

FEBRUARY 15 2019 - 12:00PM

Shelly Beach 'mayor' Harry Thompson is the muse for a new animated exhibition opening at the Glasshouse



Laura Telford

Local News



REAL LIFE: Artist Todd Fuller is drawing a larger than life sketch of Harry Thompson for his exhibition. PHOTO: Laura Telford.

A new exhibition combines film and drawing to tell the story of Port Macquarie icon Harry Thompson the unofficial mayor of Shelly Beach.

A sketch animation artist, [Todd Fuller started work on the exhibition during his time as an Artist in Residency at the Glasshouse in October, 2018](#) and said he is delighted to be back showcasing his work.

"During my residency it was an intense two week period where I tried to find out and explore as much of the local landscape and area as possible," Todd said.

"I did a lot of sketching to make into animations during that time and was able to go away with a great sense of what I was doing.

"Growing up my family came to Port Macquarie a lot for holidays and I have a vivid memory of the thong tree that Harry made from forgotten items on the beach in case people came back looking for them.

"To be able to talk to people who knew him and for them to share their memories of him was wonderful."

As a result of his residency, Todd has created a five minute animated video which tells the story of Harry and his caravan in Port Macquarie.

"People will very easily be able to recognise the significant places that Harry used to go in town," he said.

["The film flicks between Harry as a young man arriving in Port Macquarie and then Harry in his later years looking out over his favourite beach.](#)

"The exhibition is a nod to Harry."

Todd said the town of Port Macquarie is a character weaved throughout the animation and locals will certainly be transported back to a simpler time.



 IN ACTION: Todd during his Artist in Residency program in 2018. PHOTO: Laura Telford.

Bridget Purtill, gallery curator said the exhibition will connect with a wide range of people.

"It is poetic that Todd is not only retelling the story of an iconic local figure but that he too shared memories with this area and of Harry," Bridget said.

"Through memories, conversations and observations, Todd with lyrical visual storytelling has brought new life to the former local character.

"Harry was a colourful character who made Shelly Beach his home many years after winning the lotto.

"It always struck me that maybe winning the lotto wasn't Harry's pot of gold - [that it was actually about finding this special place, Shelly Beach.](#)"



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