

secured the grant unbeknown amount of funding," Mr Aitchison said.

Club president and secretary Ray Aitchison said he

with the tide which can change the level of the river by up to 1.5m." The ramp was last up-

place to fish for trout," he said. "The season officially opens on August 7 and the new floating pontoon facility will

tians would recall summer holidays with freshly caught fish on the barbie," Ms Giddings said on av-

to the MAST website — masttas.gov.au for further information and an application form.

# Team taps Willow Court's paranormal potential

MATT SMITH

GHOST hunter by night, heritage ambassador by day — Nick Jarvis could never be accused of not being passionate about New Norfolk's old mental institution Willow Court.

About a year ago the New Norfolk born-and-bred Jarvis was being warned by local police he would face trespassing charges if he kept up his unofficial ghost tours of the iconic site.

Today he is part of a new committee set up to preserve the area and research the tourism potential of the site which boasts impressive architecture pre-dating Port Arthur.

Mr Jarvis said his mother and grandmother both worked in the kiosk at the Royal Derwent Hospital, before Willow Court's closure in 2000.

"I love the buildings and the architecture," Mr Jarvis said. "But during 2007 and 2008 the place was in such a bad state."

Mr Jarvis said fires, trespassing and vandalism were rife during the years following the institution's closure made contributing to the deterioration of the site a constant battle.

"Many of the people associated with the site operated like a secret society," he said.

Mr Jarvis said a more proactive and sympathetic council had developed a greater commitment to preserving Willow Court in recent years.

With a strong interest in the paranormal, Mr Jarvis and four friends set up the



**SPIRIT LEVELLERS:** Ghost hunters Aiden Sullivan, of New Norfolk, left, and Nick Jarvis, of Austins Ferry, check for the supernatural in Willow Court's Ward E. Picture: RAOUL KOCHANOWSKI

Australian Paranormal Investigation Unit in early 2008.

Two of the co-founding members of APTU, Aiden Sullivan and Glenn Hevey, have joined Mr Jarvis on the Willow Court Committee.

During the Willow Court Open Day in late May, the three friends recognised there was a strong public interest in

ghost tours at the site. The mental institution has an infamous history and still con-

figures up bad memories for many members of the Tasmanian community.

"In the past people have felt things like ghost tours were inappropriate," Mr Jarvis said. "I believe if managed prop-

erly, like the tours in Port Arthur, there is no reason why we could not see official ghost tours in the future."

Until that time Mr Jarvis and the team at the APTU have requested permission from the Derwent Valley Council to film a documentary about the ghostly history of the site.

They should have a response to their inquiry this month.

Mr Jarvis said he would welcome any information from the public regarding Willow Court or the Royal Derwent Hospital.

For more information about the APTU go to [www.paranormal.com](http://www.paranormal.com)

## Public input call on windfall



**Damian Bester**

AN unexpected \$89,000 has been offered to the Derwent Valley Council on the condition that it meet certain criteria set by the Federal Government.

On June 18, then prime minister Kevin Rudd announced that additional funding of \$100 million for the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program would be made available to councils.

This funding will help councils build and modernise community facilities, including town halls, libraries, community centres, sports grounds and environmental infrastructure.

It has been made available to help strengthen communities during the economic recovery by supporting local jobs and providing long-term ben-