

2007: Year in Review

July

KARRATHA held its breath as an unnamed investor looked to buy the struggling Karratha Cinemas complex and resurrect the business.

FeNaCING festival organisers called for volunteers to help keep the event float parade alive.

The intoxicated driver of a Nissan Skyline, which slammed into a tree and seriously injured a passenger in Wickham in September 2006, was fined \$3500 and had his licence suspended for two and-a-half years.

Photographs emerged of a two to three-metre saltwater crocodile in tugboat pens at Cape Lambert and Environment and Conservation Department officers confirmed the sighting was real.

Ninety-nine per cent of the Burrup Peninsula received Commonwealth heritage listing with Green groups and the WA Government in disagreement over whether the move would stifle industry.

Australia Post was forced to cough up \$2500 a week for posties to temporarily fill positions in the Pilbara.

A Karratha man and his pregnant

wife and child were lucky to escape with their lives after a flying projectile from an unsecured load smashed through the windscreen of their 4WD.

Karratha police declared efforts to tighten controls over alcohol consumption at Karratha Airport were working.

Wickham artist Clifton Mack took out the award for best overall work at the 2007 Cossack Art Award with his painting The Fortescue Mignight Starry Sky with more than 400 works on display on the night.

Karratha BMX Club rising star Airlie Gooden left to represent Australia at the 2007 BMX World Championships in Victoria, Canada – competing in the 12-year-old challenge and cruiser classes.

Rocky Kwila won the XXXX Gold Roebourne Cup at the Nor West Jockey Club by five lengths from Feudal Lord.

August

FINAL arrangements were being made to reopen Karratha's cinema within weeks while Roebourne Shire Council hiked rates up by 4.9 per cent after approving the 2007-08 budget.

Woodside Petroleum gave the green light to the development of its \$11.2 billion Pluto liquefied natural gas project.

Running on empty for the third time in eight days Tom Price residents were fuming over the town's increasingly common fuel shortages.

Water restrictions were extended across WA with Pilbara residents only allowed to water their gardens on alternate days of the week.

A Roebourne pensioner claimed she was a virtual prisoner in her own home, under constant attack by bullying and harassment from a small army of out-of-control youths.

There were fireworks, internationally renowned musicians and even some high-flying BMX riders.

This was just a taste of the excitement surrounding this year's FeNaCING festival with more than 35,000 through the gates.

The waters of Dampier Archipelago were filled with fishing enthusiasts as the 2007 Dampier Classic got underway.

Skywest and Ozjet both signalled they too were both considering entering the Karratha market.

Karratha was treated to a stellar



NOVEMBER: Alan Carpenter arrives in the Pilbara.

line-up of performers when triple j's AWOL tour rolled into town.

A trap was laid by the Environment and Conservation Department to lure a crocodile lurking around Point Samson.

Karratha Recreation Club played host to 10 red-hot bouts as boxing made a triumphant return to the region.

September

THE annual Pannawonica Campdraft and Rodeo was postponed in the wake of the recent outbreak of Equine Influenza in Australia.

China was expected to use a visit of President Hu Jintao to reinforce its business links with WA through a series of agreements across the iron ore and LNG sectors.

The Karratha Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service was calling for witnesses following a spate of deliberately lit fires in Karratha.

A blood moon rose in the clear

skies of Karratha when the earth passed directly between the sun and moon - showing the Pilbara region was fertile ground for stargazers.

Just two weeks after a trap was laid in Cape Lambert another crocodile was sighted - this time in Onslow.

Several instances of skin irritations, blood noses and sore throats were reported among local Fire and Emergency Services Authority volunteers in the wake of a fire aboard a cargo vessel off Dampier.

The Karratha Falcons' quest for back-to-back flags was crushed to the tune of 61 points by a determined Rovers outfit in the NPFL Grand Final.

The tragic death of popular 20-year-old Kylie Lynch rocked the Pilbara community.

Obstetric services began their reintroduction at Nickol Bay Hospital following a lengthy hiatus.

Rio Tinto Iron Ore and Sinosteel reached an important milestone in their historic Channar joint venture,

following the signing of two agreements in Perth.

A distraught mother revealed she had caught her son inhaling from an aerosol can and warned other parents to be vigilant.

Karratha Detectives put a major dent in the supply of methylamphetamine to the Pilbara after seizing 84g of the drug.

Campaigning for the Roebourne Shire Council election was heating up and the planned redevelopment of Karratha Aquatic Centre was looming as a pivotal issue in the upcoming October 20 ballot.

Karratha policeman Shane Gray gave a chillingly detailed account publicly for the first time about the events that led up to him fatally shooting Victorian criminal William John Watkins, 38, on the side of the North West Coastal Highway, 20km south of Karratha, last year.

The Karratha Netball Association Grand Finals were played out with



OCTOBER: The dirt drags return to Karratha.

Workpac Sierras 1 victorious in Division 1 over Cougars 1.

October

DAYLIGHT saving began and the controversial issue was still stirring plenty of debate among politicians and the community throughout regional WA.

Campaigning for the Federal Seat of Kalgoorlie gained momentum with Greens candidate Robin Chapple issuing a challenge to the two major candidates to upgrade the remote area zone tax rebate to people in the region.

Julie Bailey stuck it to the boys and won the Karratha Dirt Drags as the fastest dragger on the evening with a top speed of 138kmh over the 200m strip.

Local government officers were thrilled with the success of the inaugural postal voting system which boosted participation rates to a record high at Saturday's Roebourne Shire Council elections.

Regional tourism was on the verge of a boom thanks to a new Qantas route linking Karratha and Brisbane for the first time.

The Gorgon gas project was rubber stamped by Federal Environment Minister Malcolm Turnbull.

Iconic Australian rock band The Screaming Jets came to town and played some of their greatest and well-known hits at the Walkington.

Pannawonica held its annual Robe Rive Rodeo in a scaled down format thanks to the chaos caused by Equine Influenza.

Burrup rock art had another enemy with a petroglyph of major importance desecrated on the Burrup Peninsula by locals as Aboriginal and Green groups fought to protect the ancient carvings.

Revered Australian netball figure Jill McIntosh was in Karratha to impart her extensive coaching

knowledge to locals.

November

KALGOORLIE MHR Barry Haase vowed to keep Labor honest and to ensure the newly appointed Rudd Government kept its promises in the aftermath of the Federal Election after claiming his third term in office despite a swing of about four per cent to the ALP.

Premier Alan Carpenter was in town to officially launch construction of the \$12 billion Pluto LNG project.

Days before the Federal Election Labor promised a massive \$80m investment including plans to complete works on Dampier Highway if elected.

Woodside poured water on claims its Browse LNG development would end up on the Burrup saying the peninsula had always been a possible location for the project and final decision was yet to be made.

Local police were delighted with the appointment of Sen. Sgt Jack Lee as the officer-in-charge of the Karratha Police Station.

The Burrup Peninsula's traditional owners protested against Woodside's Pluto development.

Police had labelled Melbourne Cup celebrations as "disappointing" following a number of incidents that caused havoc around Karratha on the day.

December

TWO Karratha locals were charged by police with making false mayday calls and appeared in Karratha Magistrates Court - each facing more than \$80,000 in costs associated with the full-scale search and rescue operation.

The Karratha Police Station 2007 Ball committee presented funding to beneficiaries in the local community including local schools and the

family of 18-month-old Mackenzie Crane, who suffered from the debilitating Spinal Muscular Atrophy.

Karratha Youth Housing Project celebrated the official opening of its new premises with an outreach program offering help to young people in town who were disadvantaged or in crisis.

The Department for Planning and Infrastructure reminded boat owners across WA to purchase a new Emergency Position Indication Radio Beacon before the 2009 deadline.

Pilbara News reported hundreds of jobs would be created for indigenous Australians in the Pilbara mining industry after an agreement was signed between the WA Government and Rio Tinto Iron Ore.

The Spirit 1260 Karratha Town Christmas Party was held at the Tambrey Centre with hundreds of families turning out for a huge free sausage sizzle, jumping castle fun and of course the big guy, Santa Claus.

Mining giant Rio Tinto commenced its fly-in, fly-out roster initiative from Busselton for workers living in and around the area employed at its Pilbara-based mine sites.



