



details

Exhibitions

Main Gallery
 ■ *Menagerie: Contemporary Indigenous Sculpture*, January 13 to March 4

Links Gallery
 ■ *Narelle Thomas: A Personal Journey – Kakadu, Kimberley's and beyond ... until tomorrow*
 Next: Susan Wood: *Secrets and Lives*

Margaret Carnegie Gallery

■ *Fon McBurnie: Metal as Anything*, until January 29

National Art Glass Gallery

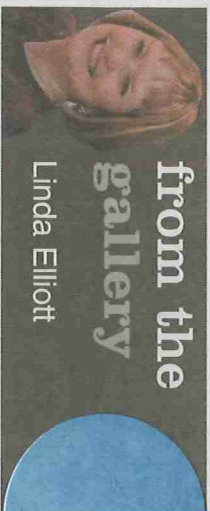
■ *Momentary Reflections: Kristel Britcher, Melinda Willis and Christopher Boha*, until March 11

E3 art space

■ *Innovation, Inspiration, Innovation*, until Friday, January 20.



from the gallery



Linda Elliott

unique and groundbreaking exhibition has just opened at Wagga Art Gallery – *Menagerie: Contemporary Indigenous Sculpture*, featuring 33 established and emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, who have each produced outstanding sculptural works depicting a variety of animals.

These artists, drawn from every Australian state and territory, were selected by curators Nicole Forshaw and Brian Parkes after months of research and travel seeking to expose the richness and breadth of contemporary indigenous sculpture in Australia.

Menagerie includes fibre works by Yvonne Koolmatjie from South Australia; ceramics by Judith Inkamala from the Northern Territory; wood carving by Craig Koomaeta from Queensland; mixed-media assemblages by Canberra-based Danie Mellor and Tasmanian artist Vicki West; work cast in bronze and aluminium by Dennis Nora from the Torres

Summer at the gallery

work online.

For one day only on Wednesday January 18 from 10am to 3pm in the Artist in Residence, Wagga Art Gallery.

This workshop is open to teenagers aged 16 and above – all participants under 18s must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. There's more to movie-making than hitting record.

Please bring your lunch, camera, laptop, pen and paper. All bookings to Sonya Gee on 6923 4826 or abcopen.riverina@abc.net.au.

THIS is the last weekend for *Narelle Thomas: A Personal Journey ... Kakadu, Kimberley's and Beyond*.

Reflecting the artist's creative evolution, from intricately detailed botanical watercolours of plants, insects and wildlife, to large graphic drawings pushing the boundaries of vision.

WAGGA Art Gallery's first exhibition launch for 2012 will ensure that our new year is off to a particularly strong start.

Frank Howarth, director of the Australian Museum will launch *Menagerie: Contemporary Indigenous Sculpture*. Clare Beltrage, creative director of Canberra Glassworks will launch *Momentary Reflections: Kristel Britcher, Melinda Willis & Christopher Boha*, and Susan Wood will open her Links Gallery exhibition, *Secrets and Lives*.

Join us on Friday, January 20 at 6pm. The following day on Saturday, January 21 at 11am, Christopher Boha, Kristel Britcher and Melinda Willis will take a walkthrough of *Momentary Reflections* in the Glass Gallery.

Blamey kept tongues wagging



at the archives Wayne Doubleday

Sir Thomas Blamey – Part 2

IT NO doubt came as a huge shock, not only to Wagga residents but to the whole nation, when in 1925 Thomas Blamey, who had risen to the position of chief of staff of the Australian Corps under Lieutenant General Sir John Monash, decided to leave the regular army

(although he remained in the militia) to take up an appointment as the chief commissioner of police in Victoria.

The reasons behind this choice are not evident, although Blamey's sudden rise through the ranks of the army would have certainly created angst and jealousy in many of his fellow officers. Blamey remained in that position for 11 years although his tenure was dogged by scandal and controversy.

Sherry Morris relates a number of such instances in *Wagga, A History*. "While reorganising and modernising the police force, he had often been criticised for flouting the law by drinking openly with friends after six o'clock closing. Worse still, his police badge had been found in a brothel when it was raided by three of his constables; and in 1936 he had lied in the witness box before a Royal Commission."

SATURDAY OPENINGS

The CSU Regional Archives is extending its opening hours to include the first Saturday of every month. On these dates the archives will be open from 10am to 3pm. The next Saturday opening will occur on February 4.

This trial initiative has been put in place to cater for those researchers who are unable to visit the archives on weekdays during normal business hours.

Rumours also circulated that Blamey was also the head of the "White Army" at the time. This was a secret right-wing army created to defend against any communist or Catholic takeover attempts. After his resignation from chief commissioner in July 1936, Blamey supplemented his income by making radio broadcasts on international affairs. He was also remarried on April 5, 1939 to Olga Ora Farnsworth (his first wife Minnie had died in 1935).

When World War II broke out in 1939, Blamey was again back in favour with the army hierarchy, being promoted to Lieutenant General and given command of the newly formed 6th Division of the AIF. The high regard and esteem in which Blamey was held, particularly in Wagga, was evidenced through the decision to rename Garland Street in his honour in November 1939.

The early stages of WWII mirrored Blamey's spectacular rise through the ranks 20 years earlier. April 1940 saw Blamey appointed as Commander of the 1st Australian Corps (who he commanded during the Greek campaign in April 1941). He was then promoted to Deputy Commander-in-Chief for all British Forces in the Middle East, and in September 1941 Blamey reached the rank of General. Despite enhancing his reputation in the Middle Eastern theatre of war, the same problems Blamey had experienced before came back to haunt him. David Horner noted, "... he failed to win the unanimous support of a small and influential group of senior AIF officers ... he seems occasionally to have provoked antipathy towards himself rather than to have tried to dissipate it. His relations with soldiers were also strained. Rarely able to inspire complete loyalty and trust ..."

With the threat of Japanese invasion growing daily in Australia, Blamey was recalled to Australia in March, 1942 to take on the role of Commander-in-Chief of the Australian Military Forces. After the appointment of General Douglas MacArthur as Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in the Pacific, Blamey was appointed as Commander of the Allied Land Forces in the South-West Pacific Area. In late 1942, controversy again struck Blamey when he addressed the troops of the 21st Brigade who had fought against the Japanese on the Kokoda Trail. It is not clear if Blamey's

words were misconstrued or misunderstood, but the troops were left resentful and angry when Blamey apparently accused them of "having run like rabbits". Then, in early 1945, Blamey was criticised in federal parliament, although the claims were without foundation according to Donald Horner. General MacArthur's own private view of Blamey is illuminating, although again it is a double-edged sword: "... sensual, slothful and doubtful character but a tough commander likely to shine like a power-light in an emergency. The best of the local bunch".

At the conclusion of World War II, Blamey represented Australia at the Japanese surrender on board the *USS Missouri*, and signed the surrender documents on Australia's behalf. He was officially relieved of his post on December 1, 1945.

Blamey retired to Melbourne, and fittingly was given the rank of Field Marshal by Prime Minister Robert Menzies in June 1950. Blamey fell ill shortly afterwards and died on May 27, 1951. It is estimated that 250,000 people lined the streets of Melbourne for his state funeral.

Perhaps Donald Horner encapsulates the legacy of Sir Thomas Blamey best when he asserts, "Blamey's disputes with the government and MacArthur should not overshadow the importance of his contribution to Australia in World War II ... Blamey did not waste Australian lives".