Hobby turns into global business

When Renee Patterson was encouraged to get a hobby eight years ago, no one had any idea that the hobby “would turn into a successful global franchise business.”

Renee is the franchisor for Momentoes, an international baby-hand and feet-casting company. She runs the franchise company from her small home office in Hokitika with help from her sister Natasha Cartwright. Momentoes employs five people across New Zealand, including Renee. It all began in 2007 when Renee purchased the West Coast franchise of Momentoes as a bit of a diversion. She loved the product so much she bought the international company three years later.

Since then they have doubled the number of New Zealand franchise areas to 20 (run by 13 franchisees) and Renee and Natasha operate three franchises themselves. They also have franchises in Australia and the United States.

“Running a franchise company is hard work, you spend every day coaching and mentoring people to do well but as time goes on we are seeing a stronger team which motivates me,” says Renee.

Renee says running the company from the West Coast hasn’t been a problem. “When I purchased the company the previous owner asked me when I would be moving to Christchurch, I replied that I was a born and bred West Coaster and extremely proud of it and I didn’t think for a second that I would be moving it to Christchurch, I’m a born and bred West Coaster and extremely proud of it and I didn’t think for a second that I wouldn’t bring it to the Coast,” she says.

Franchisees order directly to the head office in Hokitika where all the frames, mats and boxes are made to order from New Zealand sourced raw materials and then sent out.

“Eight out of 10 customers from the Coast are cheaper than if we were in Auckland or Christchurch and while we were in Auckland or Christchurch and while the gains made in the previous month flowed through to the bottom line so DWC reported a small loss of $192k.

For further information, contact:
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Chairman's Comment

Season's greetings.

While we couldn't have asked for much better weather for holidaymakers and the hay cutting season, I hope there has been enough rain in between times to keep the farmers happy with their feed and production.

With the weather treating us well over Christmas and New Year, I trust everyone has had a restful holiday and are in high spirits to face 2015 with a positive outlook as we all settle back into our work.

I note the restoration of the Runanga Miners’ Hall has had a positive start to the year with a new roof having been fitted. Another great job — well done to all those involved.

I wish everyone good health and prosperity for the year ahead.

John Sturgeon — Chairman