

SWOP EXPANDS

Colin Woodall is one of 1,000 clients who have used SWOP, the Support Work Program run by ARC (Action and Resource Centre) for low income families. Although he is a quadraplegic, Colin has been able to continue working with the help of transport provided by SWOP. Each day for the past 15 months a SWOP worker has picked him up from the city and driven him either to hospital or to his home in Fitzroy. Colin's parents are elderly and he recently moved to a centre for quadraplegics in Croydon — moved by SWOP, of course.

The program was set up with two objectives: to create jobs for the long term and young unemployed and to provide a transport and handyman service for low income people. The majority of jobs done have been furniture and rubbish removals, and home maintenance jobs which don't need a qualified tradesmen.

Until March this year, SWOP was subsidised by the Brotherhood and a \$15,000 grant from the Department of Social Security. With its dual objectives, the program was never intended to be self-supporting. The Department of Employment and Industrial Relations has recognized its value as a job creation and training program, and has now granted \$42,000 for one year. This has been used to employ an



Mr. J. Woodall (left), his son Colin (centre) and SWOP worker Graham Pring who moved Colin from Fitzroy to Croydon.

education officer who is a qualified trade instructor, an on-site tradesman and an office administrator, plus equipment such as handtools and portable electric tools. Graham Pring is one SWOP worker who hopes that by working with the tradesmen, he can learn enough to get a job as a panel beater. Graham had worked as a cleaner but was unemployed for a long time before joining SWOP.

SWOP has been approved as a formal training program and as

such, all 'trainees' will be eligible for NEAT training allowances. The income from work done will be used partly to cover vehicle costs, with the remainder accumulating so that SWOP can continue after the grant runs out next March.

By the end of May a minimum of 16 people will be employed, all of whom would otherwise have had no chance of employment. SWOP will help them to gain confidence and to learn basic work skills so they can move into the permanent workforce.

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