

# Willing workers wanted

By Vaughan Mawbey

**WANTED:** willing workers to help turn the derelict Newport railway substation into a community arts centre.

A committee in charge of the project is seeking 40 job trainees to take part in a work scheme, and also wants volunteers who will supervise the trainees.

Darren Williams, president of the Hobsons Bay Community Arts Centre, said the committee is preparing for two intakes of 20 trainees, who will work for 16 weeks each, receiving full-time wages as tradesmen's assistants.

During this time, they will also receive training in building industry skills from Victoria University.

Mr Williams said the committee would give preference to applicants who had some building trades experience or skills.

The committee was also seeking volunteer supervisors with building industry skills, he said.

Mr Williams said during the 32 weeks the trainee workers were on site, the committee aimed to mend the many broken windows of the 20-metre high building, install screens that would save the new windows from being broken, mend the leaking roof, refurbish the inside of the building, and create a hall for performances.

His call for workers followed an announcement by the Employment Minister John Pandazopoulos that the State Government's Community Jobs Program would take on 40 people to help transform the Newport substation into "a venue to promote



A mural adorns the outside of the Newport substation.

regional visual and performing arts".

Mr Pandazopoulos said the Newport substation would be one of three projects to receive a total of \$525,000 under the Community Jobs Program.

About 400 people walked through the cavernous substation building when representatives of 18 schools and community leaders attended the launch of a school arts project there recently.

Murals painted by school students were fixed to the outside of the building, and there were music recitals by the children.

Cr Brad Matheson announced the Hobsons Bay Council would

give \$35,000 to the jobs program to help refurbish the substation.

He said two similar substations have been renovated for community use in Melbourne suburbs.

One, in Albion, was used as a Maltese community centre, and the other, in Fitzroy, had been turned into an aged care centre for the Italian community.

Cr Matheson said he looked forward to the day when the Newport substation was opened for use as a community arts centre.

Application forms for work on the substation can be obtained by phoning 0415 369 874.