



Omarama Gazette

February 2021



New school principal welcomes change

The South Island's east and west coast may be dramatically different in geology and climate but two small schools on either side of the alps have much in common, Omarama School's new principal says.

Michelle Green, who has been principal of Haast School for the past five years accepted the position at here in late December and will take up the role in about five weeks time.

In making the move she would be crossing two of New Zealand's noteworthy passes – the Haast and Lindis, she said.

"I'm ready for a change.

"Haast is a very much at the end of the road. There is a rumour we could have cell phone coverage this year. It's still a trip to Wanaka.

"[Plus] I don't think it's healthy for a school or a principal to be in a position too long.

"And I'm looking for a new adventure," Michelle said.

She came to teaching "late in life" having focused her attention on raising four children.

Her youngest child was 11 when she left business and marketing careers behind her and began her teacher training at the New Zealand Graduate School of Education. They're all grown now with a son working for Heineken International, in Amsterdam, and a daughter working as a doctor at Rotorua Hospital.

There were a lot of similarities between Haast and Omarama schools.

"They're two country schools, there's a small team of teachers, they both have an outdoor focus," something which as a former member of the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council, she values.

- Continued over

New school principal welcomes change

Here she will have the opportunity to teach swimming and skiing, both of which she loves.

Most “exciting” this year for Omarama will be the build of a new classroom.

The resurfacing of the tennis court was completed during the break.

Reassuringly, the roll was at 58 and forecast to stay in the late 50s, so the school would remain a three-teacher school. “It’s all on track.”

Because her appointment was made just at the end of last year the Omarama School Board of Trustees had been “very understanding” and allowed her the first five weeks of this school year to make the transition.

Kim McKenzie is acting-principal.

Michelle was in Omarama this week to meet staff and parents.

Below: Newly-appointed Omarama School principal Michelle Green will make the permanent move to town and her new role in five weeks.

Omarama School teaching staff spend their first day back getting to know new school principal Michelle Green. The recently resealed tennis court awaits the return of school pupils.



Sale of land to fund tow plane purchase

A plan to sell some land to release funds to buy tow planes will help future-proof Omarama Airfield and secure it as an established New Zealand glider port, its company chairman says.

At its December meeting the Omarama Airfield Ltd directors decided to subdivide part of the residential land it owns on the eastern boundary of Nimbus Dr, and has begun the search for a planning and project management firm to handle the development. The money released by the sale will buy tow planes to guarantee glider launch services into the future.

Company chairman Clive Geddes said in an interview this week, it had not yet settled on a project manager for the work.

"We are considering creating six to eight lots and no more than that - in a small area."

The lots would be in a 25m strip on the eastern side of Nimbus Dr .

The airfield owns the block east of Nimbus Dr stretching from the end of that road through to the Patterson property and taking in the model aircraft fly zone.

The land is zoned 'high density residential' and was always intended for development, Mr Geddes said.

The Airfield company also wants to allow for a road to come off east at the junction of Nimbus Dr and Cirrus Pl.

At present the extension of Airport Rd from the Nimbus Dr corner to the Pink Glider Café is not a legal road, Mr Geddes said.

"So we want to make room [at the Nimbus Rd – Cirrus Pl junction] to create a legal road to access the residential area."

In the mid-2000s, when the Cirrus Pl subdivision was created, the initial plan which was eventually dropped was to create a second subdivision on the Nimbus Dr site as stage two of that original development.

The company was in a sound financial state with good reserves.

- continued over

Below: Omarama Airfield Ltd is making plans to develop and sell land it owns east of Nimbus Dr.



Sale of land to fund tow plane purchase continued

But it did not want to remain in a position where it was totally reliant on third parties for launch capacity. "If they leave, it's useless."

It did not want to operate tow planes itself and would engage a contractor to do so, all of which should ensure Omarama kept its status as a national and international "glider port".

Mr Geddes said the company's "position against budget" for the first six months of its financial year was good. However, it was probably down about 30% on the previous year. "We're not too worried about that as long as we still make a profit."

The Company's role was to maintain the standards of the facility.

It does not pay dividends and profits were placed in reserve or "ploughed back" into the airfield.

Landing fees were up against budget because of recent competitions held, including the national championships which take place every second year.

The "5% revenues" – such as that from the Pink Glider Café were down, which was to be expected, he said.

"We made a decision to undertake an extensive spray programme which was not budgeted for.

"[But] cash in and cash out there is a slight surplus."

The company did take up the Government's Covid-19 wage subsidy last year but this year had not applied to either central Government or the council for assistance.

"We want to see the economics of this subdivision first.

"We don't have to form a road or services because they're already there.

"Once we know the cost we may talk to council."

Last year was "difficult health-wise" this year was going to be difficult from an economic point of view but the company was "very positive" about the future.

The airfield had "tremendous support" from glider pilots throughout New Zealand, Mr Geddes said.

Omarama Airfield Ltd is a Waitaki District Council council-controlled organisation.

Read more in the full update from Omarama Airfield Ltd directors overleaf.

Below: An aerial photo shows the approximate boundaries (in red) of residential land owned by Omarama Airfield Ltd east of Nimbus Dr, a small portion of which is to be subdivided and sold to raise funds.

Graphic: Omarama Gazette. Aerial photo of the airfield, November 2016, used with the permission of Arne Martin Guettler



There's a new face at the helm

After more than four busy years overseeing the comings and goings at the Omarama Memorial Hall curator Charlotte Newfield has stepped down from the role. A new curator - Michelle Kitchen- has been appointed and takes over from Charlotte this month.

The Omarama Residents' Association and the community owe a debt of gratitude to Charlotte for all her hard work over the years, Omarama Residents' Association chairman Tony Chapman said.

Charlotte was appointed hall curator in December 2016 – the first to take on the job. Initially, Charlotte was appointed as both treasurer and curator, managing administration and juggling other duties alongside her jobs - at Boots & Jandals Hotel and as sub-contractor for the Waitaki District Council - and motherhood.

Daughter Emilia was two at the time and baby Lucy followed, born at a particularly busy time managing the centre when it played host to film crews and some major meetings and forums. Charlotte and husband Brad celebrated their marriage at the Hall.

Michelle and husband Neville moved Ahuriri Heights, Omarama from Queenstown about three years ago. Before coming here to live they had camped regularly at the Top 10 Holiday Park.

Michelle has a background in small business and early childhood management with a focus on systems and processes, and health and safety. - Continued over

Below: Michelle Kitchen steps into the role of Omarama Hall curator this month



New curator for hall

- continued



"The hall is a fabulous community asset, modern and new, and would be the envy of a lot of small communities," Michelle said.

As a "community hub" it had "so much potential" for a wide range of diverse use, large groups and small, which might want to use all or part of the complex.

It was already the established base for Omarama Playgroup, the library which is about to be refurbished and the Kurow Medical Centre.

The Omarama Residents' Association has presented Charlotte with a \$200 gift voucher in recognition of her service.

For all hall hire enquires: Michelle 027 280 54446
hallhire.omarama@xtra.co.nz

Left: After four busy years Charlotte Newfield has stood down from the role of hall curator.

Marathon effort raises almost \$2K

While some days a round of golf may seem like a marathon, this one actually was. And for a country golf club it was both a marathon effort and a marathon of a fundraiser.

Last month, Otematata Golf club members took up the Longest Day Golf Challenge. and raised almost \$2000 for the Cancer Society.

The Longest Day is a golfing endurance event – 72 holes (4 rounds) of golf in one day to raise funds for the Cancer Society.

Playing four rounds of golf is the equivalent to walking a marathon.

Players, who are sponsored for their efforts, tee off at sunrise and play through to sunset, making the most of the daylight on the longest days of the year.

The challenge ran from December 1 to January 31 with players able to choose which day to take part.

The Otematata club played its four rounds as a team relay on January 20, organiser Ethel Gary said.

"The first players teed off at 6.15am, it was a dull morning and I believe that the first balls couldn't be found easily.

"Next tee-off was 9am, then 11am, 12 noon, and the last tee off 2pm."

The day, which proved to be a test of skill and stamina, concluded with a community sausage sizzle – with sausages donated by Campbells Butchery.

"A raffle was held, and along with the money raised by players hitting the tree on the 2nd fairway over the last year, we raised the grand total of \$1986.40." Ethel said.

"The funds will be deposited in Otago account with a request that they be earmarked for North Otago," Ethel said.

Omarama Library in for a facelift

Five years on from its grand opening in the Omarama Community Centre the Omarama branch of Waitaki District Libraries is about to make a strategic move and get a bit of a face-lift.

District libraries manager Philip van Zijl said, although when it opened the Omarama Library was the first of the district's community libraries to be "automated" with a direct link to the central library, "our little library - there wasn't enough room to swing a cat in it".

An opportunity arose to make it better fit-for-purpose when its lease agreement with the Omarama Residents' Association came up for renewal.

As a result the library will move into the adjacent meeting room and will share space with other users. "We want to rejuvenate it," Mr van Zijl said.

The larger space will allow people to "spread out".

As well computers and wi-fi will be made available for public use.

"And furniture, so people can sit and read a newspaper or a book, have a chat and a cup of coffee."

Yes, hot drinks and a biccie will be provided, too.

Mr van Zijl said new shelving had been acquired and it was just a matter of fitting out the room, which would happen within the month.

As well, Waitaki Libraries would be "putting in a little more support there for the volunteers".

"We now have the resources to spend a lot more time and energy."

It had also acquired a vehicle for the sole use of library staff "which will make our connection a lot easier".

Two staff, Jean Rivett and Lisa Potaka Ross, were now dedicated to working with the branch libraries and would be available to work more closely with the volunteers.

The librarians' plans include working more closely with Playgroup and offering some technology/internet training – to the community.

"It's an opportunity to do what we always wanted to do," Mr van Zijl said.

Mr van Zijl leaves Waitaki Libraries mid-March and a new library manager has been appointed.

When the library moved into the Community Centre from the old Dental Clinic at Omarama School it was allocated rooms initially planned for use by a doctor or nurse and had not been put to use.

Shortly, afterwards the Kurow Medical Centre asked to set up Omarama satellite clinic in the building and was given permission by Plunket to use its rooms.

Once the agreement with the library came up for renewal the Residents' Association committee saw it as an opportunity to review the use of space.

**'The Community Reports' is
dedicated to news
from clubs, groups and sports teams.
Contributions are welcome.
omaramagazette@gmail.com**

Rates rise will hit some harder than others

The Waitaki District Council and key council staff held a workshop behind closed doors on Monday to thrash out budgets and consider this year's rates rise.

Last year the council decided hold rates at their existing levels for the 2020/21 year because of the Covid -19 situation which means they need to play catch-up this year to keep pace with planned expenditure.

The present Long-Term Plan – a 10-year plan - which is being reviewed and goes out for consultation this year - had signalled the council would begin setting aside funds for some big ticket items like a new sports and events centre in Oamaru, in the next financial year.

Councillors will also be bearing in mind the latest Quotable Value triennial assessment of property values which showed land and capital values had increased markedly since the last assessment in 2017 especially for lower value properties.

In discussion about the QV report at its meeting late last year Councillor Kelli Williams pointed out because it appeared the residential increase was driven by the lower value-base properties, it could "hugely affect" rates first home buyers and those on fixed incomes.

At that time councillors asked staff to carry out modelling to show what the revaluation might mean for various individual ratepayers.

Waitaki District Council finance and corporate development group manager Paul Hope said the council had added "cost pressures", many coming from decisions by central government.

The most significant was the 3 Waters review programme.

The council also needed to factor in the increasing value of the infrastructure – a nearly 11% increase in asset values by the end of the 2020 financial year, he said. It meant more money had to be put aside for replacement.

"Although Council has some choice about the level of funding it can devote to the key areas of roads, water supply and wastewater disposal, the Three Waters Review and recent flooding in the Waitaki illustrates the need to keep investing in these key services to make sure these services meet the current and future needs of the community."

As well, the council is receiving lower returns on its investments because of the economic situation. Nevertheless, the council was investing more money than it borrowed

Last week, Waitaki Mayor Gary Kircher said, while a rates rise was "unwanted", it was also inevitable".

"At the moment we've got everything in the mix, all possible expenditures and projects that Council expects to carry out over the next ten years.

"On Monday, we will see what effect that all has on rates and make decisions on where cuts need to be made or projects postponed or deleted.

"There is never a good time for a rate increase and it's certainly not at the moment, however Council will be faced with numerous increases because of factors beyond our control - we need to look at the factors we can control and make cuts or changes to those."

Councillors and staff would be working hard to minimise any increases.

And while individuals might be hit hard by the effect of the land and capital revaluations the reality was revaluations did not change the amount the council collected in rates – rather it could change the way the total is sliced up, he said.

"If your property has an increase which is exactly the average increase, then it won't change. If your increase is greater than the average increase, then you will pay a bigger slice. If your increase is lower than the average, then you pay less."

"There's nothing that councils can do about that - it is the way rates work and that's set by the Government."

"With the Long Term Plan, or Annual Plans, that is where councils change the amount that's collected."

"How that is reflected on individual rates bills varies depending on what we are doing and where."

"For example, if your property is in Palmerston or Oamaru, and we carry out a major project on Weston footpaths, a Weston resident pays the cost of that and you don't."

To reduce the impact on rates from all the factors noted above, the council would consider what expenditure could be reduced, delayed, or modified in some other way.

It would also consider whether it was appropriate to use some of its reserves, doing so in a way that did not "create a bow wave of cost" that would lead to an even greater need to increase rates in future years.

Once the draft budget was finalised, more details would be available about the impact on rates, based on different types of properties and their locations within the Waitaki district, Mr Kircher said.

Any decision on the draft budget would go out for public consultation in April with any change in rates effective 1 July 1, 2021.

A useful tool to see how the Waitaki District stacks up against the rest is the New Zealand Taxpayers' Union-produced ratepayers report. www.ratepayersreport.nz



Help needed to curtail "worrying trend"

Environment Canterbury is asking people to make sure they report any wallaby sightings – dead or alive - on the South side of the Waitaki.

Reportedly, Wallaby sightings have increased in the hill country south of Omarama, particular in the Glen Creek area.

Last week, three dead wallabies - one found on each of the three major highways out of Omarama - were reported to ECan.

"One farmer had the initiative to check one of the carcasses before he reported it and found the animal had been shot, not run over," ECan biosecurity team leader Brent Glentworth said

An increase in numbers in the region over the past decade had become a "worrying trend" and ECan and landowners were working hard to stop this continued spread.

"However, we need everyone's help.

"We would like everyone to play a part in preventing the transportation of wallabies (particularly joeys) by individuals, or to report passive wallaby sightings outside the containment area.

"Some may think they are having a bit of fun, but it's a huge waste of resources chasing up pranks like this.

"We want to gather information on authentic wallaby movement outside the containment area so we can have accurate records and direct contractors to search and prevent new populations being established," he said.

The Containment area is from the Rangitata River to the Waitaki River, inland to the Tekapo River.

It is an offence, with steep fines, under the Biosecurity Act 1993 to capture, convey or hold wallabies.

At high densities wallabies cause significant damage; their browsing damaging both native and exotic forests, preventing regeneration and depleting forest understories.

Wallabies also damage tall tussock grasslands, including the "inter-tussock vegetation" creating bare ground and increasing the risk of soil erosion. They also eat pasture and crops.

Wallaby sightings can be reported online at ecan.govt.nz/wallaby or by phoning 0800 324 636.

In the next issue of the Omarama Gazette ECan will provide an update about the National Wallaby Management Programme, the work that has been done to date and what is planned for the future.



This dead Bennetts Wallaby was one of three discovered on the outskirts of Omarama last week and reported to Environment Canterbury.

Photo: supplied

Wall to preserve moments in time

A project to create a feature wall in town which preserves important moments of Omarama's past is about to get underway now funding has been approved. The Ahuriri Community Board granted the Omarama Residents' Association \$6,900 for the wall at its December meeting.

The feature which will be created by Oamaru precision cutting company AcuCut will be installed on the street frontage of the volley wall of the new sports courts.

The space was set aside for the artwork as part of the sports courts development project and the design will be in keeping with the existing hall and community centre signage. It will note Omarama's contribution to North Otago and the Waitaki.

Visitors would be able use it to learn more about the surrounding area and it had the potential to be developed later into a starting point for a tourist trail, the Association's application to the Board said.

At present, Association committee member Ann Patterson and a small sub-group is considering options ahead of the final design being approved.

It is consulting with Te Runanga o Moeraki kaiwhakahaere Justin Tipa, of Kai Tahu, regarding Omarama's earliest history.

The artwork will also feature significant moments from later land settlement through to the present day.

Of necessity, to be visually effective, the design itself will be kept simple and make use of symbols to represent some moments in time.

"We hope to get everybody's input," Ann said.

Anyone who wants to contribute ideas or have their say about what should be included can come along to a meeting of the Omarama Residents' Association.

If you cannot attend you can contact Ann Patterson 03 438 9493

email: merinolodgeomarama@gmail.com

Or Jemma Gloag 021 275 3662 email: buscot@farmside.co.nz

Or email the committee: omarama.committee@gmail.com

The final decision about what is to be incorporated and how it will be showcased will be made at the April meeting.

The next Omarama Residents' Association Meeting is 7.30pm, Thursday, February 24, 2021 at the Omarama Community Centre.



The Noticeboard



To have your community notice included here email: omaramagazette@gmail.com

Youth Glide NZ hosts Winning Over Waitangi from February 6, 2021 to February 8, 2021 at the Omarama Airfield.

The Mackenzie Country 2021 Cavalcade begins February 27 and ends in host town Twizel in a grand parade on March 6.

Kurow Medical Centre * NOTE CHANGE OF DAY * Omarama Clinic at the Omarama Community Centre, is open Thursdays, 8.30am to 5pm. To make appointments for all clinics, order repeat scripts or make enquiries please contact Kurow Medical

Centre 03 436 0760 (Monday to Thursdays). www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz

St Thomas' Omarama Church Community: Services and communion are held on a regular basis, usually monthly at 10.30am on the Friday of the second weekend of the month at the home of a parishioner. Contact: Kay Verheul 03 438 9538.

The Omarama Community Library is open 9am to 10am Wednesdays and Saturdays, Library hours can change. Contact Yvonne: 027 476 7473.

The Omarama Golf Club Saturdays, cards in 12.30pm, tee-off 1pm. Club captain James Moynihan phone: 027 215 8266; email jwmoynihan@2yahoo.co.nz. www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz

Omarama Playgroup meets at 9.30am each Wednesday during the primary school term at the Omarama Community Centre.

For more information phone president Andrea Aubrey, 03 438 9863; vice president Tarryn Benton 027 201 7065, secretary Carla Hunter, 03 976 0504

The Upper Waitaki Young Farmers Club meets at 7.30pm on the first Monday of each month at the 'Top Pub' - the Blue and Gold pub, in Kurow. All welcome. Join the Facebook group.

Bridge Club - The Omarama Bridge Club meets on a regular basis and would welcome new members. If you are interested please phone Sylvia Anderson 438 9784 or Ann Patterson 438 9493.

The Omarama Model Aircraft Club meets on Saturdays from 9.00 am to 12.00 noon at its flying ground at the Omarama airfield. All welcome - Contact Don Selbie on 027 435 5516.

FENZ Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade meets 7pm each Wednesday and has its meeting at 7:30pm on the third Wednesday of the month. New members welcome.

Plunket Line: 0800 933 922

Omarama Plunket Committee: Petrina Paton 027 345 6192

Car Seat Rentals: Christine, phone: 03 435 0557 or 027 208 0362

Breastfeeding Works: Claire Hargest-Slade 03 684 3625, 021 493 863
clairhs@me.com

In case of emergency: to prevent any confusion about the location of Lake Ohau Alpine Village in an emergency, the following points should be noted:

When phoning 111, advise that Lake Ohau is in South Island and the nearest cross road is State Highway 8 and Lake Ohau Road. Also mention that Lake Ohau Alpine Village is on the shore of Lake Ohau, and is 20 mins (40 km) from both Twizel and Omarama. This will assist the operator to find the required information to enter location in the system and allowing the call to progress to the next screen in the system.

**To read more, enjoy more photos and watch our place 'come to life' check out our Facebook page and website.
www.facebook.com/omaramagazette/omaramagazette.nz**

**To receive email alerts between monthly editions of the Omarama Gazette sign up to our 'Local List'. Email
omaramagazette@gmail.com
and put 'Local List' in the subject line.**

Thank you to all who share your stories and contribute in other way to the Gazette. We all really appreciate what you do.

**The March issue of the
Omarama Gazette
is Wednesday, March 3, 2021.**

Please submit copy
by Friday, February 26, 2021

**Advertising pays for
production and distribution.**

To find out about publication and close-off dates,
and how much it costs to place your advertisement,
please phone 021 294 8002, 03 438 9766 or
email omaramagazette@gmail.com

The Community Reports

Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade



Happy New Year One and All

Let's start the year by practicing keeping ourselves safe. Safety around the home is always important. A campaign is starting next week called escape my house.

Things to have are an escape plan for all emergencies and a safe place to meet in case you get separated. It is advisable to have a torch handy as the power could also be cut off.

It is also good to have a practice run or two so the process is something you as family are familiar with.

Please remember it is still a restricted fire season but always check the weather forecast before you light and have your permit and a water source handy. Also check the FENZ website www.checkitsalright.nz for any changes in status.

- Stay Safe, Chief Fire Officer Greg Harper

FENZ Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade meets 7pm each Wednesday and has its meeting at 7.30pm on the third Wednesday of the month.

Boots & Jandals Hotel Social Club

'Spud-in-the-bucket'

competition judging and social day

**Sunday, February 14, 2021
2pm start - 4pm**

Fabulous meal provided for social club members.

Prizes for best spud etc

Even if you haven't got a spud-in-a-bucket, if you are in the social club, come along and enjoy a great day out.

See you there.

For further information contact Philip 027 410 6524

Omarama Community Library



By Georgie Robertson

Sometime near the end of February or early March, the Omarama Library is planning to move from the current two rooms that are shared with the doctor and nurse at the front of the Community Centre.

The room at the end of the meeting room has been measured up and the shelving is on the way.

The plan is to have all the books in one room and have a few cushions and chairs for people to sit and browse as they make decisions. It should give us better lighting and good access.

We have been promised an expanded selection of books from Oamaru and we also have an amount of locally-raised money (independent of the Waitaki District Library) that the library committee are planning to use to purchase more books that will remain in Omarama.

As usual, volunteers are welcomed with open arms, so if you haven't been along to view the library, why not pop in on a Wednesday or Saturday, 9am til 10am.

**The Omarama Community Library
is open 9am to 10am,
Wednesdays and Saturdays at the
Omarama Community Centre**

St Thomas's Church Community

Contacts:

Chairperson

Jan Thomas

Committee secretary (Presbyterian)

Lee Kearon, phone: 021 250 1060

or email: lee.kearon@gmail.com

Treasurer

Kay Verheul

Anglican representative

Ven Dr Michael Godfrey, phone 022 342 9977

or email educator@calledsouth.org.nz

Omarama Golf Club

By Christine Bowman

- Hope everyone had a great Christmas and New Year. The golf club has certainly been a popular and busy place over this period.

Our New Year tournament had a false start this year. Scheduled for January 2 with a record 111 entries, food ready, prizes ready, raffles ready, draw ready and then a huge downpour of rain overnight!!! So the unfortunate decision was made at 7am in the morning standing in the rain, with flooded greens that we would need to postpone the tournament to the following weekend. So back to the drawing board for gathering entries and re-organising the food. But just like Santa who always get through, the following weekend was a great success. Unfortunately due to a number of holiday makers returning back home that week our entries reduced to 80, which is still a great turnout. The course actually turned from looking rather brown to green during the week due to the rain the previous week, so there was a plus having to postpone. On the day the sun was shining, people were smiling and plenty of laughs. A big thank you to all our sponsors that contributed towards prizes and raffles. A special mention for Millbrook Golf that donated our major prize of a voucher for a round of golf and cart for four people. Congratulations to everyone that played, but our three stars for each division are below:

1st Senior and Overall winner	Tony Sheppard 43 stablefords (Tinwald/Omarama)
1st Junior Men's	Paddy Galvin (Omarama)
1st Ladies	Kathryn Clark (North Otago)

A big thanks to everyone that has been mowing and keeping the grounds up to date, as we have had a large number of green fee players each week throughout January.

One of the things that makes golf such a great sport, is that all shapes, sizes and age can play. I think this is rather special, we have a photo from our club day this week, of Riley Tuffley (our youngest member) and Ian Niles (our oldest member). Believe it or not there is approx. 70 years between them!!!!



This weekend is our annual Otago and Canterbury challenge, for the toilet seat award.

Our next major date is Easter weekend, Saturday, April 3, for our other annual tournament, so put the date in you diary and enjoy the last weekend of daylight saving.

*Left: Omarama Golf Club Captain James Moynihan congratulates the winner of the New Year tournament Tony Sheppard.
Photo: supplied*

The Omarama Golf Club Saturdays cards in 12.30pm tee-off 1pm. Club captain James Moynihan phone: 027 215 8266; email jwmoynihan2yahoo.co.nz. www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz

*Right: Riley Tuffley (our youngest member) and Ian Niles (our oldest member). Believe it or not there is approx. 70 years between them;
Below: Scenes from the New Year Tournament.
Photos: supplied*





Kia Ora Parents and Omarama School community members.

Happy New year to you all. I hope you all had a restful Christmas break although it seems so far away.

Below are a few messages relating to the beginning of the term.

Term one will commence on Wednesday the 3rd of February starting at 9 am.

Michelle, our new principal will be available on this day and Thursday for any parents who would like to meet her.

She is looking forward to meeting and getting to know you all.

The buses will run as normal on Wednesday. The Ohau /Waitaki valley bus will run as last term starting from the Ohau turn off.

Please ensure your child/ren has a sun hat and drink bottle as the weather is hot and protection and fluids are important during such days.

Children will require their togs from day one, as we will be swimming regularly and the year 4-8 students will be preparing for the Waitaki swimming sports. We would appreciate parents ensuring these come to school each day.

Lastly if your child has any of their exercise books from last year that are not full and you would like them used, please send them to school on Wednesday.

Please note: Waitangi Day will be observed on Monday the 8th so school will be closed next Monday.

Looking forward to seeing you and your children's smiling faces on Wednesday.

Acting Principal
Kim McKenzie

We recently held a raffle to fundraise for the Ohau fire.

A wonderful framed falcon image was donated by Donna Falconer from Twizel.

The proceeds went to the local fire brigade.

It was drawn under police supervision and won by Gill Kingston, Queenstown.

We would like to thank everyone for their support.

James Kerr



Omarama Search and Rescue

Omarama Search and Rescue last month completed an advanced stretcher rope management course to hone skills in case they are needed in a rescue on steeper sections of the Alps 2 Ocean trail.

The course covers patient management and rope safety when the slope of the terrain is such that a person and/or the rescuers may struggle to maintain their footing. The rope systems used make sure that should someone slip they don't go scooting back down the hill to the bottom.

The group has just purchased about \$1800 worth of gear- knee harnesses, extra rope and a descent device used to belay people down.

The exercise took place on Ladybird Hill with thanks to Rodger and Donna Smail.

- copy and photos supplied

Below:

The Omarama Search and Rescue team puts new gear through its paces at Ladybird Hill last month



Omarama Rodeo Club

By Marcia Green, Omarama Rodeo Club secretary.

The year 2020 was one some of us would like to forget – for the Omarama Rodeo Club it is one of our proudest. Last year amid the fiasco of Covid19 and lock down we managed via the power of zoom calls, the messenger chat group and finally face-to-face meeting's to get ourselves sorted for the 28th of December.

First on the agenda was the complete rebuild of the timed event area.

The club utilised the workmanship of Matt Parsons to get this new structure up in time for the 28th of December as well as dedicating Sundays to working bees. We were delighted with the end result of Matt's work and the area has been named after him. On the day it ran exceptionally well creating smoother, faster events as well as placing the action out in front of the crowd more.

The club is incredibly proud of the day we put on for our spectators and competitors. We have heard nothing but positive feedback from those who attended the event. This is something we will strive to continue with. We had one of the biggest turnouts from our competitors in years with some fine-tuned action put on by all of them. A number of young competitors also attended on the day along with quite a few families competing together which was wonderful to see. The crowd attendance was great and we truly hope they enjoyed the sharp show we and the competitors put on for them. MPI were in attendance (as is normal for all rodeo's) and they were most happy with how the day was run as well as how the animals were before and after each event – each animal is fully checked prior to and after each event by a vet with MPI present.

Last year Jamie Brice, our long standing president stepped down from his role. Jamie has been integral to the advances we have made as a club particularly around our grounds and structures. The Omarama Rodeo Club would like to thank Jamie for his leadership and the time you have given us. We wish him all the best.

Stepping into Jamie's role is Daniel Montgomery who has been part of the rodeo scene for some time. The Montgomery family (below) bring with them a wealth of knowledge from their time within the rodeo sector and we as a club are thrilled to have them with us.

The club would like to acknowledge all those within the community who either sponsor events throughout the year or on the day as well as our supporters. We cannot do this without you and your support to us and essentially the community in the long run is most appreciated. Thank you so much. I would also like to thank our club members – you're outstanding individuals who make everything so much easier.



Below: Rodeo cowboy Clint McAughtrie, of Omarama, carries the flag into the ring at the Omarama Rodeo Club December 2020 event.

Left: The Omarama Rodeo Club's new president is Daniel Montgomery pictured here with wife Charlotte and family; Right: Long-serving president Jamie Brice has stepped down from the role; Far right: A young cowboy stands during the cowboy prayer. Photos: supplied.



Ahuriri Catchment Community Group

By Tania Innes

The Ahuriri Catchment Community Group met on January 27 at the Wrinkly Rams to discuss prospective funding opportunities and potential projects to aim for that will enhance our local environment and provide information on policy and regulatory changes for our community.

Several fantastic ideas were discussed including; the development of a wetlands walkway along the Omarama Stream, supporting new people coming into the area to find information they need to become an active part of the community, information and talks on freshwater policy and any regulatory changes that will affect our area.

A date has been set for a talk on
Essential Freshwater policy
with Lauren Phillips of Beef + Lamb New Zealand
at the Wrinkly Rams on
February 24, at 3pm.

This is an event for everyone in the community
who wishes to learn more about how it may affect them.

The next meeting of the Ahuriri Catchment Community Group will be on
February 24 at 1pm at the Wrinkly Rams. All are welcome.

Contacts:

Chairperson: Trent Spittle

Vice-chairperson: Michael Doree

Secretary/Treasurer: Tania Innes

Facilitator: Stevie Young



Youth Glide

By Kim Read

Youth Glide operations at Omarama are continuing at a pace.

Next weekend sees WOW...our Winching Over Waitangi camp, where a group of local young glider pilots will be building on the flying they did during a hugely successful Youth Soaring Development Camp in December.

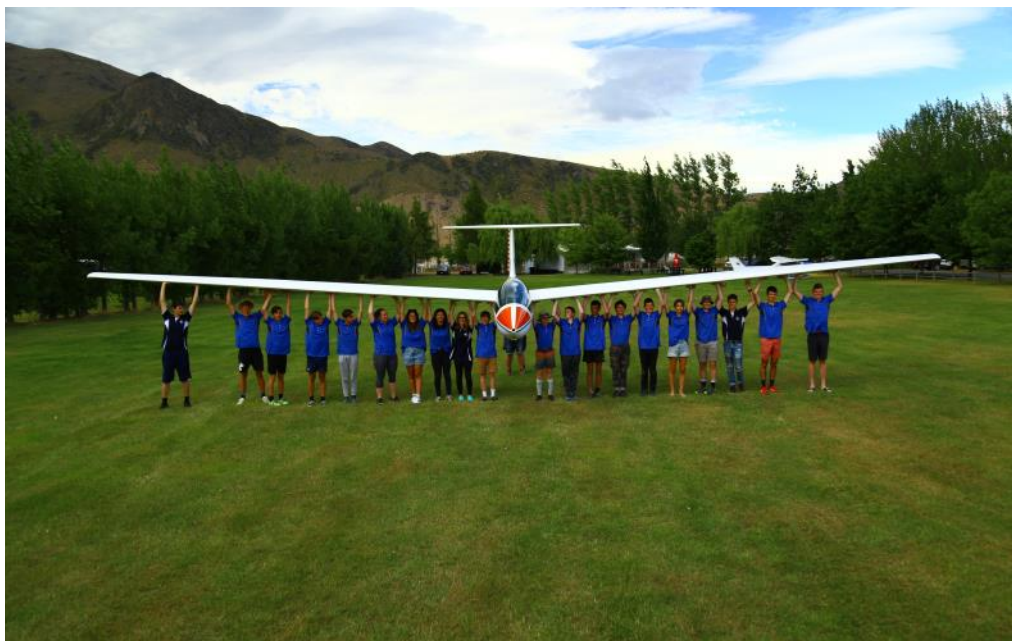
That camp saw the 20 students attending from around the country doing 260 flights averaging over an hour long each. The conditions were challenging so there was less solo flying done (just 39 student solo flights) but there was lots of fantastic soaring done.

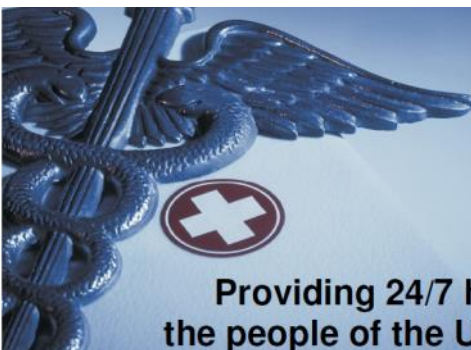
The Mackenzie turned on some awesome wave soaring conditions and amongst the many outstanding flights, we saw three of our 16 and 17-year-olds doing their five hour duration flights solo. To put that in perspective, that's like taking an airline flight from Christchurch to Brisbane...but without the inflight service as you have to do the flying!

Add to this, we had two of them climb to over 20,000 feet, using oxygen once they were above 10,000 feet so they didn't suffer from oxygen starvation.

The Skylaunch winch was well utilised and this will be the focus launch method for the coming weekend. The winch has now been operating for a year and is proving to be a huge asset helping make the sport of gliding affordable for young participants. We have had fantastic local volunteer support and we are working towards getting more winch drivers qualified to spread the "workload" of the volunteer helpers.

We welcome new participants and visitors who want to see what we are up to out at the airfield so come on out and take a look when you see we are flying.





Kurow Medical Centre

8 Wynyard St, Kurow
P: 03 4360760 F: 03 4360780

E: info@kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz

W: www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz

www.facebook.com/kurowmedicalcentre

**Providing 24/7 health care and support to
the people of the Upper Waitaki and Mackenzie**

**Kurow Medical Centre and its satellite clinic
in Twizel Mackenzie Health Centre and
Outreach Clinic at Omarama Community Hall
are proud to offer our registered and casual patients the following services:**

- * Ultrasound performed by a qualified clinician (great for minor fractures, gall stones, kidney stones, heart and lung problems, foreign bodies, blood clots, detecting early pregnancy and much more!)
- * Minor surgery * Vasectomies
- * Mole checks and removal * Steroid injections * Venesection
- * Aviation, workplace and driving medicals * Botox for Wrinkle reduction
- * Workplace health screening * Counselling
- * Spirometry to diagnose asthma and COPD
- * Hearing and sight tests for adults and children * Ear syringing
- * Liquid nitrogen for warts, verruca's, and skin lesions
- * Cardiovascular risk assessment and diabetic checks (funded for eligible patients)
- * Travel advice and vaccination
- * Cervical smears (funded for eligible patients)
- * Seasonal flu shots and shingles vaccine (funded for eligible patients)
- * Childhood Immunisation * Before school checks
- * Postnatal and six-week baby health check

And much more!

**GP consult fees: Under 14yrs Free; Adult \$41.00
Care Plus – Free to eligible patients only**

We also offer the following services from external Health Care Providers:

- * Podiatry and Ear Health (Kurow only)
- * Physiotherapy, Acupuncture and Massage (Kurow and Twizel)

Open

Kurow: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm. Omarama: Thursday 8.30am to 5pm.

Twizel: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 8.30am to 5pm and Saturday 9am to 12pm

Please note: We provide 24/7 on call after hours cover by our doctors and PRIME nurses for all our registered and casual patients!

If you require further information or an appointment, please contact us on:

For Kurow 03 436 0760 or for Twizel 03 976 0503 - Dr Tim and Juliet Gardner

Look us up on our website or Facebook page for more information.



Kurow Medical Centre

8 Wynyard St, Kurow
P: 034360760 F: 034360780

E: info@kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz
W: www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz
www.facebook.com/kurowmedicalcentre

IMPORTANT PATIENT NOTICE

from Kurow Medical Centre and Mackenzie Health Centre

Due to rising costs and rent increase at Kurow Medical Centre we must advise that effective 01 February 2021 there will be a fee increase for patients aged 14 years and over. This follows a three-year period of no fee increases. The change has been approved by our PHO, WellSouth.

The following fee schedule is for standard Doctor and Nurse consultations.

Age Group	Current GP Fee	Amended Fee
Up to 13 yrs	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
14-17 yrs	\$ 26.00	\$ 27.00
18-24 yrs	\$ 40.00	\$ 41.00
25-44 yrs	\$ 40.00	\$ 41.00
45-64 yrs	\$ 40.00	\$ 41.00
Over 65 yrs	\$ 40.00	\$ 41.00
	Current Nurse Fee	
Up to 13 yrs	\$0.00	\$0.00
14-17 Yrs	\$25.00	\$26.00
Over 18 yrs	\$35.00	\$36.00
	Community Card Holders	
14-17 yrs	No change	\$13.00
Over 18 yrs	No change	\$19.00

For other fee increases or if you have any questions please contact the Receptionist or Juliet the Practice Manager on 03 436 0760 or 03 976 0503
We look forward to continuing to provide excellence in primary health care to all our patients.

Best wishes Tim and Juliet Gardner

PAID CONTENT

Breen offer solutions for every client

Breen Construction is much more than a family business with a long-standing reputation in Otago.

The company that takes pride in having built quality, handsome structures across the region for the last 80 years has further strengthened its presence in North Otago. Spreading out from its Alexandra base, with the fourth generation of the Breen family at the helm, it has established a team in Twizel.

Area Manager Jason Pryde, of Omarama, has recently joined the Twizel team to help manage projects and establish key relationships. He says, “Breen Construction has diverse knowledge and experience across the construction industry, and offers a variety of options well suited to this region”.

Breen is proud to be involved in the Twizel Sports Development Board and also offers scholarships to Twizel Area School leavers entering into the construction industry.

Breen has increased its regional offer by acquiring the Specialised Structures network across North Otago, Clutha/Gore, Dunedin, and Central Otago. Specialised Structures offers premium portal frame building solutions for every market — industrial, warehousing, aircraft hangars, retail premises, free-stall cow barns, sheds, and carparks. Each building is custom-designed to suit the requirements of the clients, who get exactly what they need.



This exciting addition to Breen complements its existing business and the client base it has built up across Otago. Managing Director Lindsay Breen says “we are delighted about building these new structures and we are already getting strong enquiry across all areas. These structures are a quality product and align with our values; “we refuse to have our standards compromised”, therefore we give our clients a good investment that will last.”

Breen Construction has grown from its roots as a well-respected local contractor to a leading construction company, serving clients from around New Zealand and the world. Now in its eighth decade, the company has a team across the regions of almost 200 staff.

Anyone with a building project on the horizon should contact Breen Construction or Specialised Structures to discuss the wide range of options available.

**The team at Breen can be reached at 19 Hooker Crescent, Twizel.
Phone 03 440 0190 or email info@breen.co.nz**

For the dedicated Specialised Structures team,
you can call us on 050 878 7828
or drop us a line :
northotago@specialisedstructures.co.nz

www.breen.co.nz

Mike Sangster (left), of Specialised Structures and Lindsay Breen offer wide range of options for any building projects. Photos: supplied





GRANTS & AWARDS

WAITAKI DISTRICT COUNCIL

Apply for the **CREATIVE COMMUNITIES SCHEME**

Funding for local
arts projects
that benefit the
Waitaki community
and promote
participation in
the arts.

**APPLICATIONS OPEN
22 FEBRUARY 2021**

Applications close 19 March 2021

**Need some dollars for a
project to get people involved
in performance, literature,
visual arts, craft or music?**

More information, including application forms,
can be found at www.waitaki.govt.nz, Council
offices and at Waitaki District Libraries.

www.waitaki.govt.nz



Waitaki District
creative
COMMUNITIES *nz*



Waitaki
DISTRICT COUNCIL
TE KAUNIHĒRA A HĀPIE O WAITAKI



GRANTS & AWARDS

WAITAKI DISTRICT COUNCIL

Apply for **COMMUNITY GROUP GRANTS**

Funding to help
community groups
and not-for-profits
with projects and
programmes that
benefit the Waitaki
community.

**APPLICATIONS OPEN
15 FEBRUARY 2021**

Applications close 12 March 2021

Could your community group
use a funding boost towards a
special project? Big or small:
we want to hear from you!

More information, including application forms,
can be found at www.waitaki.govt.nz, Council
offices and at Waitaki District Libraries.

www.waitaki.govt.nz



Waitaki

DISTRICT COUNCIL
TE KAUNIHERA A POHĒ O WAITAKI

Omarama Residents' Association

From the December meeting

There were 12 people present. Chairman Tony Chapman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their hard work during the year.

Because of a change in committee members the bank signatories will be updated.

Waitaki District Council roading manager Mike Harrison has responded to the association's road safety concerns and he will meet with us in the new year, date yet to be set. Due to low interest rates it was decided to put \$25,000 into the Rates account with the Waitaki District Council which will give us accessibility and also a better return.

Charlotte Newfield has resigned as Hall Curator and the association will present her with a gift voucher of \$200 to thank her for all the hard work.

Michelle Kitchen has been appointed to the role.

A general assessment of hall maintenance is to be made.

The next meeting of the Omarama Residents' Association

is 7.30pm Thursday, February 18, 2021

at the Omarama Community Centre

An invitation is extended to all

Contacts: Tony Chapman, chairperson, 027 242 8605.

Yvonne Jones, secretary, 027 476 7473.

THE ASSOCIATION HAS ITS OWN POST OFFICE BOX

Could all those who want to contact the association by mail, send accounts to be paid, or have correspondence considered at the monthly meetings ensure it is addressed to:

The Secretary, P O Box 93, Omarama 9448.

**The association's email address
is omarama.committee@gmail.com**

OMARAMA COMMUNITY CENTRE HALL HIRE

To make a booking for an upcoming event or for more information about hall hire and availability please contact Michelle Kitchen 027 280 54446 or email hallhire.omarama@xtra.co.nz



The Waitaki Newcomers Network

Contact: Christine Dorsey
027 242 8643.

waitaki@newcomers.co.nz
Abacus House,
102 Thames Street,
Oamaru
03 434 7544.

www.newcomers.co.nz

Omarama Collie Dog Club

The Omarama Collie Dog Club trials are on
March 7 and 8, 2021

2180 Omarama/Tarras Rd
Dalrachney Station

Secretary: Carla Hunter 03 976 0504 Email:smithyc66@gmail.com
Entries close 10am on the second day

The Otematata Chronicle

is published on the third Wednesday of each month.

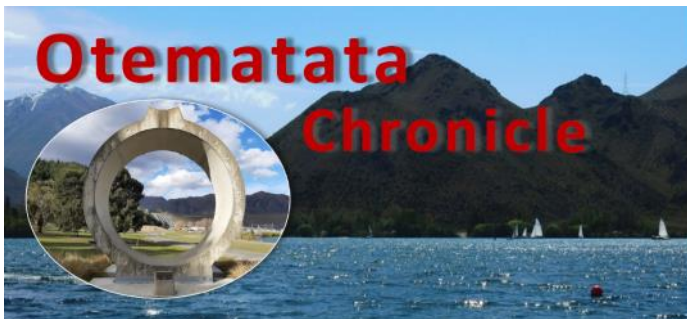
The next issue is Wednesday, February 17, 2021

The close-off for this is Friday, February 12, 2020

The Chronicle is emailed to subscribers.

If you would like to subscribe please:

email otematatachronicle@gmail.com or phone 021 294 8002





TWIZEL MEDICAL CENTRE

Community Owned, Community Focussed,
Community Operated

Twizel Medical Centre is your local Ministry of Health funded, enrolling practice. Contracted by SCDHB for General Practice, District Nursing and 24/7 Urgent Care, contracted by St John for PRIME (Primary Emergency Response) Services across the greater MacKenzie area.

Hours: Monday to Friday 08:30 - 5:00 pm with extended hours over the summer months

Urgent and emergency care 24/7

Our Team: NP Gemma, GPs Drs Peter and George, Admin/Receptionists Donna, Jacqui, Annie and Sue, Nurses Paula, Ann, Zoe, Holly and District Nurses Libby and Jess are passionate about our community accessing a high quality service.

Twizel Medical Centre has charitable status so any surpluses are reinvested to ensure our community has access to sustainable general and urgent care services.

15 MacKenzie Drive, Phone: (03) 4350777

Twizel Medical Centre news

- COVID-19 Update
- COVID-19 vaccination programme

Since the announcement of a community case in Northland the spectre of COVID-19 is upon us once more and all New Zealanders are encouraged to be vigilant.

Anyone who has cold or flu symptoms should phone Twizel Medical Centre before visiting and one of our nurses will advise you whether you fit the criteria for testing. Please call us on 03 435 0777, or you can call Healthline on 0800 358 5453.

The symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- * a fever of at least 38°C
- * shortness of breath
- * a sore throat
- * sneezing and a runny nose
- * temporary loss of smell.

Please be aware that these symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as colds and flu, and do not necessarily mean you have COVID-19.

COVID-19 is spread by droplet infection i.e. when a person coughs, sneezes or talks they can spread droplets containing the virus. You can also get infected by touching surfaces or objects that have been touched by an infected person. The risk becomes higher in enclosed spaces that do not have good airflow, in crowded areas, and in face-to-face conversation.

Now is a good time to remember how important it is to use good hygiene:

regularly wash and dry your hands thoroughly

sneeze and cough into your elbow, and not near others if you can help it

clean shared surfaces regularly

wear a face covering in public.

Scanning QR codes with the NZ COVID Tracer app has dropped off over the last few months, but now might be a good time to start using it again. If you are moving around in crowded places on holiday it is especially important because you may not remember everywhere you've been. If you don't use a smart phone or don't know how to use the app you might find the NZ COVID Tracer booklet more helpful.

Using Bluetooth tracing allows you to receive an alert if you've been near another app user who tests positive for COVID-19. Bluetooth tracing is great for large gatherings and events, like music festivals, when you're amongst large crowds of people – though you still need to scan QR codes to keep track of where you've been. Bluetooth tracing does not affect your privacy – it cannot share your location, your name or anything else about you.

The COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

The Ministry of Health is working hard to get access to a safe and effective vaccine as early as possible.

At this stage first delivery of vaccines is expected to be available from around May onwards. Some points to be aware of with regard to the vaccine are that:

any vaccines that will be used will first be approved by Medsafe. Medsafe is responsible for the safety of the medicines that we use in New Zealand.

the vaccine will be free for everyone

it will NOT be mandatory – you can choose not to be vaccinated

there will be a roll-out plan so that vaccines are made available to people at the right time.

The first priority will be border workers and essential staff, and then to the population groups who need it most. At this stage it is anticipated that the vaccine will be available to the general public in the second half of the year.

If you are worried or anxious about the threat of a new outbreak of COVID-19 please do contact us and ask to speak to a nurse. - *From the Team at Twizel Medical Centre*

Omarama Airfield Ltd

An update from the Directors following their December 2020 meeting

New Director

The board welcomes the appointment, by the Waitaki District Council, of Glenbrook Station owner and aviator, Mr Simon Williamson, as a replacement for Glen Claridge who resigned for personal reasons some months ago. Glen's involvement has been appreciated and we look forward to Simon's contribution.

Policy for the Future

The past twelve months have seen significant changes to the operation of the Omarama Airfield.

The cessation of business by Glide Omarama closely followed by the pandemic has identified to the company a number of risks that need to be dealt with to ensure the long term viability of the airfield.

First amongst these is the need to ensure launch capacity. To that end the company has made a decision that it will need to own, but not necessarily operate, tow plane(s) in order to guarantee that pilots can get airborne. To fund these acquisitions the company has decided to subdivide part of the residential land it owns on the eastern boundary of Nimbus Drive and has opened discussions with planning and project management firms on how best to achieve this.

The company will work with existing launch operators to put in place a long term launch solution that will benefit all airfield users.

Airfield Operations

Projects completed or currently being progressed are :

1. Investigations into the Wi-Fi, radio and web services to identify and put in place robust future proofed systems.
2. Development and management of the winching strips.
3. Finalising the Agreements and Licences to Operate for long term airfield users.
4. Briar and weed control.
5. The development by the Omarama Gliding Club of an app. that will provide information on the airfield.
6. Improvements to the 27 access road.

Airfield Maintenance

Pete McKenzie is now being assisted by Malcolm Wright to ensure that there is coverage for irrigation and maintenance works on the airfield.

Public Liability Insurance

At the October 20 briefing a request was made for the company to investigate the possibility of it holding a Public Liability Insurance cover that would act as an umbrella for all airfield users. The broker has advised that all of the potential liability within each entity covered by the policy would have to be identified to the satisfaction of the insurer and underwriter. This is a complex process and on the brokers recommendation the company will not be pursuing the proposal any further but reminds airfield users to ensure that their individual cover is adequate.

The company has appreciated the commitment and support of the shareholders, Southern Soaring, Youth Glide, Kahu Soaring, the Omarama Gliding Club and the gliding community in ensuring that the services essential to the airfields operation have been in place. We look forward to working with all these parties and others to continue developing the facility.

Clive Geddes clivegeddes@xtra.co.nz

Simon Williamson simon@glenbrookstation.co.nz

Richard Subtil subtil@omaramastation.co.nz

Terry Jones morganjones@xtra.co.nz

Justices of the Peace

JPs are available by appointment to:

- * Witness documents such as applications for citizenship
- * Certify copies
- * Take declarations, affidavits and affirmations

The service is free of charge

To make your visit quick and easy:

- * Do not sign anything beforehand
- * Do take photo identification
- * Remember to take the original as well as the copy to be certified
- * Check that a New Zealand Justice of the Peace can complete your documentation



Georgie Robertson
Omarama

03 438 9554 027 4861525



Vicky Munro
Otematata

03 438 7855 021 438745



Alona Shaw
Omarama

027 773 4214



Notary Public Services Affidavits and Declarations

David Stone, Lake Ohau

03 438 9653, 027 490 9118, david@stone.org.nz



When circumstances beyond your control lead to a rural business crisis be it financial, climatic or personal the Rural Support Trust is ready to assist. Services are free and confidential.

0800 RURAL HELP (0800 787 254)

Waitaki District Council

The council begins 2021 with the task of needing to replace three of its top executives, according to a report in the Otago Daily Times.

After seven years, the council's heritage, planning and regulatory group manager Lichelle Guyan will step down in March, to take time out and consider her future, the report says. Mrs Guyan is the council's third executive team member to leave this year, with assets group manager Neil Jorgensen finishing next month, and chief executive Fergus Power in June.

The council has received a 'BBB' rating in its first Local Government New Zealand CouncilMARK review. The programme incorporates an independent assessment system and lays out in which area the council is working well and also notes areas where there is room for improvement.

Funding rounds for the first half of 2021 open

The Waitaki District Council is inviting charitable groups and community organisations to apply for a share of community grant funding to go towards special projects and programmes to help enhance their local community. All information, including application forms can be found on the council website, at Council offices in Palmerston and Oamaru, and at Waitaki District Libraries . *See the advertisements in this issue*

Tourism promoter Oamaru & Waitaki and 'Neat Places' have launched a video to encourage more New Zealanders to come and visit. Featuring businesses and locations across the district, this video complements the neatplaces brochures which are now on display in participating businesses and other public outlets such as the Visitor Centre, Opera House and Kurow museum.

This initiative was jointly funded by the council Economic Resilience Fund and by participating businesses and is one of several initiatives targeted to stimulate the economy or increase economic resilience.

The Oamaru Public Gardens have been awarded a 5 Star 'Garden of National Significance' rating. The New Zealand Garden Trust made the award after a thorough on-site assessment late last year and a peer-reviewed report. The garden, established in 1876, is one of the oldest in New Zealand. It is one of four gardens in New Zealand moving up from a four to a five-star ranking this year.

The council has installed the rate-payer funded public Wi-Fi in parts of Palmerston, Omarama and Oamaru promised late last year. Users logged into the "Waitaki Wifi" network will be taken to a home page that promotes the region.

The Order of St John, South Island Region Trust Board (Oamaru) wants to lease land from the Waitaki District Council to establish and operate a purpose-built emergency ambulance base on part of Awamoa Park, Oamaru. The maximum time the council can grant a lease is for 35 years.

The period for consultation with the community about the proposal starts Friday February 26 and runs for one month.

The council's planning team wants to hear from the community about possible future environmental challenges and natural hazards to assist with updating its district plan. The present plan, in terms of natural hazard risk, focuses almost entirely on flooding and this information needs to be revisited and updated, planning

manager Hamish Barrell said. The District Plan Review will address the potential consequences of climatic change and other locally-relevant environmental considerations.

“There will be a new chapter on stormwater and natural hazards, including revised areas of flooding risk from the regional councils and provisions to encourage hydraulic neutrality – that is, we don’t want downstream properties to be worse off from any new development upstream.

In addition, we wish to see other natural hazards recognised such as land instability, coastal erosion, fault lines and wild fires.

While the role of regional councils is going to be key, given their function, our local knowledge can be invaluable in informing this process. Photos, memories, experiences and local records of past events, can help build a picture of the environmental challenges certain areas face. To contribute email: districtplan@waitaki.govt.nz

Council Controlled Organisations– Directorship updates.

The council has appointed Omarama farmer Simon Williamson as a director of Omarama Airfield Ltd. He replaces Glen Claridge who resigned late last year. Two new directors - Andrew Blair and Dr Scott Wilson - were appointed to Waitaki District Health Services late last year. Other recent management appointments are Stuart Mologne as clinical director, Kelvin Kite as chief financial officer, and Phil Jamieson as chief executive.

Mr Blair comes from a background in advisory and governance roles including Southern Cross healthcare, Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust, is the former chair of both Capital and Coast District Health Board and Hutt Valley District Health Board as well as having served on the Board of Hawke's Bay District Health Board. He also has extensive prior leadership / managerial experience in hospitals and healthcare organisations.

Dr Wilson is a Rural Hospital Medicine (RHM) specialist and former clinical lead of Ashburton and Dargaville Hospitals, having developed and overseen the implementation of new models of care in these facilities. His governance experience includes two terms on the Council for the Division of Rural Hospital Medicine, chair of the NZ Rural Hospital Clinical Leaders forum, and he is an executive member of the Rural Hospital Network. He balances these roles with family and raising two children. In other appointments, Tourism Waitaki retains its same board with the reappointments of both Rick Ramsey and Megan Crawford. Following the recent resignation of Adair Craik, Council has decided to leave the board at four directors for the time being.

Whitestone Contracting Ltd has had its chair, Michael de Buyzer, reappointed by the Council.

Phone: 03 433 0300

Automated options after hours

E-mail: service@waitaki.govt.nz

www.waitaki.govt.nz

Ahuriri Community Board news

From the meeting

December 14, 2020 at the Otematata Community Centre

In attendance:

Ahuriri Community Board members Vicky Munro (chairperson), Brent Cowles, Steve Dalley, Peter Ellis, Ross Menzies, Council representative Cr Ross McRobie. Waitaki Mayor Gary Kircher, Cr Bill Kingan, Waitaki District Council chief executive Fergus Power, governance advisor Ainslee Hooper.

The board undertook something of a pre-Christmas spend-up authorising grants to Kurow, Otematata and Omarama, at its meeting.

It asked for the council's seal of approval to grant the shortfall of \$7,000 from Ahuriri Ward Rate Reserves to the Waitaki Valley Community Society for the Kurow community skate park and learn to ride facilities.

In 2019 the council gave money to the learn-to-ride park facility with the remainder coming from other grants and community fundraising leaving the shortfall.

The Otematata Residents' Association has been assured it will get any top-up required to see it able to purchase heat pumps for the Otematata Lakes Centre Hall. Both Ahuriri Community Board member Steve Dalley, who is chairperson of the association and Cr Ross McRobie, whose wife Petrea is secretary, left the room for the discussion and vote.

The association asked for an amount of \$3,759 for the heat pumps.

The total cost of the installation is \$27, 758.63.

The association received \$12,000 from both Meridian Energy and the Otago Community Trust.

In discussion, both Mrs Munro and board member Brent Cowles understood the association was also likely to receive a significant donation from cycle tour company Cycle Journeys who planned to donate any proceedings from the opening of the new A2O cycle section towards the heat pump project.

The outcome was the board agreed to top up any shortfall from its Discretionary fund, should one occur.

The Omarama Residents' Association was granted \$200 for a 'spider' swing, \$250 to have two junior hockey goals built, \$6,900 to incorporate a community history wall into the street frontage of the volley wall of the new sports courts.

The wall, which will be created by Acucut, Oamaru, will feature significant moments in Omarama's history and could also become the starting point of a 'history' walking trail.

The Board has asked for a further quote to be obtained by the association in support of its request for funding of \$5405 to repair the water-damaged road front signage at the Hall and install a gate between the carpark and the new sports courts.

Because the single quote presented with the application came from Omarama Residents' Association committee member Hank Verheul the board wanted to see an alternative before agreeing to the grant.

This was to protect integrity of the association's committee, Cr McRobie said.

Alps 2 Ocean

Money has been granted for a business case to re-route the trail through Otematata

and take it off road between the town and Aviemore, Cr McRobie said. With the opening on Friday of the new section between Sailors Cutting and Benmore Mrs Munro said she was personally pleased to learn all safety aspects had been covered including access for emergency services because part of that section runs through Rostrievers Station of which she is a part owner.

Christmas trees

Feedback regarding the district's three new Christmas trees, one of which was installed in Kurow, had been overwhelmingly positive, Mrs Munro said.

Many had asked if each of the towns could have one.

The challenge was not so much about finding the funding but how a tree will be put up and where it would be stored afterwards, Mr Kircher said.

"If the community can come up with that then its easier to do."

Rubbish and recycling

Mr Dalley said he had been approached on several occasions and asked if better provisions could be made for recycling and rubbish disposal in Otematata.

Holiday makers to the town often commented the facilities were not as good as they were in their home towns.

Mr Power said the council's recent Rubbish survey indicated while most people were happy with their present situation more 'education' about recycling options was sought.

Cr Kingan said a new solid waste manager had recently been appointed to the council. Mr Kircher said the numbers of permanent residents in Otematata did not support making any changes like extending the opening hours and some alternative options were open to abuse.

"There are no easy answers, the answers that are there people don't want to pay for."

Transpower's Clutha-Upper Waitaki lines project director Roy Noble briefed the board about its \$100 million upgrade of two high-voltage lines through Otago. The lines run from Roxburgh to Livingstone and from Cromwell to Twizel which means some of the work will take place within the Ahuriri Ward.

The work will mean the lines can carry 1000MW after the upgrade up from 600MW and will allow Transpower to convey electricity, at present used by the Tiwai aluminium smelter, north.

The LGNZ version of the Community Boards' 2019 – 2022 Triennium Standing Orders was adopted at the meeting along with a code of conduct. The new standing orders allow; an informal mode of speaking to and moving motions, meetings by audio-visual link, and authorise the chairperson to have a casting vote when necessary.

The next Ahuriri Community Board meeting is 3.15pm Monday, March 8, 2021 at the Otematata Community Centre

Minutes and agendas can be found here

<http://www.waitaki.govt.nz/our-council/council-meetings/agendas-and-minutes/Pages/default.aspx>

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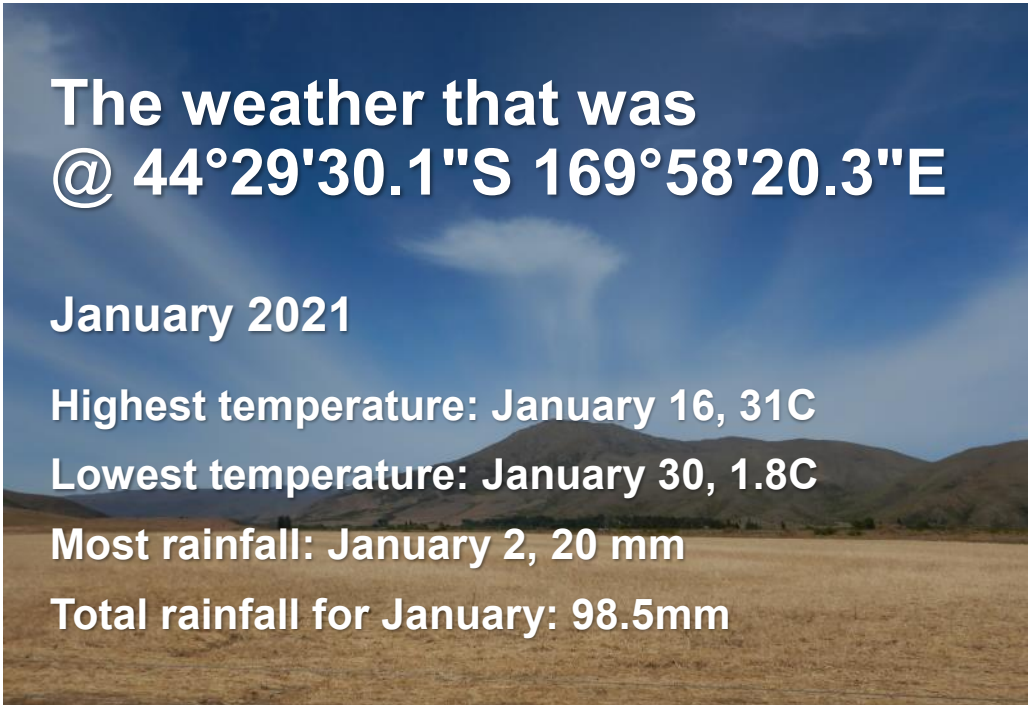
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The weather that was @ 44°29'30.1"S 169°58'20.3"E


January 2021

Highest temperature: January 16, 31C

Lowest temperature: January 30, 1.8C

Most rainfall: January 2, 20 mm

Total rainfall for January: 98.5mm



The weather that was @ 44°29'30.1"S 169°58'20.3"E

December 2020

Highest temperature: December 15, 31.5C

Lowest temperature: December 27 -0.4C

Most rainfall: December 11, 8.2 mm

Total rainfall for December: 40.4mm

The Garden Diary - Blowing hot and cold

West. Nor' west. Snap! It slams sou'west.

The semaphore on the hill against the brooding sky signals the mood swing.

The temperature gauge up-one-minute-down-the-next follows its lead.

The day dawns bright and clear. Come elevenses and noon the familiar crashing rumble rolls in, sometimes accompanied by a yowl, as the wind wraps itself the house like some demented cat. Belying its ferocity, it leaves a whisper of snow on the tops and I'm pulling on jerseys and stoking the fire first thing. In Summer!

This season the weather has not been generous. A rogue frost has visited each fruit tree in turn and like a sniper in the night taken out any hope of peach pie.

There are no peaches, no apricots, no pears, no plums, no quinces.

The only plant fruiting madly is the ornamental grape 'Vitis vinifera purpurea'. It's never looked so good. It could be a model for a still life by Rembrandt, so tempting but oh so bitter not even the birds touch it. Mustn't grumble. We will have apples. But!

The lawn is burnt and the hedge is crispy. The wildly fluctuating temperatures and extreme of wet and dry also cause another problem. The bark on one of the pears has split vertically almost from top to bottom. The prognosis is good but frost crack can take 'sides' out of even established trees – which is why some about town are looking a little bedraggled.

The season's stalwarts shine on.

Some so dainty they really look as if they should rightly wilt like a Bridgerton maiden.

Lacy, refined and dressed in diaphanous mauve silk with pearls *Thalictrum delavayi* (Chinese Meadow Rue) graces the flower bed with her presence year after year.

In lavender and maroon bonnets *Verbena bonariensis* and *Knautia macedonica* bob their heads up above surrounding perennials which have moved on from their moment in the sun. And in the background *Lysimachia clethroides*, the gooseneck loosestrife, bounces away to the tune of the wind. Soon its leaves will turn deep, autumny-scarlet.

In the herb garden Anise hyssop stands straight, tall and independent as does the pink *Monarda* (Bee balm) while the sunflowers, not yet in bloom and just the same height, must be ring-fenced with stakes.

Convolvulus sabatius mauritanicus – such a scary name for a tiny beauty – looks up and gently asks permission to bake in the sun on the hot concrete path

Perovskia atriplicifolia Russian sage has won me over. First impressions were not good - sprawling and a bit stinky. But now, provided it gets a good chop at the right time, it's a great filler - all wiry silver and lavender when there's nothing else about.

It is now the *Echinops sphaerocephalus* globe thistle shows its softer side - it won't be pushed around by the wind either. Its perfectly spherical spiky head turns into hundreds of tiny starry blooms attracting insects of all shapes and sizes.

And with the roses taking their summer siesta it's left to the steadfast phlox to fill the garden with their sweet, powdery scent.

There's change in the wind. This morning fog fills the basin lifting at the hem to show the rising sun lighting drought golden hills. There's a heavy dew. Summer is turning.

The resident possum has resumed its nightly sortie, scampering along the fence tops winding the dog into a frenzied cacophony because she cannot get us to stir ourselves - like she thinks we can't hear her?!

It will be back. It knows there are apples.

- Ruth Grundy

(I garden a small space under a big sky in Omarama)



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