

Jervis Bay Museum

Idris Murphy & Alison Chiam – Gallipoli exhibition discussion

I am Max Dingle and I will be MC for this event.

I am a painter and sculptor but my connection with Gallipoli is from the time I was Assistant Director at the National Maritime Museum. I travelled to Istanbul and co-chaired, along with a representative from the Turkish Institute of Naval Archaeology, an investigative workshop into the Australian submarine AE2 which was the first submarine to penetrate the Dardenelles into the Sea of Marmara. AE2 achieved this on 25 April 1915 and it's success and potential to disrupt Turkish supply lines is often cited as one of the reasons that the landings at Gallipoli went ahead. AE2 was damaged by shell fire five days later and without loss of life, scuttled. In 2007 we investigated the possibility of preserving and or raising AE2.

Our recommendations to the Australian & Turkish Governments were that the wreck remain in its final resting place in 72 meters of water as the potential for damage and the possibility that the live torpedoes on board may explode was far too high. A number of in-situ preservation measures were also recommended. On completion of the investigation we all travelled to Gallipoli and were given to opportunity to toured what remains of the battlefield by walking / climbing, in the footsteps of the soldiers, from the landing beach to the summit.

Idris Murphy has had a long and distinguished involvement on the arts, as a celebrated painter and educator . He is represented in many major collections and has been the recipient of numerous awards including winning the 2014 Gallipoli Art Prize with his painting Gallipoli Evening 2013, which was inspired by the place as well as a recent discovery of 160 letters written by grandfather Charles Idris Pike from the battlefields of Gallipoli and the Western Front to his sweetheart Violet (who later became Charles' wife).

I am sure you all know Alison Chiam, one of our well known local artists and an art educator who through her workshops provides artists from our area exposure to the talent and wisdom of many major Australian artists. In 2013 a group of artists, including Alison went on a trip to Gallipoli to paint, the trip was inspired by Idris Murphy, and the outcome for Alison is the exhibition hanging here at the moment, *TIES : Memories of Gallipoli*.

The format for the evening is Idris Murphy will tell us a little more about the letters and the Gallipoli connection, followed by Alison and the experience of painting Gallipoli. We will then have time for questions.

Max Dingle

17 March 2016