

29 July 2022

Queensland Museum Network steams back to Mackay for free family fun

Unearthed is steaming back into Mackay for a fun-filled day of free activities for the whole family on Sunday 21 August.

The free Community Day, presented by Queensland Museum Network and BHP and BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) as part of their Project DIG partnership, will feature a range of STEAM activities, live experiments, digital workshops and a showcase of fossil discoveries made in the region and unique to tropical Australia.

Kicking off the festivities is a sticky beak at the region's unique bird life with a bird walk at 6:45am with Queensland Chief Scientist Professor Hugh Possingham.

Then from 9am, the fun begins at Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre with more than 40 interactive activities and demonstrations. Explore virtual realities, create glow-in-the-dark art with local artists, fly a drone, and learn about traditional Aboriginal knowledge and culture with Yarburn Creations.

Meet Queensland Museum Network experts from across the state, watch leading researchers sequence a coral genome live, examine a dendroglyph recently discovered with Western Yalanji traditional owners and see fossils, snails, spiders, frogs and skinks up close.

For the first time at Unearthed locals are invited to bring their precious heirlooms and have a museum expert assess the item's significance and give you some pointers on how to care and store those loved pieces. Whether it's your family recipes, clocks, books, photos or jewellery, bring your treasures to Unearthed's very own *Antique Roadshow*.

Take some downtime and celebrate the stunning local landscape, flora, fauna and human history of the region with a viewing of the *Eungella: Land of Clouds* exhibition.

Round the day off with a boogie to Unearthed's science rock band and snag from the local community sausage sizzle.

Queensland Museum Network CEO Dr Jim Thompson said Unearthed provided an opportunity for museum experts to showcase regional discoveries to the community.

"This is the fifth year we have brought Unearthed to Mackay and we absolutely love bringing the museum experience to the region," Dr Thompson said.

"We are proud to be able to share our love of science and discoveries with regional communities and bringing our team on the road for free community days such as Unearthed, is a fantastic way to share our expertise and showcase our research."

Leading researchers and scientists in the field of palaeontology will showcase a range of real and replica megafauna fossils that can be found locally at mining operations, near Nebo. Megafauna is an extinct supersized species of mammals, reptiles and marsupials and they have been uncovered by Queensland Museum scientists during annual digs over the past decade.

QUEENSLAND MUSEUM NETWORK

Linda Murry, General Manager of BMA's Hay Point Coal Terminal said BHP and BMA had been a proud partner of Queensland Museum for a number of years.

"Through Project DIG we have been working with Queensland Museum to bring cutting edge technologies to the forefront of palaeontological research," Linda said.

Queensland Museum palaeontologist, Dr Scott Hocknull has been leading palaeontological research in the Mackay region for more than a decade.

"Our team of researchers from Queensland Museum have been working in this region for more than a decade and have uncovered a wealth of knowledge about the megafauna and other species that called this area home," Dr Hocknull said.

"We are excited to be able to bring some of our local discoveries and put them on show here in Mackay to talk to people about them, their rich history and the importance of understanding the past to help preserve the future."

The FREE Community Day will be held on Sunday 21 August, 9am to 2:30pm at the Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre

For more information visit <https://projectdig.qm.qld.gov.au/>

ENDS

For further information, images or interviews please contact:

Queensland Museum Network Media Team			
Christine Robertson	M: 0417 741 710	(07) 3153 4451	Media@qm.qld.gov.au
Kylie Hay	M: 0434 565 852	(07) 3153 4450	Media@qm.qld.gov.au

Images: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/99es7rojhg8i8hq/AAAWWg90Hxb-FJM4suQr1Khna?dl=0>

Unearthed FREE event

Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre (MECC)

Sunday 21 August, 9am to 2:30pm

FREE, no bookings required. Capacity limited.

About Project DIG

Unearthed is a community event supported by Project DIG, a partnership between Queensland Museum Network, BHP and BMA to transform how we store, explore and share our collection and research with communities worldwide.