

COLLIE ART GALLERY

Statement by Member for Collie–Preston

MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie–Preston) [12.54 pm]: It may surprise some members of this house to learn that the town of Collie last year became home to the first purpose-built A-class art gallery to be opened in Western Australia since the Art Gallery of Western Australia was built in the 1970s. This extraordinary new centre for the arts is testament to the dedication of a group of volunteers who raised the \$2 million needed for its construction. The Collie Art Gallery was built as part of the Shire of Collie's SuperTowns program and was made possible with funding from the Shire of Collie; royalties for regions; Bendigo Bank, Collie; the Coal Miners' Welfare Board of WA; and Lotterywest. Last month, the gallery opened an exhibition of works by The South West Printmakers. It sold 13 works of art on the first night. Also on display is beautiful finely crafted woodwork made by retired miners who have spent half their working lives underground. This new gallery is creating income for artists, craftspeople, local cafes, hotels and motels. Thousands of people who may never have thought of visiting Collie before are now coming to see the work of local artists in our art gallery, and I invite members of this house to give the Collie Art Gallery all the support it deserves, and to make the effort to visit Collie themselves.