

THE NIMBIN GOODTIMES

Forthright and FREE

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Lismore Regional Gallery open at last

by Sue Stock

The opening of the new \$5.8 million Lismore Regional Gallery at the old Lismore High School site off Keen Street, last Saturday evening was an inspiring and festive affair, with over 800 people there to celebrate the launch.

The Welcome to Country was conducted by Rev. Dorothy Gordon from Woodburn, assisted by Thelma James and Gilbert Laurie. Gilbert Laurie smoked the exterior and interior of the gallery (pictured right) which amusingly set off the smoke alarms, proving that they are working.

Speakers included Edmund Capon (pictured) on behalf of the Margaret Olley Trust, who recalled many interesting anecdotes about painter, Margaret Olley; Mayor Isaac Smith; Thomas George, MP for Lismore; Kevin Hogan MP for Page; and Brett Adlington, Lismore Regional Gallery Director. (pictured below right)

Lismore Mayor Isaac Smith said the gallery and 'The Quad', Lismore's new town square "will change the face of Lismore CBD".

"The new Lismore Regional Gallery and Quadrangle will become a strong anchor for the city centre, attracting tourists and local residents who will inevitably flow into the CBD," he said. He acknowledged the work of Jenny Dowell, former Mayor of Lismore who has a gallery named after her in recognition of her involvement in the campaign to secure the funding for the gallery.

Lismore Regional Gallery Director Brett Adlington said a gallery for Lismore was first mooted as far back as 1901. In 1954, Council opened the previous gallery premises in Molesworth Street as a 'temporary gallery'.



After decades of discussion, funding applications and hard work, Brett said it was an incredible feeling to finally roll out the red carpet and open the doors to a new gallery for Lismore.

"It has certainly been a long time coming!" he laughed.

"The Lismore Regional Gallery is now a functional, modern and beautiful facility that we can be proud of as a regional city. We have four times the space, a climate controlled, flood-free storage area for our permanent collection of more than 1000 pieces and a friendly and welcoming environment for visitors and locals.

"It's such an exciting day... there has been so much effort from so many individuals to

get us to this point. It's overwhelming, it's incredible, it's exciting... it feels a bit surreal to finally be here!"

Brett said it is estimated the new Lismore Regional Gallery will see visitation of 55,000 people annually, boosting Lismore's economy by \$1.8 million.

Lismore Regional Gallery also launched a \$1 million fundraising campaign to purchase the Hannah Cabinet for the gallery's permanent collection.

The Hannah Cabinet, which is currently on loan from a Canberra gallery, was created by master craftsman Geoff Hannah, whose worldwide acclaim belies the fact he works from a small workshop in the suburban back streets of Lismore.



Opening hours: Tuesday and Wednesday 10am to 4pm, Thursday 10am to 6pm, and Friday/Saturday/Sunday 10am to 4pm.

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