

## Diary

### Working Party for the George Haddock Track

### 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June 2014

#### Summary

#### Hours Worked

<b>Survey team:</b>	<b>92 hours</b>
<b>Building Team:</b>	<b>172 hours</b>
<b>Track team:</b>	<b>116 hours</b>
	<b><u>380 hours</u></b>

The hours counted are only for the on-ground work on Fraser Island and don't include the countless additional hours put in by Su and Jennifer and others in the catering crew. Nor does this log of hours take into account the many preliminary hours put in by Su in stocking up with provisions for the whole team of 13 for a week nor in the hours of administration, acquiring and delivering the tractor nor the work put in by Harold Charles in preparation including acquiring all of the necessary items to complete the building work. It also doesn't include the travel time to and from the site. The summary is only the on-ground work done on the island.

#### Work Accomplished

**Survey:** The track route is now more clearly identified and by the end of July is expected to be tagged for all the ill-defined sections to make it easier for the for any cultural surveys and the track teams to follow.

**Building:** The first two working bees have most heavily focused on work on the buildings and bringing them into a good state of repair. The standard of work was most impressive. The barracks and the two sheds have been transformed. All are now secure and locked. The part of the barracks that will be used by hikers has been isolated from the rest of the building. There is still minor work to be done on the barracks. This is mainly cosmetic. This includes replacing sections of the ceiling and painting.

**Track work:** The smaller team assigned to the track have advanced the completed track some kilometres. They have also developed better techniques for the task. It is hoped to be able to complete all authorised clearing in October.

#### Day 1, Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June

The group began assembling and moving well before Daylight. Greg coming from the Gold Coast went into the Clem & tunnel in darkness and emerged in daylight. Robin who left Rockhampton at 2.30 was saw daylight first at Childers. Others around Brisbane were also moving well before daylight.

It was just 6.30 when six people in two vehicles pulled out of Camp Hill. The group grew to seven when Jennifer added to the numbers. At Rainbow Beach the numbers grew by another five and they group stopped for smoko including Jennifer's zuchinni loaf. It was only at a very bustling Rainbow Beach the realization that we were in the middle of a long (Queens Birthday) weekend dawned! Then with the vehicles fuelled up the group headed for the ferry and on to the island. The schedule was kept for the whole trip even despite two vehicles going on a sight-seeing tour of Eurong's Second Valley (definitely not Lost!)

Then while most people were eating lunch at Eurong, Harold who had come prepared repaired the broken hinge on the gate to FIDO's shed with Greg's assistance. Our lunch break though was marred with some quite heavy showers and that was a portent of what lay in store for us for the remainder of the day.



It was 1.30 when the group reach Kgari and exactly on schedule pulled into the Lake Allom barracks at 2.00 pm.

The vehicles were quickly evacuated of all food, gear and equipment while the sheds and barracks opened up and we settled into our home for an exciting week to follow. A quick inspection revealed how well the place had fared in almost three months since we were last here. There were no deposits left here by vermin, the windows were clean however the leaks in the roof we had noted on our departure were still evident.

We soon had tent up and tarps in place despite the light continuous rain. It was just well because as darkness fell the rain became much heavier and over 25 mm fell during the night.

### **Hours Worked**

<b>Survey team:</b>	<b>1 hour</b>
<b>Building Team:</b>	<b>3 hours</b>
<b>Track team:</b>	<b>3 hours</b>
	<b>7 hours</b>

## **Day 2 Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June**

The rain of the night continued throughout the day. There were several signs that it might be clearing only to leave us disappointed. In the end it was resolved that it would be impudent for the Survey Team to embark on a whole day walk to define a definite route through from Coomboo to Lake Allom which has been the most difficult part of the 52 kilometre project.

Having abandoned the survey work for the day they combined with the track team to set off for Lake Coomboo to see what might be done as far as jobs there. However here they were dogged when the regular and almost incessant drizzle was punctuated by periodic bursts of heavier rain that left all well drenched to the skin by lunch time. They set off to Lake Coomboo and appreciated the environs proposed for the site of a future hikers shelter. They were able to view the lake in one of the rare drizzle-free periods of the day and this inspired Fearless Leader to head off to Hidden Lake. Having brushed past a few overhanging branches we realized it may be worth pruning more systematically. Robin disembarked, grabbed his razor sharp double-sided brush hook and

swung into action. Woe betide any limb intruding into the track space. He sallied forth as a vanguard while the vehicle quietly idled along driven by Greg who remained sweat-free and dry all day. Eventually everyone j(except Greg) joined Robin and cleared the track as far as Hidden Lake. Here they cleared a turning bay and then went down to enjoy the ambience and natural beauty of this rarely visited lake. They had cleared 2 kilometres (5% Of the George Haddock Track that had been authorized) by 10.00 am.

The next step was to check out the work program for the track connecting Lake Coomboo to Lake Allom. We drove though to Mike's Folley and determined a work awaiting to be done there which added to the assignment of clearing through to Pine Hill.

It was still raining heavily as we headed back to the barracks for lunch and to get into some drier gear. With the many downpours continuing F.L decided to check out the state of Bowarrady section of track that was accessible and could be assessed from the Awinya Track. We discovered to our delight that the track between the road and Arch Cliffs had been freshly graded and we were able to follow this to the Hervey Bay end and to the mouth of Bowarrady Creek which it was agreed was a wonderful entry point to the George Haddock Track. With the 2.2 kilometres cleared to Hidden Lake plus the 4. Kilometres here mean we had accounted for 15% of the George Haddock Track approved to be completed in this Friends of Parks project.



The carpenters and handymen and one woman set about a series of tasks as directed by Harold. His options for assigning tasks though were

dictated by the weather. Although there is an urgency to work on the leaks in the roof this can't be done in the rain. They focussed mainly on doors. Most of the doors have now been hung including a new door installed to isolate the bedrooms and bathroom so that they won't be accessible to hikers. All doors have now been painted or at least undercoated. All door have keys locks including the security door with a new security front door.

Generator shed doors have been fixed. They needed realigning owing to expansion from the inclement weather. They were about a centimetre wider than when made and installed in March. They have now also been painted. The storage shed doors that had been unhinged were also realigned and repainted.

As much work could be done inside as the weather permitted was done. Harold said, *"If the weather fines up and the generator keeps going, all tasks should be completed by the end of the week."*

**Hours Worked**

<b>Survey team:</b>	<b>18 hours</b>
<b>Building Team</b>	<b>48 hours</b>
<b>Track team</b>	<b>24 hours</b>
	<b>90 hours</b>

**Day 3  
Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June**

The day at last dawned fine. A strong wind throughout the night had dried off the vegetation and spirits of everyone were lifted. The hammer and saw mob were soon at it while the survey mob were contemplating the belated start on the missing link between Lake Allom and Lake Coomboo.

Having parked one vehicle at the northern end of the track, the Track Team then delivered them down to the Lake Coomboo end of the undefined section of the proposed walking track. The Survey team then took off marking the route to the top of the hill following a former logging road. And then took to a cross country route to pick up another former logging road coming in from Block 14. Some of the walk was through open Blackbutt forest with lots of Barbed Wire vine (Smilax embedded in the dense forest litter on the floor. Then the route came to the Cathedral Forest that has never

been entered by loggers. Here there were huge ancient trees and the forest floor was almost bereft of any understorey. Each ancient tree had its base encircled by a very distinctive mound. The forest was well named.

Ascending the hill the undergrowth became thicker and more entangling. Then we located the former logging road. However the regrowth in the logging road was at times so thick that it was almost impossible to negotiate and we found it easier to walk beside the road. At the end of the road we stopped for lunch. Before continuing and losing any evidence of the former logging road. We searched in vain and were not even confident that we had located the main Block 14 through road.

At 2.20 pm J.L. decided that we didn't have enough time to continue with the survey and that we needed to get out before dark fell. After weighing up the options Fearless Leader determined that the best and shortest option was to abandon following roads and instead follow a compass course north to intersect a clearly defined logging track that led out to where the car was waiting. It was a very difficult compass bearing made more challenging because the whole area had been heavily logged and the ground was littered with fallen timber entwined with lots of vines that made the work harder to get through. They managed though to press on and in the fast fading light locate the marked track that led out of the forest to the car. They arrived back at the barracks just as the very concerned team waiting there was about to send out a search party as darkness fell.



In the meantime the Track Team that had been left where the Survey team took off set about clearing the track up the hill to the top of the ridge. There was heavy regrowth and it was the most challenging work. They toiled and sweated until 2.00 pm to advance only 600 metres up the hill. Exhausted they returned to the Barracks where they arrived just before the Rangers who were delivering Terri the Tractor, the iron and timber on a trailer. The Rangers lamented that they didn't have a chainsaw to clear a tree across the walking track around Lake Allom. Robin came to their rescue and politely did the job for them. In the process he learnt that the QPWS may have a small unused blade that could fit the Kubota lying around back at Rainbow Beach. This will be followed up.

Robin then was very keen to field test the tractor and the delver designed to clear the walking path and tried it out on the track to the walking tanks and immediately came up with some suggested modifications. .

In the meantime the workaholic Barracks team under Harold's direction worked like Trojans. They finished all of the doors to the barracks so that they fitted and swung well and all had locks.

They then took advantage of the fine weather to work over the roof sealing every nail and finding one hole. They were fairly confident that the roof will never leak again. Robin's chainsaw chipped in and removed two branches overhanging the roof. However in the environment every opportunity should be made to sweep the roof and clean the gutters.



In the meantime other members of Harold's team were busy at work painting and generally

following the scheme of things devised by Harold that are rapidly transforming the barracks into a home.

<b>Hours Worked</b>	
<b>Survey team</b>	<b>30 hours</b>
<b>Building Team</b>	<b>48 hours</b>
<b>Track team</b>	<b>24 hours</b>
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	<b>102 hours</b>

**Day 4  
Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> June**

Another sunny dry day dawned. It was announced though that all work was to finish by noon and after an early lunch we were destined to see Indian Head.

The Survey team was spared further exertions for the day although Joyce agreed to mark the track south of the Woralie Road as far as she could. She ended up travelling more than two kilometres using her GPS to plot the path. However the Fearless Leader and J.L. were busy sorting out the mapping data (J.L.) and clearing the shed.

Last night a decision had been made after seeing Terri the Tractor that it would be best housed in the larger shed and the equipment and camping gear should be stored in the former Generator shed with its concrete floor and where it should be drier. F.L. and J.L. were busy relocating the gear to the new shed. As this was happening the roof was being ripped off the tractor shed and replaced with the new roofing that the QPWS had delivered yesterday. Befittingly Doug did all of the elevated work and in no time the shed was reroofed. In the meantime the gang down below was left cutting all of the corners and iron as the excellent job required.

Meanwhile Robin took Terri and his chainsaw down to the track. The depleted Track team set to work and extended the track 700 metres into the forest and worked non-stop until the noon deadline before returning to barracks that we are now proposing should be called the Harold Charles Barracks because they are not very close to Lake Allom and Harold has put in a masterly effort leading the team transforming this abandoned building into becoming the effective the heart of the George Haddock Track project.

In the meantime more work was being done adjusting the shed doors while Ron and Su wielded their paint-brushes with skill and dexterity on the barracks' doors.

Promptly at noon everyone returned and after a satisfying lunch set off at 1.00 pm for Indian Head. There was a stop on route to view Knifeblade Sandblow. Surprisingly we were not the only ones to stop there. At last another 17 people followed us in to the Lookout suggesting that there is some interest in the geomorphic processes.

We paused again at Dundubara to discuss the access to Bowarrady and to learn of more clearing done for us on the George Haddock Track as far as Lake Bowarrady. That leaves mainly the section from the lake to the Awinya Road to be done in October when we have a key to that section.



We all revelled in seeing a whale from Indian Head before afternoon tea and a race against the rapidly rising tide to Cathedral Beach to augment our supplies of various fuels and wine. Our race after that was also against the fading light and we just made it to the barracks before darkness fully fell.

**Hours Worked**

<b>Survey team:</b>	<b>14 hours</b>
<b>Building Team:</b>	<b>27 hours</b>
<b>Track team:</b>	<b>15 hours</b>
	<b>56 hours</b>

**Day 5  
Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> June**

After an afternoon off and with a glorious day dawning everyone was keen to get back to work. The building team had a much quieter day with all of their main tasks completed. Ron and Su continued the painting of doors. The verandah rail was painted and the tractor shed was cleaned and made ready. Harold and Doug dug into the ceiling to assess its state of health. The state of the upper levels were not encouraging. The insulation was saturated with water. One beam didn't rest on anything; termites have been in the main beam and it is a little depressing. Harold though is not deterred and is preparing to replace the whole ceiling and fix the beams and rafters in the process next October. His confidence is based on his faith in the roof now being waterproof. He is already preparing the work program for October.

The Track Gang had a hard tough day. The further they moved away from the Woralie track the more overgrown it became and with more fallen logs to be cleared. It was a daunting task with some fallen logs so big that the track had to deviate around them. Whereas yesterday the Track team advanced 700 metres in five hours today after a full day of harder work the team estimates that it has only advanced another 500 metres for the day.



In the meantime the Survey Team headed south to check on the state of the route and the challenges awaiting the track builders in the section from Pine Hill to Lake Garawongera. First though they went to inspect the rain gauge at Lake Coomboo. However they are not confident that they successfully retrieved the

data. For the whole day Fearless Leader was handicapped by the fact that he couldn't find his glasses before leaving.

Turning south from the Moon Point Happy Valley Road to Garawongera they encountered an obstacle course. They stopped at a point not far above Yidney Scrub where the GHT crossed the road and estimated a relatively easy job to clear the track before proceeding

By the time they reached the last major obstacle only 50 metres from the well used Happy Valley to Bogimbah Road they had already snigged, chopped, rolled, sawn away about a dozen obstacles but the last one was immovable and required a detour. F.L proposed a 30 kilometre detour going around via Yidney Scrub but J.L and Joyce though argued in favour of a smaller detour that involved Tahka jumping over a few logs in a small obstacle course. The first hurdle was adeptly cleared but alas Tahka got stuck straddling the second slightly larger log and could neither be powered forwards or backwards. After a subdued lunch a plan evolved. By jacking and packing up the front wheels Tahka could retreat. The whole log was packed to make an easier less abrupt leap.



With the obstacle course completed Fearless Leader inspected the Telstra road to be used as part of the George Haddock Track and a section north of the road. We later learnt that this would become the M15 on the Great Walk. After a brief pause at Lake Garawongera they returned view Yidney scrub and determined that the M17 point may need to be slightly east of where originally intended. They when bounced their way back to camp arriving just after 5.05 pm.

It was a more subdued Happy Hour reflecting the tiredness of everyone as they are nearing the end of a strenuous week but all are feeling a sense of accomplishment. While we never count the hours contributed by Su and Jennifer with the catering that is done outside their work hours, a special mention should be made of their contribution especially when the meals are so good.

**Hours Worked**

<b>Survey team:</b>	<b>27 hours</b>
<b>Building Team:</b>	<b>36 Hours</b>
<b>Track team:</b>	<b>27 Hours</b>
	<b>90 hours</b>

**Day 6  
Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June**

The Fearless Leader had determined that today was to be a day of rewards with everyone going to enjoy the magic of Hervey Bay's western beach between Woralie and Wathumba. All teams were requested to be back for a 10.00 smoko and a picnic lunch on the beach before returning for a late burst of work.



With this in mind, an enlarged Track team set to work at 7.30 and worked tirelessly until 10.00 am. They thought they were making great progress with Robin wielding his chainsaw with gladiatorial skill as well as slashing with his trusty brush-hook and following up with the tractor. The remaining five were flat out clearing the debri he left behind off the track. . At the end of this impressive progress the team decided to measure their great progress and discovered with some dismay that fifteen person hours had only advanced the track 200 metres and that the progress to date was a mere

900 to 1000 metres from the Woralie track. Still the work is progressing and our techniques are getting better. Our break off point came with Robin running out of chainsaw oil.

Back at the barracks Harold was cleaning up the ceiling of the Number 2 Bedroom that had been damaged when the roof leaked. He then painted it and there is now little evidence of the damage that had once been there. Bob was finishing up the Tractor she which now is both weather proof and more presentable.

After smoko the whole team piled into a convoy and went to explore the Western beach from Coongul to Wathumba. This is the north-western terminus of the George Haddock Track. We didn't investigate too closely because a yacht was parked in the creek beside Fearless Leader's favourite campsite on the whole of Fraser Island and a bicycle had been unloaded to be used for some exploration. Lunch was had at Awinya where Su couldn't resist working on a nemesis of hers, Mossman River Grass, as well as serving us a splendid lunch.

To our surprise the day that started off so sunny and fine had changed into a gloomy day with intermittent showers. Luckily they skirted around us while we had lunch. Continuing north the group was absorbed by the remnants of the Syncarpia forest that had grown in that site more than 10,000 years ago when all of Hervey Bay was dry land until the sea levels rose. We were also most impressed by the cliffs of coloured sands on this side of the island,

We deviated on our return to camp to show the builders Lake Coomboo and some of the work that the Track Team had done down there in the vicinity of Mike's Folley where the Building team saw the evidence of the hard work undertaken by the track team.

It was almost dark when we arrived back in camp after a well-deserved break from heavy work. Few of the team had previously experienced the wild and beautiful Western Beach previously. It was a highlight,

**Hours Worked**

<b>Survey team:</b>	<b>2 hours</b>
<b>Building Team:</b>	<b>5 Hours</b>
<b>Track team:</b>	<b>18 Hours</b>
	<b>25 hours</b>

**Day 7  
Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June**

The first part of the day was spent packing and storing away equipment. Su and Jennifer were finishing off a big stocktake of the larder left behind while everyone else was busy for the two and a half hours of frenzied activity.

Robin went down to retrieve the tractor that was parked at the end of the track. On his way back there was an accident when the carry-all which was much frailer than we had imagined broke. As a result the tractor and the carryall came back separately and while the tractor was secured in the shed, the carryall was loaded on to a trailer to be taken to Brisbane for reconstruction. The delver was also returned to Brisbane for modifications to improve its efficiency.

While this was going on simultaneously tents were coming down and hung out to dry and all of the scrap building material, mainly old roofing iron was loaded into one of the trailers to be left at the Happy Valley dump.

We got away at 9.30 after this flurry of activity for an uneventful trip down the beach where the only notable feature was the line up of drunken portaloos standing at odd angles on the beach near Eli Creek.

After an early lunch at Happy Valley and farewells to Robin and more at Rainbow Beach, we reached Brisbane at 5.00 pm

**Hours Worked**

<b>Survey team:</b>	<b>0 hours</b>
<b>Building Team:</b>	<b>5 Hours</b>
<b>Track team:</b>	<b>5 Hours</b>
	<b>10 hours</b>

