

Bigger, better Shinju festival for 2017 eyed

■ Nicola Kalmar

The Shinju Matsuri committee celebrated an exciting milestone in the festival's 46-year history, after declaring this year's event the biggest and most successful to date.

Festival president Chris Maher said record crowds at hallmark events including the opening ceremony, the float parade, the Lantern Matsuri and the Sunset Long Table Dinner had helped Shinju Matsuri cement itself as a top regional event and Broome as an iconic destination.

Despite the sun setting on this year's nine-day celebrations, Mr Maher said plans were already in the pipeline to make 2017 bigger and better.

In line with the Shinju board's strategic plan to prepare for the festival's 50th anniversary in 2020, Mr Maher said the focus would include building the capacity of flagship events, increasing marketing campaigns and collaborating with local resorts to offer packaged holidays around the festival.

After doubling ticket sales of this

year's Sunset Long Table Dinner to 400, Mr Maher said next year's event would be expanded further, but the focus would be on building and maintaining a "high-quality" experience.

"We're going to focus on trying to build the experience of the night and maintain and build the quality as opposed to maintaining numbers of people," he said.

"We might go to 500 at the most, but we're looking at how to continue to build the experience from the beginning to the end of the evening ... it's about value, not about numbers."

Mr Maher said another focus would be on building a "signature" close for the festival.

After launching the inaugural three-day Shinju Fringe in May this year, organisers will bring the mini festival back for 2017.

Described as a "snippet" of the main event, the Shinju Fringe will now be a permanent fixture on the Broome social calendar to help highlight the festival throughout the year, Mr Maher said.

The 2017 Shinju Festival will be held from September 2-10.



Beer cans, wine bottles, plastic, abandoned shopping trolleys and a burnt garbage bin deposited into the mangroves behind Paspaley Plaza in Chinatown earlier this month. Picture: Christine Roberts

Tide of trash scars Chinatown landscape

■ Robert Dougherty

This was the trail of unsightly rubbish carried through mangroves by a high tide alongside Broome's shopping hub on Saturday, September 17.

A trail of empty beer cans bottles scarred the landscape behind Paspaley Plaza in Chinatown on the back of a 10m tide.

Abandoned shopping trolleys

and a burnt rubbish bin also added to the eyesore. A Shire of Broome spokesman said rangers had the power to prosecute people caught dumping rubbish.

The council employs a full-time community clean-up crew to collect rubbish and empty bins around town.

Environs Kimberley director Martin Pritchard said the garbage was detrimental to the health of

Roebuck Bay, including marine life caught by the public.

"We are concerned about the rubbish. It's a very real danger to wildlife, especially the plastics — birds and turtles mistake it for food and eat it, dolphins also die from ingesting plastic bags," he said.

"Roebuck Bay is internationally important and we need to think about taking serious measures to protect it."





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