

# Portland pushing pedal power

By SHANE FOWLES

PORTLAND is aiming to become a bicycle-friendly city, with the creation of a biking path network — the focus of a public meeting tomorrow.

Glenelg Shire's councillor Frank Zeigler said a master plan would be crafted with the vision of promoting safe bicycle commuting through the city.

Secure bicycle parking will also be a feature, to encourage people to move to the cleaner transport alternative.

"After all, Glenelg Shire is the hub of renewable energies and should proudly promote a philosophy of sustainability," Cr Zeigler said.

The meeting will be held in the council office at 4pm.

**Really cooling off**  
SWIMMERS have been feeling the chill at Cobden's swimming pool.

The pool's solar hot water system broke down, causing temperatures to drop about four degrees. Corangamite Shire recreation manager Trev Greenberger said the system would be fixed in the off-season because the pool would have to be closed.



The Warbles, aka John Bode (left), Rebecca Bode, Tania de Jong and Jonathan Morton, from The Song Room, during yesterday's performance. **Picture:** GLEN WATSON

# Visitors making a song and dance about opera

By KATE BUTLER

OPERA is not boring. That's what 1000 school kids learnt yesterday as they sang, danced and waved their hands to a performance by national organisation, The Song Room. The Song Room founder

and performer Tania de Jong said the visit aimed to teach youngsters about opera and the performing arts. "They don't know a lot of operas or in many of these schools' cases, much about music, dance and performing arts, because it's not part of their curriculum," she said. "We don't want them to think it's boring, so we perform bits and pieces from various operas and make sure it's funny and entertaining."

Pupils from 14 south-west schools, who learnt lyrics of songs before the performance, packed out the Warr-

nambool Entertainment Centre. Ms de Jong said she hoped the children, some of whom joined the four performers on stage, walked away with a bigger passion for drama. "Smaller schools don't necessarily have the resources to have a music or

arts teacher, so this helps make up for it," she said. "Research shows that children who participate in performing arts have great communication skills and more self-esteem. "Some kids might now go home and say to mums and dads that they want to try it."