



The Message Stick

March 2025

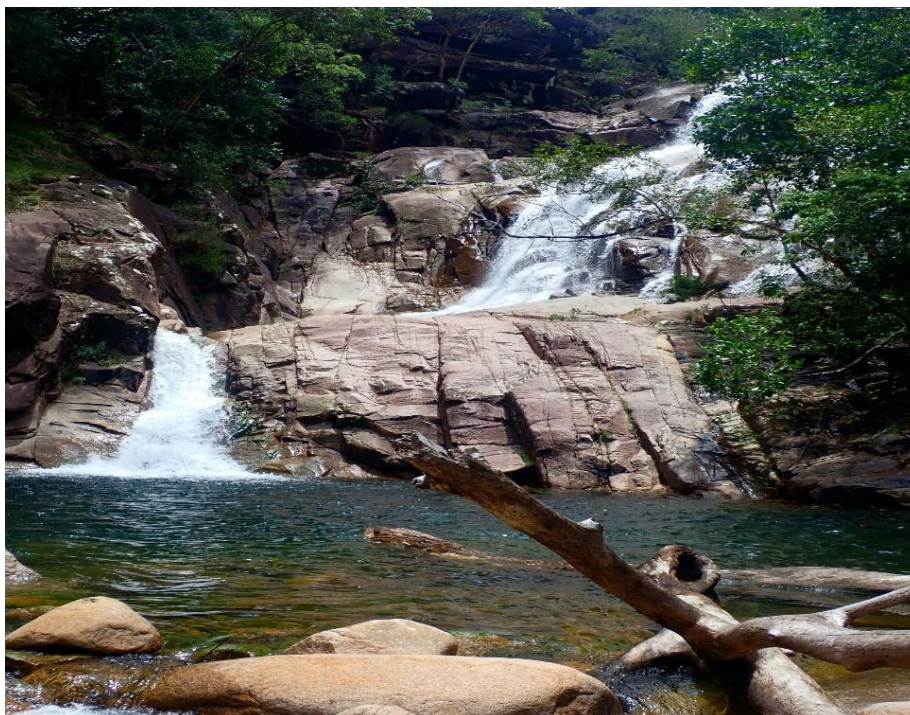
Mackay Bushwalkers' Club Inc. PO Box 1313, Mackay, 4740

Web: <https://mackaybwcq.org.au/>

Email: mackaybushwalkingclub@gmail.com

Future Events

Cape Hillsborough.....	2 nd March
Left Hand Branch.....	9 th March
Seaforth Evening walk.....	15 th March
General Meeting.....	19 th March
Blacks Creek.....	23 rd March
TBA.....	30 th March



Left Hand Branch

Club Officers

President	Peter Bennett	0427 383 732	Digital Officer	Bethany Morgan	0415 761 058
Vice President	Carole Weekes	0455 872 207	Newsletter Editor	Telina Lambert	0434 392 558
Secretary	Philip Morgan	0431 130 074	Walks Coordinator	Coral Morgan	0407 164 856
Treasurer	Mari Simmonds	0429 190 168	Equipment Officers	Frances Eiteneuer	0447 866 188
Membership Secretary	Mari Simmonds	0429 190 168		Penny McMahon	0421 071 294
Social Media Manager	Wendy Bennett				

From the Editor

Weather is unpredictable so please be aware that walks may need to be cancelled at short notice if the leader deems it unsafe to go ahead. Any cancellations will be advertised on the Club's Facebook Group.

Also remember that the terrain can be treacherous and have a possibility of poisonous animals and plants so be prepared with a small personal **First Aid kit**. It doesn't have to be huge but should include a snake bandage.

Trip Leader Bag

All walk's leaders need to arrange for the trip leader bag to be returned to Frances or Penny ASAP after every walk please. Our equipment officers need to check the bag each week to ensure it contains all the necessary equipment and forms needed for the following Sunday's Walk.

Assembly point for walks (unless otherwise advised):
CAR PARK - CORNER of ALFRED AND NELSON STREETS
Car Park address is 295 Alfred Street
Please arrive 15 minutes before walk start time.

Please make sure that if you would like to lead a walk in the following month, please inform our walks coordinator Coral Morgan 0407 164 856 before the 18th of March

All items for the next newsletter including walk information for upcoming walks and previous walk write ups should be sent to mackaybushwalkingclub@gmail.com by 25th of 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
8-10 = Rocks, creeks, rockhopping, scrambling, thick scrub, major rock scrambling using hands, technical

Difficulty

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

A Blast From The Past

PIGEON CREEK – A BREAK DOWN – 24 MAY 1998

When the radio alarm sang for me at 6:00am on Sunday the 24th I was ready. After years of talking about I was finally joining the Mackay bushwalking group on an “easy 4 hour” (their words) walk along “Pigeon Creek, rocks” (sandy track, pebbles – my thoughts). The phone, at 6:30am, was my second alarm. My friend Rymer, another new recruit, was telling me to bring lunch (no bread in the house!) and that 4-hour walk would finish at dusk (!!!).

Never mind. We meet the rest of the friendly group outside the library as arranged, were organised into a van and left for our adventure. Sitting in the back of a windowless van I quickly lost my bearings but Coral seemed to know where she was going and Maureen reassured Rymer and me that this creek would be a dawdle and excellent for starters. She, herself, could get to the “falls” (our destination) in 90 minutes. We arrived at Norm’s place and joined the others, all happy and enthusiastic. The early winter sky shone brilliant blue, cool sunlight brightened the green of the grass and trees, black and white cows formed their own group to discuss the strangers who had suddenly invaded their peace and we walkers joyfully stepped in cow pats too numerous to avoid. As we introduced ourselves, we saw that there were 5 newcomers this Sunday. This included me, who had walked part of the Inca Trail and therefore thought myself capable of anything (HA!), Ryma, an avowed bushie, Peter and Wendy, who had done Hinchinbrook and Manuela, a German tourist who was even newer to Australian bushwalking than I was. And off we went.

We arrived at the creek and the third alarm bells sounded. The sandy bed I’d envisioned was under 8 inches of water and the rocks were far closer to boulders than pebbles. As I slide down the first rock and sat spraddled in the creek it came to me that I’d worn the wrong shoes. Too late now. The first 30 minutes of slipping, dripping and downright falling dampened my clothes but not my spirit. When Manuela-with-the-bad-ankle decided to turn back, the rest of the group looked at me expectantly but I stoutly stated “I’m going to do it.” I guess I had not heard alarm #4.

After two hours of new comers tripping on vines, brushing into Moonlighters, getting tangled in Wait-a-whiles and, of course, slip-sliding down rocks, the group divided and one half hurried forward to reach the “falls” we’d come to see.

Another two hours and we stragglers were struggling still, though I suspect the other could have made it on their own and only courtesy kept them from pointing accusing fingers at my blood-flecked body. Rymer, Wendy and I finally opted to stop for our lunch break while our helpers went on. We sat on boulders in the middle of the stream, eating our sandwiches and looking around. Wendy’s knees were swelling from rock kisses, Rymer sported a Moonlighter rash and I as I sat back hard against a rock, I realized where my most serious injury was. Although we hadn’t made it to the “falls”, resting in the midst of this clear, cold woodland stream, surrounded by the towering gums and palms of a Queensland rain forest while serenaded with the special gift of the bird song seemed reward enough for the struggle. After lunch the others rejoined us and the homeward journey began. A few more fairly serious falls, one resulting in a twisted knee and a possibly broken coccyx, and I realized that my legs had given up completely. Slowly, over the next two hours, I was led by the hand of David, who made the trip down backwards. (Thank you!) The quicker group went on ahead, Ray’s white hat a marker through the dappled sunlight and the shadows of trees. Occasionally they rested till we caught up, resuming the hike when we arrived and thereby, somehow, depriving the slow coaches of breaks. I’m still trying to figure that one out. At long last the 4-hour, easy walk finished and we were back at the cars for chocolates and soft drink. What an amazing, exhilarating day! What a great bunch of people to be wounded with! What a welcome relief home was, with hot bath, ice packs and red wine! P.S. Monday morning it took me 15 minutes to struggle out of bed onto very uncooperative legs. It is just possible I won’t be joining Mackay bushwalkers again but – good walking and thanks.



Brook
McReynolds

Future Events

All trip leaders please ensure you collect the club gear bag before undertaking your walk and return it as soon as possible afterwards.

Please contact the leader to nominate for all walks before 12.00pm the day before the walk unless otherwise stated.

Cape Hillsborough Sunday 2nd March

Leader: Peter Bennett 0427 282 732
Depart: 8:00am from Mackay
Journey: 120km = \$12
Grade: S33
Estimated walking time: 3 hours
Total of all uphill sections: 140m
Pace: slow
Terrain: some beach, some graded tracks, some uneven terrain
Vegetation: open forest and rain forest

Expect: I am going to do an exploratory at Cape Hillsborough. I want to start at the top of Paradise Creek and walk down stream. I have not done this walk before.

Ring me to nominate for this walk no later than 12.00pm Saturday for more information.

Left Hand Branch Sunday 9th March

Leader: Kate Brunner 0467 976 955
Or Facebook Messenger
Depart: 7am from Mackay (someone will have to volunteer to lead from Mackay)
8am at Finch Hatton Gorge
Journey: 120km = \$12
Grade: M87
Estimated walking time: 5 – 6 Hours
Total of all uphill sections: N/A
Pace: Average
Terrain: Some Track, Thick Rain Forest, Rock Hopping
Vegetation: Rain Forest and Scrub

Expect: We follow the general walking track almost to wheel of fire. From there we scramble steep up the left slope up the left slope. Along this route we find some tapes that at some height veer off to the left above Finch Hatton creek. The idea is to follow these tapes

on, past The Junction turn off. I Believe they take us above the waterfalls into a creek section known as The Left Branch or Waterfalls Creek or Sparkle Falls. We have accessed this area often over a steep ridge. The creek up there is lovely with lots of gushing water and fun swimming possibilities. We follow this creek till we had enough and probably return via the same route. Expect steep slopes, large boulders, lots of sweating and cooling water. With swimming breaks and some exploring this would be a full day walk but we will consider all wishes and look out for the weakest.

Seaforth Evening Walk Saturday 15th February

Leader: Deb Wilson 0400 319 078
Depart: 3pm from Mackay
Journey: 50km = \$5
Grade: M32
Estimated walking time: 3 – 4 hours
Total of all uphill sections: n/a
Pace: Average
Terrain: Sandy Beach
Vegetation: n/a

Expect: coastal views, there will be a full moon rising for those who stay longer. Could be mosquitos and sandflies. On arrival, meeting place will be in front of the water park
There are barbecue facilities.
Bring water, byo bbq, insect repellent, torch.
Should be fun if it doesn't rain
Note: different start time and this walk is on a Saturday.

**Induction 6.30pm &
General Meeting 7.30pm
Wednesday 19th March**

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

**Blacks Creek
Sunday 23rd March**

Leader: Deb Wilson 0400 319 078

Depart: 7am from Mackay

Journey: 130km = \$13

Grade: M55

Estimated walking time: 5 – 6 hours

Total of all uphill sections: 10m

Pace: Slow - Average

Terrain: uneven rock, soft sand creek bed

Vegetation: some open forest, scratchy vines,
lantana.

Expect: walking along a creek bank, through
scrub, some minor scrambling, could be some
water to cross through, limited shade while
walking.

On reaching lunch destination there are shady
trees and a good swimming hole.

For this walk there is the opportunity to break
into, two walking groups.

A slower group who can walk at their own pace
if there is enough interest.

Previous Activities

Salonica Beach Camp

14/02/2025 – 15/02/2025



7 Bushwalkers participated in this overnight camp. After all the recent rain we were delighted that Friday was fine & dry. With the low afternoon tide it



was easy to cross Breens Creek, so we headed south along 2 long beaches & several rocky stretches to our camp site at the southern end of Salonika Beach. We checked out the beach hut on the way, it has obviously sustained some damage due to the recent bad weather.



After setting up our tents high on the beach due to the tides, we had some time to explore the rocks & sit and chat on the beach before dinner. Afterwards we waited and watched as the almost full moon appeared over the horizon. Eventually we tired of mosquito swatting & headed for the tents. There was almost no breeze, so it was quite a humid night.

Fortunately, we were all up early, had had breakfast & were almost packed up when the heavens opened unexpectedly, and the rain deluged down. The rain put paid to any further exploring we might have done, so we headed back, easily crossing Breens Creek again, to the cars.



In spite of the rain on Saturday morning, we all enjoyed the

camp and company, and were able to count some Torresian Imperial Pigeons, still flying to/from Victor Island. Thanks Coral for organizing this camp.



Penny McMahon