, the first two came out of the water making inking noises but didn't have any ink, it was a bit weird, the third slightly larger and more coloured one managed to spit out a bit of ink. All three plus 4 tiny fish we caught with the small net are in the fridge ready for fishing at Essington tonight.

07:30 we fired up the engine and water maker and upped anchor, we are now about 5 miles towards essington sailing in 15 knots of easterly with a double reefed jib and half a main, very comfortable but about 2 knots of southerly current slowing us to around 4 knots.

Arrived at Seven Spirit Bay at 15:30

Dinner at the Resort with 10 other cruisers from 5 yachts that are heading for Darwin to do the rally to Kupang. Food and service was excellent, steak and vegetables beautifully cooked and an entree total \$40 per head plus a couple of bottles of wine at \$50 each, another \$200 food bill, oh well, you only live once.

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2011

07:30 Departed Seven Spirit Bay heading for Victoria settlement ruins at the south end of Essington

11:00 Arrived at Victoria Ruins, anchored in 3.5m waiting for wind to drop to go ashore and explore.

Ham cheese and tomato toasties for lunch.

Moved to Berkley Bay after visiting the ruins of Victoria, 1839-1850, a long time to be trapped in a remote place. We caught a bronze whaler last night and had it for tea, not much action fishing, caught another one and let it go.

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2011

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2011

Departed at 07:00 headed through Bowen Strait and heading for Valentia Island for stopover tonight. 18:00 anchored in 4.5 metres in the south bay of Valentia Island.

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2011

The wind generator started up at around 2am, its worn bearings making a bit of noise, the wind cam up to around 10 knots I checked out position and the battery voltages and went back to bed,. I woke again at around 5:30 the wind was the same, I finally awoke at 06:30 and got up and put the water maker on and fired up the kettle. At 07:00 we motored around the west end of the island and headed for the cape to the east of us. We are now around 15 miles east of Valentia sailing at around 4 knots in a 15 knot easterly, a bit lumpy but not too bad.

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2011

We sailed through the night last night, passing about 20 miles north of the Goulburne Islands, about 35 nm north of the Crocodile Islands and with a bit of tacking and motor sailing have ended up at 16:30 on Monday about 80 miles WNW of our waypoint at the north of Stevens Island, about 15nm west of the Hole in the Wall, and our destination, the Wessel Islands for a bit of a relax and fish and oyster hunt. Winds have been between SE and East and up to 20 knots, only about 15 today from the SE.

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011

We had a good run under motor and half main and arrived at the Wessel Islands just before dark, we anchored in Guruliya Bay, Raragala Island, a nice l shaped bay well protected from anything but northerly winds. We had steak, ,sausages and mashed potato for dinner, fired up the video and watched Jack Hunter, a take off of of Indiana Jones but badly acted, written and directed.

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June

We spent the day anchored, visited the shore, checked the water separator filters on the primary fuel filter and the fuel transfer pump, both had no water at all, we have transferred 200 litres from the front tank to nearly refill the aft tank,, we still have 200 litres in jerries, we will refill the bow tank and add fuel set (F10) to the tank to keep the fuel water and bug clean. When we left affinity last August we filled both tanks and added F10 so we didn't expect to have any fuel problems.

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June,

We cleaned up and put the dingy on the davits ready to move to the bay next to the Hole in the Wall to anchor, we moved the boat and re anchored just as a cat "Boomerang" was coming through the Hole, they anchored just inshore of us so we gave them a call on the radio. Rod, the skipper visited us in his dinghy a couple of hours later, we gave them some cryovac'd tuna and some chemicals for their water maker, they gave us some Barramundi wings, some of the maps for the Qld Coast produced by Queensland EPA, they invited us over for spag bog for dinner, Rod's wife Jen is Rob Baker,s sister and Robs brother Chris was onboard as well. Nice people. We stayed until about 10:30 then went back to affinity and hit the sack.

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July

We got up at around 8am, we were going to wait for the tide at about 4pm to go through the hole but decided to go straight away, we had around 4kn of current with us in the middle of the Hole, we motored and sailed a bit, caught a nice Queenie as we passed between Wigram and Cotton Islands, had a bit of rain and a few squalls to 20 knots and are now anchored in Elizabeth Bay approx 25nm sail from Gove where we will head tomorrow. I rang Julie and told her about Boomerang, she has known Chris for years, we have arranged to talk to them on 4146 at 6pm so I will mention Julie to him then.

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2011

Arrived at Gove after a bit of early morning fishing in Elizabeth Bay, amazing spot for fish, caught a spaniard, coral trout, and a spango. We headed out through the very disturbed waters between the unnamed island and then around Cape Wilberforce. Just before Gove we hooked something big, it spooled the line but we managed to get it nearly back to the boat before it threw the double hook. It was probably a 50kg Spaniard. We are now at anchor, dinghy is launched and we are getting set to go ashore to the yacht club for a drink.

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2011

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2011

We borrowed (rented for \$20 per day) an old bomb belonging to Jenny who has her vessel careened in front of the club and headed to town, first stop we got our permit to buy packaged alcohol, then to Woolworths for the shopping. Veges, cheese, bacon, sausages some salad stuff and some fruit. 3 cartons of cider, two bottles of Bundy and a bottle of Cognac. Done. As we headed back to the car where we had put the booze a large aboriginal was standing right next to the RHS rear door eyeing off the cartons, if we hadn't returned we would have lost the lot, as we approached he hooped in his car and his missus hopped out of the drivers side and headed towards Woolworths, clearly disappointed that she was going to have to now but the booze instead of acquire it. We put \$20 of fuel in the car, loaded up the dinghy and I headed out to the boat whilst Leo did his washing, I had done mine on the boat yesterday.

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Got fuel from the Perkins Wharf at 10am, 200 litres for \$1.59 per litre, took off heading for Dalywoi Bay. Overnight at Dalywoi,

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Upped anchor after a bacon sanger, it is now 4pm and we are about 2 miles from Cape Grey, about 40nm south of Dalywoi and about 45 miles north of Groote Eylandt. We anchored just outside the protected bay behind Cape Grey as the depth was not enough for us with an expected drop of .7 of a meter tonight so we are anchored where it is a bit lumpy but in 4 metres with 40m of chain

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2011

It was an uncomfortable night, with the rocks only 300 metres downwind of us, I got up 3 times to check our position and I slept with the wireless remote to the instruments so that every hour or so I could check our depth. We took off at first light with the wind at about 140 heading 220 for our next stopover about 27 nautical miles north of Groote Eylandt, in a bay called Myaoola Bay. It took until 2pm to get the 120 miles up the to the bay after rounding Cape Shield. We had Barra Wings, courtesy of Boomerang at the Wessels with some crumbed queenie and salad for lunch before heading out in the dingy to troll some poppers and head about 500 metres up the mangrove lined creek to catch very little. We had a couple of unknown hist, the creek about 3.5 metres deep and very narrow, the bay at its

entrance about 1 metre deep. We are anchored in 3 metres at present (19:00) we should lose about 400 more by midnight, leaving around 400mm under the keel (we hope), both our tide points give different tide levels and time so we will see what happens.

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2011

A much more comfortable night, although at 20:30 the tide bottomed at 2.5 metres, we had only 300mm under the keel, this morning at 06:30 we moved to a spot about 500mm deeper to save the worry. Crumpets and poached eggs for breakfast, we dont look like being able to go anywhere until tomorrow as the winds are forecast to be SE 20-30 for the next couple of days, we will probably get south out of Blue Mud Bay tomorrow and then make a decision about the weather and where we will go then.

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2011

We got up at 6:30 upped anchor and headed out towards Nicol Island, the Richards Cruising Book says it is a perfect anchorage protected from all but Westerly winds, as with most of his comments and maps it wasn't as he described, the bays were very badly drawn and his depths were clearly wrong. We anchored at 11:00 and began making water. Cereal and yoghurt for breakfast followed by a bit of toast.

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2011

At exactly midnight the wind eased to around 14knots from the south east, we bunged on the kettle, upped anchor and headed south west around the little island called something like you me him them island and once we cleared the reef to the north of it and Nicol Island, set a course for Cape York. Winds were great for the first 24 hours, a bit stonger than expected with gusts to 25 knots, but consistently from the south east and pretty nice goong.

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July

We covered 120 miles in the first 24 hours sailing all of the way

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2011

We are now about 100nm from Cape York, caught a small tuna this morning but it flciked itself off the gaff, the hook came out of its mouth and hooked in a loop around its tail, it dragged backwards for a while, when I tried to retrieve it it flicked off the swivel hook straightened and it took the hook, skirt and sinker with it as it hastily dived deep off the back of the boat. We are motoring as we needed to charge the batteries and wanted to load the engine, this has stopped it smoking anywhere near as much as in the Kimberley, we have a tiny bit of mainsail up to stabilize us and are doing around 4.5 knots at around 60 degrees, we plan to stop at Sesia for a night of rest and a few beers, should be there tomorrow morning if the wind does the right thing. Wind hasn't changed, 15-18 from where we want to go so we have motored with mainsail ½ out all day, it is now 17:42 and we have just over 80 miles to go to the Sesia leads.

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2011

We arrived in Sesia at approx 12:00, the lowest water on the way in was 2.9 metres as we turned around the green starboard marker just before the anchorage. We had a good run with the wind coming up from the south east just after 3:30am and we sailed almost all the way from there, dropping the main and motoring in through the leads. We need some fruit & veg and will head to Bamiga for that, we have to thumb a ride into town but that shouldn't be too hard. I was contemplating taking the ferry to Thursday Island but the anchorage is a bit tight and if Affinity drifts Leo might have problems re-anchoring by himself.

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2011

I de-scaled and de-bugged the water maker, it was producing 27 litres per hour and after the clean was doing 31 litres per hour with higher pressure. Checked the engine oil & coolant, and did a few other minor maintenance items. At around 3pm we went to the supermarket at Sesia, a 1km walk, it was well stocked, lots of meat and fresh produce and friendly service, not at all like as described in the Leslie Richards book.

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2011

07:00 departed the mooring heading for Cape York, cool and light rain and about a 10 knot SE wind. Arrived at Escape River at 17:30, having an apple cider now. We had 30 knot winds today, I steered most of the day as the autopilot wasn't handling motoring with just a tiny bit of mainsail up very well.

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Wind blew all day today and the forecast is for 30 knot winds for the next 3 days so we may be trapped for a bit. A Tasman 35 catamaran, Rum and Coke pulled in around 4pm, we spoke to them on VHF, the owner his Thai wife Boo, and son and his brother James have come up from Carins, heading for TI, then Weipa to drop off the owner Ben, then on to Gove and then on to Indo. They hooked a decent Barra from the back of the cat at around 9pm but lost it near the back of the boat when the line snapped.

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2011

I woke up early at 06:00 before sunrise for a quick leak and when I got on deck it looked like Rum and Coke had gone or was leaving but a closer look made me think that they had dragged anchor and had gone about 200 metres out into the channel, they appeared to be stationary, I tried to call them on the VHF with no response so I woke Leo to man the VHF, grabbed the HH VHF and took the tender over to wake them up, they said they had a delta with 25 metres of chain out, and didn't look to be impressed that it had dragged, but no probs, they thanked me and moved back next to us. I will be going over to their yacht later to install the world tides and currents program for them.

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Stayed one more night as did Rum and Coke, as they previously had a share in the pearl farm and they spent the evening with Rusty and his wife who owned the farm now.

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2011

08:30 winds were looking better so we fired up the engine, upped anchor and left heading hopefully for Cape Grenville, Margaret Bay.

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2011

01:30 arrived at Margaret Bay, 3 other vessels, two yachts and one power boat already at anchor here. Excellent mooring.

07:00 Fired up the engine after transferring fuel to the rear tank.

We motored sailed all day, just after rounding Cape Grenville we hooked a small school mackerel that we released, then a larger Mack Tuna that was well hooked so we kept him, I had put 50lb braid on my boat rod as my conventional line was getting a bit short and was likely to be often spooled by bigger fish. I had the bit from behind the mack tuna's head raw after chilling it with a bit of wasabi and soy.

We rounded Cape Weymouth and Sidmouth and kept trucking southwards, occasionally getting to sail for a few hours in the still light (10-20knot) south easterlies.

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2011

We are now about 12 miles north east of Port Stewart, heading into Princess Charlotte bay. We had telephone access yesterday evening as we passed Portland Roads but no more access is expected until nearer to Cooktown.

We arrived at Flinders Island at around 5:30pm, there were three yachts in the bay that faces to the West and when we arrived inside at the anchorage at Flinders Island in Owen Channel, there were four other yachts already there, one had just arrived, after we anchored two more yacht arrived making six total, quite a marina.

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2011

03:45 I woke up, not much wind, lets get going. We upped anchor whilst having a cup of tea and got going. We have just exited the eastern end of Owen Channel, it is now 04:53

We motor sailed all day and ended up at a little island about 30nm West of Lizard Island called Howick Island, it is near Watson Island where in around 1890 Mrs Watson and her baby drifted from Lizard Island in a metal pot thing after escaping the attack from aborigines who had ambushed them whilst her husband was away near Night Island, Mrs Watsons remains and her diary were found some time later and the diary and pot are in the Brisbane Museum. We anchored near a funny looking power boat with outriggers either side, outboards and a sun deck with bikes and other stuff stored there, it was a weird thing to look at:

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2011

03:00 I awoke and had a look outside, the wind was still blowing around 20knots from the east so no point leaving early to head for Lizard Island.

06:00 We upped anchor and left, a few minutes after the monomaran tri hull power sailing vessel departed, they were heading west as we turned around the north of Howick and then on to 109 degrees to head for Lizard. Still a 15-20 knot easterly so it will be a part main motor sail to Lizard.

We arrived at Lizard Island at 14:30 and anchored in the bay next to the resort. Drinkie Time me thinks.

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2011

We took off at 03:30 from Lizard bound for Cooktown, the wind wasn't very cooperative so we alternated between motoring, motor sailing and sometimes sailing and arrived at Cooktown on the Fishermans Wharf at 15:30, Jim the owner greeted us and fueled us up, 200 litres at \$329.00, then we negotiated to stay alongside for \$50 per day including power, what a treat, no dinghy stuff, walk to the pub, you beauty. Another boat was just leaving as we finished fueling, one of the guys had bought some prawns off the fishing boat in front and didn't need all of them so gave us around a kilo of fresh cooked prawns, again, you beauty.

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Still in Cooktown, it looks like we will get a window to head south perhaps Saturday afternoon, violent winds and rain in Perth last night should make their way across the bight and be south of Tassie on the weekend so the winds should mellow to normal trade wind 15-20 knots then and we will head for Hope Island, then perhaps Port Douglas but most likely on to Cairns as soon as we can.

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> & Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Still awaiting our weather window

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2011

At 0700 untied and headed out, winds at 25 knots and gusting to just over 30 later in the morning but we need to get a bit south in prep for the lighter winds that are due on Tuesday arrived at Hope Island after motor sailing at 14:00 and picked up the white mooring about 20 metres off the beach. Position . 15 43.8S 145 27.425E bommies around us and onshore but we have just enough water at low tide to stay on this mooring, we had 2.5 metres on arrival at low tide and the low tides get higher over the next few days.

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2011

Will be staying at Hope Island with a hopeful departure tomorrow morning to head for Low Islets or perhaps Port Douglas, winds should begin to mellow to under 20 knots tomorrow morning. Barometer is at 1015 and winds around 25 at 09:53

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August

I was awoken by the dinghy banging on the transom, when I investigated it was hard against the starboard side and we were side on to the wind, we were moving, I ran to the bow to find the mooring lines intact on the boat but no mooring, I yelled for Leo to get the anchor remote so that as planned we would immediately drop anchor, but he didn't arrive with it, when I ran down to the stern Leo was at the wheel, the engine racing and we were roaring along at full speed going who fucking knows where, I grabbed the remote and told Leo to steer towards the island but he replied that he couldn't see the island, I could and we weren't heading for it, I told Leo to head into the wind and started dropping the anchor, I called for Leo to go to neutral, dropped a heap of anchor chain, I don't know how much, the anchor was dragging over rock by the feel of it, I let out some more and it took thank fuck. Our location was 15 43.712S 145 27.321E

I had inspected the lines just before dark last night and all was ok, no wear or chafing, when we move to another mooring when it gets light I will take the dinghy and have a look at what went wrong.

At 08:00 we upped anchor and moved back to the location of the mooring and dropped anchor next to it, it is raining and squally so I will wait until the wind and rain mellows a bit before going in the dinghy to have a look at the problem but will most likely stay on anchor and add a safety line to the mooring in case the anchor decides to pull but I doubt that it will, it took when we dropped it first go.

Before we upped anchor the reef was about 50-70 metres from us so just before we headed up into the wind we must have almost hit. Lucky!!

As we anchored a fishing boat came in and anchored on the north side of the reef about.

Barometer 1017 and rising

I checked the mooring in the afternoon, I had used our rope as a bridle through the splice in their mooring line, it looks like we may have sawed through their rope with ours as we swung, I had added a second backup line but it was tied through the same eye so it did little for us. I took the tender and cut off the broken splice, added a new float (a black pearl buoy) re spliced the line and then tied a line with a long loop back to Affinity so that we are anchored primarily but the loose line to the mooring will back us up if our anchor drags. I took the tender afterwards with my handheld GPS and made a few of the reefs on Software on Board, we were around 80 metres from the reef when we anchored but we had motored to the south east so we must have been very close before we turned back. Again Lucky.

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2011

Still stuck at Hope Island, not much moving with the weather, a high is going to strengthen before moving east and this means strong winds north of Cairns for the next few days, if things go as planned the weather should get better on Friday with a real chance to get south on Saturday.

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2011

We finally departed the Hope Islands, the forecast is for lighter winds for a few days. At 06:50 we upped anchor and untied the additional line to the mooring and headed north around the reef to the east and set course for Low Islets about 7nm NE of Port Douglas. We arrived at 16:30 and slipped into a couple of drinks. Pork chops, chips and veges for dinner , we will head for Cairns tomorrow and probably leave Affinity there after looking around at marinas, real estate and some tourist stuff.

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2011

Departed Low Islets just before sunrise (06:30) and arrived at Marlin Marina at 14:52 we are in pen D9 and about to have a beer.

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> August

We will hire a car today and take fire extinguishers and liferaft for service and then do a bit of cleaning, tomorrow we will head down to Airlie and have a look at marinas and real estate and find out what other attractions are there for tourists

### **List of Some of the Menu Items Onboard Between Darwin and Cairns**

Pizza, pepperoni and prawn

Steak and Chips/Veges

Roast Beef with roast onion, carrot, potato and cabbage, with gravy

Fish Vindaloo with fresh fish and rice

Curry Sausages and rice

Battered Coral Trout and Chips

Crumbed Mackerel an Chips and salad

Bacon and Eggs with tomato

Sausages and veges

Spanish Omelette's

Fresh baked bread rolls with hot beef slices

Fresh baked bread rolls with Bacon and Egg for breakfast

Cereal with fresh made yogurt

Beef with Sour Cream and Onion

Poached Eggs on fresh bread toast

Cold beef slices with salad

Tomato soup with home made croûtons

Chicken soup with home made croûtons

Tacos with spicy mince and salad

All meals prepared on board by Mark, cooked and served by mark also.