



Maroon league legends immortalised on canvas

A RUGBY league legend came face to face with an earlier version of himself in Townsville yesterday.

Queensland and Australian champion 'Big' Artie Beetson was shocked when he saw a painting of the state's Team of the Century – which included him depicted at his playing weight.

"They made me look nice and slim so that's good," he said.

Roma-born Beetson, the 'enforcer', who captained Queensland to its first State of Origin win in 1980, unveiled the painting at a private lunch at

Jupiters Casino.

The painting was commissioned by the Queensland Rugby League this year to celebrate the NRL's centenary year.

Urbex, a subsidiary of civil construction company BMD Group, will display the rare 2m x 1.5m painting at its Kalynda Chase sales office for the next eight days. The painting, by Welsh-born Davis Thomas, features 17 legends of the game including honorary captain Wally Lewis and inspirational halfback Allan Langer.

The oldest player honoured is

Duncan Thompson, who first played for Queensland in 1915. Darren Lockyer is the youngest and only current player to be included.

Urbex Residential North Queensland general manager Neil Bennett said it was important to give the public a chance to see the painting.

"(It) represents an enormous part of rugby league history and it is something which wouldn't normally be on show in North Queensland," he said.

The painting will be on show until November 16.



EARLY VERSION ... Artie Beetson and Neil Bennett with the painting on show until November 16