

Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust, Inc

President's Report 2012

I am pleased to present my third annual report for the Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust.

In the year just past the focus has been very much on preparations for the 150th celebrations marking the discovery of gold in Cromwell and elsewhere in the region.

Gold 150 Celebrations

On going financial assistance from the Central Lakes Trust has enabled us to extend the employment contract for Julie Hughes – our coordinator for all Gold150 activities in the region. Julie has been very active both in collating information of all the community events and in taking a leading role, along with Terry Davis, Royden Thompson and others from your committee in running gold panning demonstrations in many of the schools in the region. This will culminate later this year in a schools' goldpanning championship held in conjunction with the National gold panning championships.

There have been three projects in the last year which the OGHT has used to mark the 150th. The first of these – and by far the most ambitious – was a three day celebration held in the Nevis Valley centred on Graham Stewart's property at Lower Nevis. The success of this was due in large part to the combined efforts of Lex Mclean, Graham Stewart and Sam Graham with support also from other residents of the valley. Well over 1000 people spent part or all of the weekend in March taking part in valley walks and tours, experiencing how to use the "old" Nevis Post Office, watching the old smithy in operation, panning for gold and visiting the displays of family histories and memorabilia.

The second project, which tied in with the first, was to replace the six interpretation panels at various locations in the valley. The old ones had become very difficult to read due to the incursion of moulds and rot. The new style of panels we now use will eliminate this problem.

And the third project was carried out in conjunction with the Ida Valley Cemetery Trust and saw the erection of a kiosk and interpretation panels at the old cemetery at Moa Creek. Members may remember that we visited this remote, historic place during an earlier field trip.

There are a number of other projects planned for our next financial year. By the time of this AGM it is likely that the tailings elevator from the old Bendigo “Gold Light” dredge, currently located at the Lions picnic area on the shores of Lake Dunstan will have been transported back to its original location at the old Bendigo township. This project is being supported by Fulton Hogan who will be providing the heavy lifting equipment. Working in conjunction with the Department of Conservation we plan to make the elevator into a suitable viewing platform which will look over the site of the old Bendigo dredge hole.

There are three other projects planned for this year. The first of these will hopefully see the relocation of the old Chatto Creek dredge pontoon boat from its current position on the right bank of the Manuherikia river to the opposite bank where it is planned to site it adjacent to the rail trail. The second project will see the placement of a string of old dredge buckets on a site adjacent to a DOC reserve. And finally we are looking at having a celebration weekend at Bendigo towards the end of the year to “unveil” the dredge elevator arm with its interpretation panels, “open” the stabilized Bendigo bakehouse plus various other activities. We will be contacting all members nearer the time to advise you of these activities and also to encourage you to join various working bees to assist with the work.

The assistance of the Central Lakes Trust has been a key factor in our ability to undertake these projects and their significant support is greatly appreciated.

Cavalcade 2012

This year the Cavalcade ended in Cromwell with the racecourse being the location for the grand parade, market day and hoedown. Over 500 riders, wagoners and walkers took part on thirteen trails. We noticed this year that there seemed to be a greater number of younger people on the trails – we hope that this trend, if it is one, continues. The final Saturday of the cavalcade was blessed with stunning weather, in marked contrast to the weather experienced on the Thursday when a weather bomb hit Central

Otago, and in particular the Nevis valley where we had three trails progressing through the area. Our thanks go to all Trail Bosses, Wranglers and Gofers who collectively have run successful trails over the years and when conditions have been severe, as they were this year can be relied on to make the right decisions when called upon. And as always a big thank you to the landowners who allow our cavalcade trails to traverse their land. It is only with their support that the cavalcade continues to be the success that it is.

The hoe down was a great evening with the Glen Moffat band and singer Marian Burns. The success of the event can be judged by the fact that there were a number of noise complaints from Cromwell town – some two kilometers away!

The assistance of Roberta Laraman during the busy time leading up to the Cavalcade is also gratefully acknowledged.

Planning is underway for the 2013 Cavalcade which will be finishing in Tapanui.

And this year we farewelled Alistair Gibson and Peter Dymock, both of whom have been trail bosses of long standing. Our heartfelt thanks from the Trust for the service they have given over the years.

Gold panning Championships

This event was held a week later than normal so as to avoid a clash with the Rugby World Cup and attracted increased numbers compared with previous years. This year the overall winner was Bill Lind. Our thanks to David and Amanda Gatward-Ferguson and their committee for organizing not only a very successful competition but also ensuring that the weather was fine – in marked contrast to some previous years. This year the championships will be held in Arrowtown as part of their Gold150 programme. Over the time of last year's championships it was a pleasure to host Kauko and Inkaari Launonen who have built and run the world's most northern gold museum in Tankavaara in northern Finland.

Cromwell Museum Proposal

In 2011 a grouping of the Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust and the Cromwell Genealogy Group jointly approached the Central Otago District Council with a proposal to take over the running of the Cromwell Museum for the overall benefit of the people of Cromwell and the surrounding district. The group also saw this as an opportunity to relocate from their existing offices in the old Cromwell Methodist church and move to a more central location thus being better able to both deal with public enquiries and to better house the archives, collections and miscellany of the group by utilizing the space currently occupied both by the Cromwell I-Site and the Museum. In addition we have concerns about the increasing costs of maintenance and insurance on our old church premises.

The response from the Council at the time was to agree in principle but also to indicate that such a move would not be possible until at least the end of 2012 as the Council had requested a review of the operation of all of its i-Sites. This review has now taken place and the CODC have confirmed their intention to relocate the i-Site from its current location in the Museum building some time during 2013.

Our objectives are broadly to operate and manage the Museum and its collections including archival material for the benefit of the people of Cromwell and the district, and to provide a small research area where genealogical researches could be carried out as well as providing space for our own OGHT operations. It is also felt that a group such as ours by virtue of it being located immediately adjacent to the collections would be able to extract synergies and also to deal with any public enquiries which may arise.

Other objectives would be to enhance the museum's acquisitions by purchase, loan or the gifting of artefacts and other items of historical interest and to either display or store these as appropriate.

We note that there has been an earlier Museum Committee whose role was to set up the Museum and their efforts are to be commended. The current displays provide a memorable and evocative sense of the district's history both since the time of the gold rush and more latterly since the development of the Clyde dam and Lake Dunstan. However, it is apparent to us that there has been little recent activity in regard to the Museum and its collections. The displays have remained largely untouched and we suspect that there is

much local historical material that could be housed and displayed at the museum if the local community was aware of the opportunities.

The group established a small subcommittee in 2011 and since then has received financial information from the Council on the costs of running the current Museum as well as reviewing floor plans for the building. Numerous visits have been made to the Museum to review the collections. We have also taken advice from the south island liaison officer for Te Papa.

We also wish to raise awareness around Cromwell and the region of what we are planning so that people realise that this will be a community-owned resource. We will want to encourage locals to offer their services to both help with the establishment and also with the future voluntary staffing by operating the front-of-house, answering questions and giving tours. We anticipate that a community meeting will need to be held to explain our plans and to gauge the level of local support. Of particular interest is how we can engage with the young people of the district. Volunteer support is seen as crucial for the success of this venture.

It seems to us that there are two possible models to explore – either a charitable trust or an incorporated society with charitable status. An early task would be the drafting of a constitution and the formation of an elected committee with, say, between five and nine members once it has been established that there is support for this proposal at the Council/Community Board level. It should be noted that the ownership of both the building and the collections remains with the Council, with the group that takes over the operation of the Museum having “caretaker” status of the collection. The CODC have agreed in principle to continue funding the operational costs of the Museum at their current levels to cover costs of electricity, rates, phone, insurance etc. It is planned that a Memorandum of Understanding will be drawn up between the Council and the group.

We would also want to make early contact with other regional museums, in particular Central Stories, with a view to learning from their experience and to explore the type of assistance they may be able to provide.

We would be looking for grant funding to assist with this. Te Papa has two types of grant that we would be able to apply for – **strategic project grants** of up to \$5,000 and **helping hands** grants of up to \$1,000. However, the total pool of funding available from Te Papa is limited and we would need to

look for other funding providers to assist with establishment – particularly if any capital work is necessary.

In the longer term we would need to consider how we funded the development of marketing and promotion materials, accessing training or professional development opportunities and the extent to which we should be guided by the New Zealand Museums Standards Scheme which supports smaller museums to achieve new levels of professionalism.

This is the first time that this proposal is being aired publicly amongst our wider membership and your comments and feedback are welcomed.

Other Upcoming Events

These are too numerous to mention here but you should look out for the Gold150 brochure to be inserted in the late June issue of the Central Otago News. But I do want to mention two events in particular. The first is the three day conference being run in Cromwell from Wednesday 29 to Friday 31 August by Lloyd Carpenter under the auspices of the University of Canterbury. Lloyd is historian with a particular interest in the history of the Bendigo region and has contributed much material over the years on its history. The Conference theme is “150 Years of Riches – The Central Otago Gold Rush” and will be held at the Golden Gate Conference Centre.

The second event is a seven day cruise on the Milford Wanderer to be held in late July. This cruise will take in Preservation Inlet, Dusky and Doubtful Sounds with shore visits to explore the sites of early settlement and industry in a part of New Zealand that most people never get to see. We are fortunate to have one of our honorary members, noted historian John Hall-Jones, as our tour guide. Twenty five of our members have taken up places on the boat (which sleeps 33) and if this proves to be successful, as I have every confidence it will, then the Trust will look at organizing similar trips in future years.

Other Activities

During the year the OGHT has presented submissions on the proposed redevelopment of the St Bathans’ post office and I have been the Trust’s representative on a group assisting the Central Otago District Council with

the development of a Heritage Strategy for the region. As well I have given numerous talks to a variety of groups.

Thanks

And finally thanks to a number of people. Firstly to Terry Davis, our Cavalcade organizer and events and projects manager for his tireless efforts over the past year, and to Julie Hughes who has been our Gold 150 organiser. Also to all the members of my committee and in particular to Nola Gollop for her abilities to make sense of our finances.

Dave Neill, a member of our committee for many years, will not be seeking re-election this year. Dave has spent many hours on the maintenance of our church building as well as many of our outside projects. Many thanks, Dave, for all your good work.

Jocelyn Cook also needs a mention as the person who has done outstanding work on all our interpretation panel design over the last year. I would also like to make special mention of Edith McKay of the Cromwell Genealogy Group who has played a key role to date in our discussions over the Cromwell Museum.

And a big thank you for the team at the Department of Conservation in Alexandra – Mike Tubbs, Anita Middlemass, Jacob Dexter and Tessa Bunny for the quality of the relationships we have with them and for their assistance in helping with the annual cavalcade.

Martin Anderson
President

Committee Members 2011/2012	Honorary Life Members
<p>Kay Adam Graeme Anderson John Cook Mike Floate Nola Gollop Bruce McMillan Don Morrison Dave Neill Steve Clark Tessa Bunny (DOC representative)</p>	<p>Graeme Anderson Dick Skinner Fleur Sullivan Kay Adam Michael Floate Roberta Laraman John Hall-Jones Don Morrison</p>

2012 Cavalcade Trail Bosses	Long Term Cavalcade Sponsors
<p>Chris Bayne Sandra Cain Tony Cumberbeach</p> <p>Peter Dymock</p> <p>Alistair Gibson Stu Moore Tony Roderique Morley Williams Bruce McMillan Edgar Parcell</p> <p>Jane Whitmore Murray McMillan April Hill Gandy Burrows Matthew Sole</p>	<p>Tussock Creek Speights Swandri Gran's Remedy Chapstick Allflex Cromwell Mitre 10 Gronell S.O.G. Tussock Tucker</p>

