

Steel Sapphire Delivery - Hillarys to Sydney - 27th July - 22nd August 2015

Crew

Skipper - Mark Loader

Crew - Tim Daly (full voyage), Peter Bernard (Wirrina to Sydney), Jen Bernard (Eden to Sydney)

Navigator - Tim Daly/Mark Loader/Peter Bernard

Owner - Peter and Jen Bernard

Preamble.

Chris Kelly, my old friend from ocean racing days and the Splash, had been going out of his way in assisting Peter and Jen in getting their new purchase organized that was berthed at Hillarys Yacht Club. Jon Sanders referred me on to Peter and Jen as he was not available to assist in delivering the vessel. Julie, Dylan and I met Peter and Jen at the airport in Perth just before they departed back to Sydney, we made a quick verbal agreement regarding possible delivery in two weeks. Over the two weeks I visited Hillarys to assist in preparing Steel Sapphire for the delivery to Sydney, including taking her to and from the pen and traveliftworking closely with Chris and Peter to meet the deadline to depart of 27th July.

27th July 2015

08:30 Departed Hillarys Yacht Club after vessel anti fouled, prop speed, and rig work completed, with ML, TD and PB aboard, short sea trial sail to Fremantle, dropped Peter Bernard at Fishing Boat Harbour - Kailis Wharf picked up 4 litres engine oil, 4 litres coolant concentrate and replaced faulty Autohelm Wind Instrument.

14:30 Departed Fishing boat harbour and motored through Rockingham Channel and out through Challenger Passage before heading south, hoisted mizzen and staysail and motor sailed until wind increased enough from the east to sail.

28th July 2015

After changing shift at 01:00 GPS lost fix at 01:30 and steering had issues, TD called ML to deck and it appeared that we had fouled a line or perhaps weed or other object around rudder, vessel wouldn't respond to steering and helm was heavy and felt wrong. After checking for any visible issues and that no lines from the vessel were overboard we decided to head for Koombana Bay some 29 miles away to inspect and see if there was any damage. It was a slow sail and we were reluctant to start the engines as we then may foul the propellers with the obstruction from the rudder. After 6 hours of very little progress the rudder appeared to be responding so we took the risk and started the port engine, we engaged the prop and all seemed ok. we decided to continue to Bunbury, now around 12 miles away.

We had advised Julie Loader of our possible issue at 02:00 and at 04:30 also called Peter Bernard and advised him of our intentions. Bunbury Sea Rescue (Albert) was contacted and Albert met us at the "evacuation wharf" where we tied up port side to do our inspection. ML donned mask in the freezing conditions and stood on rear ladder face in the water and found no trace of any problem on the rudder. After some breakfast and cup of tea/coffee we cast off and at 12:30 were on our way towards Cape Naturaliste, 34nm away with full headsail and mizzen, still not a lot of wind so we motor sailed with just starboard engine on 1500 rpm. Rounded Cape Naturaliste just after dark and turned south towards Cape Leeuwin, no sign of any rudder issues.

29th July 2015

Still motor sailing at 02:30 ML came on shift at 01:30 after relieving TD who was on watch from 10:00 last night. Passed 7nm West of Cape Leeuwin at 02:10, heading for Albany approx 170nm miles away, winds expected to be with us today and turning 10-15 from the East tomorrow, then east and southerly for approx a week until bad weather with a line of fronts and 40+ knot winds will slow our progress, plans are to stop for one maybe two nights in Albany and then head for Esperance where we may be stuck for a week, may go to Middle Island to shelter if possible. At 09:00 just as I finished a 4 hour sleep (thanks for the extra hour Tim), Tim switched off the motor and we were sailing at 6.5 knots with a bit under a knot of current assisting us. Bow sullage tank inst draining so it looks like we will have to poke something into it from the outside when we are in Albany to try to get it emptied, we are both using the rear head now, it goes straight over the side. We are around 75 miles from Albany now and still sailing, it's 15:28 and we should get in early tomorrow morning if the wind continues to assist us as it has been. We are at 35 09.178 116 31.720 7.3 miles at 040 degrees to Point Nuyts.

30th July 2015

At around 00:30 this morning, Tim was getting dressed for watch and had one leg of his tracky pants still over his foot as he stood up and he went arse up into the toilet door opposite his cabin, he ripped his ear lobe and was bleeding and came on watch with a tissue held to his ear, he said he was ok but may need stitches, so our planned trip to Albany is warranted. We arrived after motoring on starboard engine from around 2:30 at 08:30 and are in Pen WB22 at the Albany Waterfront Marina, Tim has just been to the hospital via cab it is 11:25 I just rang and he has had stitches and a tetanus injection. We plan to hit the pub for lunch, I have been fixing some drawer latches and we will pick up some Dyson matting in town to stop things like the knives and forks sliding back and forward in the drawers. We also need to work on the front sullage tank, a bit has drained by itself but there is a lot more pooey stuff to be emptied.

Friday 31st July 2015

We added 8 litres of vinegar to the tank, hoping that the acid may break down the solids and get the tank flowing but also on Gary Caporns recommendation added 500mls of the stuff they put in camp toilets that breaks the contents down, lets hope some serious sloshing on the way to Kangaroo Island does the trick. We have done some other maintenance, topped up the coolant on the port engine 1.25 litres, checked the oil, topped up the genset coolant reservoir, fixed a couple of lights, and put non skid

matting in some of the drawers. Winds are supposed to change from SE to SW tomorrow morning so we should be on our way before lunch if all is to plan.

Saturday 1st August

Yesterday Tim and I went to check out the fueling jetty and found out through Mark McRae that there is no fuel, just a fueling jetty, we have around 800 litres aboard so we are not going to bother with fueling until probably Portland. 08:15 we cast off and motored out of the harbour after another quick top up of the water tanks, hot showers are nice. We managed to get sailing for around 10 hours and then as the wind eased in the evening we motored again one engine 1200 rpm with sail up to maintain our desired speed of 5 knots or more. Once again the fucking microwave flew through the air and crashed to the floor in the companionway damaging the floor this time, the bulkhead on the outside of the genset last time, we had put non skid matting on it, replaced the plug with an Aus one and made an extension cord with a pommie plug and a Aus socket to enable the microwave to be put in a "what we thought" safe location and put foam blocks alongside it to stop it sliding, all to no avail, the microwave is in a locker now not to be used again, its cover is bent and it is very lucky it is not on the bottom of the ocean in around 5 km of water. Winds have been from the south/south southwest and lightish, allowing us to sail then it gets to around 12 knots but motoring a lot of the time.

Sunday 2nd August

Another day of mixed wind strengths, we sailed for most of the day and then at around 18:45 started the motor again and would be motoring into Monday morning, we are currently (Monday morning at 08:00 as I type this) at 35.308150s 123.164566e doing around 5-6 knots, at 080, barometer is 1034 so we are almost at the middle of the high passing through, so winds will be light and changing from SW though W then to the north in a day or two (hopefully or two), we are tracking slightly north of our rum line so that we have somewhere to go when the winds turn north, it could be 30 knots so we don't want to be into it if we can help it. Currently we are aiming still to head for the north side of Kangaroo Island but if this become a problem we will track for Portland, KI is now around 092 true and Portland around 108 so roughly 15 degrees further south so this may be an option if the winds are at all east of north. During the night I had trouble starting the port engine, it didn't want to fire initially and then when it did, after several failed starts, I couldn't get any revs, tried revs in neutral and no good also, I started starboard instead and when I had 1400 revs re started port, it initially didn't rev, then came up, in gear, to 1000, then crept slowly to a bit under 1400 but would go no further, after playing a bit I shut it off, we will need to have a look in port, suspect a fuel problem. Satfone has also been playing up, can make and receive calls and SMS's but cant send SMS or email, everything seems ok, tried resetting to defaults and still no good, Julie is calling me twice a day on satfone and we are giving her our lat and long and speed, heading. Julie is going to see if there is an issue at Iridium or Telstra, it has not had any regular problems with sending texts etc.

Monday 3rd August 2015

08:02 Position as above, motor sailing at 5-6knots, bugger all wind, an Albatross was just scanning the ocean and passed us by, I took a quick video on the iPad. Just checked fuel and we have enough for

around 670 miles based on the gauge, 720 based on 6 litres per hour and the hours we have motored plus a few for the genset so I suspect the 670 about right with around 700 to go so we could really use a day or two of sailing to ensure we can get there. came good by itself I suspect the problem was at Telstra, yes, in Manila.

Tuesday 4th August 2015

Hughey has finally sent us the wind proper, we have sailed all day and into the night, now we appear to be on top of the fuel situation with around 600 litres remaining and as of 23:00 today 495 miles to our waypoint just north of Kingscote on Kangaroo Island, we are still now able to get to Portland we need to, if the expected northerly winds that will come as the western side of the high pressure system that is passing us reaches us on Wednesday or Thursday are too east or too strong to allow easy passage to the north of KI. The pressure rose to 1036 yesterday and is now dropped to 1030 and the wind is coming more from the south west so north west and then north flow should follow. We have been dining well with fresh baked rolls and today a loaf of bread, along with the frozen meals of spag bog and lamb and bacon casserole we have had sausages in bread, hamburgers, bacon lettuce and tomato rolls and have not gone hungry and there is plenty more in the freezer, Tim's coffee pod machine makes coffee each day and we have a nice cup of tea or two each morning.

Wednesday 5th August

Finally we sailed for a full 24 hours, we are now 458 miles from the KI waypoint, it was very cold and a bit rainy during the night but with the wind strong enough and from the right direction, who would complain. There are jet black clouds in front and we were getting up to 7.5 knots its lovely stuff but i reefed a bit of headsail just in case we get hit, then let a bit out again as we slowed down, we have a tiny bit of jib furled, IE most of it out, about 2/3 of main and full mizzen. May have bacon sandwiches using the fresh bread from yesterday for brekkie. Further to our port engine problem, we tried the engine again today an it still refused to do more than 1000 rpm unless assisted by the sails of the other motor, our latest plans are to head for Wirrina Cove just north of Victor Harbour or the point to the south east of Adelaide where we could hide from the strong northerly winds expected on Sunday morning and see if we can get a mechanic to have a look. We decided to have a look at the primary and secondary fuel filters and found all to have their water separators full of water, we drained them all and re ran the engine and whilst not perfect it was able to achieve 1600 rpm and drive the vessel, we drained all of the starboard filters and the genset primary and all had the same issue, lots of nice clear water. We checked the seals on the deck filler caps and they are cracked and broken, we have been getting water over the deck so this probably was where the water came from . We have use self amalgamating tape on the caps and they look sealed now and we have been running on the port engine for 3 hours no probs and the water separator whilst it has some slime and dirt in it is not showing any signs of more water. I spoke with Peter on the satfone and advised filter numbers so we can order replacements for all fuel filters and also asked if we can get 2 x oil filters and 20 litres of mono grade 30 oil so that we can change the very dirty engine oil in both engines. Genset oil appears a lot cleaner but found that the coolant cap is grown over and cant be removed easily, I sprayed it with CRC and will try it again in port, I couldn't locate the secondary genset fuel filter it must be on the front of the engine, it will need to be checked

for water, also haven't yet drained the two secondary filters on the starboard engine but suspect they too will be full of water.

Thursday 6th August - Saturday 8th August

Pretty uneventful for a couple of days motor sailing, we passed the light on Neptune Island in the wee hours of Saturday and then after taking some sunrise photos, enjoyed the calm waters between Kangaroo Island and the mainland. We called the marina manager at St Vincent Marina an hour out and Aaron said he would meet us alongside and assist, we furled the headsail. wound in the main and mizzen and prepared fenders and lines for our also uneventful arrival.

Friday 14th August

At 05:35 this morning we pulled out of Wirrina and are now motoring with 2 knots of current assisting us through backstairs passage. We are heading for Portland as on Sunday afternoon until Monday morning we will hide from some stronger winds and then be on our way possibly via Eden to pick up Jen and then in predicted light northerly winds we will be motoring towards Sydney. Yesterday I went for a quick swim under the boat to check that the port engine problem was not due to something fouling the prop, but no it was clear, the water was freezing but when I got out even though it was about 17 degrees it felt warm.

Paul Webb the mechanic fixed all sorts of engine stuff, including:

- replaced all fuel primary (3) and secondary filters (4) (genset has a filter before lift pump and one after that we couldn't check, they will need to be done at some stage.
- servicing the port engine salt water pump and putting a full kit through it, impeller was in bad repair, took some photos but some fins broke, the others with permanent bends, back plate worn so reversed, and cam replaced as half worn.
- servicing spare salt water pump so we have a fully ready spare
- replaced impeller in starboard engine also missing fins and not in good nick at all
- adjusted starboard engine idle speed, it was slow
- fixed blocked fuel return valve from port engine injector pump, this allows return of fuel from injector pump and joins at a t junction in the pipe into the injector return pipe to the fuel tank. This didn't fix the low revs in gear problem but Paul then pushed the rod in the injector pump that he called the "rack" and managed to get it freed up and the engine then had power and revved to 1750 in gear in the pen.
- fitted an inline filter prior to the electric pump that pumps fuel from the main tank to the day tank, all engines run off the day tank and this water separator/filter will ensure that the day tank fuel is clean at all times as long as the filter and water reservoir is checked regularly and filter changes as often as is required. The pump that fills the day tank was running whenever the

engines or genset are on but at the start of the trip the light indicated it was only running intermittently, possibly under control of the float switch. The problem is that there is no overflow from the day tank back to the main tank so if the pump does not shut off it gets pressurized and the screws on the level switch and float switch at the top of the day tank leak and drip diesel in to the bilge. As a temporary fix until the system is working under float switch control we have wired an on off switch at the nav station, so even though the pump run light on the pump is isolated, we need to keep an eye on the day tank level and turn on the switch occasionally to top up the tank as required.

- The genset is pretty good but needs the hole where the coolant reservoir goes in below the radiator cap drilled out as it is either never been drilled or so full of hard shit it is blocked, I suspect the latter as the end of the pipe and brass T at the header tank were both full of crappy stuff that needed poking out. The coolant in the genset looks like it is mainly water so could use a change and the temperature switch doesn't appear to work as the temp gauge never shows. Start battery will need replacing as it struggles if the genset is cranked too many times.
- The exhausts on both the engines need some attention too but not too urgently.
- Brushes on the motor that drive the hydraulics for the autopilot were replaced and the autopilot is now functional yay, no more steering.
- Note port engine is anti-clockwise, starboard engine is clockwise.

Tim, Peter and I spent hours trying to fix the bow head but the pipe is blocked and despite getting some flow and manually pulling to some plastic from the bottom of the tank, our efforts were in vain. Tim spent some hours attacking the panel under the toilet to get it out to inspect the skin fitting and elbow at the stop cock as it felt very corroded but proved it to be not as bad as he first suspected and he cleaned it as much as he could and sprayed it with corrosion inhibitor and replaced the floor and toilet and it is still in reasonable condition, the salt water inlet hose leaks and despite Tim's efforts the hose wouldn't stop leaking and in the end we have closed the water inlet and taped the lid shut, the lid on the holding tank was broken as we removed it so it has a couple of holes in it, Peter used epoxy putty to fill the holes but it failed to seal it fully so we are better off leaving it for Sydney to be repaired and we will have to use the main cabin head for the trip.

Saturday 15th August

A casual day of 80% motoring, some sail to assist, engines and genset are running fine and oil and water checks show that there is no fluid loss since the hot water tank inlet from the starboard engine coolant system was tightened. Temp reached around 22 degrees with black clouds appearing on the western horizon.

Sunday 16th August

After rounding Lawrence Rock we turned in towards Portland Harbour some 5 miles away, I had done the 8-11 shift last night, Tim 11-2 and Peter 2-5 this morning, Peter woke me as we rounded Lawrence

Rock and then I woke Tim approx 1.5 miles from the marina, we tied up after a very casual and managed arrival, Peter is managing the 30 tonnes really well with a perfect arrival and docking, the light NW winds not making things awkward at all, after a cup of tea we hit the sack again at 06:30, the Marina Manager should be here at around 8am to open the gate to the two casual berths and give us the forms to fill out and key card so we can have access outside 8-5 open hours for the gates.

Monday 17th August

Bit of sailing and lots of motoring, just one engine, port engine is a bit tappety so we are using starboard only until tap pets are done in Sydney

Tuesday 18th August

More of the same, passed Wilsons Prom late in evening.

Wednesday 19th August

About 20 miles from passing Bass Strait oil rigs, wind from behind! Southerly then northerly change to come around midnight

Motoring with full Genoa and mizzen oil rigs now on port bow. Listening to a bit of Van Morrison - Astral Weeks, light winds astern, now no genoa, just mizzen

Thursday 20th August

It is 06:46 we are just rounding Gabo Island, Dolphins, sunrise and a hot cup of tea. It's 10 degrees outside and 16 in the cabin, engine makes a great room warmer. 250 miles to Sydney, 40 to Eden where we pick up Jen and a few provisions. Yesterday the main tank to day tank fill that was happening purely by vacuum since the fitting of the inline filter ceased working, Peter noticed that the day tank was 3/4 full at dinner, we switched on the pump via the on off switch I had fitted to no avail. Investigation found that the hose clamp on the new filter was too small and not clamping, after tightening the tank started filling but there were bubbles in the bottom of the filter water separator, looks like the bowl isn't sealing, we will try a tighten on the assembly bolt when next in the engine room, if this doesn't work we will need to pull the fitter apart and check seals etc or replace the filter complete. We arrived at 13:45 Jen was there to greet us and so was a rusty bolt that stuck out of one of the wharf chafers and took a 50c sized chunk out of the port rubbing strip, it came off as a neat chip they can be glued back in place until a proper fix is done, the surge assisting the bolt in its nasty work. Jen was there to meet us and after some hellos and loading her bag, Tim set off for some backup tobacco, Jen went for fish and chips, Peter and I tightened the bolt holding the main to day tank filter and seemed to stop the air bubbles that were entering when the transfer pump was running. After lovely fish and chips we set off at 15:30.

Friday 21st August

Motoring all day and into the night, slow progress around Jervis Bay as tide, waves and wind were against us and we copped a few greenies that found their way through a leak in the front hatch into my

bunk, not too wet and a towel now reducing the impact, down to around 2knots for a couple of hours, we turned more west after Sir John Young Banks and found lighter winds and less current and waves so more comfortable and faster headway, gusts were reaching 25 knots out further, inside the 50 metre contour Peters advice that proved good.

Saturday 22nd August

I did 19:00 to 22:00 last night and on again now from 04:00 to 07:00 we are passing between the anchored ships off Port Kembla, seas have calmed and around 16 knots from the north, still motoring, I furled the mizzen as it as just flapping, still a bit slow but making 4 knots over the ground ETA at Woolwitch around 15:30 at this pace. Sun is just rising, 37.5 miles to go

We arrived at 13:30 at Woolwitch Marina, Jen and Peter loaded a heap of belongings from Atilla, their Bavaria 36 that was in the pen that Steel Sapphire is to occupy, we then took both boats down to a mooring near the bridge, dropped off Atilla onto the mooring and then after refueling on the way back, Peter backed Steel Sapphire perfectly into the pen, where she will live for the next couple of years until they depart for their world cruise

End note:

Special thanks to:

Chris Kelly for all his assistance

Tim Daly for putting up with all of my idiosyncrasies and doing the whole passage from Hillarys to Sydney

Peter and Jen Bernard for their great choice of delivery crew, focus on safety and for joining us for the eastern legs of the delivery.

Paul Webb the mechanic fro Adelaide who dropped everything to fix the engine issues, and Aaron the Marina Manager from Wirrina's Marina St Vincent for his assistance and driving us around when we needed him.

Approx 2450 miles 26 days total, 2 days in Albany, 6 days in Wirrina and 1 in Portland, so 17 days at sea at 144 miles per day a 6 knot average which is pretty quick for a delivery and explains the high fuel usage, engines averaged at 5.2 litres per hour, around 1800 litres of fuel, so we only actually sailed for 650 miles and motor sailed the majority of the rest.

On to the next delivery. Tim and I fly back to Perth tomorrow morning.

Mark Loader

23rd