

## Sir Thomas Blamey Portrait – Statement from General Manager Peter Thompson

Wagga Wagga City Council takes enormous pride in its relationship with the Australian Defence Force over the past 100-plus years.

The Council regularly takes actions which demonstrate this pride and respect such as granting Freedom of the City to the Kapooka Army Band in 2023 and adopting a street naming protocol for the new Special Activation Precinct at Bomen which uses the names of the sappers killed at Kapooka in a training accident in 1945.

The Member for Riverina, the Hon. Michael McCormack MP, has used the media to criticise the Council however the substance of his commentary regarding the portrait of Sir Thomas Blamey is misleading and untrue.

The portrait of Sir Thomas Blamey has never been placed into storage.

In August this year the portrait was placed on exhibition in a different location which is consistent with the routine rotation of many of our artworks.

The portrait hangs proudly in our much-loved Museum of the Riverina Historic Council Chambers site, scarcely more than 40 metres from its previous location in the Council Meeting Room, which is not open to the public unless a meeting is taking place.

The portrait enjoys pride of place in a public museum which is free for all to attend.

It is immediately across the road from our equally loved Victory Memorial Gardens.

Members of the public can visit the Eternal Flame, read the names of the fallen, see the recently unveiled statute remembering the Australian Light Horse and the even more recently unveiled statue of Simpson and his Donkey.

They can then walk across the pedestrian crossing and view the portrait of Sir Thomas Blamey at the museum.

In its place in the Council Meeting Room, we now exhibit the painting known as an “Illuminated Address” which records the granting of the Freedom of the City to the Australian Army Band Kapooka in 2023.

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## About Wagga Wagga City Council

Wagga Wagga City Council serves more than 68,000 residents across an area of 4825 square kilometres with an overall budget of \$240 million.

The organisation manages more than \$2.48 billion in assets, including a 2300km road network, Wagga Wagga Airport, Livestock Marketing Centre, and the Oasis Aquatic Centre.

Council also provides important community facilities such as Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, Wagga Wagga City Library, Museum of the Riverina, and Civic Theatre, as well as maintaining countless parks, playgrounds, and sporting facilities to ensure Wagga maintains its reputation as 'the City of Good Sports'.

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