

# The Mosgiel sign



## Digging deeper...

The sign was the brainchild of Neil Buckley, promotions manager for the Mosgiel Retailers' Association. It was adopted by the Rotary Club of Mosgiel as a project to mark their 50th anniversary.



## Stat attack

The sign cost a total of \$12,000 and 700 hours of labour.



## Local lingo

The local name of Mollywood stems from the obvious comparison that can be made between the Mosgiel sign and the older and more famous Hollywood sign on the corner of Beachwood Canyon Drive and Glen Holly in Los Angeles.

'Sir – I think this sign is a good idea because people will know where Mosgiel is'

'The people who said it would disturb motorists are wrong because who would be dumb enough to keep looking at the Mosgiel sign when they can see an intersection up ahead'

It is indeed hard to miss as you drive down the slope of Saddle Hill heading south on State Highway 1, but as is shown by these extracts from letters to the Editor of the *Tairi Herald*, feelings in early 1987 were running high about plans to install a three metre high sign in the old quarry overlooking the Mosgiel interchange.

At the planning hearing held to discuss the sign, four objections were recorded. Those speaking on behalf of the then Ministry of Works and Development noted that it would necessitate regular trimming of trees planted in the area, and that it would take attention away from the busy intersection below. But the erection of the sign was approved, subject to a number of conditions. These included that the sign must be white, that the characters must be no higher than 3.04m, and that it must not be lit by flashing lights or create glare.

The Mayor of Mosgiel turned the sign lights on at 7pm on Wednesday 29 July 1987. Radio 4XO, Radio 4ZB and the television news programme *The South Tonight* were there to record the event. Local retailers held their late shopping night on Wednesday that week to coincide with the ceremony.



The sign by night with Mosgiel in the distance



Installation and finishing of the sign in 1987



Photo: ODT [www.otagomuseum.co.nz](http://www.otagomuseum.co.nz)