

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT 2007-08

Ladies and Gentlemen, Committee members, and special guest Tim Jones - welcome to the Cromwell Promotion Group's Annual General Meeting. Cromwell has continued its strong growth over the last year with near record building activity and, due to good weather, excellent orcharding and viticulture results. As I mentioned last year, the politicians call for decreased activity is normally shrugged off by Cromwell because of its proximity to Queenstown and Wanaka – but this year it is different. The global slowing down and oil crises has affected Queenstown and may have downstream effects on the Cromwell economy.

However, at this stage indications such as resource and building consents are positive and we may avoid any problems. Nationwide statistics indicate that the number of new housing units authorised in May have declined by a third – a significant number. I guess Cromwell is merely catching up on what building activity was missed or delayed over the last upbeat five years. The value of building consents over the last five years are as follows:

	<u>2003-04</u>	<u>2004-05</u>	<u>2005-06</u>	<u>2006-07</u>	<u>2007-08</u>
Cromwell	\$36M	\$31M	\$45M	\$59M	\$59M
Central Otago (total)	\$70M	\$77M	\$79M	\$94M	\$97M
Cromwell % of total	51%	40%	57%	63%	60%

For those new to Cromwell and the Group, I am going to repeat what we are here for:

*The Promotion Group's aim is to attract people to visit, play, stay, or reside and work in the Cromwell District, for the benefit and betterment of all existing residents and ratepayers. In general, the role of the Group is to provide an environment in which local firms, organisations and operators can work within.*

To achieve these aims, the Group spent approximately \$124,000 last year on various activities. Income comes from a \$90,000 grant from the Cromwell Community Board; voluntary subscriptions; and 'profit' from the Cromwell Summer Series. Other funds are specifically derived from gaming machine trusts for projects such as the Cromwell Summer Series, Fireworks Display, equipment grants and walkway development.

The Group has two subcommittees as follows:

The **Cromwell Town Centre Committee** with Chairperson Graeme McDowell. This group had a continued poor year attendance-wise at their meetings but got involved with items such as: Mall maintenance, Mall sound system and Mall Surveillance system. Two main issues were dealt with:

- The Council report on The Mall by Octa Associates. This involved several meetings and discussions on what to do with The Mall – along similar lines as the 1998 'Let's Get Radical' exercise. Although the report outlined various items considered that should be undertaken to revitalise The Mall, these should be treated with caution at this stage as the Cromwell Community Board has yet to fully consider and assess the options.
- Christmas Decorations. The Committee has been working with Trish Willocks of Visual Effects in Dunedin to devise a suitable layout for decorating The Mall at

Christmas. Items envisaged are Christmas trees, garlands, flashing lights (may be permanent on trees and pergolas) etc. It is expected the cost will be up to some \$35,000 so the Committee will be seeking funding when the final plan becomes available soon.

The **Tourism Cromwell Group** under the helm of Glen Christiansen has had a better year with momentum starting to grow behind the group. Activities included: new website; fishing competition; Cromwell Clean-ups; and input into the Cromwell Community Plan.

The Promotion Group's main activities for 2007-08 were:

- Cromwell Summer Series. This year there were 1817 (1789 previous season) participants in the six event series. Special thanks go to all the volunteer staff, Sports Central and sponsors New Zealand Community Trust. These events form the main workload of the Group and continue to give Cromwell a high profile whilst providing participants with a safe environment to undertake their chosen sport. Thanks also go to Pub Charity for the purchase of a double-sided Sports Clock for use at our events.
- The 'National Cherry Spitting Contest', at Old Cromwell attracted the Australian Champion Paul Omodei, and the Manjimup Cherry Queen to our contest. Paul beat our Champ Michael Robinson but Michael flew over to Perth (again) and regained his Australasian title.
- Pub Charity and the Cromwell Town & Country Club again sponsored our annual 'Fireworks Display' that was held in November, at Melmore Marina.
- The Canterbury A&P Show continues to be our main display event, and includes sponsorship at the New Zealand Trotting Cup meeting in November. The Group had transport problems that were overcome and our 'normal' display attracted over 12,000 people into the marquee. Thanks go to the many volunteers who assist in this project.
- Local activity support included grants or assistance to local clubs who attract visitors into Cromwell and included: Old Cromwell Town, Cromwell Race Day, Cromwell Harness Racing Club, Otago Polytechnic (Young Viticulturist Contest), National Gold Panning Contest, Cromwell Patchwork Group, Central Otago Farmers Market, Cromwell Arts & Crafts, Cromwell-Queenstown Cycle Tour, Sports Central, NZ National Classic Car Rally, NZ Motorhomes Association Easter Rally and Southland Ford Car Club. It is pleasing to note the substantial funding recently received by Old Cromwell that will provide improvements and developments to that complex.

The Group also assists in various aspects of tourism ventures in the district. In essence we are attempting to capture a portion of the countries \$20.1B tourism industry - \$8.8B spent by international visitors, and the \$11.3B spent by domestic tourism. Although the creation of a 'tourist oriented strip' between Dead Man's Point Bridge and Goldfields Mining Centre is taking some time, some progress has been made. The Council's Sargood development should assist in stopping the tourist get off State highway 8b and into town, when started. The Nichols Garden centre site seems to be the first project that hopefully will see more tourist-oriented firms in this vicinity. On the other hand, the development of the Cromwell Motorsport Park is in the hands of the Environment Court, and the development of a Goldfields Museum in the Kawarau Gorge appears to have stalled completely.

The Group has also been involved with:

- A reprint of the three historic booklet series made possible with an \$8000 grant from Central Lakes Trust.
- Otago University Tourism students who are using Cromwell as a case study.
- A Lincoln College study entitled “Cromwell: Central to Everywhere” that surveyed resident’s perceptions of the districts strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and barriers to future development.
- Central Otago District Council “Cromwell Community Plan’. This report has been completed and will be released shortly.
- NZ Today magazine. This was our major advertising project this year and involved liaison with Editor Allan Dick who was on a ‘return mission’ to his favourite ‘Central’.
- Development of the Bannockburn Bridge to Ripponvale walking track, in conjunction with Sport Otago. Although we ‘got into trouble’ with the NZ Historic Places Trust it is important to note that the track is very popular and informative. As funding allows, further work on hazard and interpretation signs will allow the track to be officially opened. It is also proposed to extend the track to the ‘Stagger Inn’ shed in the Kawarau Gorge – and hence onto Goldfields Mining Centre.
- Our website [www.cromwell.org.nz](http://www.cromwell.org.nz) is being managed by Front2Back at Greymouth. Although it remains ‘functional’ it is probably time to ‘revitalise’ the site again this year.
- This year the Group has purchased a container for files and gear storage.

Thank you everyone who has made the Group’s activities such a success over the last year. Special thanks go to financial advisors Peter Mead and Cherry Dunlop from Mead Stark, the Management Committee, all the Cromwell Summer Series staff, and Secretary Terry Emmitt. I wish the incoming President and Committee all the best for the year ahead.

Adrian Somerville  
President  
July 2008