

Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust, Inc

President's Report 2015

I am pleased to present my sixth Annual Report for the Trust

Cavalcade 2015

This was very much a “touch and go” affair up until the last minute. This year the host town was Outram, and after one of the hottest and driest summers in recent years and with many of the trails having to traverse some very dry conditions, we were worried about the fire risk right up until the last minute. As luck would have it the rain came down in the week before trails were due to start and solved the problem for us.

Outram turned on a splendid occasion with a most impressive procession through the streets of the old town and with a wonderful carnival atmosphere that continued through the night. Our thanks must go to the Outram organizing committee and in particular to their chair Denis Aitken.

Next year the Cavalcade has Roxburgh as the host town with the venue for the main activities being the Racecourse in Roxburgh East. Already planning is well underway.

As I say each year the whole venture would not be possible without the goodwill, dedication and general knowhow of our trail bosses, wranglers, cooks and drivers and from the landowners – particularly this year when some were rightly concerned about the fire risk. My thanks go to all those who continue to make this iconic event such a success.

Field Trips

Last years AGM was held at Ranfurly and we combined this with a weekend of activities in and around the Maniototo basin, including a visit to Hamiltons and the old Waipiata Sanatorium, now known as En Hakkore and operating as a private Christian retreat.

Another field trip was initially planned to work in with a DoC weekend up to Skippers Canyon this Autumn, however this was postponed by DoC. We still hope to proceed later this year.

Other Projects

We have five new interpretation panels up along the walking track from the Bannockburn Bridge to the Goldfields Mining Centre in the Kawarau Gorge. This completion of this project is testament both to a strong community input and also to the perseverance of Terry in seeing this through.

Negotiations and planning are still in progress towards stabilising the Alpine Battery in situ up on the Old Man range.

Funding has been applied to prepare a Conservation Plan for the remaining building in Stewart Town in the Bannockburn Sluicings. This is a necessary precursor for any restoration work we want to do to the old stone building. We are looking at re-roofing it in the same original style. We have had several local individuals and businesses put their hand up to help with the costs of the work required and now have further plans for a toilet, bench seat and donations boxes to be installed.

Waipori has a reunion planned for next Easter the 26th and 27th March 2016. The reunion organisers, ourselves and DoC are working together to try and get some restoration work and new interpretational signage for the Canton Battery done by then.

Gold Panning Championships

Another successful championship for which we owe the Gatward-Fergusons a big vote of thanks. Julie Hughes has also been very instrumental in recent Gold Panning Championships and previously in organizing our Gold 150 celebrations and very sadly for us and the wider Arrowtown community, Julie is leaving our shores for the bright lights of Perth. We thank Julie for her enthusiasm over the years and wish her all the best.

Over Labour weekend later this year a group from the Trust will be traveling to Ross to mark their 150th anniversary of the discovery of gold in the township. They have a full weekend of activities planned including the running of their own gold panning competition.

Cromwell Museum and the Methodist Church building

Earlier this year the Trust entered into an agreement with the Cromwell Film Society to allow them to use the church as a base for their members to show movies. It is intended that our office relocate into the room at the rear of the complex and the office space that we used to occupy in the centre will become common space. As part of this we have been sorting out all the archival material in the office and where possible relocating this either to our back office or to storage at the Museum. We believe this will give the old building a new lease of life even though the earthquake rating will be a concern in the longer term.

The Cromwell Museum Trust, which we were instrumental in setting up, is going from strength to strength. The good work of Edith McKay needs to be acknowledged for this very positive outcome.

Central Otago Heritage Trust

Our Trust continues to be a member of the COHT with myself and Edith McKay serving as trustees. The COHT is struggling at the moment to identify new trustees. Earlier this year we supported the COHT in a submission to the Central Otago District Council asking for a small levy on the rates to provide for administrative assistance for groups such as ours but to no effect. We intend to keep trying.

Thanks

Another big thank you to Terry Davis for his continued energy and commitment over the past year. Thanks also to our Treasurer, Elise Velenski whose control of our finances is impressive.

Thanks is also due to the team at the Department of Conservation in Alexandra who help ensure that our annual Cavalcade is a success.

I also want to acknowledge the support and assistance received from my committee who refuse to let the advance of years dull their enthusiasm.

Martin Anderson
President

Committee Members 2014/15

Kay Adam
Mike Floate
Bruce McMillan
Steve Clark
Edith McKay
Jeanette McKay

Treasurer

Elise Velenski

Cavalcade Coordinator

Terry Davis

2015 Cavalcade Trail Bosses

Chris Bayne
Sandra Cain
Steve Clark
Bill Butler
Mathew Sole
Jane Whitmore
Malcolm Oaks
David McAtamney

Honorary Life Members

Fleur Sullivan
Kay Adam
Michael Floate
Roberta Laraman
John Hall-Jones
Don Morrison
Bruce McMillan
Sandra Cain
Chris Bayne

