

## **KAWERAU WOODFEST and NATIONAL WOODSKILLS COMPETITION**

The Kawerau Woodskills Festival, an iconic event for Kawerau, began in 1989 in recognition of the town's historic association with forestry and the timber industry. It was rebranded 'The National Woodskills Festival' in 1991 as a result of an overwhelming response from competition entrants throughout the country. Held annually in the second week of September, the National Woodskills Competition is recognised as New Zealand's premier event for carvers and turners.

The Kawerau District Council recognises the importance of this event to the township and in 2007, as part of its Regional Growth Strategy, partnered with the organisers The National Woodskills Trust. A five year strategic plan was developed to expand the Festival to include a wide variety of elements associated with the wood industry and the bush at large – an A & P show for wood if you like.

As part of the development process, the National Woodskills Trust created an umbrella brand.

### **KAWERAU WOODFEST**

The creation of this brand highlights the origins of the festival, provides differentiation between each of the proposed events and allows each area the opportunity to market the uniqueness of their individual activities, while retaining a synergistic association with the festival.

While the National Woodskills Competition remains as the cornerstone of Woodfest, new elements will be introduced each year to enhance participation and broaden the demographic appeal. It is creating an event where, in addition to showcasing the artistic side of working with wood, the general public gains insight into the historical, practical, recreational and employment opportunities that arise.

Activities involve the entire Town Centre stretching from the Tennis Court end of Prideaux Park, along the length of Plunket Street to the Circus Paddock on the corner of Plunket and Onslow Streets. Each event is in line of sight to the next so that visitors can move seamlessly between one experience and another with a sense of expectation. Food and beverage outlets are scattered throughout the outlying exhibitions for the convenience of visitors.