

## Land purchased for Art School in Ashe

Written by

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Property purchased last week will be the site of the Paul and Florence Thomas Memorial Art School. Florence Thomas, referred to by some as Ashe County's greatest artist, died earlier this year- leaving a major provision in a trust for the founding of the school.

Three directors were named in the trust: Robert Franklin of McFarland and Company, Inc. Publishers, executive director of the Ashe County Arts Council, Jane Lonon and painter Melba Miller. The property chosen for the school is 10.3 acres in Glendale Springs on Trading Post Road near the Blue Ridge Parkway. The building was originally known as Lee's Lodge and includes several residences, a 20-unit motel and a restaurant. Initially, the school will offer instruction in landscape painting. Curriculum offerings will be expanded as the school develops. Classes are expected to begin in the summer of 2008.