

## QCYC Bass Strait Cruise March 2018

At 122:00pm on Friday 23rd February the three crew of Brigand, my 1976 Spencer 30, departed Westernport Marina at Hastings on an adventure. The plan being to sail in company with 7 or 8 other boats associated with QCYC to visit the islands of the Kent group and the Furneaux group. We sailed down Westernport bay to San Remo under the bridge past Cape Woolamai and out into Bass strait. Our first and most tiring leg was to sail overnight to Refuge cove at Wilsons Promontory.



Our overnight sail was comfortable and slower than expected due to light winds. Not wanting the motor on to disturb sleeping crew, we made slower than planned progress to refuge cove, arriving at Midday the next day.

The dark night gave us an impressive display of the glittering phosphorescence in the disturbed water created by the boat.

At one point some ghostly looking dolphins came up and swam beside the boat. A glittering trail flowing behind them.

At daybreak the next morning we found ourselves amongst the islands of the Glennie group on the southern side of Wilsons Promontory.

The lighthouse at the southern point of 'The Prom'



Over the next couple of days QCYC boats congregated in Refuge cove.



Refuge cove photo taken from Telstra rock.

The QCYC boats that met at refuge cove were:

Forgive me if I missed any boats, but the QCYC boats in attendance that I can remember are:

Kate,	Jenneau 53
Imagine,	Riviera 3850
Heatwave	Lightwave 45
Brigand	Spencer 30

along with 5 or 6 fellow cruising sailors from Brighton.

Various social activities were conducted as we waited for boats to arrive and waited for some windy weather.

Aboard Brigand, we experienced the power of some Refuge cove wind bullets.

Our inflatable dinghy was flipped four times, the last time when it still had the outboard motor attached.

We then proceeded to learn how to clean out the carburettor followed by an overnight trip to Port Welshpool for supplies and with the kind assistance of Mike Phelan obtained the tube spanner required to remove and clean the spark plug.

We all visited 'Telstra rock' to make phone calls home.

Many bushwalkers were booked in camping in the campground at Refuge.

The common sequence for the hikers was to arrive, set up camp then jump into the clear cool water for a swim.

There is a boater visitors wall where boaters leave mementos of their visits.



## Refuge cove to Deal Island

Some QCYC boats for various reasons decided to return to Melbourne.

The 45' cat Heatwave and Brigand continued on the next phase of the trip to deal island



Our first anchorage was Erith island, **West Cove** where we inspected the beach hut leased by the Erith Mob and checked out the remains of an old wreck on the beach.

Snorkelling around the rocks at the northern end in the crystal clear water gave a fantastic view of the fish and marine plants.



## Deal Island

The following day we motored across Murray Pass in Andrew & Jenny's inflatable to Deal island East cove.

We were greeted by silent, friendly wallabies and Cape Barron geese that seemed to have no fear of humans.

We climbed the path to the caretakers residence and found the Telstra seat on the way.

The volunteer caretakers were enjoying the last week of their 3 month stay.

We were greeted at the gate by their 9 year old son Murphy.

Murphy showed us the vegetable garden and directed us to the Deal island museum.

We presented a small parcel of goods to help make the last week of their stay enjoyable.

(Wine, cheese, eggs, and a small amount of fruit and vegetables)



East Cove



Looking north to Erith Island



The Caretakers House



Museum



A leisurely walk up the hill to the Deal island lighthouse.

The lighthouse was decommissioned in the 1990's because of it's hight and the light was often obscured by cloud. It was the highest lighthouse in the southern hemisphere. Deal Island was also hit by a major bush fire in the 1990's which I believe destroyed many of the remaining lighthouse buildings. The lighthouse is now not open to visitors due structural damage.

A huge amount of historical information exists in the deal island museum.

The volunteer caretakers based at the settlement back near East cove, maintain the museum, perform basic building maintenance functions, mow the walking tacks and air strip and weed eradication duties around the island. The waiting list to become a caretaker is about 7 years.

A horse drawn light rail was used to haul goods and materials up the steep hill to the lighthouse.



## Deal Island - Garden cove

The wind picked up from the south west so we decided to move from Erith island, west cove around to the north end of deal island to Garden cove.

This bay has high hills either side. The southerly wind funnels down the air strip to garden cove.

It is still a good safe anchorage when over sand and great fishing & snorkelling.

In the photo below you can see the creek that runs into the bay.

It is frequented by Cape Barron geese and wallabies.



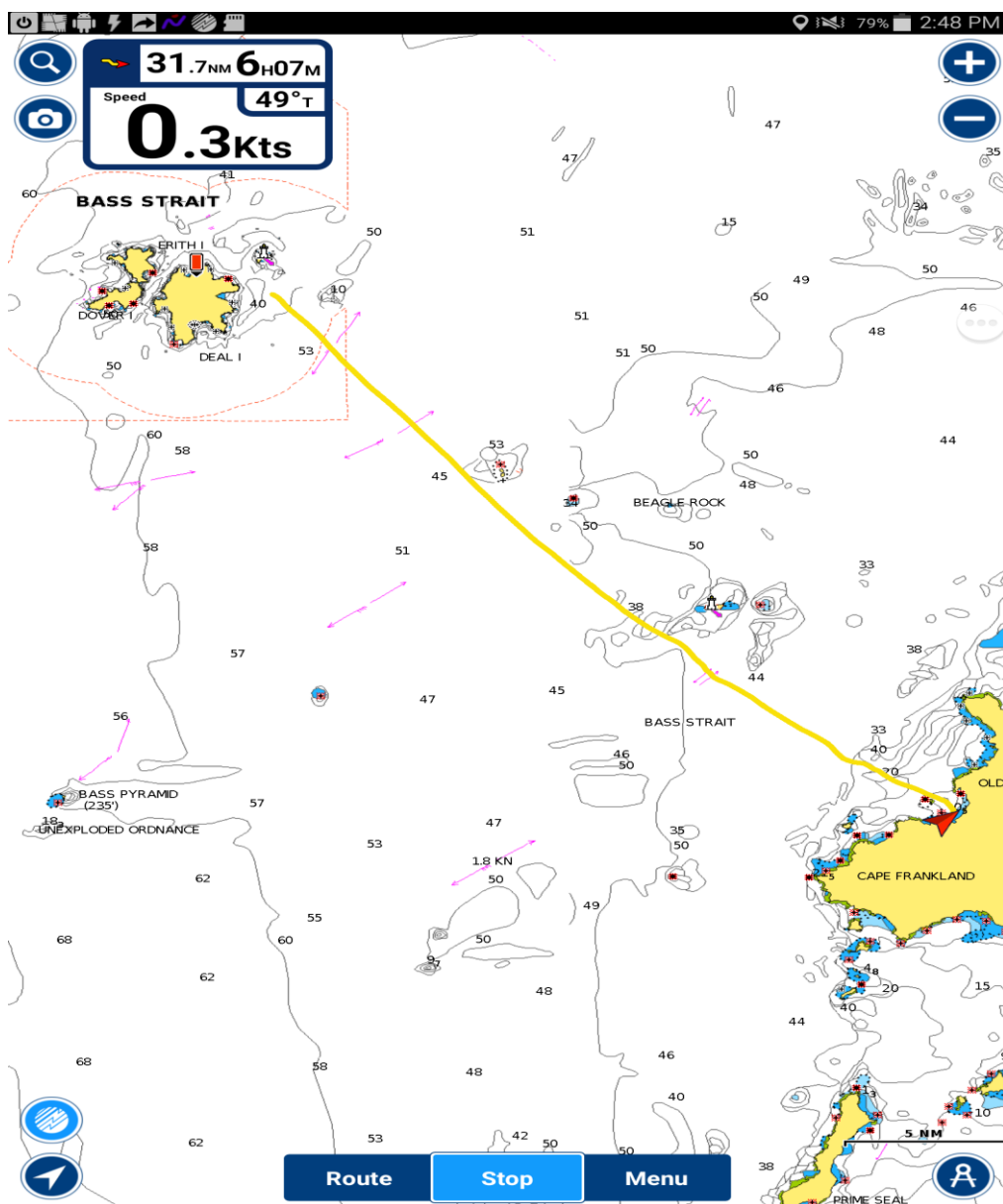
Heatwave and Brigand anchored in garden cove



Cape Barron geese and wallabies wandered up and down the beach visiting the creek that flows out at Garden cove.

## Deal Island to Flinders Island (Killiecrankie bay)

Heatwave and Brigand set sail to Flinders island along with the Brighton yachts.



The Brighton yachts contacted the resident at Killiecrankie (Alan), who kindly arranged for us to borrow fishing boat moorings. Hot showers are available at the Killiecrankie camp ground for \$3.

It was an interesting experience, the wood fired shower hot water system involved someone feeding it with twigs while the other person showered.

Mount Killiecrankie shown in the photo below is the source of Killiecrankie diamonds.

A hard stone (Topaz) that is capable of being cut and set like diamonds into jewellery.

They can be found at low tide by digging away the top layer of sand.

An unexpected incident in the inflatable dinghy caused us to need to purchase a piece of diabetic medical equipment. With the generous assistance of Mike Phelan and his mate Snow, based at Lady Barron, we were able to have the equipment flown in from Bridport in Tasmania on the next day's mail plane.

Snow kindly drove it up to us at Killiecrankie. Crisis averted.

Thank you Mike & Snow, we appreciated your efforts to help us out.

The Brighton yachts departed Killiecrankie, heading back via Deal island to their home port.

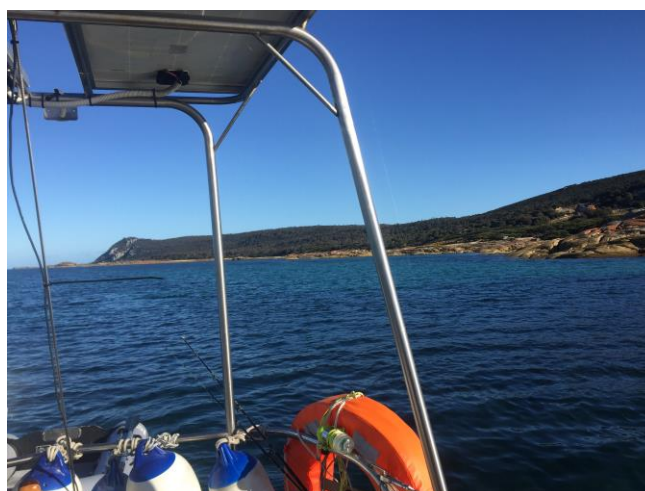


QCYC & Brighton boats moored at Killiecrankie bay with Mt Killiecrankie behind in the distance.

### **Flinders Island - Killiecrankie bay to Roydon Island**

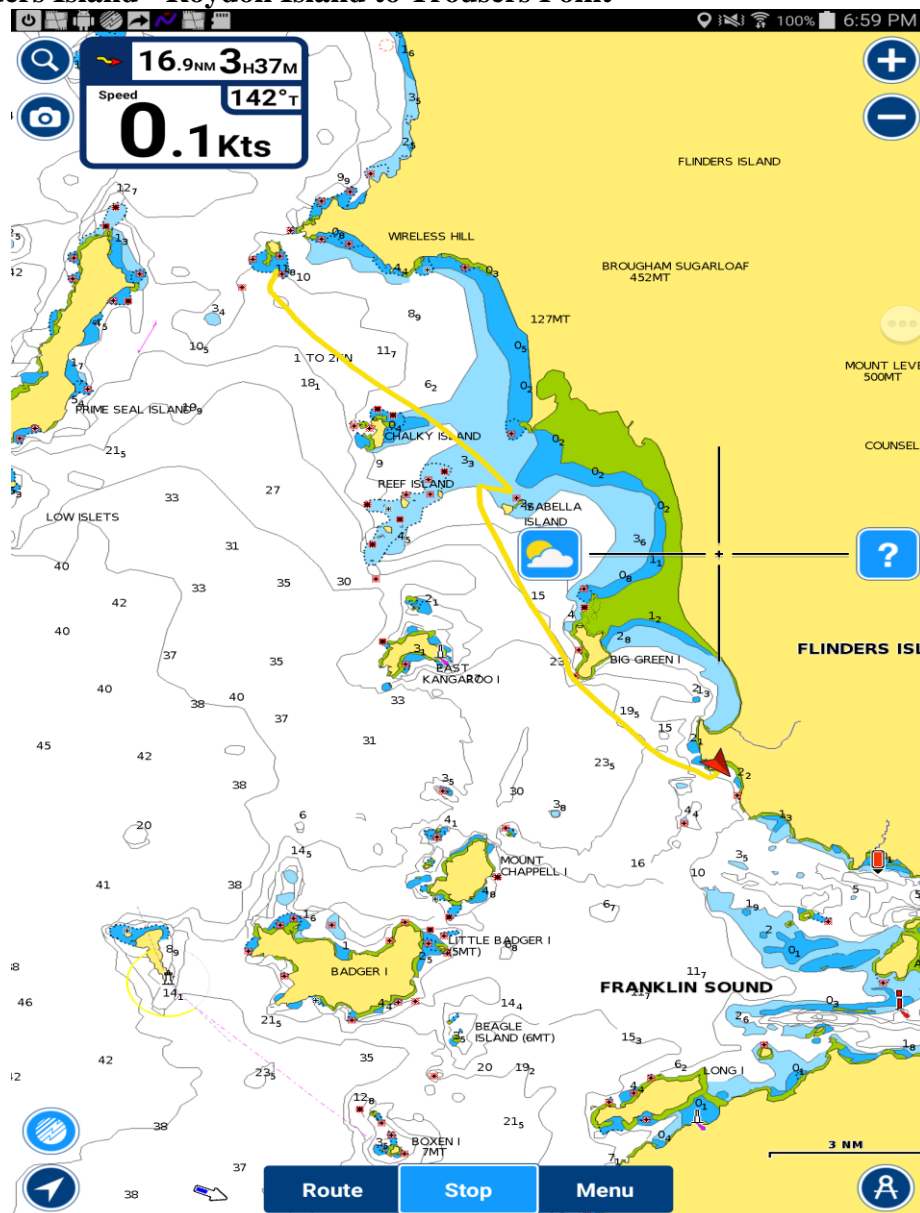


Heatwave anchored near Roydon island.

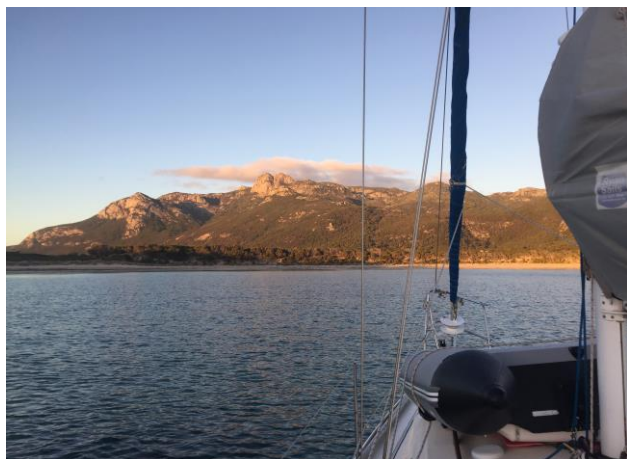


Our fishing line attracted a Port Jackson shark but we let him go.

## Flinders Island - Roydon Island to Trousers Point



We stopped for a lunch break and some snorkelling at Wybelenna island, caught a few fish for dinner. Then we sailed on arriving at the south side of Trousers Point at sundown. Trousers Point has a north and a south side both suitable anchorages depending on the weather.



Flinders island mountains create their own clouds. Heatwave anchored of Trousers point.



Flinders island Trousers Point, south side, one of the most beautiful bays we have seen.  
The Strzelecki peaks behind.

### **Flinders island - Lady Barron**

Next day we motor sailed to the port of Lady Barron.

Quite strong tidal flows made it a slow trip for Brigand.

We moored using the public moorings provided near Lady Barron harbour.

Clean toilets and hot showers are provided in the facilities at the wharf.

A 10 minute walk to the Lady Barron general store allowed us to stock up on fuel and supplies.

Then off to the Lady Barron pub for some refreshments with Andrew & Jen from Heatwave.



Peter, Brian & David relaxing at Lady Barron



The view south toward Cape Barron island from Lady Barron pub at sunset.

The following day we attempted to hire a car to do some sightseeing.

Hire cars were all booked out by the authorities dealing with a fruit fly outbreak.

They were taking serious action to prevent the fruit fly from reaching mainland Tasmania.

Hire cars are normally available in Flinders island's largest town, Whitemark about 30km away.

A taxi ride to Whitemark would have cost us about \$100, so we kept asking around and eventually found a minibus hire service in Lady Barron. We hired a 9 seater minibus for \$100 and did our tour up to Whitemark and the museum further north at Emita. The museum showed us some of the history of the mutton bird catching families that lived in the area. We also purchased some Killiecrankie diamonds for family at home.



Jen with a local baby wombat rescued from a road accident

That evening we indulged ourselves in a local delicacy back at the Lady Barron pub.  
A special feast of crayfish to celebrate a wonderful cruise.



**The parting of ways:**

At this point we needed to start our return journey back to Westernport.

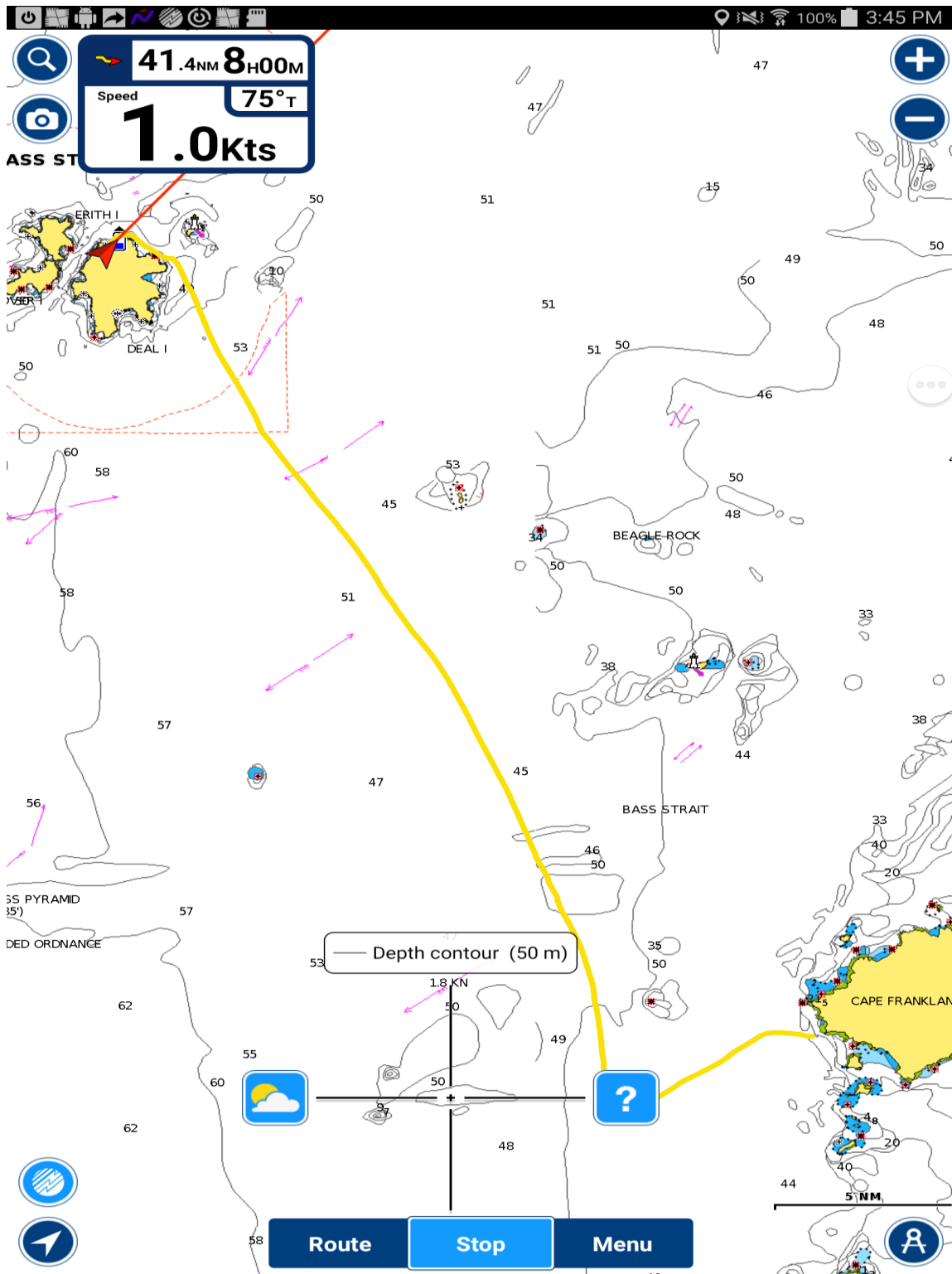
Jen and Andrew were waiting to pick up a family member as crew , and then to continue travelling south toward the east coast of Tasmania.

### Brigand's return Journey:

We sailed from Lady Barron to Roydon island.

Then next day from we sailed Roydon island to Deal island

Bad weather was approaching so we planned to stay at Garden cove at the north end of Deal island which offers good protection from the expected strong south westerly winds.



While waiting out the strong winds at Garden cove, we walked up to the Deal island caretakers residence and also utilized the 'Telstra seat' to gain phone access to check in with family at home.

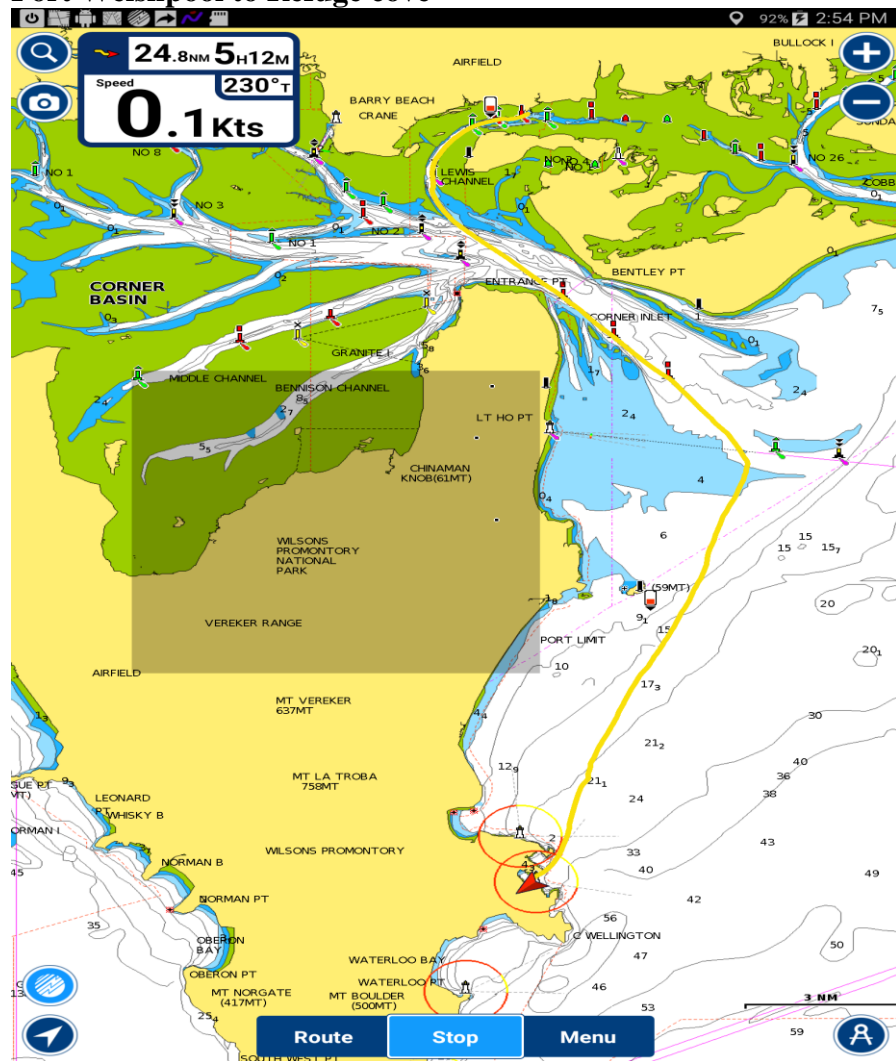
We received the message that Dad (Brian) needed to be home soon as my mother was to have some tests done in hospital.

We made the decision to sail to Port Welshpool where Dad could be picked up by family and taken home. David and I sailed Brigand back to Westernport.

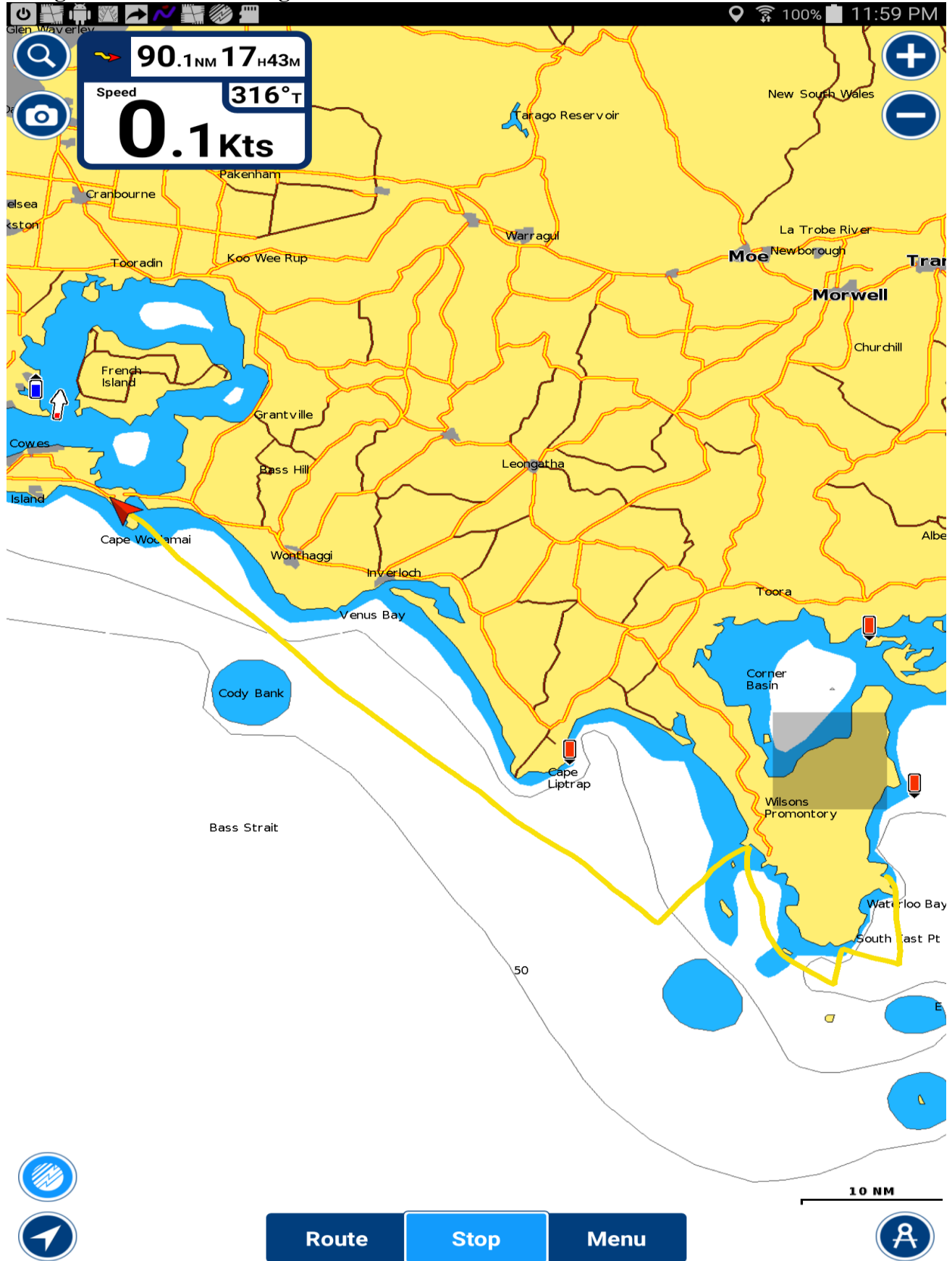
## Deal island to Port Welshpool



## Port Welshpool to Refuge cove



# Refuge Cove to Cleeland Bight





We departed Refuge Cove at 6am.

The forecast southerly wind was variable and had more westerly in it than expected so we had to tack in & out of the Glennie group of islands south of Wilson's Promontory.

This gave us a close up view of some of the rocky outcrops.

The wind eventually settled down from the south allowing us to sail a more direct course toward home.

The wind died out all together off Wonthaggi so we fired up the motor and arrived at Cleeland bight at midnight.

The next day an easterly wind pushed us under the san Remo bridge and home to Hastings, Westernport marina.

Thank you to the fellow cruisers and specially to Mike Phelan for all his efforts and support in organising this cruise.

Peter Willis

'Brigand'

Crew: Brian Willis & David Dyer