

Let's celebrate



BUSINESS AND PLEASURE: Di and Dan Mossenson, Belinda Lees, Graham Moss, Liz Constable and Paul King.

Pictures: ERNIE McLINTOCK and FAITH MORAN

Travel and tourism doing its bit for WA

By BRAD ELBOROUGH

WA's travel and tourism industry has every reason to celebrate.

And it did so in style last night at the Burswood Entertainment Complex's Grand Ballroom, for the Tourism Council of WA's annual WA Tourism Awards.

The latest figures show WA remains an attractive tourism option, with more than 235,000 overseas visitors arriving here for a holiday in the year to June 2009.

The introduction of low-cost carriers has not only made travelling to Perth (and then beyond) affordable to those living overseas, but also for those living interstate.

And many West Australians are discovering great travel options in their own backyard.

More statistics show that most other industries continue to benefit from the money being attracted to our shores by travel and tourism.

So why shouldn't those in travel and tourism take a

minute to pat themselves on the back.

The annual WA Tourism Awards are a great opportunity for organisations to take a step back from their business and make sure it is ticking all the boxes that will give it the best chance to be successful.

And all indications from the extremely high standard of applications in 2009 is that best practices are being achieved.

There were 30 categories contested last night, with gold,

silver and bronze medallists recognised on most.

The winners this year came from all parts of the industry and from all areas of WA.

The big winner was Willie Creek Pearls, recognised with gold medals in three categories — tourist attraction, specialised tourism services and major tour/transport operators. Many businesses involved with Rottnest Island also took home honours from several sections.

But by the looks of those featured over the next few

pages, the travel and tourism industry was the major winner last night — confident it is in the right hands to move forward beyond 2009.

Most award nominees were accredited through the national accreditation program, which was adopted from a WA initiative last year.

This special wraparound contains pictures taken during the gala night, as well as a recap of the medallists — gold, silver and bronze.

See today's *ESCAPE* section for details on all the winners.