

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT 2006-07

Ladies and Gentlemen, Committee members, and special guest Byron Stevenson from Queenstown - welcome to the Cromwell Promotion Group's Annual General Meeting. Over the last year Cromwell has had sustained growth in all sectors and we congratulate both private interests, and the Cromwell Community Board for this growth. Special thanks go to the Board for their positive attitude to district development with their continued 'supply' of ample Business, Industrial and Residential land so that Cromwell does not have any restrictions to growth. We hope this leadership continues into the future, especially after the October elections.

Last year Tourism trends improved sharply over the whole Central Otago district, probably stimulated by a large lift in visitors to New Zealand. The overall growth was driven by increasing numbers of Australian and Chinese visitors – with the Chinese now taking over fourth place from the Koreans – but still following Australia, the UK and the USA. Our Group needs to think harder about tapping these visitors rather than relying on our more traditional New Zealand or Otago/Southland customers.

On the domestic front building statistics showed another sharp increase despite the politicians call for decreased activity. In my mind, the Cromwell district tends to shrug off any of the national economic declines, and is more reactive to what happens in neighbours Queenstown and Wanaka. Let's have a quick look at the Council Building Consent figures (ending May) for the last four years:

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

This year I am going to depart from my normal report format because we need to stand back and consider 'what it is that we actually do'. It will also help the continual flow of new residents into the district who do not know about, or understand, our activities.

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. That aim has not changed in the last decade. In general, the role of the Group is to provide an environment in which local organisations and operators can work within. To achieve these aims, the Group spent approximately \$125,000 last year on various activities.

The major source of funding comes from a \$90,000 grant from the Cromwell Community Board. The Group also derives income from voluntary subscriptions (about \$6,000 to \$7,000 per annum), 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, and walkway development.

The Group's Marketing Plan 2006-07 comprised the following items that were undertaken:

- Advertising: included newspapers, magazines, radio and cinema advertising, direct mail, and internet sites.
- Personal Selling: included Promotions Officer, Information Centre assistance, and guests / giveaways.

- **Publicity:** included Town Centre promotions, Tourism Cromwell, NZ Trotting Cup sponsorship, photographs and displays, banner and signs and event furniture.
- **Sales Promotion:** included attendance at the Canterbury A&P Show, event management, local activity support, walkway development, brochures, imagery and logo.

The Group has two subcommittees.

- The **Cromwell Town Centre Committee** with Chairperson Graeme McDowell. This group had a poor year attendance wise at their meetings but got involved with items such as: Mall maintenance issues, Mall sound system, Mall Surveillance system and Christmas decorations (Swim Centre tree lights). It is pleasing to note that their recent AGM was well attended and that a vibrant committee was formed ready to address all Town Centre problems and Mall entertainment proposals.
- The **Tourism Cromwell Group** has had a variable year but their committee has recently become more focussed on tourism and town issues. It is to be hoped that there will be more opportunities and activities for all the tourism operators to be more involved in the policies of the group as it forms the 'commercial arm' to the 'public good' Promotion Group.

The Group's main activities for 2006-07 were:

- **Cromwell Summer Series.** This year there were 1789 participants in the six event series, slightly down on the 1911 of the previous year. Special thanks go to all the volunteer staff, Sports Central and sponsors Pub Charity and Cycle Surgery Central, who are all required to run these successful events that have become firmly established on the Cromwell calendar. It is intended to continue the series again this year – possibly with a new mountain bike event based at Bendigo.
- Last year our AGM guest speaker Jon Doust convinced us to organise the first 'National Cherry Spitting Contest', at Old Cromwell. The contest went well and our winner Michael Robinson went on to win the Australasian contest held at Manjimup, Perth. It is hoped to run the event again this December.
- Pub Charity and the Cromwell Town & Country Club again sponsored our annual 'Fireworks Display' that was held in November, at Melmore Marina.

The Group's 'Canterbury Campaign' continues to be our main display event, and includes sponsorship at the New Zealand Trotting Cup meeting. It also involves a lot of work and co-ordination with our neighbouring Central Otago promotion groups, and Tourism Central Otago. Special thanks go to all the volunteer staff who take a week off their normal lives in order to promote Cromwell as 'The Gateway to Central Otago'.

Local activity support included grants to clubs who attract visitors into Cromwell and included: Lowburn Collie Dog Club, Old Cromwell Town, Cromwell Race Day, Cromwell Harness Racing Club, Central Speedway, Central Otago Motorcycle Club, Otago Polytechnic (Young Viticulturist Contest), National Gold Panning Contest, Model Railway Exhibition, Cromwell Patchwork Group, Central Otago Farmers Market, Cromwell Arts & Crafts, Cromwell-Queenstown Cycle Tour, Sports Central, and Southland Ford Car Club.

The Group also gets involved with fostering new tourism ventures or Cromwell district economic developments. In general terms this means assisting and informing promoters about the 'system' and 'methods' on how they can achieve their aims. New operators include Paintball Central, a tandem hang-gliding venture, helicopter firms, and the especially exciting Goldfields Museum Charitable Trust and Cromwell Motorsport Park. Further, Byron will update us all with his tourist ventures shortly.

To keep you up to date, the Goldfields Trust has recently made further funding applications in order to construct their \$1.65M museum facility at the Goldfields Mining Centre. The Cromwell Motorsport Park has recently applied for consent to build a vehicle testing and proving track suitable for vehicle proving, driving schools, tourist activities, filming commercials, and motorsport. Land will also be developed for an automotive related commercial park. The Group wish both the Goldfields Museum Trust and Cromwell Motorsport Park Trust all the best in their various endeavours to foster tourism in the Cromwell district.

Cromwell continues to be a 'preferred' place to live and work in Central Otago, due mainly to its modern facilities, central location, and positive thinking Community Board. It is important to maintain that effort so that more industry, horticulture, jobs, students and residents come to enjoy what we all know is the best small town in New Zealand.

I wish to thank everyone who has made the Group's activities such a success over the last year. The list is extensive but 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 2007