



# The Message Stick

## February 2025

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

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

Email: [mackaybushwalkingclub@gmail.com](mailto:mackaybushwalkingclub@gmail.com)

### Future Events

Beginners Abseiling/ Cape Hillsborough .....	2 <sup>nd</sup> February
Mt Charlton Creek .....	9 <sup>th</sup> February
Salonica beach camp.....	14 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> February
The Leap.....	16 <sup>th</sup> February
General Meeting .....	19 <sup>th</sup> February
Rawsons Creek.....	23 <sup>rd</sup> February



### Cape Hillsborough

#### 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 26th of November

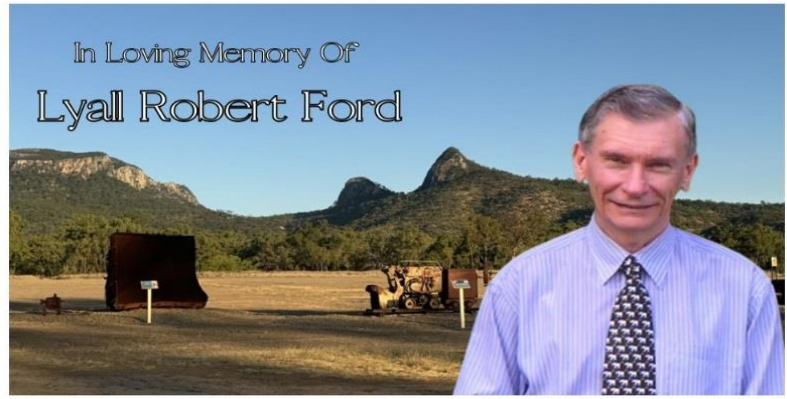
All items for the next newsletter including walk information for upcoming walks and previous walk write ups should be sent to [mackaybushwalkingclub@gmail.com](mailto:mackaybushwalkingclub@gmail.com) by 3rd of December.

## Key to Walks Grading System

Distance	Terrain	Difficulty
S = short – under 5km	1-3 = Graded or open terrain, no scrub	1-3 = Easy, suitable for beginners
M = medium – 5-10km	4-7 = Bush, minor scrub, rainforest	4-7 = Medium, reasonable fitness required
L = long – over 10km	8-10 = Rocks, creeks, rockhopping, scrambling, thick scrub, major rock scrambling using hands, technical	8-10 = Hard, strenuous, fit walkers only

## A TRIBUTE TO LYALL FORD

The recent passing of Lyall Ford, a member of our bushwalking club, will leave a gap that won't ever be filled. Although he was not a regular walker with us, he contributed so much more to our group with his generous hospitality, his close links to the Mt Britton area through his family history, his publications highlighting the mining history of the area, and his willingness to share his very detailed knowledge through guided tours, informative signs, and entertaining anecdotes. His miner's shack was the venue for numerous club and private camps over the years, and many of us share happy memories of our Mt Britton trips made so special by Lyall's involvement.



*Funeral Notice for the Late*

***Lyall Ford***

Friends & Family are respectfully advised of Lyall's passing.

Lyall Robert Ford

13 May, 1944 - 12 January, 2025

While the lifestyle was very much off the grid, campers could sleep in the air conditioned donga on sleeping bags, or pitch a tent, or use a vehicle equipped for camping, or just sleep on the floor of the hut. However, the amenities such as the hot shower, the kitchen facilities, the outside toilet, and the view of the Marling Spikes through the plate glass window were all available to be shared. After dark, a campfire would be lit in the yard, and Lyall's guitar playing skills would make a singalong very enjoyable. The atmosphere created will be sadly missed by all of us who experienced these gatherings, and the evening often concluded with a game of Boggle, at which Lyall was just about unbeatable.

Sometimes for variety the campfire would be built at the site of the old township, not far from the old fig tree, and Lyall's links to this have been traced back to his great grandfather, John Henry Mills, a pioneer photographer and gold miner. One of Lyall's publications, **BELOW THESE MOUNTAINS**, chronicles the historical background of the family and of the area, and emphasises the majestic features which have brought so much pleasure to our club and to others who enjoy bushwalking and camping. Many of our members have derived new knowledge from this book and others written by Lyall.

It was great that Lyall was able to attend our fiftieth anniversary celebration dinner in November last year, and I am hopeful that he understood how much his generosity, his knowledge and his hospitality contributed to the Mt Britton outings facilitated by him.

**LYALL FORD** - Thank you for the memories.

## 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.

### **Abseiling – Cape Hillsborough Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February**

**Leader:** Philip Morgan 0431 130 074  
**Depart:** 7:30am from Cape Hillsborough  
Northen Carpark (you'll see me in a Green  
Suzuki Swift or a White Nissan Patrol)  
**Journey:** N/A  
**Grade:** M62  
**Estimated walking time:** 2 Hours (to/from  
Abseiling spot)  
**Total of all uphill sections:** Depending on  
how many times you Abseil  
**Pace:** Average  
**Terrain:** uneven, bushwalking  
**Vegetation:** possible scrub

**Expect:** abseiling at Cape Hillsborough.  
Abseiling gear is provided, please allow space  
in your day bag to carry a harness and helmet.  
The trip duration will largely depends on  
numbers but I anticipate being back at the cars  
somewhere around 2-4pm. This trip is  
dependant on clear weather.

**(note the different meeting place and time)**

### **Mt Charlton Creek Sunday 09<sup>th</sup> February**

**Leader:** Peter Bennett 0427 383 732  
**Depart:** 7am from Mackay  
**Journey:** 140km = \$14  
**Grade:** M87  
**Estimated walking time:** 4 hours  
**Total of all uphill sections:** 120m  
**Pace:** Average  
**Terrain:** Very Uneven  
**Vegetation:** Rainforest

**Expect:** mostly rock hopping, scrambles, wait-  
a-while, swimming holes, difficult creek  
crossings.

This is an ever popular walk in the Mt Charlton  
area. This Creek runs all year and comes out  
from the rainforest areas of Eungella National

Park. The walk culminates in one of the best  
swimming holes in the district. The hole sits  
between two waterfalls. This walk consists of  
constant rock hopping all the way. Make sure  
you bring your swimmers.

Bring food for the day and spare clothes.

**Ring me to nominate no later than 12.00  
midday the Saturday before for this walk.**

### **Salonika beach camp Friday 14<sup>th</sup> - Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February**

**Leader:** Coral Morgan 0407 164 856  
**Depart:** 3pm Friday from town  
**Journey:** 90km = \$9  
**Grade:** S32  
**Estimated walking time:** 3 hours return  
**Total of all uphill sections:** N/A  
**Pace:** slow  
**Terrain:** Tidal creek crossing, sandy beach,  
rocky beach  
**Vegetation:** n/a

**Expect:** Penny and I plan to do this camp  
anyway as we enjoyed it so much before.

We camped on Salonika beach near the site  
where we count the pigeons (pips) flying to  
their colony on Victor Island, fast count there  
was well over 3000 of them. We hope to see  
some returning in the early morning.

If the weather is good we will watch the night  
sky for satellites, helicopters and UFO's, we  
don't know yet if the space station will be  
visible. Just thought we would put it out there  
and see if anyone would care to join us.

Its only about 2.5km along the beach. To camp  
you need to be self-sufficient and carry your  
own tent, sleeping gear, food, water and also  
insect repellent. Be prepared to walk through  
a water crossing of Breens Creek.

**Please ring if you have any queries.**

**It would be appreciated if you could advise  
us as soon as possible, preferably by  
Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February we will return  
home by mid-morning Saturday**

**Mt Mandurara – The Leap  
Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February**

**Leader:** Deb Wilson 0400 319 078  
**Depart:** 6am from Mackay  
**Journey:** 50km = \$5  
**Grade:** S54  
**Estimated walking time:** 4 – 5 hours  
**Total of all uphill sections:** 250m  
**Pace:** slow – steady  
**Terrain:** very uneven. Rocky creek bed section which could be slippery depending on the weather  
**Vegetation:** rainforest, nearing the top there are grass trees and long grass.

**Expect:** Expect it to be most likely hot and humid, some rock hopping, scrambles, some steep short climbs and descents, loose rocks, and reading some recent reports of the track possibly some downed trees to climb over. Mt Mandurara is situated in the Pioneer Peaks National Park  
This walk is suitable for slower walkers and reasonably fit beginners, there will be no need to hurry  
Walk will begin at edge of the national park after first walking along a bitumen road. We will then follow a rocky creek bed section, walk up along the foot of the cliffs, continuing on to the top. There will be stops along the way for water breaks and resting. Smoko will be had at the top. We should enjoy views of Mackay and the surrounding countryside.  
For parking of cars when arriving at destination, no parking on Westlake Drive, we will be turning right from Westlake Drive onto Herbert Court.

**Please NOTE the earlier starting time**

**Induction 6.30pm &  
General Meeting 7.30pm  
Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May**

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

**Rawsons Creek  
Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February**

**Leader:** Kate Brunner 0467 976 955  
**Depart:** 8am from Finch Hatton Gorge  
**Journey:** [if someone will lead from town cost of journey would be \$ 15 and departure 7am. Update on fb]  
**Grade:** M87  
**Estimated walking time:** n/a  
**Total of all uphill sections:** n/a  
**Pace:** n/a  
**Terrain:** Creek walk  
**Vegetation:** Rain forest, Expect rock hopping, Swimming holes.

**Expect:** We follow the general walking track to where it is close to Rawsons creek on the right. Then descend into the creek bed. We follow this creek till about lunchtime and return the same way It depends much on water levels how far we get. There is a wonderful swimming hole someway up but plenty of dipping opportunities all along also lovely ferns and moss and nice rocks. There are sections of large boulders at times we can avoid them by walking on the side but that is sometimes tangled in wait-awhile. I don't want to make this sound like a hard walk it has been a favourite club walk for as long as I can remember.



# Previous Activities

## Illawong to Bakers Creek

08/12/2024



Illawong to Bakers Creek. 7 ladies set off on quite a hot, sunny morning, first in the shade along the road, then via Shellgrit Creek Environmental Reserve track to the beach. The water in Shellgrit Creek was low, so it was very easy to cross. We then headed south along the first long sandy beach,

but sometimes ventured into the tree line for shade. We had an attempt at pushing over the dead leaning tree. Frances was stronger than all of us and kept it upright, but Carole didn't put enough muscle into the attempt. After morning tea, some decided to return, while others "bit the bullet" & continued on. First along the next beach section, then through the trees for shade, eventually reaching the creek mouth. Bakers creek has a very



wide entrance. The dead tree stumps have been there for years. On the return we collected as much debris as possible, Jeanette being our "pack horse" (pity I didn't get a photo). However we stopped occasionally to enjoy the peace & tranquility and the cool breeze. We were back at Illawong at lunch time. A hot, but enjoyable walk with good company.



**Penny McMahon**

## Botanic Gardens BBQ and Night Walk

14/12/2024



Botanic Gardens BBQ & Night Walk. Only 5 ladies took a chance on the weather to attend this outing. We enjoyed our meal and devoured the rainbow cake just before it pelted rain. However, the rain didn't last long, so off we went, invigorated by the thunder & lightening as we walked. Overall, we did not encounter much animal activity, so we entertained ourselves with our torches.

We did see possums and bandicoots, mostly they were too fast for our cameras. After the rain the atmosphere was very pleasant with very few "bities". Thanks, Coral for organizing this, we should do it again.

**Penny McMahon**



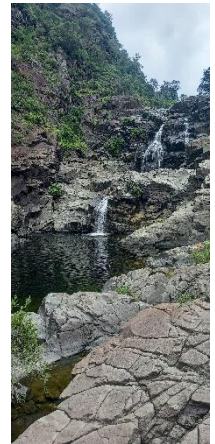
# Hazlewood Gorge

05/01/2025



On Sunday Peter and myself headed off to hazlewood gorge waterfall. Weather was nice and overcast with not much rain expected. We decided to walk overland and then drop into the creek. We'll we encountered so much lantana and dropped into the creek

furtherup than normal thinking it would thin out- but nope the creek was very bad as well for alot of it and quite slippery. Even when we got down it was very overgrown and only out on the rocks of the gorge was it nice. We were needing a rest I can tell you!! The waterfall was beautiful as ever, with a nice calm flow. Have seen it much bigger! We didn't spend much time there as it was going to be a mission getting out. I have to mention- I've never in my life seen so many march flies all day!!!! One stage we may have counted 30 on my gators! But we did see some centipedes, a huge golden orb and beautiful butterflies! Lots of

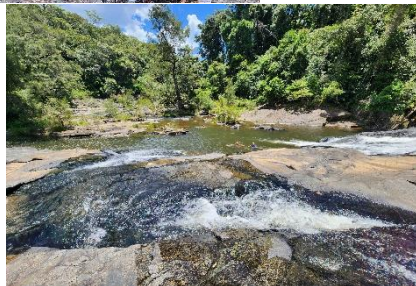


different birds were heard during our many rests, when we were out of the creek which was really nice. Last time on the ridges we had lovely banksias- this time it was not pretty. A big day out to start the year!! We were very happy to see the car!!

Di Rutland

# Eungella Tracks

19/01/2025





# The Junction

26/01/2025



Our Australia Day walk started off with lots of interesting chatter about how organised each of us were to the day ahead, the hot days etc. As we started we all agreed we can do lots of swimming to suit our days hike!

We'll straight in at the wheel of fire, just to cool down before the climb up!!

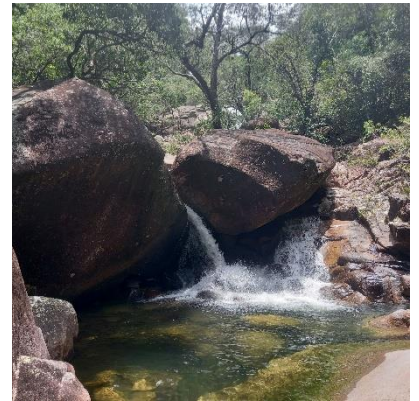


Lots of very chilled people at this stage before getting organised for the next leg up the hill!! Bush was a lovely



walk as you'd expect up there. Lots of chubby little lizards around!! Down we go to come out at the Junction of lovely flowing waterfalls. Food then swim. Soooo nice!!! Kate, Chris and myself swam in the lower pool( Deb watching) before going up to the higher one- great to have a choice hey!!! The others were swimming above. A little explore

to view on top of the higher waterfall was done by a few. Sooo relaxing, but all good things must come to an end! After walking out to the main track, we again decided to cool off at the wheel of fire - such a good decision! So our feet looked like prunes as well as looking like drowned rats for most of the day, but great fun, good company, thanks Pete for the walk!!



**Di Rutland**