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## City art collection grows with bequest

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Shoalhaven City's art collection will grow substantially with a bequest from two art lovers from the city. Max Dingle and Gavin Hughes have made Shoalhaven City Council a generous offer and have decided to leave their comprehensive art collection to the city.

Shoalhaven City Mayor Councillor Greg Watson said it was a great pleasure to hear that two local residents had decided to bequeath their collection to the city.

"Max Dingle and Gavin Hughes have been collecting art works and sculptures for the past 40 years and such is their love of the city they have decided that it is best to leave this art collection to the Shoalhaven City," Cllr Watson said.

"This bequest will see more than 170 art works become available to the city and more importantly it will provide a sharp focus on Australian women's art over the past 40 years."

The art collection is made up of Australian women's artists with works from the 1950s to the present. The collection has a large number of works by Victorian artist Margaret Dredge [1928 – 2001].

Both Mr Dingle and Mr Hughes knew and supported Margaret during her career. They acquired their first work by Margaret Dredge in 1964 and the last painting was purchased from her estate in 2005.

Max Dingle explains why they want their collection to benefit the Shoalhaven: "While the first works were purchased in the early 1960s, interest started when I was studying art in Nowra in the late 1960s. I was studying at Nowra TAFE and the first exhibition of my own art works was in the Nowra library [which is now the Shoalhaven City Arts Centre] in 1970."

"I then gained entry into the National Art School in Sydney in the early 1970s. We began to get serious about collecting art works about this time."

The collection now contains 170 works including 40 sculptures. Some of the sculptures, including Aurelia by Jan King – on loan to Council – will be used as art works in the new Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre.

Gavin is an architect working locally and in Sydney, and is responsible for architectural work at the Lady Denman museum in Huskisson.

The first exhibition of works from the bequest will be on show in the Arts Centre in 2009.

Footnote: To celebrate the signing of the bequest Gavin Hughes and Max Dingle resorted to a quiet celebration – they purchased another art work.



ART: Signing the bequest for the M G Dingle & G B Hughes Art Collection is the Shoalhaven City Mayor Councillor Greg Watson and Gavin Hughes and Max Dingle.