22 November 2011

Calendar of events to commemorate 70th Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin

Chief Minister Paul Henderson today announced the Territory Government is investing $300,000 into a series of events to be held next year to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin.

Mr Henderson said the Territory Government would invest $200,000 in hosting a series of events for civilian survivors and families affected by the bombing of Darwin, as well as provide $100,000 to the Darwin City Council to assist in the commemoration activities.

This is on top of the Territory Government’s $10 million investment into building a new Defence of Darwin Experience which will be completed to coincide with the 70th anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin.

“The Bombing of Darwin 70th Anniversary is a significant day in the history of the Territory and one Territorians are keen to commemorate,” Mr Henderson said.

“This is an investment to ensure this major historical event and the families involved are recognised.

“It is part of our $11.5 million plan for Darwin’s World War II commemorative sites including a $1.5 million upgrade to the Australian Aviation Heritage Centre in Darwin.

“The new $10 million WWII Defence of Darwin Experience is now 74% percent complete, with the installation of electronic exhibits to commence next week, ensuring it will be ready and open to the public in time for the commemoration.

“Once complete, the facility will serve as a tourist attraction in line with the Territory 2030 target to boost such opportunities,” Mr Henderson said.

“East Point is a beautiful spot and it will be an even better place for families to visit when the new Defence of Darwin Experience is complete next year. Like the Cyclone Tracy exhibit at Bullocky Point it promises to become a community attraction by telling the personal stories behind our history,” Member for Fannie Bay, Michael Gunner said.

“To support the commemoration, free bus services will be provided to and from events in Darwin for veterans and the community, as well as a Darwin tour and a tour to Adelaide River for veterans and their carers,” Mr Gunner said.

Recent works at the Defence of Darwin Experience include:

- Internal fit out of the Exhibition Building and Office Building
- Concrete pouring of the Plaza
- Asphalting the Carpark
- Commencement of concrete service road and bus drop off
- Installation of fire pump house and new water main
“Work is already complete on the newly upgraded Australian Aviation Heritage Centre in Darwin which has just undergone a $1.5 million upgrade in time for the commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin,” Mr Henderson said.

**Media contact:** Lidija Ivanovski 0457 933 856

**Background on calendar of events:**

Events to be held by the Territory Government:
- Friday 17 February - Lunch Function hosted by the Chief Minister in honour of the civilian survivors & families affected by the Bombing of Darwin
- Saturday 18 February - Official opening of the new $10 million Defence of Darwin Experience
- Saturday 18 February - Chief Minister and Lord Mayor hosted Black Tie Gala Ball at the Convention Centre
- Sunday 19 February - Public commemoration service at the Cenotaph
- Sunday 19 February - Chief Minister will host a function in the Great Hall following the commemoration service at the Cenotaph

The Territory Government is providing an additional $100,000 to Darwin City Council to provide a two-week long program of events and activities to be held between 11 and 26 February, including (from [www.frontlineaustralia.com.au](http://www.frontlineaustralia.com.au)):

- A commemorative service at the Darwin Cenotaph including a re-enactment of the first bombing raid by the Australian Defence Forces on Sunday 19 February from 9.30am
- The Frontline Australia Ball at the Darwin Convention Centre on Saturday 18 February
- A one-off commemorative football match at TIO Stadium on Saturday 11 February at 5.00pm
- An exhibition named 'The Community Lens' featuring historic photographs of members of the Darwin community at the Community Art Space at the Civic Centre (more detail)
- Australian premiere of documentary 'An Awkward Truth' with talks from the producers and the author of the book on which the documentary is based, Peter Grose
- Talks, workshops and displays at the Darwin City Council Libraries and the NT Library
- A special event with the National Trust and Sing Australia at the Myilly Point Heritage Precinct
- NT Schools Exhibition at the Chan Contemporary Art space (more detail)
- Historical photographic display of the original Post Office and Telegraph Station at the Main Hall at Parliament House
- A fashion show named 'A Minute's Warning' at the Parap Hanger, Parap in the evening of the 19 February
- Heritage tourism packages, and
- Government and community arts events