

Labor Day in the apostles was a really nice trip that was all about changes. The plan had been to base camp on York Island with day trips to Sand and Raspberry islands. Things did not go according to plan. The 5-day weather forecast on Saturday morning progressed from good to bad to worse. The wind on Sunday was predicted to be 15-20 knots increasing through the day, with waves 2-4, then 3-5 and by Monday morning 5-7 feet. While it is almost a given that the forecast three days into the future on the big lake is wrong, you don't know if things will be better or worse. We decided to punt.

The campground at Little Sand Bay had an opening and we took it. We left the gear in the cars, packed a lunch and put the boats in the water. Wind calm, waves calm, bright sun, maybe 60 degrees.

Now that the brush has been cleared at the Hansen Farm, the newly painted bright white farmhouse can be seen from the mainland. Using the house as a navigational aid, we paddled across the channel to Sand Island East Bay. Just around the point from the farm, we paddled into the sea caves where Malla sang selections from traditional Swedish folk music. With the natural reverb of the caves, the effect was spiritual.

After lunch at Justice Bay we headed up to the lighthouse. Great views, nice weather and met some interesting people - it was hard to get away, but it was good that we did. As we paddled down the shore, the clouds began to thicken and at East Bay we were treated to a stinging cold shower. No wind though, so no waves; and the crossing back to the mainland was uneventful.

We made camp, ate dinner, and went down to the dock for the sunset. The wind was up and so were the waves. The sunset afterglow was pink and gold, then grey, then deep red with a silhouette effect that made the north shore disappear. The wind blew all night, and the waves Sunday were cranking up to maybe 3 feet. The shallow channel to Sand Island was a very confused sea. We went to Bark Bay and fooled around in the estuary and then paddled down the flowage to the bay. At the mouth of the Bark river is a sand bar that forms a partial barrier to the bay, and beyond that was a nice set of rolling waves, breaking in orderly fashion. Half the group paddled out into the bay for a few minutes before surfing back into the river. Riding up onto the crest of the waves was most impressive. Then we went shopping in Cornucopia.

Monday morning was clear and bright with little wind. We packed up and went to the mainland sea caves for a truly great morning on the water. Lunch at lunch beach (where else?). Then the long drive back to our lives among the muggles.