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# Community Services Manager's Report – April 2005

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## Information Centre

### Special Packs

Two hundred packs were collated for people attending the Centennial School reunion during Easter 2005.

Five potential residents' packs were given out in February.

### Newsletter

We are working with Central South Island Tourism to produce our quarterly newsletter. This newsletter is distributed to operators throughout the region and key people in the tourism industry nationwide.

## Signage

In 2003 we produced and erected visitor information signs at the Cup & Saucer corner and St Andrews. We are currently working on content for the third sign which is to be erected in Glenavy.

## Lets Grow Waimate

This one day seminar organised jointly by Pro-ject Waimate and the Waimate District Council to encourage innovation and development was supported by 70 people including a number of Councillors. Comments on the day from participants were extremely positive and at the debriefing meeting we believe together we provided a hugely successful day. The success was attributed to the range of excellent speakers delivering a variety of topics, and of course the nutritious catering. A follow up letter is being sent to participants encouraging them to join one of our local groups who are working on development projects, for example the Whitehorse Recycling Trust.

## Tourism Get-together

Invitations have been issued for our next tourism get-together to be held Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April at Battaglias. Lynda Ramsay will speak on the LTCCP and encourage people in the tourism industry to make submissions. Councillors are most welcome to attend and may register at the Waimate Information Centre.

## Meetings

- 1) Pro-Ject Waimate "Lets Grow Waimate" planning meetings
- 2) Selwyn District Council economic development officer
- 3) Ministry of Social Development – Liz O'Kane re cadet schemes

- 4) Pro-Ject Waimate committee meeting
- 5) Christchurch & Canterbury Marketing/District Tourism Managers hosted by Waimate
- 6) Aoraki Development Trust – improving relationships

## Regional Development Conference

I have been talking to a number of people involved in Economic Development in their regions to learn the degree of Council involvement, what works, and what doesn't work.

I believe we need to place high priority on the writing of an economic development strategy as a master plan to work from.

Attending the three day Regional Development Conference was key to understanding the structures of Central Government and their roles in economic development. Approximately 500 people attended with the majority coming from central and local government and economic development agencies.

The conference opened with a presentation on MRI's projects. Canterbury and Otago were conspicuous by their absence as the only MRI funding in the South Island has been granted to Southland and Marlborough. I have a DVD available on the projects funded nationally through the Major Regional Initiatives (MRI) programme.

Conference speakers varied from Ministers speaking on their respective portfolios, to local leaders involved in panel discussions.

I attended three breakout sessions:

1. Regional futures (shaping sustainable regional development) train the mind to thinking and planning fifty years into the future
2. Taking Stock (appreciating untapped regional physical resources) NIWA spoke on climate and soil monitoring, and Crop & Research on alternative foods/crops.
3. Education, training or work? (best practice models from Mayors' Taskforce for Jobs and EDANZ) an example of training partnerships with Central Government, Porirua City Council and Manukau City Council.

A few key messages from the conference:

- Focus on social issues as a driver of economic gain – low unemployment = low social problems.
- Be outward looking, active and forward thinking, forge relationships in your industry
- The regions have been experiencing growth for the last five years and we were warned not to be complacent as economic development could never be allowed to stand still there will always be facing challenges.
- We need to have a national cultural change to celebrate success not condemnation of failure.

The Minister of Economic Development, Jim Anderton said in his closing address there were some key challenges arising from feedback from conference participants:

- Are we addressing the right issues?
- Are our programmes working?
- Are our institutions able to deliver?
- There are infrastructural issues
- Better co-ordination with government needed

- Regional partnership programmes and MRI's – one size doesn't fit all – they need to re examine the criteria.
- Better integrated communication within regions
- Need to review Trade & Enterprise funding

**Carolyn Johns**  
**Community Services Manager – 29 March 2005**