



The Message Stick

July 2013

Mackay Bushwalkers' Club Inc. PO Box 1313, Mackay, 4740

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Future Events

Mt Dalrymple	7 th July
Through The Spikes.....	14 th July
General Meeting.....	17 th July
Broken River Loop Rd	21 st July
Back of Finch Hatton.....	28 th July
Sydney Heads	4 th August
Back of Diamond Cliffs Exploratory.....	10 th & 11 th August

*Happy 80th Birthday Maureen
Queen of Mt Dalrymple
You are an inspiration to us all!*



Club Officers

President	Dan McKinlay	49534249	Contact Officer	Cheryl Brodie	49552895
Vice President	Garry Hendicott	49440236	Walks Coordinator	Frances Eiteneuer	49576028
Secretary	Kathy Cant	49522269	Assist Walks Coordinator	Coral Morgan	49578474
Treasurer	Cheryl Brodie	49552895	Newsletter Editor	Jenny Wooding	49440236
Safety Officer	Kevin Smith	49696068	Publicity Officer	Rob Kollin	49512490
Equipment Officer	Garry Hendicott	49440236	Social Coordinator	Dan McKinlay	49534249

From the Editor

This newsletter is a little late in coming out as I have just returned from a week in Victoria. The weather was very chilly but fortunately not wet and Garry and I were able to get some good walks in.

On our last day we were cruising the camping shops in the middle of Melbourne and bumped into Pam and Eric. What a surprise and we discovered that Vaughn had been in the same stores only 2 days before us. Such a small world!!

Last night's surprise 80th birthday party for Maureen was attended and enjoyed by 21 Bushwalkers. I think Maureen was truly surprised to see us all and she was delighted to have all 3 of her sons there for the occasion. Many thanks to her family for inviting us and I think we all scrubbed up quite well.

It was great to catch up with those who have just returned from the Bungle Bungles and to hear about their trip. Sounds as though they all had a wonderful time.

Keep warm everyone!

Our Publicity Officer is Rob Kollin
robertskool@qld.chariot.net.au

Please email Rob any photos you think would look good in the newspaper.

Items for the next newsletter should be sent to
jennywooding@dodo.com.au
prior to 25th July

Future Events

All trip leaders please ensure you collect the club gear bag from Garry before undertaking your walk.

Please contact the leader to nominate for all walks

Mt Dalrymple Sunday 7th July

Leader: Jenny Wooding
Depart: 5am (yawn)
Journey: 200km \$20
Grade: L77

This walk is being held in honour of Maureen's 80th birthday – what a legend. It has a very early start to ensure we make it to the top in plenty of time for lunch.

Mt Dalrymple is the highest mountain in our area and it involves a full day of walking with lots of ups. We will be walking up and back via the Western Trail

Through The Spikes Sunday 14th July

Leader: Garry Hendicott 49440236

Depart: 6 am
Journey: 240km \$24.00
Map Ref: Mirani 8655 Easting 662255
Northing 7630288 (GDA94)
Grade: M65

Estimated walking time: 6 hours **Total of all uphill sections:** 270m **Pace:** average **Terrain:** uneven, long grass, hidden obstacles underfoot, slopes **Vegetation:** Open, Spear Grass **Expect:** Traversing steep slopes, trip hazards, sun, no water, magnificent views.

The Marling Spikes consist of three prominent volcanic cones just south west of Sydney Heads in Homevale National Park. Our journey will take us through the saddle between the Spikes where we will find that there are indeed more than the three spikes we see on the map. There will also be excellent views of Sydney

Heads from close up. The walk will be a loop along creek banks and ridges (some steep) up to the saddle, the return will be down a ridge (one leg shorter than the other will be an advantage) to a creek bed which we will walk in back to the cars. Total distance is about 6.5kms.

Note the early start.

Broken River Loop Rd Sunday 21st July

Leader: Dan McKinlay: 49534249 or 0409057494 or email dmckinlay@bigpond.com

Journey: 190km \$20.00

Depart: 7am

Grade: L46

Estimated walking time: 8 hours

This walk commences at Broken River, we then walk along the Rain Forest Track to the Crediton Loop road and then walk to Crediton Hall. This section is just over 11 km. We have lunch at Crediton Hall and then we follow the upper loop of Crediton Loop Road and head back to Broken River. This section is mainly on open Road and will be exposed. It is close to 11 km. Back at Broken River a well deserved coffee or ice-cream at the cafe. This walk is suitable for beginners but a good level of fitness is required as it is a 22 km walk. You will need plenty of drinking water, hat, sunscreen and insecticide.

Induction 6.45pm/ General Meeting 7.30pm Wednesday 17th July

Downstairs room, Mackay Family Care and Community Support Association Centre 60 Wellington Street, Mackay. Newcomers and visitors welcome. Induction by Kathy and Cheryl

Back of Finch Hatton Sunday 28 July

Leader: Cheryl Brodie 49552895

Depart: 7:00am

Journey: 130km \$13.00

Map Ref: Mirani 703607

Grade: S55

Estimated walking time: 4 hours **Total of all uphill sections:** 250m **Pace:** slow to average **Terrain:** very uneven terrain **Vegetation:** open forest **Expect:** some steep slopes and long grass.

The walk will start at the Finch Hatton water tank and will take us to the top of a ridge. There will be plenty of rests in suitable areas to admire the views down into the Pioneer Valley and east to the coast and the pace will be as easy as we need it to be. Lunch will be enjoyed at the top of a great vantage point at the top of the ridge, and the trip home will be down hill. The day will not be too demanding, but all morning we will be working our way uphill. Please bring water and food for the whole day.

Sydney Heads Sunday 4th August

Leader: Coral Morgan 49578474

Co Leader: Garry Hendicott 49440236

Depart: 6 am

Journey: 250km \$25.00

Map Ref: Mirani 8655 Easting 663728 Northing 7631090 (GDA94)

Grade: M55

Estimated walking time: 6 hours **Total of all uphill sections:** 350m **Pace:** average **Terrain:** uneven, long grass, hidden obstacles underfoot, slopes, loose scree **Vegetation:** Forest, dense vegetation in places especially on top. **Expect:** steep slope with loose scree, rocky outcrops with height, trip hazards, sun, no water, magnificent views.

Sydney Heads is the most prominent feature in Homevale National Park rising to a height of 921 metres. The club has not climbed Sydney Heads since April 2007, a visit to this worthy destination is long overdue. Although a short walk of just under 5kms the rewards are spectacular, all of Homevale can be seen from this vantage point. We will visit a rocky outcrop (cliff edge) on the Northern end overlooking the Diamond Cliffs and then traverse the top of the heads to the highest point at the Southern end overlooking the Marling Spikes and Mount Britton.

The ascent up Sydney Heads requires a scramble up (and down) a loose scree covered slope, care must be exercised here to avoid dislodging material onto other walkers. Note the early start.

This will be a car based camp in the area of Mt Bryden. From our base we will do exploratory day walks towards the back of Diamond Cliffs, in particular to an area known as the Valley of Caves. More information in the next newsletter.

**Back of Diamond Cliffs exploratory
Saturday and Sunday 10 & 11 August
Leader: Steven Morgan**

Previous Activities

Eungella Tracks 26th May

We were Dan, Helen, Carole, Paul, Frances, Fran. instead of doing the usual through walk from the top of at the Crediton Loop Road we started at the Chalet end and we walked to the Cascades and then to the Broken River Picnic area. We were thrilled that during the walk from the Cascades to the Picnic area we spotted a very big Platypus frolicking on the surface in a pond on the way. It had to be the biggest many of us had ever seen, a fantastic creature. I might add that this was not spotted at one of the normal viewing spots. We completely spoilt ourselves at Broken River and had Coffees etc at the Cafe, Paul had his usual ice cream. This is a luxury which is indeed rare during lunch spots on our walks but was appreciated by all. On the way back Frances let out a large yell as she had a close encounter with a snake. We all observed what a good job Queensland Parks did in cleaning up this track. Overall a lovely sunny day, very few leeches, a good stretch out (just over 20 kms!), a giant Platypus, snake and the walk was done in very good time due to the low numbers and fit walkers. To polish off the day we went to the Chalet for another round of coffee, but heck we deserved it. What a grand way to spend a day, hard to beat.

Dan

Mt Henry 1st & 2nd June



I am suffering the day after side effects..... When Steve rates a walk at a difficulty rating 7 there is no argument. Only 6 of us turned up for a great two days enjoying the pristine Rain forest, misty to create more atmosphere on top of Mt Henry and the creek system to the north. The birth place of the Mighty Burdekin river. The rocks and fallen trees true to climate were beautifully mossed and slippery to go with, so each step had to be carefully chosen and tested as we followed the water course being delighted by small canyons and waterfalls. We ran out of daylight to reach our planned camping destination but who cares. We eeked out a corner to fit our little tents near the flowing water and enjoyed a mild temperature night only to rise next morning like gorillas in the mist to a lovely day and more criss crossing rapids reaching our planned camp site shortly later. Such a lovely spot where a waterfall fed junction joined our creek. Then it was up and out using compass. Yes.. A map and compass- Not GPS for directions adding to the atmosphere of adventure. With Steves uncanny sense of direction we found our way over a saddle and into the birth place of Cattle creek catchment and followed the water course until we found the Dalrymple trail. 3rd crossing where Steve amused us by sitting in the middle of the creek with his stove on a flat rock boiling a cuppa... His comment "Why not. Water readily accessible." Then our attention

was drawn to Debs excitement of finding Gold. Don't tell any one.... We'll start a gold rush. She really had a rush of gold fever and a good look confirmed it was indeed the real thing. A two dollar coin in the middle of the creek... It truly was a camp of discovery since we also came across an empty backpack and wondered of its story ???? We weren't alone up there either. The army was there. The Leech Army. A complete vampire war party intent on spilling blood and yes they took and took. Wave after wave of assaults leaving us weak and anaemic. Well the weak was more likely two days of hard slog but we had high spirits and came out victorious explorers of the unknown and survivors of battle..... Thank you Steve and of course fellow pioneers Kerry, Kate, Debs and Telina for a great weekend.



Celestine.

Mt Henry 1st & 2nd June

After the helicopter extraction last year, I really did need a decent work to get my confidence up again. This sortie north of Mt Henry was to be it. With a smallish party of six (myself, Kerry, Kate, Debra, Celestine & Telina) we set off from the end of Dalrymple Road on cloudy conditions. You might think that early June would be a safe bet for avoiding the damp conditions in this area, but the rain has just held on steadily all year, and we were heading in on the back of 25 – 50mm of rain only days before. The leeches reminded us of this all week end.

We reached the first creek crossing on the Western Trail to further confirmation of the “good” year we have had for rain – the creek was flowing very well. From here, up the long ridge to the top, still following the taped trail. Our plan was to leave the taped trail at the top of this ridge somewhere around 670738 (AGD66 datum used throughout) and follow a ridge line to the top of Mt Henry. The ascent of Mt Henry by this ridge is a very gentle climb, but we discovered we were still following tapes. Parties unknown to myself have well taped this route to the top of Mt Henry. Anyone who has been on Mt Henry will realise that despite its lofty height, it is a bit of a disappointment compared to its brothers William, David and Dalrymple. It is heavily treed at the top and there is no view to be had.

The persistent low cloud was starting to break now. We grabbed a bit of lunch on top of Mt Henry and started to feel very cold, so didn't hang around. The plan was to head north west from here, and I am happy to report that we proceeded according to plan. We soon found ourselves in the watercourse at about 673753 and started descending the creek. Ferns and mosses proliferated in this area and were flourishing. Like any typical rainforest gully, the progress was slow. Not that we had a slow group mind you. Every time I looked over my shoulder, they were all there, right behind me.



There was good water in our gully right from the start, and it built up momentum as we went. The usual little cascades and small waterholes, and then at around 670758 a delightful treasure of a waterfall with a drop of about 10 – 15 metres. The waterholes and waterfalls transitioned into broken boulders and the like, and there was little prospect of campsites at the sides of this creek. Not far of dark, we found a half decent area and scratched out a camp. This was in the area of 674764. Study the map and you will realise that we had walked the grand distance of just over 1km from the top of Mt Henry. That gives you some idea of how slow progress can be in these rain forest creeks.

The night was gentle to us on all accounts. It could easily have been much colder, and there was no rain to speak off. In the morning, we continued down the creek to the junction at 674766. This was

quite easy to identify, and we headed up the tributary to the east from this junction. Again, the rain forest was very enjoyable. I was hoping to find the saddle which separates the top end of Cattle Creek from Urannah Creek. We eventually did find a watershed ridge which was running north south, but this was the watershed between the creek we had been in and the systems to the east. I was expecting more flat country in this area than we found. I dropped over this watershed to find a creek running north. This was not what we wanted, so I returned to the group on the ridge line and we headed along the ridge to the south for a while before veering off to the left (east) and dropping into the creek which was now heading south. We were now definitely in Cattle Creek although we had missed finding the saddle at the top that separates Cattle Creek from Urannah Creek. Oh well. Another day.

We now followed Cattle Creek down to meet the Western Trail at the third creek crossing. I am not sure about the others, but I found this section of creek quite tedious. There are several sections along here where the creek is a wide flat tree fern forest and there is no prospect of following the creek as such and a route around the edge of these tree fern bogs has to be taken. We reached the Western Trail for a late lunch, and then the routine march out to the cars from there to make the cars for a comfortable finish around 4:00pm.

In the end the walk was a good work out. Although we were not pushing along at a break neck pace, we were able to cover some quite rough country in reasonable time because of the consistent pace that the whole group was able to maintain.

This was a particularly satisfying foray for myself, pushing into areas that I have not been in before. The walk also opens up future possibilities. The obvious walk that comes to my mind now is a three day walk, following the route up to Mt Henry, but then continuing north from Mt Henry on the ridge to about 684765, then down the creek to the junction at 674766. There are campsites in this area, and this would be a comfortable day's walk. From this base, do a day walk push further down the creek. The creek is already well established at this point, so there would be every chance of good creek features such as water holes and water falls. And best to go when it is a bit drier and less leeches.

Steve

Bong Bong Creek 9th June



Thanks Peter for a great day!

Crediton Scrub

16th June

We were Dan, Deb, Dale, Marco and Carole. This was Deb Carters first walk and Deb handled it very well. I have to say how pleased I was with the work Queensland Parks had done in tidying up this part of the Highlands Great walk compared to the walk last year. A magnificent day with very few leeches. Plenty of water in the Creek near the start, so a wide range of tactics used crossing a log to get to the other side. Number of logs to go over and under but overall a relatively clear track. On the way back we came across a couple of hikers who were doing the Great Walk. They had mentioned they had seen a large black snake but it was well out of our view. A good day, good pace, good company and we awarded ourselves with a Coffee at the Chalet on the way home.

Dan

Helicopter Ride

16th June

Although this was not a club activity, it is of interest to club members.

Helicopter joy rides are on offer at the Finch Hatton show each year. Mother (Coral Morgan) schemed and arranged for a booking for an extended half hour joy ride with Victor, Frances, Kerry and myself. In beautiful fine weather, we headed off from the temporary heli pad at the back of the show grounds towards Lost Rock, then across for a viewing of the waterfall on Yarravale Creek that has become known as Migaloo. I am not sure what the association is, but Migaloo is the name of a whale – look it up on the net.



From there back to the Diamond Cliffs massif and a very close look at Clark's Pinnacle. It was worth the ride just for this view of Clark's Pinnacle. We then went around Sydney Heads, back along the ridge to the eastern end of Diamond Cliffs, and then to the west looking at Diamond Cliffs from the north side. Whilst the Diamond Cliffs are south facing, there is plenty of action on the north side as well, we sections of smaller broken cliffs, and a valley that mother believes is the "valley of the caves" that she visited once several decades ago.

From here we looped around the western end and did a lap back looking at Diamond Cliffs from the south this time, ending in the inspirational finale of the large cliff at the eastern end of the south face of Diamond Cliffs.

So much to see, so little time! We had booked a half hour flight and I am sure we went well overtime. The view from the helicopter is breathtaking. However, while you have an excellent perspective, you really don't have much time to take in detail. You don't get to soak it up like you do when you travel through this country at walking pace.

The flight has fuelled imagination for a number of walks. And when your body is past walking, if you are cashed up (really cashed up), this is a pretty neat way to see some of your favourite wilderness places. I am up for another ride next year.

Steve

Mt St John Sunday 23rd June

As it is report writing season for our many members who are employed in education, I decided to select an appropriate format for this write-up.

Criterion 1 - The leader is able to select a mix of old and new hands, and manages to collect all participants from their various meeting places.

Rating - Well done, Frances. The group contained about four people who had made the trip many times before, as well as some enthusiastic new blood, and you even managed to include a couple of walkers who have been missing from our outings for some time. Furthermore, Kate was duly collected at Gargett, and the Crediton Hall campers appeared at exactly the right time.

Criterion 2 - The leader is able to order the appropriate weather for the walk.

Rating - Excellent. Although of course the winter morning was bracing and we were well rugged up at the car park, the day was sunny and the mountains were crisply outlined during the drive towards Eungella. The sky was cloudless and that marvellous cerulean blue. We soon warmed up as we made our way through the open forest and eventually up the 200 metres of steep slope to access the mountain, but cooled down again as soon as we stopped work for lunch. There was a bit of a breeze to assist with the cooling down process. As a bonus, we saw the huge full moon rising on the trip back to town at the end of a fairly long day's walking.

Criterion 3 - The leader is able to create a few obstacles to keep participants on their toes.

Rating – Sound. On the way it was necessary to climb under a fence and to cross Heazlewood Creek, and these obstacles were expected and handled well, but an unplanned hurdle was the tree across the dirt road about a kilometre from the cattle yards where we were to commence our walk. This led to a new transport arrangement with one car being left behind and passengers being shared between the two four wheel drive vehicles.

Criterion 4 - The leader must ensure that everything taken in comes back out.

Rating - Poor. Mention needs to be made of the fact that the lug of Frank's broken safety glasses could have been left behind in the bush, and that the rechargeable battery out of Dan's GPS which found its way down a crevasse between two large rocks could have been left there if it hadn't been spotted by a couple of people and then retrieved by Frank with the aid of a stick. However, the leader herself set a bad example by almost leaving her gloves behind at the lunch spot, and then actually leaving some of her clothes in the boot of Roger's car.

Criterion 5 - The leader is able to encourage airborne wildlife and deter slithering species.

Rating - Excellent. There were no sightings of snakes at any time. However, Frances was able to call down two King Parrots at our morning tea spot, and from their perch in a nearby gumtree, they watched as lots of frustrated photographers tried to capture the full glory of the colours of the subjects. In addition to this, an eagle obliged by circling around our lunch spot many times, and gliding quite close to us. Once again, all the cameras appeared. There had been talk on the way up of the time we saw two eagles on a Mt St John walk, so reliving the experience was a great bonus. Lots of butterflies were observed in the early stages of the walk.

Criterion 6 - The leader has a knowledge of areas rich in sights, sounds and scents of the bush, offering a range of landform types and walking environments, and offering spectacular views.

Rating - Excellent. The day provided easy walking along an old road, steep ascents and descents, long grass, open forest offering minty and lemony perfumes, climbing over rocks, a view encompassing many of our destinations from Mt William to Lost Rock and lots in between, and for the botanists there were grass trees, callistomen, orchids (not yet flowering), prickly pear, lantana, vines, herbs, and of course many beautiful gums.

Thanks, Frances for another great day enjoyed by everyone.

Carole

✓ *Full marks for being creative Carole, Editor*