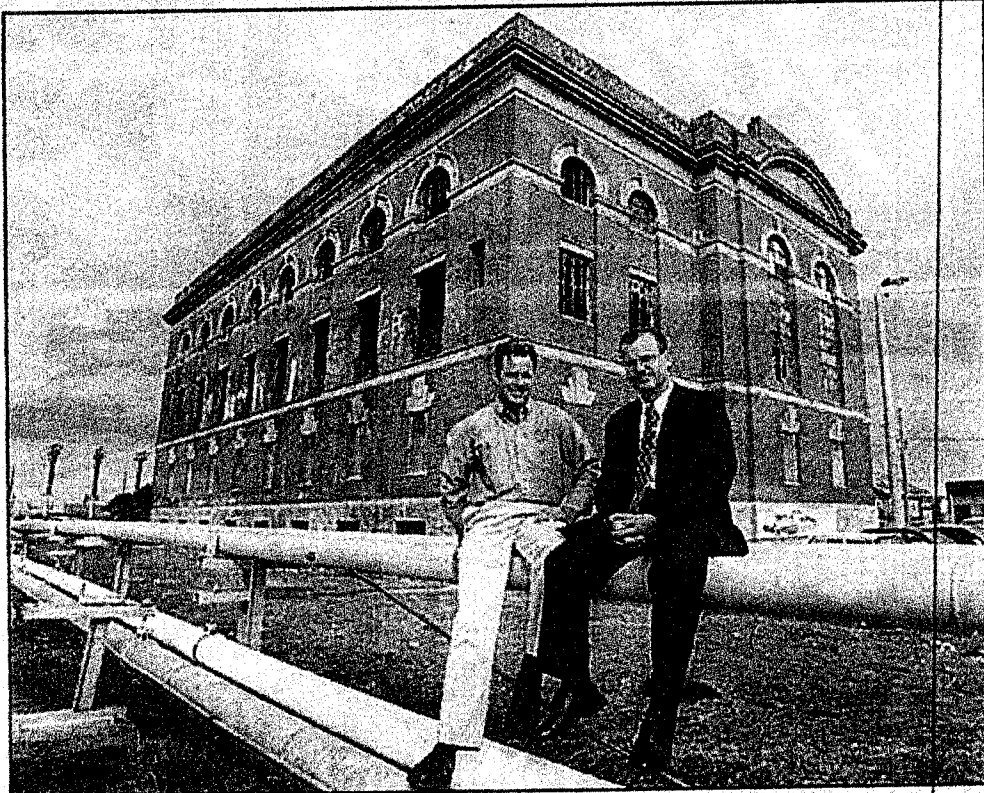


Railway building on track for facelift



Darren Williams (left) and Nigel Edwards are the driving forces behind a project to turn the Newport railway substation into a community arts centre. Picture: Matthew Murphy.

By Vaughan Mawbey

THE Newport railway substation is to get a \$120,000 clean-up as part of a plan to turn the derelict building into a community arts centre.

Last week the Hobsons Bay Council decided to give \$20,000 towards the clean-up, which is expected to start this weekend.

A council officer's report said the substation would be renovated by a community group, the Hobsons Bay Community Arts Centre (HBCAC).

VicUni has promised \$80,000 to pay for up to 53 work-for-the-

dole trainees to clean up the site, and local industry has given \$20,000 in materials and services to help the project.

Two local residents, Nigel Edwards and Darren Williams, are the driving forces behind the project.

Mr Edwards said the renovated building would be home to "arts-related businesses" such as multimedia producers and a group that restores paintings and sculptures.

The HBCAC wants to make the building as accessible to the public as possible, he said.

The first stage of the restora-

tion will cost about \$1,259,000 and will be followed by two more stages, which will involve restoring the interior and making artists' studios, commercial coffee shops and reception areas available for use.

Mayor Brad Matheson said: "Darren Williams and Nigel Edwards are the kind of community members who make Hobsons Bay such a wonderful place to live and work.

"This is a great community initiative which will bring about a fantastic asset for the people of this city and, in particular, our arts community," he said.