

- Searcy. John Costello takes up Valley of the Springs Station. Captain Carrington surveys the McArthur River – Borroloola has its beginnings. Survey of NT/Qld border begins under surveyor A. Poeppel, L. A. Wells, six assistants, two Afghan cameleers and Assistant Government Geologist, Woodward. Thirty two pastoral stations are operating in the Territory running more than 96,000 cattle and 26,000 sheep
- 1885** The town site for Borroloola is surveyed by J. P. Hingston, a South Australian Surveyor. The meaning of Borroloola is debated but accepted as 'place of the paperbarks', though 'fresh running water' is also suggested. The township is envisaged as a major port for the handling of beef, seafood and minerals and in handling goods shipped in from other parts of Australia and Asia. The Town of Borroloola is proclaimed by the Governor of South Australia, Sir William C. Robinson, on 10 September 1885 following Gazettal a week earlier. Captain Creswell explores a stock route from Powell's Creek OT Station to Borroloola and a police camp is established west of Roper Bar
- 1886** The Kimberley gold rush is in full swing with many prospectors passing through the region via the Queensland Road. The first Police Station is erected at Borroloola and the town develops to include a Magistrate, Policeman, a Chinese garden and a hotel – from where the policeman commences duty. A punitive party is raised and led by Tom Lynott to track down Aborigines alleged to have speared a man named Lenahan. Sixteen allotments offered for sale following advice from the Magistrate, G. McMinn. Surveyors Carruthers and Wells' border survey terminates at the 651 miles 57 chains post on the shores of the Gulf, on 29 September. Borroloola is described as a lawless town – the 'Ragged Thirteen', a band of outlaws, under Tom Nugent, plague pastoralists and travellers in the area between Wollogorang and the Roper River. The Borroloola and Barkly Tablelands Progress Association is formed.
- 1887** First race meeting is held at Borroloola
- 1888** Some £700 in customs duties is collected in one month. Reports received that many horses are suffering from 'walkabout' disease. Silver lead is discovered on McArthur River Station
- 1889** The Wollogorang lease is transferred exclusively to J. W. Chisolm and the Carne brothers leave the station. Aboriginal people commence a 'coming in' to live in Borroloola. Police stations are opened at Anthonys Lagoon and Roper River adding to a presence Powell's Creek, and a Chinese Joss house is operating in Borroloola
- 1891** Severe outbreak of influenza causes many deaths among the Aborigines in the region. The Costellos move onto Lake Nash. Cattle stations are all badly affected by Redwater fever. Copper is found at Maude Creek in the McArthur River area
- 1892** W. G. Stretton, a local magistrate, writes a book on his observations of the tribal customs of the local Aborigines and their interbreeding with the Macassans
- 1893** Henry Coop of Calvert Downs begins moving his cattle west to form a new station at Tanumbirini. Whilst with his cattle on the Robinson River he is speared by Aborigines but survives. Calvert Downs abandoned and Coop establishes the new station in 1894
- 1894** Brumby Clarke murdered near Settlement Creek. The McArthur River Jockey Club is formed and W. G. Stretton is elected Chairman
- 1896** Borroloola has a European population of six – Aborigines are not included in the figures but are estimated at around 300
- 1897** Manager Robert H. Shadforth is speared in the rump by Aborigines of the Illibarra group in a daring night attack on Wollogorang homestead. The Territory's cattle population is quarantined through an outbreak of Redwater fever
- 1898** A lease for a garden is attained by Chinese in Borroloola
- 1899** John Chisolm, owner of Wollogorang Station dies. Copper ore is discovered on the station and assays at 35.75%. John Farrar forms Nutwood Downs station following his withdrawal from Valley of Springs due to 'walkabout' disease amongst his stock
- 1901** Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen, anthropologists, visit Borroloola and the region to study the customs of the local Aboriginal people. The resultant books, *Across Australia* and *The Native Tribes of the Northern Territory* are published in 1912 and 1914
- 1902** Charles J. Scrutton forms Mountain Home Station on the head of the Robinson River
- 1903** As a result of attempts to deny access to Macassan trepangers, mostly based on misinformation, a letter is sent to Macassar stating that the coast is to be closed to trepanging