



# The Message Stick

## September 2015

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

Web: <http://www.mackay.bwq.org.au>

Email: [mackaybushwalkers@dodo.com.au](mailto:mackaybushwalkers@dodo.com.au)

### Future Events

The Springs – Mt Britton .....	5 <sup>th</sup> September
Mt Britton .....	6 <sup>th</sup> September
Movie Night.....	8 <sup>th</sup> September
Mt Martin .....	13 <sup>th</sup> September
General Meeting.....	16 <sup>th</sup> September
Yarrowonga Point.....	20 <sup>th</sup> September
Mt Catherine.....	27 <sup>th</sup> September
Brandy Creek Backpack .....	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> October



Coral and Maureen in a cave sharing pikelets on "The Spikelets" walk!

**Maureen we all wish you a speedy recovery and we look forward to seeing you back in the bush with us as soon as possible.**

### Club Officers

President	Carole Weekes	49546108
Vice President	Garry Hendicott	49440236
Secretary	Kerry Morgan	49540037
Treasurer	Michelle Dartnell	0428552603
Safety Officer	Vacant	-
Equipment Officer	Garry Hendicott	49440236

Contact Officer	Coral Morgan	49578474
Walks Coordinator	Coral Morgan	49578474
Assist Walks Coordinator	Kevin Smith	49696068
Newsletter Editor	Jenny Wooding	49440236
Publicity Officer	June Bradley	49557696

### *From the Editor*

As I am sure you all know, Maureen slipped and broke both sides of her right ankle on the recent Spikelets walk. On behalf of everyone I would like to extend our very best wishes to Maureen. We will miss her giving us cheek on walks but look forward to her being able to join us again when she is up and about.

Garry and I have been to visit Maureen and she is looking very healthy and happy. She is staying with her son and family and is being very well looked after. It is amazing how quickly she can move around with the aid of a walking frame. Maureen is being a very good patient and not doing anything she shouldn't be with her leg. She loves visitors from the club calling in to see her or taking her out for a drive. I am not going to publish her family's phone no. or address but if you would like to visit Maureen contact me and I will pass on the info.

Coral is organising a movie night to see Bill Bryson's "A Walk in the Woods." It will be on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September. I'm not sure of the time yet but I will email that out when we know.

Whales are in the area so hopefully we will see some this week at the Beak.

Have a great month everyone.

Our Publicity Officer is June Bradley

[azippa22@gmail.com](mailto:azippa22@gmail.com)

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

Items for the next newsletter should be sent to

[jennywooding@dodo.com.au](mailto:jennywooding@dodo.com.au)

prior to 24<sup>th</sup> September

### *Ticks*

A reminder to all to beware of and on the lookout for ticks – they are a bushwalking hazard.

The program "Catalyst" on the ABC earlier in the year recommended the use of a product called "Wart Off" as a safe and efficient way of removing them. This product freezes the tick and causes it to drop off. The program suggested that using products such as Rid and other repellents is not a good idea. They irritate the ticks, causing them to inject more of their poison before eventually dying.

Wart Off can be purchased easily in chemists so you may want to consider keeping some for dealing with ticks.

### *Key to Walks Grading System*

#### Distance

S = short – under 5km  
M = medium – 5-10km  
L = long – over 10km

#### Terrain

1-3 = Graded or open terrain, no scrub  
4-7 = Bush, minor scrub, rainforest,  
Rocks, creeks, rockhopping, scrambling  
8-10 = Bush as above + thick scrub, major rock  
Scrambling using hands, technical

#### Terrain

1-3 = Easy, suitable for beginners  
4-7 = Medium, reasonable fitness required  
8-10 = Hard, strenuous, fit walkers only

# 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**

## **The Springs at Homevale Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September**

**Leader:** Lyall Ford  
**Town Coordinator:** Coral 49578474  
**Depart:** 9am  
**Journey:** 240km \$24  
**Grade:** S53

We will meet Lyall at the Mt Britton township and walk a couple of kilometres along a hilly track to the source of the water supply by lunchtime. From there the walk will be exploratory as we intend to follow back downstream, possibly through some thick vegetation. Participants could camp for the night at Lyall's place or at the township and then do the Sunday walk.

Book by Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September with Coral

## **Mt Britton Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September**

**Leader:** Coral Morgan 49578474  
**Town Coordinator:** To be decided  
**Depart:** 6am  
**Journey:** 240kms \$24  
**Grade:** S74

**Map Ref:** 636254 Mirani  
The short section of back road from the Mt Adder Rd will require 4WD vehicles but we can ferry passengers if necessary

We will commence with a short walk up to the Natural Arch, which in itself is one of the most awesome features of this area. All walkers should be able to handle the pace. The terrain will be quite uneven and there could be spear grass to start with. The route will be up along a dry rainforest gully to a point where we can scale the mountain with relative ease, gaining approx. 300mts in height. The amazing Homevale vista can be enjoyed from here. Extending the walk to the next 2 peaks will be optional. Carry water for the full day. Book by Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September. Note early departure of 6am.

## **Mt. Martin Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September**

**Leader:** Peter Bennett 0427 383 732  
**Departure:** 7.00 am  
**Journey:** 90 km \$9.00  
**Map Ref:** FS897685  
**Grade:** M87

**Estimated walking time:** 6 hours **Total of all uphill sections:** 460m **Pace:** average **Terrain:** Uneven terrain **Vegetation:** scrub and lantana **Expect:** much steep slopes loose rocks  
This walk has not been done since last century. We will walk up the southern ridge and onto the main ridge (the highest point). The view from this point will possibly be not much, but you will be able to cross it off your bucket list. As I have not done this walk recently I cannot give you much information, so we will call it an exploratory walk. Bring enough food and water for the day and clean spare clothes. This walk is not suitable for beginners.

## **Induction 6.45pm/ General Meeting 7.30pm Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September**

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

## **Yarrowonga Point Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

**Leader:** Penny McMahon 49514287, penny\_mackay@msn.com  
**Depart:** 7am  
**Journey:** 200km \$20  
**Grade:** M32  
**Map Ref:** Carmila  
**Estimated Walking Time:** 4 hours. **Pace:** Average. **Terrain:** Mostly beach, some rocky

areas. **Expect:** Long beach walk, some rocky areas, rock pools to explore depending on tide, fabulous views.

From the Bruce Highway south at Ilbilbie, we will turn off towards the coast to Yarrowonga Point. From the headland at Yarrowonga Point we will walk along the beach (1.2k) to the headland at Notch Point. There are some rocky areas to explore at the headlands (turtles have been seen in the rock pools) and depending on the weather and tide the beach is suitable for a swim. Fabulous views south to West Hill Island and north to Cape Palmerston. This walk is suitable for beginners, but you must bring plenty of water for the whole day. Remember to slip, slop and slap!

**Note:** 4X4 drive vehicles will be needed for the last section of road, so numbers may be limited according to the number of vehicles available.

### **Mt Catherine Sunday 27 September**

**Leader:** Deb Wilson 0400 319078

**Depart:** 06:30 am

**Journey:** 140km \$14.00

**Grade:** M55

**Map Ref:** Calen 745920

**Total Ascent:** 450m

**Estimated Walking Time** 6 hours

Mt Catherine is a 485m high peak close to Mt Beatrice just north of Calen.

The walk commences from Deb's property and then immediately into the National Park along a ridgeline. The climb is relatively gradual with a number of smaller peaks along the way with some steeper sections. There are beautiful views provided from some vantage points including over the valley to the south with Deb's property in the foreground. There are great views of the jagged peak of Mt Beatrice and the vegetation is forest with cycads, elk horn ferns, tall grass

trees, orchids and some moonlighter. Bring water for the whole day. Note the slightly earlier start time.

### **Brandy Creek Backpack Camp Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October to Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October**

**Leader:** Jenny Wooding 4944 0236  
0447091532

**Depart:** 1pm

**Journey:** 300km \$30.00

**Camp Fees:** \$11.90 per person

**Map Ref:** Proserpine

**Grade:** L37

#### **Day 1**

**Estimated walking time:** 2 -3 hours (8.3km)  
to Repulse Creek

#### **Day 2**

**Estimated walking time:** 5 - 6 hours (11.5km)  
Repulse Creek to Bloodwood Camp

#### **Day 3**

**Estimated walking time:** 3.5 - 4.5 hours  
(8.5kms plus additional side track) Bloodwood  
Camp to Airlie Beach

This is a good introductory backpack hike with plenty of variety along the way. First day is fairly flat and easy walking, 2nd day gets steeper and is longer and the 3rd is quite hard with a steep up before a long descent into Airlie Beach.

There is plenty of water available on the way and toilet facilities at each camp site. All your needs for the camp (food/ tent/sleeping bag etc) have to be carried in and out.

**It is essential to notify the leader by  
Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September if you intend to  
come on this camp as camping permits  
need to be purchased.**

The walk has a later start on Saturday as 3 of us have a 90km charity bike ride in the morning. The first day is easy walking and we will be easily at the campsite and have time to set up before dark.

## *Previous Activities*

### **The Roch Arch Cape Hillsborough Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> August**

A big thank you goes to Penny for leading this interesting and enjoyable walk and to the drivers. It was a great day!



We started off along a national parks track, before heading down a small gully and over some foreshore rocks. We then crawled through a cave.

After smoko we walked over some more rocks, stopped to watch the turtles and we observed the people high above at turtle look out. We then walked over even more rocks! A rest break was taken in a wave eroded cathedral (sitting on rocks) before walking over even more rocks so that we could traverse under some rocks to arrive at an idyllic grass hill for lunch.

Luckily there were rocks for seats and shade! The way back was similar. It is interesting how many different types of rocks that there are: - Sharp rocks with lots of holes eroded away, smooth ones rounded over time, little caves of crystals, fissures filled with Quartz, sandstone, conglomerate, rocks like rusty steel, white, red, brown and blue.

We observed a lot of interesting sights including a scrub turkey raking leaf litter for his mound, turtles coming up for a breath, a white breasted sea eagle and we even saw Bronwyn Bishop returning from a jaunt on Hamilton Island. At smoko a sunbird serenaded us and we tried to identify a distant bird in a tree. We enjoyed climbing over the rock falls which are considered recent in geological terms.



This was only my second walk and it is such a pleasure to be enjoying the bush and nature with such a friendly, fun, knowledgeable, observant, diverse and witty group, that eat ice blocks.

Linda

**Mt. St. John  
Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> August**



Our aim was to set off early in order to pass the starting point of the bike riders' event opposite the Eungella chalet. After travelling all the way up the mountain in a very dense fog, we arrived only to find that the road had been closed for the start of the event and so we pulled in to the chalet to watch. Off they charged in thick fog and shortly thereafter the road was opened and we proceeded very cautiously on our way through still more fog and past the riders. Eventually we made it to the western side out of the fog and free of bike riders to the prospect of a beautiful day and a walk that promised spectacular 360 degree views.

Frances had last done this walk three years ago and three of the ten walkers were new to the walk. We had every confidence in the old hands' knowledge and experience plus Brian's trusty GPS with its contour map as we set off across the paddocks, negotiated the Hazlewood creek water hazard, travelled along and over the barbed wire fence, to a spot which Frances declared marked the beginning of the ridge to eventually start our ascent. It was notable because of the saplings which grew out of the fallen tree trunk.



As we climbed higher, the views of hills and mountains became more impressive and since we had made such an early start, we stopped for a morning tea break before beginning the final scrambling ascent up to the top (well, what Linda and I thought was the top), only to discover that this was just the beginning of the ridge which would lead to the three peaks - the real top of Mt.St.John. At peak number one, we were impressed with views towards Hazlewood Gorge, and on the other side to Crediton and beyond.

As we made our way towards peak number two, the discussion revolved around different landmarks that could be seen from on high and Coral declared that we would be able to see the Marling Spikes, while Paul ventured to argue with her. We marvelled at the variety of plants – with maiden hair fern, elkhorns and orchids hidden amongst rocks which also harboured prickly pear and xanthorrea. We were on the lookout for wedge-tailed eagles and king parrots, but none were to be seen. However, expansive views on both sides of the ridge gave us plenty to marvel at. Finally, at about 1.00 p.m., we reached peak three and Coral declared that she would have to eat her words, since no Marling Spikes were to be seen – just the western end of Diamond Cliffs which obscured the Spikes. As we retraced our steps after lunch we paused to note various landmarks – ‘Lost Rock’, Fort Cooper, Hazlewood Gorge, Eungella Dam and the view across Crediton Plateau including Mts.William, Henry,David and Dalrymple to name but a few. With some bottom sliding and a couple of somersaults thrown in, we descended the ridge and made our way safely back to the cars. Thanks to Frances for leading this walk - a great day in a beautiful part of the world.



Fran Limmagine.

### **Blue Water Trail Sunday 9th August 2015**



This last minute addition to the club calendar was designed to meet some of the social, physical, cultural and coffee-drinking needs of people who were not candidates for the Maud Creek Falls backpacking event, and a response from eleven members was pleasing. The weather was ideal, and the eight o'clock start was another incentive. Although it was a bit fresh when we set off from the Regional Botanical Gardens, it was not long before we were delayering, and a brisk pace was maintained along the bank of the river to Canelands, where we were joined by Penny, and this became the first coffee break for the majority.

The walk continued along the path and into River Street, where the timeline mural painted on a low wall was appreciated before we continued along the Sandfly Creek section. Bird calls were identified when a group of bee eaters appeared, and in fact this stretch and the Cathy Freeman section along the river both proved to be productive bird-watching areas. Newcomers Anna and Noel had left one of their vehicles at Iluka Park, but decided they were up for a bit more walking anyway. Lyn left us at this point, and Penny was next to head for home after first having lunch with us in Queen's Park, where most of the group enjoyed an inspection of the Orchid House. The bee theme was revived when Paul insisted on sitting near the entrance to a beehive on a monument in the park. After a photo call, the remains of the group set off to try out the Cross City section of the trail, rather than return to the cars via our usual route through Quota Park and Bridge Road.

We were entertained on this section of our journey by Maureen and Paul, who argued vehemently about the direction of the airport from our current location. I'm not sure who won. By this stage our bodies were telling us that we had covered a healthy distance, and in fact by the time we arrived back at the Gardens, we had put 21 kms behind us. Our vice-president and our newsletter editor arrived on their bikes as we were about to try out the Gardens cafe, but Coral was unable to join us as she had another function to attend. Others who made up the group were Fran L, Kathy and Cheryl, and the consensus seemed to be that it was a pleasant day.

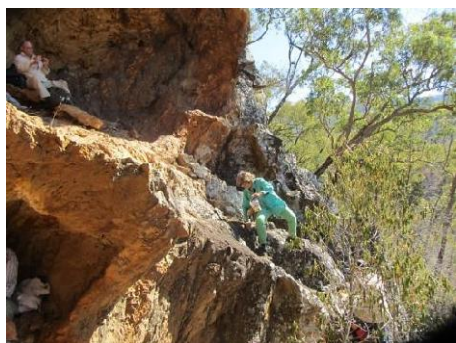
Carole

### **The Spikelets Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August**

A day full of pleasant surprises finished off with a dose of drama is an excellent way to describe this little adventure for the 18 participants involved.

Paul was heard to remark on several occasions, "This is the best walk ever".

We began with a 20 minute stroll along a 4WD track from Mt Britton before heading off cross country and up a ridge to the first Spikelet. Soon we were all sitting in the High Cave (yes, all 18 of us fitted in there) taking photos before heading around to the opposite side of this Spikelet to see the Hidden Arch then execute a Hang Ten on Wave Rock.



Morning tea was enjoyed here and Coral impressed us all by producing a bucket full of pikelets complete with jam and fresh cream for everyone to enjoy. Pikelets at the Spikelets has a nice ring to it.

New walker Robyn told us she had been scouring the internet and Google Earth but couldn't find "The Spikelets". Garry was forced to admit that he had just made the whole thing up.

With full bellies we headed down and across a small creek and some small lantana before climbing out and up a long ridge to the second Spikelet, which we had dubbed Panorama Peak. This ridge was steep in places but Garry went ahead with the speedier walkers while I brought up the rear at a more leisurely pace. There were several places along this ridge where we could see the "Alien Head" watching over us, although those of us more visually impaired swore blind that it was Ned Kelly.



At Panorama Peak everyone took turns sitting on the top and soaking up the expansive views. Some also explored several caves around the base before heading off to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Spikelet.

Access to the third Spikelet (alias Lost World) is easily and quickly done following the contour around a gully arriving at the base of this largest of the three spikelets for lunch.

After eating, most of us set out for the exploratory component around this Spikelet to see if we could circumnavigate it, find an entrance to "Lost World" or at least get a closer look at the Alien Head.

Hugging our way clockwise around the base of the steep sided Spikelet a number of likely looking crevices to the top were explored but abandoned half way because Garry is a yellow bellied chicken.

Just before giving up and turning around as time was getting away from us, Kate found an easy way up, and after some discussion we all ended up at the top.

Below us was "Lost World" in all its glory, but no easy way down to it. Strangely enough the "Alien Head" was nowhere to be seen but it should have been right here. Garry assured us that the reason we couldn't see it was because we were standing right on top of it.

Progress was much quicker on the return trip due to the fact it was mostly downhill. Many of us tripped and stumbled in the long grass with its hidden obstacles at one time or another.

The final ascent up the last ridge to the first Spikelet saddle took its toll on some of us so an extended afternoon tea/rest break was in order.

The final leg was to be a piece of cake, all downhill and back by about 3.45pm Garry was promising us. Almost immediately Maureen tripped and fell. When she didn't immediately bounce back to her feet shaking off offers of help we realised that she was seriously hurt.

On inspection, Maureen's ankle was swelling rapidly – not good! The ankle was quickly strapped but there was no way she could put any weight on it. "It's broken" said Maureen. There was nothing we could do but leave her there for the Dingoes to chew on.



"No!". said Garry, "Not on my walk. Think of the paperwork, someone will have to carry her the rest of the way". Seeing how it was Garry's idea it was unanimous that he should be the one to do it.

There was about 800 metres of bush with a steep downhill section to traverse to get to a 4WD access track. A real team effort ensued as other walkers formed a tight circle around Garry as he descended with Maureen perched on his back. Their instructions were explicit, catch Maureen at all costs if Garry stumbles. Apparently

Garry is expendable now that we can see the track, let him go down.

Maureen as always remained a trooper and an inspiration, despite obviously being in considerable pain she stayed in good spirits throughout joking about what lengths she had to go to get such attention.

I set off ahead with Ian to get his car which he then drove back to where the others would eventually meet the track with Maureen.

Once comfortably placed on the front seat ready to be taken to hospital, Maureen was still full of cheek. "This is all Coral's fault for talking me into joining the bushwalkers 40 years ago". She was heard to say.

Apparently she also said she enjoyed her "horsey ride". It was a sad end to what had been a great day's walk.

Jenny

### Footnote

Garry and I have been to visit Maureen and she is looking very well despite her broken ankle. We took her out for a drive and ended up seeing whales from the Lambert's lookout which was a real treat for us all.

Maureen seems convinced that Garry had to carry her for hours and for about 20kms!

