

## **Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust, Inc**

### **President's Report 2013**

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

In the year just past the focus continued to be on the 150<sup>th</sup> celebrations marking the discovery of gold in Cromwell and elsewhere in the region.

#### **A New Generation Honours the Past**

One of the lasting memories of the gold 150 celebrations will be part played by the schools in our region. All schools took as their main theme for the year a remembrance of gold rush times and most children will have had the opportunity to pan for gold. The Trust has had a mobile gold panning set up which has been taken from school to school and while the "gold" might have been gold painted lead shot this doesn't seem to have deterred the amateur sleuths.

One of the Trust's aims this past year has been to link today's children with the events of the past. We are fortunate in Otago that there are still strong linkages with the land and its people and our wish is that today's children and their parents will want to keep these memories alive into the future. To that end we were kept quite busy in the week immediately following the Cavalcade where we had involvement with 3 Schools visiting the Cromwell area and we were able to take them on guided walks, do some panning and provide information. We are very fortunate to have within our members such knowledgeable characters who we can call upon to interact with groups. One of the goals for this year is to formalize our offerings to schools and increase our involvement with them.

The programme for the remainder of the year contained a comprehensive schedule of some 140 activities that spread from Glenorchy to St Bathans. Of particular interest were the events held in and around Cromwell which coincide with the July school holidays and in particular the Rush to the Junction Grog and Tucker and Stake Ya Claim on July 7; the conference organized by the University of Canterbury in August on the subject of "150 Years of Riches – the Central Otago Gold Rush"; the presentation by the Alexandra Musical Society of the musical "Rush" also in August; the gold rush re-enactment at Arrowtown in October together with the gold panning championships; the gold rush Grand parade at Clyde also in October and the Bendigo celebrations in early December. These are just a few of the activities planned and represent many hours of dedicated work by volunteer groups right across Otago whose efforts must be applauded.

The Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust is proud of the role it has been able to play in coordinating all these activities and wishes to thank all participating groups. In particular, special thanks are due to Julie Hughes who was our events coordinator and who did an amazing job in energizing the various communities. We also wish to acknowledge the

role played by the Central Lakes Trust in providing significant funding for these activities and for funding Julie's activities.

### **Other Projects**

The Trust completed two major projects during the year. The first of these was the relocation of the old Bendigo dredge tailings ladder from its long time resting place at the Lions' picnic spot on the shore of Lake Dunstan back to its original location at Bendigo. This was a major operation and required the formidable skills of Fulton Hogan to accomplish this. Once in its final place the Trust worked with DOC to ensure that appropriate access and safety provisions were made. The dredge was "launched" at a weekend of celebrations held at Bendigo which incorporated a demonstration of stone wall building and tours of the Bendigo area.

The second major project was also to relocate a dredge. This was the old Chatto Creek dredge pontoons which had sat for many years on the banks of the Manuherikia river. With assistance from a impressive local team of volunteers and contractors this was lifted with the aid of two 20 tonne diggers and placed on a transporter and taken along the river bank and up onto the rail trail to its permanent resting place at the rear of the Chatto Creek Hotel. In addition to the pontoons we also recovered other dredge parts from a scrap yard at Alexandra and positioned these at Chatto Creek also. Signage is under way for this. We have to thank Lesley Middlemass for her offer to ensure that the land on which the dredge now resides is appropriately covenanted.

For this year we feel that the OGHT should focus on upgrading current signs or installing new ones. We have noted that there was a sum of \$2000 tagged in the accounts to replace the signs at Gaveyard Gully and Shaky bridge.

We have also had discussions with the Cromwell Promotions Group about a project to install signage along the new Kawarau walking track connecting the Bannockburn bridge with the entrance to the Kawarau gorge. This would be a significant project and will require external funding support before we can undertake this.

Lloyd Carpenter of the History Department of Canterbury University has figured prominently with his initiation of two other projects. The first of these was the running of a successful three day conference in August of last year. The conference on the theme of "150 Years of Riches – the Central Otago Gold Rush" attracted some 70 registrants from New Zealand, Australia and Iran and from academic and historical circles and was considered to be such a success that we would be interested in having Lloyd consider a similar event in the future. The second contribution that Lloyd made was as the guiding force behind a collaborative project involving the Human Interface Technology (HIT) Laboratory at Canterbury University to develop a heritage app which would focus initially on the Bendigo area but also three other areas and have the scope to expand right through Central Otago. Work on this is proceeding. We must acknowledge the assistance of the Central Lakes Trust in providing funding of \$50,000 to ensure this project can proceed.

## **Cavalcade 2013**

The general feeling was that this was one of the best Cavalcades to have been held in recent years and we must acknowledge the efforts of the Tapanui committee, the local Tapanui community and the fact that the committee also managed to turn on such good weather. There were 424 Cavalcaders and about 1000-1200 people who turned up at the Tapanui racecourse. This was the first year that new web based software was used to record registrations and manage entries and while there are a number of issues at the margins it generally worked well.

In the debrief afterwards it was agreed that two factors continue to make the Cavalcade an outstanding event. Firstly, the loyalty/family reunion atmosphere – largely created by the Trail Bosses and secondly tying the Cavalcade in with other events so that each can feed off the other, eg next year's Cavalcade coinciding with the Art Deco weekend in Ranfurly. So when looking for future host towns, consideration should be given to those where there was some other event on. There was also discussion on an idea that would allow people to pay say \$200 now, \$200 a bit later and the final installment before they head off. This has been implemented and people are taking advantage of this opportunity.

There has also been discussion about the idea of a Junior Cavalcade lasting say three days and aimed at high school students, and incorporating a combination of biking, riding or walking. Parents could be used as the support people and the catering group, with perhaps having someone with Duke of Edinburgh award status leading the trail.

It was noted that this was Stu Moore's last trail. Stu's trails were always very well attended and well run and he will be missed. A presentation was made to Stu to recognize the outstanding service he has given. Malcolm Oakes (from the Oamaru Host town Committee) will be taking over from Stu Moore next year.

Between the Trust and the Tapanui committee we managed to ensure a high degree of media coverage. Of particular note was the live TV cover.

We continue to look for ways to innovate and introduce changes without impacting on the essential nature of the Cavalcade – which continues to be the Trust's major annual event. It is pleasing to note that the financial benefit to the Tapanui community this year was significant – a result produced by the large number of community and volunteer groups that were involved – and providing a yardstick for the future.

We are currently working with the Ranfurly host town committee and as mentioned above the Cavalcade is to finish in Ranfurly over the same weekend as their Art Deco festivities, 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2014.

## **Gold panning Events**

The 2012 gold panning championships were held in Arrowtown at the normal time of Labour weekend with the 2013 events being held in April to coincide with the Arrowtown Autumn Festival. We are thinking that we will continue with this format as we feel that holding it at this time the event will attract more people and that the weather is likely to be more reliable. The Butler's Green area in Arrowtown is ideally suited to this type of event.

Once again thanks to David and Amanda Gatward-Ferguson for the dedicated and professional way in which they and their committee run the event. We must also acknowledge the generous donation by John Dunbier of an ounce of screened gold flakes to the Trust to be used in the championships. There has been a suggestion that a future championship could be held at Ross on the West Coast and this is something we will be looking into further. The 2013 winner was Amelia Gatward-Ferguson with an astonishing time of 59 seconds.

We must also acknowledge the continuing and very generous sponsorship from Oceana Gold which enables us to continue to run a prestige event with a range of attractive prizes.

### **Central Otago Heritage Trust**

I reported last year that I was on a working party set up by the Central Otago District Council to develop a Heritage Strategy for the District. This was done and the document "Towards Better Heritage Outcomes" was completed. In order for this now to be implemented the working group and the Council agreed that the existing CO Heritage Trust was the appropriate body to implement this. This group has six trustees of which I am one. Graye Shatky is the chair. The purpose of the trust encompasses the areas of developing and deploying a heritage strategy and then facilitating the preservation and conservation of our heritage (spaces, places and stories) by seeking funding and also promotion of heritage values, and conducting research.

The COHT is holding a workshop in late July as a precursor to a wider public forum later in the year.

### **Cromwell Museum Proposal**

In my report of last year I indicated that it was the Trust's intention in collaboration with the Cromwell genealogy Group to jointly form a new trust to assume the management of the Cromwell Museum and also to provide new office facilities for both organizations. Progress on this has been slow but sure and now that the new I-Site location has been confirmed planning can proceed with certainty. The District Council has now completed the cataloguing and audit of the entire collection and is now proceeding to get it valued. We are now progressing with some urgency the matter of forming a new Trust deed and appointing initial trustees.

Some public comment will start to be made once we have these in place, In particular we will be seeking the support of local volunteers 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. 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.

### **Other Activities**

Last July we ran the field trip to end all field trips when we hired most of the berths on the Milford Wanderer and with John Hall-Jones as our guest spent five days exploring in the Dusky and Doubtful Sound and Preservation Inlet areas with John providing expert interpretation along the way. The demand for this cruise and the feedback received suggests that we should be looking at another one at some stage in the future.

And in April Terry organized another of his successful field weekends to the Tuapeka Mouth and Port Molyneux areas. Many thanks to Bill Cowan for preparing a superb day around Tuapeka Mouth for us and Gary Ross from the South Otago Museum who looked after us around Balclutha – Worthy of note is that Gary was most impressed by the calibre of our members. He said he had never presented to a group or lead any on tours who've been so interested in what he was talking about and had done prior research before coming!

### **Thanks**

And finally thanks to a number of people. Firstly to Terry Davis, our energetic and committed 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 for their continued support and in particular to Nola Gollop for her abilities to make sense of our finances. Nola has expressed a wish to stand down from the committee this year and I want to pass on my personal thanks for her tremendous support over the time I have been President. And thanks also to Roberta Laraman for her continued support and willingness to step in and assist.

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.

And it is with sadness we note the passing away of foundation committee member and honorary life member Richard (Dick) Skinner. Richard had been in declining health over the last year and died in peace at the beginning of the month. It is with real fondness we

remember his last outing with the trust on the 'Heritage Pub Crawl' as part of our AGM weekend back in June 2010.

Martin Anderson  
President

### **Committee Members 2012/2013**

Kay Adam  
John Cook  
Mike Floate  
Nola Gollop  
Bruce McMillan  
Don Morrison  
Julie Hughes  
Steve Clark  
Tessa Bunny (DOC representative)

### **2013 Cavalcade Trail Bosses**

Chris Bayne  
Sandra Cain  
Tony Cumberbeach  
Steve Clark  
Bill Butler  
Stu Moore  
Tony Roderique  
Matthew Sole

### **Long Term Cavalcade Sponsors**

Tussock Creek  
Gran's Remedy  
Chapstick  
Allflex  
Cromwell Mitre 10  
Gronell  
Speights  
Swannndri

### **Honorary Life Members**

Graeme Anderson  
Fleur Sullivan  
Kay Adam  
Michael Floate  
Roberta Laraman  
John Hall-Jones  
Don Morrison

