



Kimberley kicks off region's biggest showcase event

Argyle Diamonds Ord Valley Muster – Friday, May 18 to Monday, June 4, 2007

Airnorth Kimberley Moon Experience – Saturday, June 2, 2007

Kununurra, East Kimberley, Western Australia

The East Kimberley's biggest tourism influx will engulf Kununurra this week, with the two-week **Argyle Diamonds Ord Valley Muster** festival set to attract more than 3,500 people.

From May 18 to June 4, the highly-acclaimed annual festival features some 50 special events showcasing the region's diverse culture, stunning landscape, friendly hospitality and unique Kimberley spirit.

The pinnacle event and closing highlight of the Muster is the multi-award-winning **Airnorth Kimberley Moon Experience** concert, coinciding with a magical full moon on Saturday, June 2.

Renowned as the East Kimberley's night of nights, the gala outdoor affair, set against the rustic backdrop of Kununurra's stunning Ord River, will be headlined by Australia's 'First Lady of Song', **Marcia Hines**. Hines, accompanied by her seven-piece band, will be joined by passionate Kimberley-devotee, **James Blundell** as MC; the **Australian Army Band - Darwin**; Broome's **Desert Child**; popular party band **Peace Love & All That Stuff with Tod Johnston**; plus a host of talented **Kimberley musicians and entertainers**.

Staged at the purpose-built **Kununurra Community Amphitheatre**, the concert will feature state-of-the-art lighting and visual effects created by the State's biggest concert production team, Concert & Corporate Productions (CCP). A kaleidoscope of moving images and colour will culminate in a spectacular fireworks display launched from the centre of the Ord River.

Biggest-ever Muster program

Kicking off what is the biggest-ever Argyle Diamonds Ord Valley Muster, is the **Kununurra Arts Council Street Party** this Friday, May 18. The town's Papuana Street will come alive with free opening night celebrations, including night markets, a community Foot Parade, Healthway giant fruit mascots, face painting, balloons, chocolate wheel, kids' fashion parade, belly dancers, Kimberley tucker and entertainment by Broome-based musicians Groovy Lips and the Yang, plus Bizircus, KATS street performers, dancers and singers.

On Saturday, May 19, the **Station Challenge Rodeo** by the Kununurra Bushmen's Rodeo Association features a live performance by country music star Adam Harvey and will see the Kimberley's cowboys go head-to-head in events like Saddle Bronc, Bareback, Bull Ride, Bullock Ride and more.

A first-time event in the Muster program is the **Alligator Airways Lake Argyle Classic** long distance swim (Monday, June 4), involving teams of inspirational swimmers from all over Australia attempting the world's only open-water marathon swim in fresh water. Covering distances of 10 or 20 kilometres, solo, duo and quad teams will tackle one of the most daring swim contests ever attempted. Set in the rugged Kimberley outback, Lake Argyle is the largest manmade lake in Australia, an incredible 21-times the size of Sydney Harbour.

Another inaugural event, the **Gibb River Road Mountain Bike Challenge**, has teams of daring long-distance cyclists travelling between 60 and 80 kilometres per day, over five days, in 20-kilometre relays. The incredible 800-kilometre race will raise money for Police Legacy, commencing in Derby on Tuesday, May 29 and arriving in Kununurra on Saturday, June 2.

The inaugural **JSW Ord Valley Muster Motocross Classic** (Sunday, June 3), will be staged under lights at the newly-designed Ivanhoe racetrack near the famous Ivanhoe Crossing. Featuring a top line-up of local and interstate motocross riders, this adrenaline-pumped event will see massive aerial manoeuvres and sky-high jumps performed along Ivanhoe's fast straights, hair pins and sweeping bends, concluding with a dazzling fireworks display.

Other highlights in the 2007 Muster program include:

- The ever-popular **Argyle Diamond Dig** (Sunday, May 20), where a make-shift diamond pit is created from a tonne of sand, offering 'prospectors' the chance to dig and discover one of three exquisite Argyle Diamonds and a host of other hidden treasures to take home;
- The **Argyle Diamonds Barramundi Concert** (Saturday, May 26), featuring a traditional dancing ceremony by Indigenous landowners, plus talented Indigenous musicians including **Peter Brandy, Mary G and Rodney Rivers**;
- The annual **Garnduwa Ord Valley Muster Basketball** Carnival (Friday, May 25 to Sunday, May 27), with intense competition between Northern Territory and Kununurra Indigenous youth;
- The **East Kimberley Tours and Rotary 4WD Adventure Bash** (Sunday, May 27);
- A cooking masterclass (Friday, June 1) and demonstration (Saturday, June 2) by renowned Executive Chef, **Chris Taylor from Perth's Fraser's Restaurant**, revealing his cooking secrets using fresh East Kimberley produce;
- Special market days at **Kununurra Markets** and **Waringarri Markets**;
- **Argyle Diamond Mine Tours**; plus
- Art exhibitions, live performances and host of other special events and sightseeing tours in and around Kununurra.

VIP Kimberley Pilgrimage

With Australian pop icon Marcia Hines leading the entertainment line-up at this year's Airnorth Kimberley Moon Experience, the concert has experienced a dramatic and unprecedented surge in popularity.

The gala event has created a major stir right across Australia, with corporate glitterati, visiting tourists and local fans snapping up tickets in record time.

More than 2,500 general admission concert-goers are expected to converge on the banks of the Ord River to enjoy the concert picnic-style, while strictly limited VIP packages to the '**Kimberley Fine Diamonds Corporate Circle**' – priced at \$380-a-head – were declared a sell-out back in March.

A contingent of 500 black-tie ticket-holders, many of whom are travelling north especially for the event, will enjoy premium Vasse Felix wines and champagne, before indulging in an elaborate, locally-inspired, five-star feast under a full Kimberley moon and sky of stars.

Among the A-listers will be reigning **Miss World Australia** and Miss World Asia Pacific Sabrina Houssami, who will be in town to show off a stunning collection of rare pink diamond jewellery, locally crafted by Kimberley Fine Diamonds. The collection, worth over half a million dollars and aptly titled the 'Crowning Collection', comprises more than 18 carats of brilliant white diamonds and two carats of the world's rarest pink diamonds.

The Miss World runner-up will make a special guest appearance on stage with the Australian Army Band - Darwin to perform the song she sang in the Miss World contest final.

Senior executives from tourism, aviation, mining, transport, pastoral, banking and finance, industrial and government sectors will attend the event, and organisations such as Argyle Diamonds, Airnorth, Qantas, Rio Tinto, Amadeus Energy, Voyages / El Questro, Tourism Western Australia, Tourism Top End, Vasse Felix, Horizon Power, the Water Corporation, WIN TV and high-profile media will all be represented, either as VIP ticket holders, sponsors or invited guests.

Government officials will include the Minister for Small Business, Margaret Quirk MLA; Member for Central Kimberley-Pilbara, Tom Stephens; Member for Kimberley, Carol Martin MLA; Member for Mining & Pastoral Region, Shelley Archer MLC; and Assistant Police Commissioner Graeme Linert.

General admission tickets to the 2007 Airnorth Kimberley Moon Experience are \$70 for adults, \$20 for children (3 to 15 years) or \$150 per family (2 adults, 3 children). Tickets to the highly-exclusive Kimberley Fine Diamonds Corporate Circle have sold out.

For further details, visit www.ordvalleymuster.com. Ticket bookings, plus travel, accommodation and local tour reservations, can be made through the Kununurra Visitor Centre on (08) 9168 1177.

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Background:

Approaching its fifth year in 2007, the Argyle Diamonds Ord Valley Muster has grown to become one of Western Australia's biggest event-based tourism drawcards. It is expected to lure approximately 3,500 visitors to the region in 2007. The Muster is an initiative of the Kununurra Chamber of Commerce & Industry, designed to extend the East Kimberley's official peak tourist season.

The Airnorth Kimberley Moon Experience has been named in the 'Top 10 Social Events' for the past three years (by The West Australian newspaper). The event is the region's most acclaimed entertainment spectacle, having received numerous award titles. Among them are both the Western Australian and Kimberley Tourism Awards for 'Significant Festivals & Events' in 2003 and 2004 and the Gold Medal in 2006, plus Australia's North West Tourism 'Best Attraction' Award and the WA Regional Achievement & Community Award in 2006.

Marcia Hines, as the headline artist of the 2007 Airnorth Kimberley Moon Experience, follows appearances in previous years by Kate Ceberano, Australian Idol's Jessica Mauboy, Richard Clapton, Anna Sleptsova, Wendy Matthews, Dave Mann Collective and the Darwin Symphony Orchestra.

The Muster's major sponsor, Argyle Diamonds, is the world's largest supplier of diamonds, producing approximately 30 million carats each year or nearly one-quarter of the world's natural diamond production.

Major sponsor of the Kimberley Moon Experience, Airnorth, is the leading regional aviation operator in Northern Australia. Headquartered in Darwin, it operates 152 scheduled departures weekly, servicing eight destinations and uplifting 132,250 passengers annually.

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