



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

***For immediate release***

**August 22, 2019**

# Walk to the Lighthouse to Shed Light on Natural Wonders

Bowen Tourism & Business to host a celebration of community, history and nature in conjunction with the community Walk to the Lighthouse.

The lowest tides every winter make it possible to cross the narrow 1km strait between the mainland at Dalrymple Point and North Head Island. This year's walk is set to commence from 3:00pm, in line with the low tide point of 0.18M at approximately 4:30pm on Saturday the 31st August.

Whitsunday Regional Council Mayor Andrew Willcox said the walk event was an opportunity to showcase Bowen's history, community and natural beauty.

"Council and community worked together to fund the restoration of the historic North Head Lighthouse and we are proud to support this annual pilgrimage event.

"North Head is one of only two 19th century Queensland lighthouses that remain intact and on their original site, giving us all a valuable reminder of this region's history.

"This walk puts the spotlight on Bowen's past and reinforces that Bowen has been a port since the 1860s," Mayor Willcox said.

The accompanying event atmosphere will be relaxed, with live entertainment, bar and grazing platters available. Attendees are encouraged to bring a rug and toast the Whitsunday 'Winter' sunset after taking part in the walk.

Making their way across the strait towards the island, walkers encounter giant and vibrantly red 'Choc-Chip Starfish' (*Protoreaster nodosus*), sea urchins and exposed coral garden. Migrating Humpback and Minke Whales and resident Green Sea Turtles are often sighted in the pristine Whitsundays waters.

Tourism Whitsundays CEO Tash Wheeler believes this unique event is an excellent opportunity to provide visitors with a reef experience right from the mainland.

"This family friendly event can provide visitors with a reef experience from the mainland and will also provide education and information about the beautiful marine life we have in the Whitsundays."

This year the walk will feature a reef education theme, with volunteers and marine biology experts providing on-site information about reef health and responsible interaction as part of the 'Leaving no Footprints' program.

Representatives from several marine, traditional owner and education groups will host exhibits in the event space, providing plenty of opportunity to find out more about the reef.

Chair of Bowen Tourism and Business, Jenn Honnery, said Bowen Tourism and Business are very excited that the Walk to the Lighthouse Event will be complemented with activity under the 'Leave no Footprints' program.

"The program is being co-run by Bowen Tourism & Business and Bowen Burdekin Local Marine Advisory Committee, and is all about creating reef education material, signage and engaging with the public. The volunteer guides will be a great engagement opportunity and will complement the event."

Participants in the walk are advised to leave approximately one hour prior to the low tide mark and be returning at the low tide point.

- ENDS -

**About Tourism Whitsundays:** *Tourism Whitsundays (TW) is the organisation responsible for destination marketing and visitor attraction for the Whitsunday region. It is the lead agency recognised by Tourism and Events Queensland and the Whitsunday Regional Council to lead the promotion of the region as a tourism destination. Tourism Whitsundays markets all aspects of the region including the Great Barrier Reef, Whitsunday Islands and Coast, accommodation, boating and sailing, fishing, touring, recreational activities, adventure, dining, shopping, weddings and honeymoons, conferencing and business events.*

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