



Governor samples Cunnamulla art

An inaugural art exhibition sponsored by the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) was one of the highlights of a visit to the Far South Western town of Cunnamulla by Queensland Governor Penelope Wensley (pictured left) last week.

RADF is a program delivered through a partnership with the State Government, local government and the community to provide financial assistance to support the development of art and craft in regions such as the Paroo Shire.

RADF, which started in 1992, has helped many workshops, schools and training opportunities for budding artists in the Paroo Shire and other areas.

The inaugural exhibition – a selection of works created since 1992 under RADF-funded programs – included pastels, silversmithing, furniture restoration, embroidery, poetry and ironwork.

Paroo Mayor Jo Sheppard (pictured centre) said she had met Ms Wensley in Birdsville at the 2008 OQTA awards function and was delighted to welcome her to a special, community function in Paroo Shire.

More than 100 people attended the opening to meet Ms Wensley, who delivered a heart-warming speech endorsing the good work of the RADF program and outlining the importance of the arts in isolated



areas. Cr Sheppard presented Ms Wensley with a small gift, a selection of local produce, as a token of the community's appreciation of her participating in such an important local event.

Cr Sheppard also recognised the exhibition coordinator, Louise Travers.

"Without Louise and her committed, small band of helpers, this exhibition would never have got off the ground," he said.

"Our community is proud of the Regional Art Gallery which is quickly

becoming recognised as the premier art gallery in this part of the world.

"We have hosted some fantastic exhibitions throughout 2008 and to have Her Excellency open our first exhibition for 2009 can only be a positive indication of the further success the community can expect from our gallery."

The Governor also toured Cunnamulla, including a visit to a local organic wheat farm, seen as a pointer to future development of an organic basin in the Paroo Shire and SW Queensland.