



# The Message Stick

## March 2014

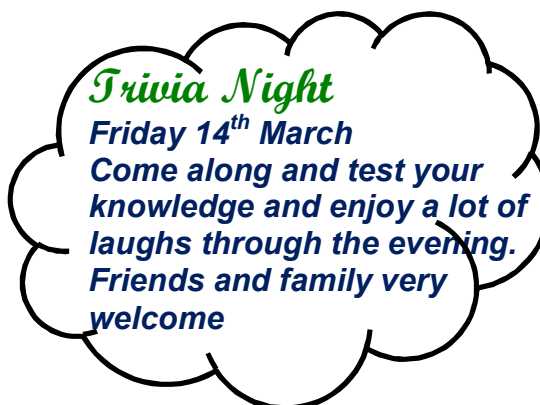
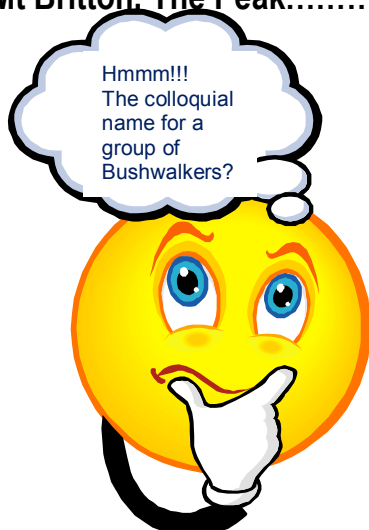
Mackay Bushwalkers' Club Inc. PO Box 1313, Mackay, 4740

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

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

### Future Events

Wheel of Fire .....	2 <sup>nd</sup> March
Mt Blackwood Exploratory .....	9 <sup>th</sup> March
Trivia Night.....	14 <sup>th</sup> March
Middle Creek .....	16 <sup>th</sup> March
General Meeting .....	19 <sup>th</sup> March
Radio Operation Training.....	19 <sup>th</sup> March
Caving Weekend .....	22 <sup>nd</sup> & 23 <sup>rd</sup> March
Eimeo Creek to Reliance Creek .....	23 <sup>rd</sup> March
Mt Tanya.....	30 <sup>th</sup> March
Massey Gorge.....	Easter
Mt Britton, The Peak.....	26 <sup>th</sup> & 27 <sup>th</sup> April



### Club Officers

President	Kathy Cant	49590762	Contact Officer	Coral Morgan	49578474
Vice President	Garry Hendicott	49440236	Walks Coordinator	Frances Eiteneuer	49576028
Secretary	Kerry Morgan	49540037	Assist Walks Coordinator	Coral Morgan	49578474
Treasurer	Dan McKinlay	49534249	Newsletter Editor	Jenny Wooding	49440236
Safety Officer	Kevin Smith	49696068	Publicity Officer	Kevin Smith	49696068
Equipment Officer	Garry Hendicott	49440236			

### *From the Editor*

What a busy month we have coming up and one with plenty of variety on offer.

Dr Louise Ashton and team from Griffith University will be back here between March 14<sup>th</sup> and April 14<sup>th</sup> to continue with the Biodiversity project. This is a great project to be involved with and I think everyone who has volunteered their time so far have found it to be very rewarding. I will keep you updated with information as it comes to hand. Don't forget to put the date of the Trivia night in your diaries. The more the merrier on the night so I hope to see you there.

Enjoy the month.

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Our Publicity Officer is Kevin Smith

[kevnjans@bigpond.net.au](mailto:kevnjans@bigpond.net.au)

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

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**Items for the next newsletter should be sent to**

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

**prior to 26<sup>th</sup> March**

### *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**

#### **Wheel of Fire Falls, Finch Hatton Gorge.**

**Sunday 2nd March**

**Leader:** Daphne Goodson 0417706240,  
49549338

**Depart:** 7.00am

**Journey:** 140km \$14.00

**Grade:** M56

**Terrain:** Mostly formed tracks, but includes a creek crossing. Track may be slippery, and

have exposed tree roots and rocks. **Walking**

**Time** 2 – 3 hours **Distance** 5 km approx.

From the Finch Hatton Gorge picnic area, a moderate circuit with uphill sections takes us through lush rainforest and between granite boulders to the lookout above Araluen Cascades, where we can stop for a swim and smoko.

We will then back track to the turn off from Araluen Cascades track for a moderate walk to a large rock pool at the base of the Wheel of Fire falls. This track has uphill sections with more than 300 steps, and Callistemon Crossing may have slippery rocks requiring care.

**What to expect:** Lush rainforest, magnificent cascades and waterfalls, probably leeches and mosquitoes.

This should be a relatively easy walk and a relaxing day, with time to swim and loiter. Suitable for beginners.

### **Mt Blackwood Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March**

**Leader:** Kathy Cant 495907621 0423046187

**Depart:** 7am

**Journey:** 60km \$6

**Grade:** S44

**Estimated Walking** 2-3 hours, **Total uphill** 200m, **Terrain** uneven, maybe some scrambling, **Vegetation** dry rainforest, expect cool understory and hopefully orchids and ginger.

We will start on the bitumen then leave the road to investigate a small creek and continue up the mountain to enjoy a different view of Mt Blackwood before looping back to the road.

### **Trivia Night 14<sup>th</sup> March**

**Contact:** Jenny Wooding 49440236  
0447091532

The Club is holding a Trivia Night on Friday March 14<sup>th</sup> at the Boomerang Hotel, Nebo Rd.

This is a great opportunity for members to get together socially. Dan is the organiser and Jenny will be the Master of Ceremonies. The Trivia night will commence at 7.15 pm, but for anyone wishing to have a meal first, please arrive at 6pm. Family and friends are very welcome to come along and join in the fun.

These Trivia nights always provide lots of fun and laughter. There is no cost for the evening apart from purchase of meals and drinks which are very reasonably priced at The Boomerang.

I will email out a menu in the next few weeks and if people wishing to have a meal, let me know their choices, I can let them know in

advance and it will avoid hold ups and delays on the night.

Hope to see you there!

### **Middle Creek Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March**

**Leader:** Garry Hendicott 49440236

**Depart:** 7:00am

**Journey:** 125kms \$12.50

**Map Ref:** Mirani 8655, UTM 55K

E670663 N7657018 GDA94

**Grade:** M65

**Estimated walking time:** 6-7 hours Total of all **uphill sections:** 150 m **Pace:** average  
**Terrain:** 8kms of 4WD track, rocky creek banks and bed, 500m bush bash **Expect:** Track walking, wet boots in creek bed, some long grass and scratchy vegetation during short bush bash.

Middle Creek is a picturesque little creek running into Teemburra Dam. Access will be through private property necessitating a short (1.5km) drive on dirt road. We will walk the rest of the 4WD track to access Middle Creek at what is known as "The Causeway" where the creek enters the dam. From there we will walk as far upstream in the creek as we feel like on the day. Be prepared to get your boots wet. There are some very nice swimming holes and scenery along the way. There may be wet rocks and a little rock hopping but nothing too difficult. When we have gone as far as we like, then we will climb out of the creek and bush bash for about 500 metres (that will be the mandatory "exploratory" component) to pick up the Lonely Valley 4WD track and return via it to The Causeway. If we make really good time and manage to cover 3.8km or so of the creek we might find ourselves at Lonely Valley itself. Be prepared for an average but perhaps long day walking, there is a fair amount of distance to cover to and from the creek on bush track.

### **Induction 6.45pm/ General Meeting 7.30pm Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March**

Downstairs room, Mackay Family Care and Community Support Association Centre 60

Wellington Street, Mackay. Newcomers and visitors welcome. Induction by Kevin and Clive

### **Radio operation training Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March**

Prior to the next meeting, Wednesday 19 March 7:30 to 7:45 I will be holding a training session on the operation (including legal requirements) of the club UHF CB radios. This training will be suitable for all radio users, but particularly all walks leaders. No need to book in, just attend the normal club meeting room on the night for prompt 7:30 start.

### **Caving week end Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> & Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March**

**Leader:** Steven Morgan  
(4954 0037, 0418 882 817)  
**Depart:** by arrangement Friday evening  
**Journey:** 600km \$60.00  
**Accommodation Fee:** depends on numbers but allow \$30 per person per night – expect much less though.

This activity has been rescheduled due to the trip planned for the beginning of February being cancelled due to cyclonic weather.

There are a good quantity of limestone caves in the area of imaginatively named township of The Caves, about 30km north of Rockhampton. We will drive down Friday night and stay at Capricorn Caves Resort. Camping facilities are available but our preferred accommodation option is to stay at one of the cabins which sleeps up to 11 people and share costs. The resort has a swimming pool and café on site.

Saturday will be spent exploring caves in the area. Caving will be tailored to the group and may involve crawling, climbing, squeezing and even the possibility of abseiling.

On Sunday morning, we will do further caving for those who have the energy, and will head for home shortly after lunch on Sunday.

All cavers will require the following equipment: long clothes (overalls are the best), sturdy shoes, head torch that can be fitted to a helmet and gloves.

Cave environments can host elevated levels of histoplasmosis spores. Intending cavers should

familiarise themselves with the risks associated with this, particularly anyone with immune systems at low levels. An excellent article can be found at <http://wasg.iinet.net.au/histo.html>.

The Bat Cleft tour planned for the earlier trip is only available seasonally and is not available at this time of year.

Bookings are by **email only**. Include your phone number in the email. [steven.morgan61@gmail.com](mailto:steven.morgan61@gmail.com). Bookings close Wednesday 19 March.

### **Eimeo Creek to Reliance Creek Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March**

**Leader:** Carole Weekes 49546108  
**Depart:** 7am  
**Journey:** \$2.50 if applicable  
**Grade:** L23

**Estimated walking time:** 5 hrs **Total of all uphill sections:** 20 metres **Pace:** average  
**Vegetation:** very little – mangroves, melaleuca forest, grassy tracks **Expect:** sand, some rocks, insects, and either rain or sunshine, so come prepared for both.

This is being offered as an easy outing for those who are not going caving, but we will be doing the return trip as well on foot, so over the day we will be covering about 14 kms. We will probably meet at the Bucasia Boat Ramp leading into Eimeo Creek, near the Bucasia Caravan Park. However, details will be finalised when members phone to book for the walk.

The aim will be to relax for a while at Shoal Pt and proceed to Reliance Creek.

### **Mt Tanya Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March**

**Leader:** Dan McKinlay, assisted by Coral Morgan-Phone Dan 49534249 or Mob 0409057494

**Depart:** 7am. **Journey:** 140km \$14.00

**Map Ref:** New Mirani 058 377

**Grade:** S74

**Estimated walking time:** 5 hours **Total of all uphill sections:** 220m **Pace:** medium

**Terrain:** very uneven **Vegetation:** (on flat) possibly overgrown with weeds and long grass, (on slopes) grass, grasstrees, lantana, scrub and vines (on top) rocks. **Expect:** steep

scrambles and panoramic views to Mackay and beyond. We will drive over Eton Range and turn off to "Hogan's Pocket", site of new Mackay City Dump. This is located at the headwaters of Black Waterhole Creek. A short but stiff and rough climb will bring us to the rim of the range, where an elongated rocky outcrop is located. This feature, dubbed Mt Tanya, is easily visible from Mackay, as one drives South along Paradise St.

Early morning is best, as the sun catches the rocks on the skyline. Be self-sufficient with lunch and drinking water for the full day.

**Massey Gorge Camp**  
**Friday – Sunday 18 – 20 April 2014**

**Leader:** Steven Morgan  
(4954 0037, 0418 882 817)

We will set off from the end of Chelmans Road and head to the higher reaches of Massey

Gorge, then follow the gorge downstream and exit by the climb up the ridge beside Beta Creek. Both nights will be spent camping on Massey Creek and there will be good water supply throughout this camp. This camp is on the "medium" end of the difficulty scale, but will involve some rock hopping. Massey Gorge is right up there as one of the bushwalking jewels of the Mackay region.

Full details next newsletter.

Bookings for this camp are by **email only**. Include your phone number in the email. [steven.morgan61@gmail.com](mailto:steven.morgan61@gmail.com).

## *Previous Activities*

### **Eungella Tracks.** **19<sup>th</sup> January, 2014**

The first walk of the season, a long 16km, saw ten walkers brave the track: Dan (our leader for the day), Maureen, Coral, Julie, Daphne, Clive, Edie, Dale, Brian and myself. It



was a great day with fine weather and not overly hot. The swimming holes were a bit low and a bit slimy but I still decided to cool off at our lunch spot at the "bridge". Happily, some people got to see a platypus, unhappily some saw two snakes and I think everyone got to see the tree goanna. The ground was fairly dry so there were only a few leeches around. The fungi, as usual, was spectacular. Thanks to Dan for organizing a great walk.



Therese



**Walk on the Wait-a-Wild side.  
January 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>**

We wave, wonderful, generous, car-shuffler, Pam goodbye, from the start of the Western Trail. A smell of adventure hauls us up the mountain, as we scorn the hungry blood suckers. All have out-done each other with light weight packing.

We lunch on top of Mt Dalrymple, overlooking the rolling canopy. A line of saturated green drops steeply, then wiggles along the lowest crease, away into haze, - St Helen's creek! We descend into it at the first cleft to the north. Soon we hear a gurgle, see a trickle, chirpy young rapids jump over mossy rocks, small poos under ferns, gurgle, burble, glitter and splash, tumbling down towards my water tap. - First falls, crashing, tall ferns, small ferns. Moss and lichen cover steep slopes. Giant root fingers clasp the mountain. Fleshy blue violets sprout from sheer shiny stone, palm fronds crash from the sky. - no leeches here - why?

In a torrent Steven spots two torrent frogs, Kerry finds an unusual fern. Ouch! a rock squashes Eric's finger! --- it is blue ..... nurse Alyth with bandaid and pill saves us from the helicopter...

-Onwards! The ground tilts, and tips all the way - we cling..

Vic scouts for foot holds under and over a massive, vertically lying log, SCARRY-!

TA DAAA! A magic rope coils out of Steven's pack - for us, - he climbs with skill only!

Waterholes turn into swimming pools, some with sandy banks. Then, a slope easing, level spots here and there, - two have hammocks. Time to camp, dip into clean water, BLISS! Dinner on a rock with water view, a cosy sleeping bag waiting ... zzzleeeeeep!

Rain sets a quick stop to breakfast - Wet, we huddle under Alyh's tarp to asses options.... The forecast is 90% chance of 5-20 mls of rain - the odds don't seem too bad...

Carefully, We rock-hop off, under the stony stare of a magnificent water dragon. Stunted "Ents" bear the battle scars of many floods. The creek bends sharply, rolls on and splashes into a big pool, hallo junction! The other branch. A flash of green feathers beats the air right in front of our eyes - Yah- hoo - Whomm-poo!



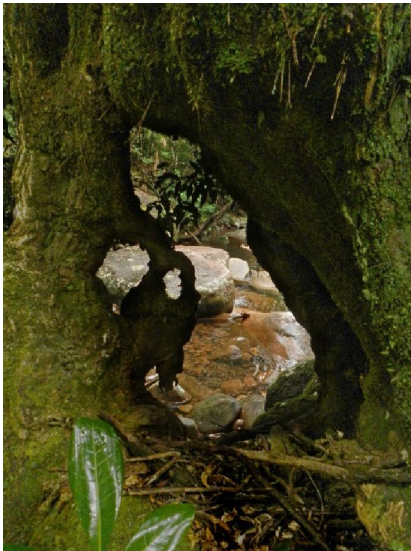
Rain gets heavier, the water wilder. When we dare to take our eyes off the ground, the sights are tremendous! -Progress is slow on a bare stone face. Rocks turn to blocks, boulders into walls. The water has carved a race trench, it takes a crashing leap. Awestruck, we follow on ledges above. The creek thrashes into a sheer walled gorge, - too slippery to look over the edge. Ahead, through streaming rain, we see, the gorge plunge, still in its straight canal.

We scramble for an overhang above, all fit behind the curtain of rain and Wait-a-while, mmmmm foood!

I dissolve in rest, others study maps.... Steven finds a promising route, -People ponder options and contour lines.... we decide to leave the slippery creek bed and return via the main ridge to the south.

Serious Snipping gets us through the spiky tangle behind the cave,- to cut a long story short... Wait -, no, you ought to get the picture... Wait-a-while, Lawyer Vine, Hairy Mary, Qld has about 5 varieties, we are probably dealing mainly Calamus moti, a clumping palm climbing with barbed tentacles up trees over and around mountains and people! Hooking everything together, tall trees stick out, but small ones are bent under the chaos - a regular Caneland Christmas! (ha) -

Just as the light fades, among the heaving spiky tangle, - a clear flat place! Tents pop up, fast as rain drops. before the next squall I dive in. Praise the wondrous plastic! Sleeping bag and spare clothes are dry. I luxuriate into an early night... sparing a thought for the man with out a sleeping bag-... which doesn't help him much...



For breakfast my last orange shines at me like a fragrant sun... The only sun far and wide... So, into the disgusting wet and smelly clothes and stride on! Steven with Pam's snipers in the lead, right behind Vic with the stick, slamming, the rest walking and talking... -about eating Wait-a-while and weaving it. Traversing more gullies and crests, we gain hight. Wait-a-while gets smaller, here it only grows to an elevation of about 800 m. By lunch, we are on the main ridge and can move now at a reasonable pace, still gradually climbing to the peak, west of my home. On top grow large gums but the forest is open, a howling gale blasts in, bringing a new load of rain and night-. (Cyclone on the way.). From here it ought to be a clear taped trail home.... tapes are missing, and we lose them all together. -No problem, with navigators like my companions! By torchlight we walk and slither down the steep slope with care, -we are quite tired. After 13 hours walking, we

emerge, very glad, out of the bush just up from the house, at 9pm.

So the 3rd attempt of the St Helen's creek walk came to a rainy end.

- To be reattempted....and thanks heaps to a great mob of mates for viral, invincible attitude!

Kate

### **Cancelled Walks**

Dalrymple Creek was out of the question, due to rainy conditions and a high volume of water, so six foolhardy souls assembled at Cape Hillsborough. We started with the Boardwalk. Unfortunately Therese tangled with a vine, resulting in a nasty tumble and a split lip. And then there were five. The rest of us enjoyed a good track walk to Andrews Point with only light showers. We had an early lunch and a storm broke so we abandoned further places.

Particularly at this time of the year, every walk on our programme is a gamble with the weather. Kerry's Killarney Creek walk suffered a similar fate. On the day we tackled a walk up the back of the Leap from Track Rd. Once up the top we crossed to the east passing several lookouts then came back to the Mackay side where we investigated down the slope towards a cave, visible from the highway before returning via the normal route and ending up at the Pub.

Coral

### **Black's Creek Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb**

The weather did not look very promising when three cars set off from town, to be joined by Brian, Deb, Therese and Kathy further up the line. As we drew closer to our starting point, the dirt road section looked ominous and there was some concern about getting back out if the promised showers did eventuate. However, the optimism of the sixteen participants paid off, and although a couple did unpack their raincoats around lunchtime, no one actually went as far as putting them on, as a few drops were all that came down.

It was good to see Fran L and Therese back after injuries, and to have Elaine, Rone, Daphne and Clive back walking with us again. Karim from Morocco (not South Africa, Maureen) was our only new member.

Black's Creek is always beautiful, and this year the grass was lush, the water level was high and although the colour was brownish there was a strong flow. Add to this the lush forest reaching down to the banks, the clean sand and rounded pebbles, and the variety of trees, vines, fungi and bush sounds and scents, and you can understand why we all felt at peace in our surroundings.

The morning's stroll took us along sand, over rocks, cattle pads and through scrub until we reached our favourite tree where taking photos and spanning the trunk are always part of the ritual. Before morning tea there was a special display staged by a colony of arboreal marsupials (definitely not koalas, Maureen), and then the serious business began – negotiating slippery slopes, lantana and prickly branches. Some chose the high road and some chose the low road, and not all of us remained upright at all times.

Lunch was enjoyed under the shade of a large tree, and about half of the group were tempted into the water. Cheryl, Kathy and Therese decided to cross the creek onto the sandy island and made the return journey very quickly without the obstacles the rest of us faced. Going under and over logs and through barbed wire fences always seems more difficult on the walk back to the cars when we are less energetic. A very well camouflaged carpet snake was spotted coiled up in a rocky depression, and our tree-climbing friends were spotted once again, so out came the cameras.

Thanks to Frances once again for sharing with us what was once her back yard, and I know everyone had a relaxing time in the tranquil surroundings, with a bit of sun and blue sky breaking through the cloud cover. Some of the water babies had a final dip back at the cars before returning home to the reality of the working week.

Carole

### **Kevin and Jan New Zealand trip.**

Jan and I went to New Zealand's North Island on a 2 week holiday. We did several day walks including Tongariro Crossing, Mt Tongariro summit, Karangahake Gorge, Waipu and Abbey Caves, Waipoua Forest, Mt Maunganui, White Island and Mt Taranaki.

Jan returned home to Cyclone Dylan and I stayed on for 2 more weeks of tramping. I completed the Tongariro Northern Circuit (4 days) and Round Mt Ruapehu (7 leisurely days). Unfortunately I had two aborted summit attempts on Mt Ngaurahoe due to nasty weather but on my last day I climbed up in cloud to the summit of Mt Ruapehu. By good fortune, the clouds cleared for a 20 minute spectacular view of the summit and crater lake. What a fantastic climax for a wonderful trip.

