

# felt 'safe' watching implosion

method, Mr Sullivan said, "By virtue of the fact that I had my family with me, I was absolutely convinced it was a safe place to be."

The inquest into the death of Katie Bender, during last July's implosion, also heard that ACT officials knew six years before the demolition that the main hospital tower was built of concrete-encased steel.

Jack Kershaw, president of Canberra Community Action on Acton, a group opposed to the hospital's demolition, tendered a redevelopment feasibility study

report dated July 1991 in which it was stated that the main hospital building was "of structural steel frame encased in concrete".

The report was jointly prepared by the ACT Board of Health and the consultants Richard Glenn and Associates, the company which undertook the 1995 feasibility study which led to the decision to demolish the hospital by implosion.

Early in the inquest, it was revealed that the explosives sub-contractor, Rod McCracken, had not become aware that the hos-

pital was built of steel, rather than reinforced concrete, until May 1997.

Last week, the court heard that senior Totalcare staff knew by at least December 1996 about the building's steel structure. It also heard that a submission containing this information had been produced at a meeting in July 1996 between Mr Kershaw, Chief Minister Kate Carnell and Mr Sullivan. Mr Sullivan said he did not recall this being discussed.

Mr Kershaw also tendered a facsimile sent to the then minis-

ter for urban services, Trevor Kaine, two days before the implosion which outlined the group's concerns over Totalcare's quality assurance system for the project. It asked Mr Kaine to call a halt to the implosion until he was satisfied that Totalcare had a fully documented quality assurance system in place.

During his seventh day as a witness at the inquest into the death of Katie Bender, Mr Sullivan said it was the demolition contractor, City and Country Demolitions, which chose implo-

sion as the demolition method. He did not believe the ACT Cabinet decision to approve demolition had anything to do with the decision to choose implosion.

He told Alyn Doig, counsel for City and Country's boss Tony Fenwick, that he would have been concerned that Mr Fenwick was still being asked, in April 1997, to supply information about the expertise of his explosives sub-contractor and for his demolition "method statement".

Mr Fenwick had been asked

for this at a tender interview on March 23.

He had undertaken to provide it as soon as possible.

He had been asked again, and given the same response, at a second interview on April 14, three days after his tender to demolish Sylvia Curley had been accepted.

It was the fact that he had been asked the same question, and given the same answer, in April which concerned Mr Sullivan.

The inquest continues today.

## Artists take the law into their own hands

Pictures: GARY SCHAFER

Deena, Anthony, Emily and Lauren Gold, of Melbourne, are drawn into the Carved Information as Real Object exhibit, above, and below, The Long Arm of the Law.

The images awaiting visitors to the High Court of Australia this month seem somehow appropriate: a paper spiral and the long arm of the law are among the exhibits on display as part of the second Canberra National Sculpture Forum.

Included in the exhibition are works by Perth sculptor Graham Hay, who has twisted hundreds of books to produce his work, and *The Long Arm of the Law*, by Sydney sculptor Susan White.

Hay's work, *Carved Information As Real Object*, was produced with the help of Canberra Grammar School students during his time there as an artist in residence. The sculpture consists of thousands of books, pamphlets and annual reports

that have been threaded on to a massive wire coil. "We need paper. It is a social product of how we operate as humans," Hay said. "There are millions of tonnes of paper used in the world."

*The Long Arm of the Law* is being shown for the first time in Australia after being rejected by the Art Gallery of NSW. It was rejected when it was entered under the name *Fitzgerald*, inspired at the time by the Fitzgerald inquiry into police corruption. "I try and say something through my artwork, reflecting the current issues at the time it was produced," she said.

The exhibition will be on show at the High Court and throughout Canberra until April 26.

— JAMES WELLS



## Four lodge

The bids vary widely in cost, technology and time for the trip.

The fastest non-stop trip, of 59 minutes, is proposed by Transrapid, using a magnetic levitation (MagLev) system. Transrapid, which has the support of Janet Holmes a Court's John Holland Group, has not issued a figure on its bid. It expects the service to be running by the end of 2003.

Transrapid also announced plans yesterday for a service from Sydney to the city's western suburbs. The tilt trains are proposed by Inter Capital Express and Capital Rail.

Mrs Carnell said each of the consortiums had demonstrated their commitment by lodging a \$100,000 registration fee in December last year.

The preferred bidder would have to satisfy planning and environmental requirements and prove the financial viability of the project before winning final approval.