



## **Circumnavigation of Macleay Island**

**Joint Paddle - QSKC and Claytons 17 January 2010**

**By**

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18 enthusiastic kayakers from QSKC embarked from Victoria Point whilst another 12 or so from the Claytons Group left from Point Halloran, the destination being Potts Point on Macleay Island for a morning tea rendezvous. The first pods from QSKC were about half way across when the lead group were joined by Shane (aka Karrazy) and friend who had paddled up from their home base of Karragarra Island to join us.

In the distance we could see a very colourful display of sails as the paddlers from the Claytons appeared around the top of Coochiemudlo Island. It was evident that they would reach Potts Point before us and we hoped they would have staked out the picnic area and warmed the seats before our arrival. When the first of us arrived the beach was seemingly alive with kayakers of all colours, sizes and makes, quite a sight to behold given that another pod of 8 was still to arrive.



Carol from the Claytons is quite well known for her culinary skills and never a paddle goes by where she doesn't produce a delicious homemade cake out of one of those Mirage hatches to share amongst the group. I know I am not in Carol's league but decided that I should at least try to lessen the 'cake envy' that would inevitably arise from the QSKC paddlers so I diligently set about baking a cake on Saturday, tragedy struck when I realised at the boat ramp that the said tasty morsel was still at home!! Carol and Kimberley were kind enough to share the remains of their cakes with Brian and I, thanks girls much appreciated. One will never go hungry on a kayak trip that is for sure; it is often as much about the morning tea and social interactions as about the paddling.

Soon enough it was time to depart for our next destination, lunch at Karragarra Island.



Only a handful of paddlers did a true circumnavigation of Macleay Island by paddling right down into Perulpa Bay to check out the local fleet and back out again. The rest were happy to follow the leaders into the somewhat obscure entrance to Lucas Passage. Paddling with the tide and very little wind this was a very pleasant paddle with many taking their time to enjoy the sites along the way. Soon enough we had arrived at Karragarra and not only did the beach fill up with kayaks but I suspect the island population almost doubled for a short time. Some minor re-arrangements of the picnic furniture and we were happily enjoying lunch with many taking the opportunity for a swim. This island is truly one of the most picturesque in the entire bay and certainly one of the best facilities for kayakers. Plenty of room for boats, picnic tables, BBQ's, toilets and a lovely sandy beach to enjoy.



With the winds predicted to increase the Claytons Group decided on an early departure from our lunch site and headed off about 15 minutes or so before us. As we rounded the bottom of Macleay Island we were greeted with some white caps and rather messy seas as the wind against tide created the usual havoc, a good call to leave early!! Once we reached the top of Garden Island conditions

improved and it was a much easier paddle the last few kilometres back to Victoria Point, it was at this point that a lone paddler appeared off to my right. Brian W of course, he just cruised passed effortlessly and was soon seen way off in the distance. Reportedly a large dugong was seen to surface just behind Gary's kayak (or was that a shark) and several turtles were observed during the day.

After a quick clean up and kayaks safely on the cars we headed off for the obligatory after paddle coffee and cake (yes more cake), well you do expend ALOT of energy paddling 19.99 km.

A fantastic day on the water and a great opportunity to meet new people and interact with other like minded people, that is the beauty of the sea kayaking community. The love of sea kayaking is what brings us all together and these occasions only strengthen our bond. Well done to the two Brian's in hatching the plan for a joint paddle and I hope we can do this on many more occasions, I even hear perhaps a joint overnight paddle in the future to enable us to get to know each other even better. Sundowners sharing a bottle or two of red would be a perfect opportunity.

