

## Chairman's Remarks - Annual General Meeting 17 November 2006

Over the past few months, property and building activity has put a positive spin on the re-emerging prosperity of Home Hill and District. This is a very pleasing outcome for those visionary members of the **Community Bank**<sup>®</sup> Steering Committee drawn together in 2003 when the area and its financial prospects were struggling, and as reduced land valuations placed risk exposure on first homebuilders seeking finance for a residence.

Today we have in progress a number of major home renovations and new houses are being built, with construction underway for huge expansion of our Aged Care Hostel facility. Vacant blocks of land are attracting premium sales and future subdivisions and are being contemplated.

Whilst our **Community Bank**<sup>®</sup> cannot take credit for the wonderful turn-around, we are extremely pleased now to be established as an operational bank offering services and ready to move ahead with this new enthusiasm and growth. Here at a glance is more positive news:

- Our original plan remains on target for banking business e.g.
  - 30 September it stood at \$20,548,000 with 641 accountholders
  - 31 October it stood at \$20,600,000 with 675 accountholders
- ATM performance and popularity surpasses our expectations
- Strategic positioning of ATM signage on the roof has been installed
- Don West Toyota has supported us by including directional signage to our ATM on their company billboard at its site on the southern entry to the town
- Directors' referrals have increased our banking business thanks to Darren West and Joan Heatley who are always developing new opportunities
- Similarly we have welcomed the business take-up from our farming community, capably guided by Bendigo Agribusiness Manager Angelo Rigano, who we believe has the edge on others with his local knowledge
- In conjunction with Bendigo Bank Townsville & Region we hope to make financial planning services available in the near future
- Our informal Roundtable with our Bank Buddies has provided valuable feedback on concepts and yielded ideas for future communications
- We are still financially supporting Burdekin Youth Radio at Radio 97.1 SweetFM Inc. ◦ Of more importance, we admire the financial support and recognition by another local bank toward shared opportunities for advancement of our youth
- Staff and supporters were keen to be part of this year's Harvest Festival, and as well as entering a float in the procession provided sponsorship for a popular youth event
- Members of staff have become involved in administration of Kindergarten, School and Service Club activities outside their work commitments, and this invaluable community spirited support provides exceptional positive exposure for the branch and genuine encouragement for the Board
- The not-so-good news is media reporting of police observations that demographic

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change may be contributing to increasing crime occurring within our community. Our aged and more frail persons are most vulnerable, so can we ask shareholders and friends to look out for your neighbours and lend a hand whenever you can

Forwarded by order of the Board,

*Joan Heatley*

Director / Secretary to the Board

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