



The gel coat has been applied to the apple in the shed whilst the frame work of the pear is pictured with Steve Bell in the foreground.



Cromwell's first fruit, the apple, awaits the artist. The work team is pictured in the foreground.

## Cromwell Promotes its Fruit Production

**from Murray Breen**

*Publicity officer*

*Rotary Club of Cromwell, N.Z.*

The revitalised fruit production industry of Central Otago, New Zealand, has been promoted in an imaginative way near the entrance to Cromwell.

The fruit symbol for this Central Otago town is made up of a supersized apple, pear, nectarine and apricot and has been presented to the town by the Rotary Club of Cromwell.

The original idea came from Rotarian Otto Muller, a thermo-dynamics engineer, who proposed a large bowl of fruit to be built from ferro-cement.

The original fruit-on-bowl proposal was modified by substituting columns for support, angled to give a view of the fruit. Ferro-cement was also set aside, in favour of fibreglass for weight and labour reasons.

Cromwell Borough Council in 1987 called on the community to submit their proposals for something different to advertise Cromwell.

Cromwell Rotary Club's suggestion of the fruit sign was accepted and members agreed to co-ordinate it.

The club successfully applied for a Clyde Dam amenity grant of \$31,000 for the project and Cromwell Borough made available the balance of \$69,000.

Many hours were spent by Rotarian Peter McKinlay in consultation with Dunedin civil and structural engineers Duffil, Watts and King, before final approval to build was given.

The Rotary club was fortunate in obtaining the services of local builder Steve Bell to produce the framework of

the four fruits; whilst Rotary members were responsible for the painting and bending of the steel, placing wire netting over the steelwork and tying same in preparation for the fibreglass applied by Polycraft of Dunedin.

After application of the fibreglass, two coats of gel-coat were applied by Rotarians prior to the application of finishing colours by Wanaka signwriter Gus Nesbitt.

Each fruit model was built on a specially designed cradle to allow rotation for ease of construction, fibreglassing and painting.

The fruit pieces were taken in those cradles by truck to the site, at the northern boundary of the town on State Highway 8A.

A 15-tonne crane was used to lift the fruit (the apple was 6 metres long with a 5.5 metre diameter) on to supporting structures.

Including the steel supports, the nectarine and pear each weighs 2.25 tonnes, the apricot 1.8 tonnes and the apple almost 3 tonnes. Steel beams run through each piece of fruit at the top of the support column for rigidity and

strength against the local winds.

Leaves were duly welded to the stem of the pear. Large local rocks were placed around the base, bedded in soil; ground cover plants and low growing shrubs surround the project.

The local Promotion Group supplied the three signs reading "Cromwell, The Centre of Attraction" and the Otago Central Electric Power Board assisted in the floodlighting of the area.

A fruit sculpture of the highest quality has been produced thanks to many local companies and individuals but more particularly to the many members of the small Rotary Club of Cromwell who donated their hours of free labour. Work started in June, 1989, at which time club membership was only seventeen.

When accepting the project from the club's president, Tony Jopp, the chairman of the Cromwell Community Board said that the sculpture would become a symbol by which future generations in Cromwell would identify their town to people in other parts of New Zealand.

The project was finalised in the autumn when the landscaping was completed.



*Handover day — February 3, 1990. Community Council chairman Duncan Butcher (left) congratulates Rotary President Tony Jopp. Also pictured (left to right) are Rotarians Murray Breen, Otto Muller and Peter McKinlay.*