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For immediate release

Events to commemorate Broome Air Raid 81st anniversary

The Shire of Broome, in collaboration with several community organisations, will host a program of events to commemorate the Broome Air Raid on Thursday, March 2 and Friday March 3, 2023, marking one of the deadliest wartime attacks on Australian soil.

The public program of event begins with A Night of Reflection at Sun Pictures on the Thursday evening, followed the next morning by an Air Raid Artwork Tour, the official commemoration event at the Bedford Park War Memorial, and RSL Morning Tea.

This year's event comes after the Shire's plans to host the 80th Commemoration of the Broome Air Raid had to be postponed due to risks related to COVID-19 and ex-Tropical Cyclone Anika.

Shire of Broome President Harold Tracey said cancelling the event all together was never an option, with very few survivors from that fateful day still alive to share their memories. He emphasised the importance of this occasion and encourages the whole community to attend.

"March 3 marks tragedy for Broome, although it is also a story of inspiration for those that helped the victims of this brutal attack and those victims that survived and lived to share the tale," he said.

"We understand how disappointing it was for the community last year when the tough decision was made to postpone the event. But I look forward to seeing the community come together to honour this significant historic date, and I thank those that keep our town's history and heritage going."

The Japanese attack on the Broome airport and flying boats moored on Roebuck Bay is a unique piece of history stemming from World War II and is the second-greatest wartime loss of life on Australian soil to date. It resulted in the loss of at least 88 lives and the destruction of 22 Australian, Dutch and US aircraft.

Community organisations, including RSL Broome, NORFORCE, St Mary's College, Broome Primary School, Nyamba Buru Yawuru and the Broome Historical Society are working in collaboration with the Shire to deliver the commemorative events.

For more information including event times, visit www.broome.wa.gov.au/air-raid

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