



Omarama Gazette

March 2020



Omarama, gateway to the Waitaki District

An open letter to the Waitaki District Council on behalf of the Omarama Community.

To whom it may concern,

This letter has been prompted by three issues of concern to Omarama residents.

1. There appears to be a general lack of care and attention paid to the maintenance of various council amenities in the town.
2. Individuals say when they have used the various avenues available to them – a phone call, an email, the Customer Request Management (CRM) system, and more recently, the Snap, Send and Solve app, queries do not receive a response or they are told it is 'someone else's problem' – another agency or another council department, and there is no follow-on action taken.
3. The perception is, action is taken on 'easy' tasks - lawns get mowed, trees get a quick trim - while others are not addressed despite being raised several times in as many years.

Last Tuesday (February 25), the Omarama Gazette asked the council to provide the statistics for online service requests/CRMs and 'Snap, send solve' requests specific to Omarama for the three months ended February 25, 2020 and for the same period last year, and the topic of concern raised and the number of requests per topic. Plus, how many of each of these had been resolved.

(This data is collected and reported on regularly at council and community board meetings.)

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Omarama, gateway to the Waitaki District ...continued

I asked for a reply by noon Monday (March 2) so these could be included in a story I was writing for Wednesday's Gazette.

On Thursday, (February 27) when there had been no acknowledgement of receipt of my request, I contacted the council.

In response, I was told there would not be a routine response to my enquiry, it was to be treated as a Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act request instead, and it could be up to 20 working days before I might expect a reply. This is the only time I have had a request for routinely available information from any council treated in this way.

To their credit, the information sought arrived Monday afternoon.

The log produced showed all 27 of requests for service in the three months to February 2019 had been resolved and, of the 30 requests for the same period this year, only three are outstanding. (There is a graphic of a more detailed breakdown of requests overleaf.)

So, what is the mandate for following up on this issue?

Last month, and not for the first time, these general community concerns were raised at the Omarama Residents' Association meeting.

At the meeting Ahuriri Community Board member Ross Menzies also expressed frustration at not being able to make headway with five issues he was dealing with on behalf of a resident.

He told the meeting, in the instance of the broken fence beside the merino ram statue, he was informed by council officers it was the landowner's problem – the council is the landowner.

	Number of Requests	Number of Requests
	Dec 1, 2018 - Feb 25, 2019	Dec 1, 2019 – Feb 25, 2020
Total number of requests	27	30
Categories identifying Omarama for each period		
Debtor Enquiry	0	1
General Parks Queries	4	7
Health Complaints	1	0
Landfill Nuisance	0	1
Parks Work Instruction - URGENT Work	0	1
Potential Breach of district plan	0	1
Property General Enquiry	1	0
Rates Enquiry	1	1
Request for Special Reading of a Water Meter	0	1
Roads Abandoned Vehicles	2	0
Roads Carpark Maintenance	0	1
Roads Culverts - side drains - blocked	0	1
Roads Footpath Maintenance	0	1
Roads Grading/Metalling/Unsealed Damage	1	1
Roads Litter General	3	0
Roads Potholes -Sealed Roads	1	0
Roads Ultra-Fast Broadband Complaints	0	1
Roads Vegetation - Mowing - Spray Control - Overhanging	1	0
Routine Water CRMs	8	4
Urgent Water CRMs (Ahuriri or Palmerston)	1	1
Water Wastewater & Stormwater Public Enquiry	3	3
Number Completed	27	27

Omarama Residents' Association chairperson Tony Chapman told the Omarama Gazette he was "very disappointed at the response to queries".

The fence palings around the ram, for example, were "a minimal thing...which could be done in half an hour". Attention to general maintenance around the town "was poor".

He was surprised to learn that, on paper, almost all issues raised had been resolved when on the ground it appeared many were still outstanding.

He emphasised it was important people made sure they used the avenues available to relay concerns to the council so the data could be logged and action followed up.

The Gazette is aware the following issues have been outstanding for six months or more.

- The state of disrepair of the post and rail fence at the entry to Omarama from SH8.
- the state of footpaths (prior to the UFB installation project) with long stretches not fit for prams, wheelchairs or the less able, particularly the section of Blackpeak Rd between Benmore Place and SH83. This was raised several times by Councillor Craig Dawson at Ahuriri Community Board meetings in the past term.

(The Gazette understands the requirement is on the UFB contractors to make good the sections they have dug up. However, this will not include stretches of footpath where they have not worked.)

- the irrigation and care of established trees, of plantings and the general unkempt state of gardens. The Ahuriri Community Board requested \$3,000 be put to repairing the irrigation system on the SH 83 entrance avenue a year ago. The work has yet to be carried out.

- continued over



Omarama, gateway to the Waitaki District ...*continued*

- ponding in various parts of the town after rain, and mud tanks and soak pits which are not draining as they should.

- high capacity bins not emptied in a timely way at the campervan dump station
- Safety signs not yet erected to signal where footpaths are dual cycle-pedestrian.

Ratepayers may be of the impression taking concerns to the Ahuriri Community Board could leverage more action. However, it appears the board has almost as much difficulty getting resolution of issues as the 'ordinary resident in the street'. In the board's previous term, the effectiveness of CRMs and response times was raised with council officers, the chief executive and mayor regularly, particularly by long-time board member Calum Reid, of Kurow. At the beginning of this new board's term some matters still lie on the table unresolved.

The topic was raised in the public forum of the December meeting of the Waihemo Community Board which was told the "Society of Local Government Managers surveys in 2017, 2018 and 2019 had shown significant improved performance in the council's CRM performance, which was now in the top 20% of all local government throughout the country".

Ahuriri Community board member Ross Menzies began making enquiries into five issues raised by a ratepayer in November last year. At the December board meeting, he detailed the frustrations he was experiencing in getting matters resolved.

Yesterday, Wednesday, he said after considerable effort and three months since making the first approach he believed the message regarding the five points had been received by the parties who needed the information to rectify the matters. Within the past week he had seen people "measuring up".

"I believe it is all underway now and I expect to have that confirmed at the [Ahuriri Community Board] meeting on Monday."

Generous community members have given their own time to remedying some issues rather than waiting for a response. A year ago the local policeman repainted the welcome to Omarama sign at the southern entrance, in his own time and at his own cost. Others have attempted repairs to broken irrigation systems.

The road blocks put in the way of addressing genuine concerns mean many people do not see the point in raising issues.

The general feeling is the community is fed up with excuses, they just want things fixed.

So, we await your action on these matters,

- Ruth Grundy, Editor, Omarama Gazette

For those who have concerns, here are the council recommended avenues for raising an issue:

- Download and use the Snap, Send, Solve app from the council website to your phone. www.waitaki.govt.nz

Please note: Users must have their email address set up on their phone in order for Snap Send Solve requests to actually be processed. The app will show the request as being sent, but if there is no email set up on the device then it doesn't have any way to get to Council.

This app may incur internet data charges or may come out of your data package allowance.

- Requests can still be lodged by filling out an online service request form, emailing service@waitaki.govt.nz, calling 03 433 0300 or freephone 0800 108 081, or visiting one of the council offices.

In late news ...

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE PLAN?

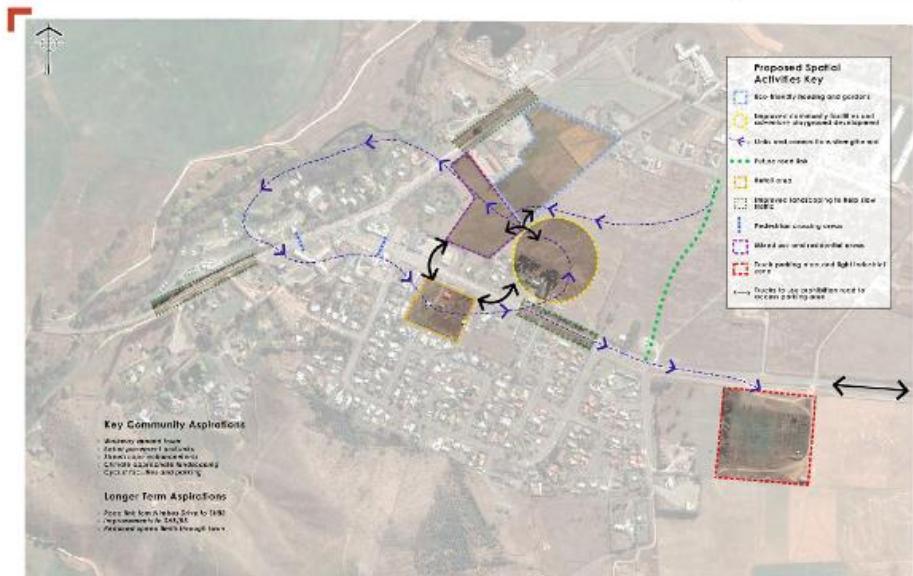
The 'final' Omarama town concept plan is to be considered by the Ahuriri Community Board at its meeting in Omarama on Monday, so it can recommend it to the Waitaki District Council for final approval at its meeting on March 31.

The report attached to the agenda which lays out the concept plans for Omarama and Otematata says the \$20,000 allocated in the Long Term Plan for the creation of each concept plan and consultation process has now been spent.

As well, the board has been asked to approve the development of design guidelines for new residential and commercial buildings in Omarama as part of the District Plan Review.

You can read the full agenda and report on the council website.

The Ahuriri Community Board meeting is at 3.15pm, Monday, March 9 at the Omarama Community Centre and begins with a public forum.



A 'good day' at the Omarama ewe fair

It was “quite a good day, today”, PGG Wrightson livestock agent Mark Yeates says. “There was firm demand for merino ewes and quite some strong interest in half-bred sheep.”

Top price of \$126 went to a line of 327 merino from Rostrieuer Run, Otematata. Other notable lines were 410 from Glenbrook Station at \$123, 304 from Quailburn Downs at \$121, and 267 from Tara Hills which went at \$120.

Mark said the yarding, estimated to be more than 6000, was slightly up on last year and was boosted by a sale of capital stock – 900 half-bred ewes from Mt Menzies Station, Hakataramea.

Prices for these ranged from \$177 for 2-tooths to \$132 for 5-year olds.

In the 6-year-old half-breds, notable lines included 82 from Benmore Station which went for \$165, 116 from Ahuriri Downs which went for \$16, and 559 from Ben Ledi, in the Dansey Pass, which went for \$160.

Prices were somewhat back on last year – the top line in 2019 was \$175 - but “on expectation”, Mark said.

The ewe fair was held at the Omarama Sheep sale yards last week.

At the lamb sale a week earlier prices were also slightly down on last year's.

The top line of ewe lambs, half-breds from Longslip Station, made \$150, down on last year's top price \$163. The top line of wether lambs went to Waitangi Station at \$128.

The average price was about \$85.



Surprise in store for Wajax teams

By Jack Zorab, Wajax 2020 coordinator

It's now just over a week until 25 teams from across Otago/Southland come together to compete in the 50th Wajax competition, here in Omarama.

Preparations are almost complete and we're looking forward to putting on a great weekend for everyone.

Being the 50th anniversary, it was important that we made this year memorable so we're pleased to announce one of our main sponsors as WATERAX, the company that makes the modern day Wajax pump, based in Canada!

They reached out to us a number of months ago after seeing our event online and it's a testament to the competition that they want to be involved.

Waterax marketing director Gabriella Gabasi said; 'We're thrilled to be part of the 50th edition of the Omarama competition and to be involved with your great event that's been using our pumps for so many years'.

Through them, every competitor on the day will receive a Wajax 2020 commemorative competition coin that they can keep to show their grand kids when they compete in Wajax 2070.

The Omarama Fire Brigade have been working tirelessly to bring everything together for the big day and we'd like to thank all the locals and businesses that have helped get us here.

We hope to see you at the Countrytime on the Saturday March 14 to watch teams go head to head in what promises to be an exciting competition.

Facebook page @wemovewater



Successful trials mark first days of Autumn

The stunning first days of Autumn made for perfect conditions for the 105th Omarama Collie Dog Club trials.

Newly-elected club president Rob Waldie said the weather "was great, not too hot and not too cold" and a steady stream of competitors arrived from Central Otago and Canterbury throughout to take part.

"The family atmosphere is great and the grounds are a credit to the Aubreys."

Rob, who manages West Edge Station, has replaced Scott Hunter who stepped down after two years in the role, and Doc Prebble, who is Ahuriri Downs manager, is the new vice president.

The club was in a "good strong" position at the moment with more than 20 members including a lot of young people, Rob said.

This is the third trials hosted by the Aubrey family on the grounds at Dalrachney Station.

It was the first time one of the country's best known sheep dog trialists Lloyd Smith, of Palmerston had judged an event at the grounds – a site he helped to chose.

"It's a good set up, good grounds."

The whole course made for easy viewing for spectators, he said.

Dalrachney Station provided the half-bred ewe lambs and two-tooths for the competition.

Judges: Event 1, The Long Pull, Kerry Chittock; Event 2, The Short Head and Yard, Bruce Calder; Event 3, The Zigzag Hunt, Lloyd Smith; Event 4, The Straight Hunt, Robbie Calder.

Photos: (clockwise from top left) Collie Dog Club secretary Prue O'Neill takes entries; vice president Doc Prebble arrives back from liberator duties on the hill at the long pull event; Omarama Collie Dog Club president Rob Waldie and Ollie Waldie (7) check things are running smoothly; Sarah Waldie and Sylvia Anderson are on bar duty; in the kitchen Lizzie Croft, Vanessa Anderson and Carla Hunter attend to lunch. Below: with thanks to the sponsors of the event.

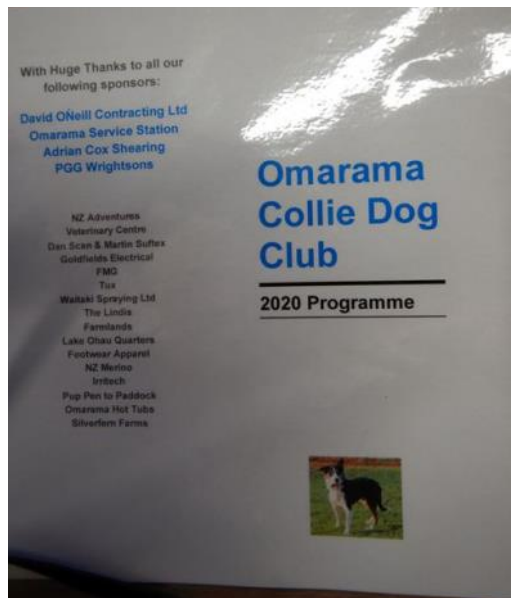
RESULTS:

Event I; S Hunter and Crest 1, B Loft and Meg 2, B Thompson and Bolt 3, R Aubrey and Trump 4, L Smith and Check 5, 1st intermediate, B Thompson and Bolt. 1st maiden J Longley and Dutch.

Event II; G Calder and Haig 1, S Hunter and Crest 2, P Anderson and Miss 3, B Murphy and Fleck 4, P McCarthy and Gay 5, 1st intermediate B Murphy and Fleck. 1st maiden D Broughton and Rose.

Event III; L Scott and Jake 1, B Lott and Liz 2, S Hunter and Ollie3, A Law and Sarge 4, S Hunter and Barb 5. 1st intermediate B Murphy and Fleck. 1st maiden Bill and Jug.

Event IV; A Bell and Bec 1, S Hunter and Ollie 2, J Mansfield and Gem 3, D Broughton and Grit 4, M Dodds and Punch 5. 1st intermediate B Lott and Jug. 1st maiden B Lott and Jug.





Omarama landmark celebrates 20 years

An inconspicuous plaque on a rock under the shade of an aging willow marks the occasion.

The well-loved landmark – the bridge over the Omarama Stream – which stands as testament to many hours of volunteer labour, has celebrated a significant anniversary. It's 20-years, more or less, since it was 'commissioned'.

Former Omarama resident and Omarama promotion bureau chairman Peter Casserly (now of Tuahiwi, Kaiapoi), whose name appears on the plaque, tells the story of five years' work and jumping through endless hoops of red tape to get the project to completion.

"Now, 20 years on, a bit of history.

For years and years, under the Oamaru Borough Council, a committee of locals administered the funds collected from rates to care for community assets like the hall, and parks and reserves. This was before the amalgamation of the county in the early 1990s and the creation of the Waitaki District Council.

Before the council took over the locals used to have all sorts of fun down by the stream at the campsite - there were dart club and school picnics, and Tom Tamati and Sam Gilbert used to put down a hangi at Christmas and Easter – lots of fun all round in the 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s.

When the council took over they gave the camping ground land over for a 30-year lease, with a right of renewal. But they forgot to survey and gazette the old walking track down to the stream and take it out of the lease. The lessee duly closed the walkway.

After a bit of talking with councillors Graham Wardell and Struan Munro we held a public meeting at the camping ground and got a mandate from the locals to have it opened again.

But who was to pay? The Omarama Promotions Bureau decided to take it on. I was chairman at the time. Jane Thomas, of Killermont Station, was secretary and was very involved with the golf club which thought it was a great idea. So, the rest is history.

We applied to the New Zealand Charitable Trust to access the funds from the Omarama Hotel pokie machines and received about \$53,000 to form the walkway and put the bridge over the Omarama stream.

I must say if it was not for some hard-core locals – Jack Maley, Peter Hardy Ron Collins, Kevin Grant, Peter Patterson – the main contractor He was bloody marvellous,

really. – also Dave Shaw, Ken Rogers Catherine Cowie, and a lot more volunteers it would not have happened.

And we are so grateful to Jo Mitchell who donated some of his land next to the track so the ambulance could drive down there if a kid fell out of a tree or something happened to someone. It is just great to see children swimming, walkers and fishermen all having fun down there now.

Please respect the walkway and don't forget to take your rubbish with you."



FURTHER: Stump (Keith) Pullan remembers returning to New Zealand on a four-month break from the mines in Australia and helping with the work. He believes the job was not actually completed until perhaps December 2002. He laughs as he recalls the other volunteers remarking –“We won’t see Casso today, it’s a work day!”

It was where he got to meet PJ (the late Peter Patterson). “I still miss the old bugger. And Gordon, Ann Patterson’s brother also worked hard on the project, Stump said.

Editor’s note: If any one has more they would like to add, or memories or photos they would like to share please contact me. As development in the town continues such background information can help ensure we keep these community treasures secure for future generations. A town masterplan will be presented to the council on March 31 and further development of walkways in the town is likely to be part of the new concept.



Facility opened with a flourish

“Awesome” was the word of the day.

The Omarama multi-sports courts facility – described by all as an “awesome” asset for the town which will serve the community for generations to come - was opened last month with a little bit of a flourish - the cutting of a big pink bow, and, of course, tennis.

It was ‘game, set and match’ for a team of volunteers that had worked five years to bring the initial idea to reality.

The multipurpose courts at the community centre comprise two tennis and netball courts, one full-sized soccer/hockey D, and a practice wall. An outdoor basketball hoop will be added. About 50 attended the opening event.

Omarama Residents’ Association chairperson Tony Chapman said it was an “awesome facility”.

“It’s going to have a lot of use by a lot of people.”

He thanked the main sponsors Meridian Energy, the Otago Community Trust and the Waitaki District Council, as well as all who supported the Residents’ Association garden tour fundraiser. As well, he thanked Kevin Grant, Hank Verheul, M&M Contracting and Multisport Surfaces, who constructed the facility. He especially thanked two volunteers who had driven the project from its inception – former Residents’ Association chairperson Ann Patterson and Sports Courts co-ordinator Jemma Gloag.

Mrs Patterson said the project was first mooted about five years ago by a small group,

“some of those dropped off”.

“After the garden tour Jemma asked, are we going to do this or not?

“We all owe Jemma a big thank you. She has driven this project.”

She also thanked members of the Residents’ Association and all those who helped create “an awesome community asset”.

As a token of appreciation for all her efforts Mrs Gloag was asked to open the facility.

The evening opened with a demonstration tennis match by two members of the North Otago Tennis senior team, Jackson Kerr, of Omarama, and Robin Jamieson, of Oamaru. Jamieson said the courts were “amazing”.

“I know what I played on last time I was in town,” he said.

“They will be a great asset to the town ...with the playground right here, you couldn’t ask for anything better.”

Ahuriri Community Board chairperson Vicky Munro it was a “very proud moment” to watch the opening.

“I cannot express my major admiration for the Omarama community.

“That was a huge project and I know it takes one person to drive these projects, but it took the support of community and sponsors as well.”

Waitaki District councillor Ross McRobie said he congratulated all who had worked to see the project come to fruition.

“It’s an awesome facility for the community.”

It represented a “huge amount” of hard work fundraising in a short time frame.

“Well done to the community of Omarama and surrounds,” he said.

Following the relaxed formalities and the opening demonstration match, teams of mixed doubles took to the courts for quick rounds of ‘fast-4’ and those gathered enjoyed a barbecue tea prepared by Tony and Amanda Chapman and served by

members of the Residents' Association.

The opening event was supported by: Silver Fern Farms; The Hungry Hydro, Otematata: Omarama Top 10 Holiday Park; Otematata Eatery, Bar & Lodging; Four Square Omarama and the Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade.

The \$215,000 raised included grants from Meridian Energy, who gave \$75,000, the Otago Community Trust who donated \$50,000, and the Waitaki District Council who gave \$40,000, to the project.

Photos: Former Omarama Residents' Association chairperson Ann Patterson congratulates sports courts project coordinator Jemma Gloag at the opening of the courts, Residents gather to celebrate the opening.



Kiwi loss soothed with bangers and mash

It was inevitable. Eventually it was going to happen.

Nothing was more certain than an Aussie would be drawn across the ditch and take out the south's toughest and most hotly-contested annual competition.

Never mind Challenge Wanaka, Australian-born Jill Crawford-Ferguson has won Omarama's Spud in the Bucket 2020.

While this was only her first attempt at the competition, it had always been on her bucket list, she said.

"I've been talking about this for 14 years.

"Don't say I'm Australian." What was that?!

There to save the Kiwis from total shame was young Kobie Sole whose bucket returned a creditable 25 spuds to take out the youth section. Runner-up with 24 potatoes was Tara Parsons.

There was a battle for second place on the podium in the adult section which proved to be a draw - 31 all - between Christine Bowman and Bruce Dyson. A judge's ruling was called for.

Bruce was relegated to third place after the judge ruled the prize should go to the better looking...spuds, of course! What were you thinking?

Coming as no surprise – The XKAV8or, himself, Kevin Grant was awarded the trophy for the best quality spuds, his bucket unearthing 27 of the beauties.

Boots & Jandals Hotel owner Julie Dyson said 60 had entered the pub social club event at the beginning of the growing season.

Each is given a bucket and a potato – this year Nadines were distributed - with the aim of producing the biggest and best crop in the bucket by harvest.



Adjudicators Philip Jannick and newcomer Ross Tangney were set a difficult task at the outset, as about 50 buckets returned for judging had to be tipped, sifted, sorted and counted – one potato, two potato, three potato... How many was that again? Ross said he hoped to do better next year. Not a lot of bribes were forthcoming, he said.

It was a vocal crowd of spectators from across the nation and, indeed the globe. At times emotions ran high.

“Can we see the size of those...they’re pretty marginal.”

“...as long as he doesn’t beat the wife. I don’t care, unless he wins.”

“You lose heaps of those [golf balls] don’t you?”

But it has been ruled in past events golf balls do not count, Paddy.

This year, the local crowd caught the eye of numerous passers-by intrigued, bemused and puzzled by the annual harvest ritual.

Frank Monaghan, of California, and friend Carol make the event an almost annual pilgrimage, although that might actually be to go fishing.

Social Club members were treated to a slap-up barbeque tea with buckets of new spuds on the side.

Photos: Boots & Jandals Hotel Omarama Spud in a Bucket 2020 winners Jill Crawford-Ferguson and Kobie Sole. The competition lines up for judging. Adjudicators Ross Tangney and Philip Jannick get judging underway under watchful eyes. Lex Perriam helps prepare the celebratory meal.



Through Antonieta's Eyes

By Antonieta (Tieta) Moreno-Casañas. Photos: supplied



After 16 years living in New Zealand, Maria Buldain is a remarkable example of someone that arrived to a new country and totally turns it into her own place.

Lots of strong words appear in here: belonging, identity, vulnerability, community, friends... She was a psychologist back in Uruguay and now, after fighting and winning a lot of battles she is a resident in New Zealand (Oamaru) with a bachelor in social services, a job as Family and Whanau Fieldworker for Able and a person fully committed to the Waitaki Multicultural Council.

As you can start seeing, she transforms her own individual struggles into a social matters that gain a role in the public sphere.

She proposed the idea of this group to the Waitaki Multicultural Council and to Newcomers and Migrant Coordinator Christine Dorsey in 2017. They gathered together weekly on Thursday at the Opera House in Oamaru from 10.30 am to 12 noon.

The official name of the group is Waitaki Migrants Meet and Share and they belong to the Newcomers Network. They organize several activities like morning coffee, afternoon tea, picnics and more. With all this, they are fighting against isolation and promoting social support in matters related to education, health, housing and settling in etc.

"Most of the participants are young people that come for information, start an educative and social process inside the community and then, our job is done. They are able to get along with their lives and don't feel the need of being at the meetings every week. It is a proof of success. But there is something that never gets lost: the friendships that they make inside the group," Maria says.

One of the hardest tasks right now is how to decentralize the group and take the project to others towns around the District (Otematata and Omarama among them).

"The migrants in these areas work a lot and they don't have the time to come to Oamaru, we are aware of that and trying to do our best to get there."

If you want to connect with this fabulous group you can go straight to the Facebook Page: Waitaki Migrants Meet and Share, or you can write me an email and I will definitely help to get you in touch.

Hope you all keep meeting and sharing, Tieta. Antonieta Casañas
email: antonietapc92@gmail.com

Tieta lives and works in Omarama. In her column she explores the culture of Omarama and the Waitaki, and tell us about her day-to-day experiences and interactions - we see ourselves through her eyes.



Supporting



St John

Colour your Day

Friday 13 March 2020

- Wear something colourful in your school, business or community.
- Observe 1 minute silence at **1:40pm** to commemorate the March 15th Christchurch Tragedy.
- Donate to St John.

Order of St John, ASB Bank Account 12-3244-0025072-00
Particulars: COLOUR, Reference: Family Name or Business

Funds raised will ensure St John has the training and equipment needed to respond to an emergency. St John serve our communities faithfully as our first medical responders to incidents throughout New Zealand.



#CYD2020

www.colouryourday.nz

The Noticeboard



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

Congratulations to Wyatt McAughtrie and Courtney Scott Martin on their engagement

Rowing: The South Island Secondary School rowing championships will be at Lake Ruataniwha from Friday, March 13 to Sunday, March 15.
The 2020 Aon Maadi Cup regatta will be at Lake Ruataniwha from March 30 to April 4.

St Thomas' Omarama 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 or Rev Ken Light 027 211 1501.

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 tee-off 1pm. Club Captain Adrian Tuffley, 027 347 8276. 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 Ruby Milestone, 03 438 9401, 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 Kurow Medical Centre holds a clinic 8.30am to 1pm, and 2pm to 5pm, on Tuesdays at the Omarama Community Centre. Please phone Kurow Medical Centre, 03 436 0760, for appointments. On Fridays phone 0274 347 464 because the Kurow Centre is closed.

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 April issue of the
Omarama Gazette
is Wednesday, April 1, 2020.**

**Please submit copy
by Friday, March 27.**

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Kurow Medical Centre

8 Wynyard St, Kurow
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W: www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz
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**Providing 24/7 health care and support to
the people of the Upper Waitaki and Mackenzie**

Kurow Medical Centre and its satellite clinics in Twizel (Mackenzie Health Centre Private Clinic) and 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 checking 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 \$40.00
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)
- *Reiki and Reflexology (Twizel only)

Opening hours

Kurow: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm; Omarama: Tuesday 8.30am to 5pm

Twizel: Monday and Friday 8.30 to 5pm; Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 9am to 3pm
and Saturday 10am to 1pm

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

To our community groups and businesses

Two things which may help you out

- Rather than offering sponsorship slots this year, if you would like a feature written about your business please contact the Gazette. A booking is required and there is a fee for this. Unlike regular advertising, a feature will be posted to the Omarama Gazette Facebook page.
- Omarama resident Charles Hornblow is available to tackle design work for your business or group (see below). He will also be assisting the Gazette with graphic design requirements. Please feel free to contact Charles for any of the services he lists.

- *Ruth Grundy, editor.*

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The Community Reports

Upper Waitaki Police news



Hi All,

One of my pet hates is overcompensating losers who do burnouts on the roads or lookouts etc, I will do everything I can to catch them, not only are they a danger to themselves and everyone else, it's also an eyesore and makes our lovely district look rough.

One such "gentleman" thought it would be a good idea late last year to do a burnout as he left Mobil Omarama and then another at the intersection of Ben Omar Rd before going to Twizel, and doing another

one outside the Top Hut hotel, the majority of which was all captured on CCTV. He was finally convicted in January and as a result he's now lost his licence for six months, received a fine of \$600 plus court costs of \$130. Not to mention, I impounded his vehicle for 28 days, which will cost at least another \$350 to get out. The stupidest thing is that the day after doing his cool burnouts he also had to go and buy himself some new tires. So to any other burnout enthusiasts out there, just be aware it's gonna cost you a pretty penny if you're caught.

I've attended four car crashes in the last month, one of these made the news. This was a crash on SH8 near the intersection of Lake Ohau Rd. A slower moving van travelling at about 80 kph was heading south. A vehicle travelling in the same direction began to pass the van. Unfortunately the van then put on its indicator and began to turn right into Lake Ohau Rd. The passing vehicle which was still behind the van but now on the wrong side of the road swerved right to try and avoid the collision, this actually exacerbated things as if they had continued going straight ahead they would likely have missed the van. Long story short, the car hit the van spinning it around 180 degrees, the van then caught fire and the single occupant lost all of her possessions, as well as her home away from home. Thankfully there were no major injuries. The lesson to be learnt is that the passing driver was found to be at fault and was charged with careless driving. The main reason for this was he had passed near a well-marked intersection. There were other contributing factors as well but that's the key one. It's something to bear in mind, you can be the best driver in the world but you can't foresee what other road users are thinking and some of them just plain don't. So make sure you think "what if". Always be aware of possible hazards, at the least it may give you a fraction of a second more to avoid that collision, which can be all the difference.

Thankfully the dishonesty offending in the Otematata area seems to have ceased. Unfortunately, we were unable to apprehend the offender/s. Please make sure you secure your property, boats and vehicles. Remove any high commodity items such as laptops, i-pads, wallets, dare I say it, tote tanks, out of view.....if you're able. I know it's not that easy to move tote tanks and then where do you put them if you don't have a garage? But you can make it harder for the thief. Consider a chain around the handle and then wrapped around the ski pole, maybe around the seat

post. Keep your tanks empty as much as you can. Don't fill up till the morning. Park your boat in the drive or out of sight if you are able. Just small things but most thieves are lazy that's why they steal. So if you make it a little harder they may give up and look for an easier target.

Last month, saw senior constables Peter Scott (Kurow) and Jamie Reid (Twizel) and myself execute a drug warrant in the Omarama area. A moderate amount of cannabis was seized, as well as some drug utensils. The occupant has been charged with Possession of Cannabis as well as another unrelated charge. Do you want drugs in our town? I sure as hell don't, but I can't do it alone, I need to have information that I'm able to act on. If you know of any drug activity, no matter how small you may think it is, please come and see me, or phone me. I guarantee your anonymity. If you'd prefer to speak anonymously to someone else, you can also call the Crimestoppers which is an independent charity that helps New Zealanders fight crime by providing an anonymous and simple way to pass on information phone: 0800 555 111.

Don't forget the new police NON emergency line for those non urgent matters. What is it? That's right!! 10-5.

That's it from me, have a safe month - Bean

Senior Constable Nayland Smith, Omarama Police.
021 191 4808 or email nayland.smith@police.govt.nz

Omarama Golf Club

By Christine Bowman

We have continued to make improvements to the course over the last two months while we have had the nice dry weather.

Our new number two green is looking great with the last levelling and seeding completed a couple of week ago and we are all looking forward to using it in the near future.

We have put in and seeded three new tee blocks at numbers near 1, 3, 6.

This will add more variety to the course, with our aim having 18 different tee off's in the future.

A HUGE CONGRATULATIONS to James Moynihan who shot a 68!!!!!!! on 23 February, which is equal to our course record. James is on a 6 handicap and played 4 shots under the course 72 shots a round perhaps he should have tried for the NZ Open last week!

Put Saturday, April 11 in your diaries for our Easter Tournament, full details will follow later in the month.

The Omarama Golf Club Saturdays tee-off 1pm. Club Captain Adrian Tuffley,
027 347 8276. www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz/

FENZ Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade



Another month has passed and we have been lucky there have been no vegetation fires but we need your help to keep it that way.

It is still a closed fire season which means no fires including drums and pits on farms. We may have had some rain but you can be fined for lighting fires until the season goes back to permits. Please check the website if you are unsure, or call myself or FENZ

The Otago-Southland Wajax 50th challenge is Saturday, March 14, at The Countrytime.

Come along and support our local team which

includes our own Eveready Bunny Maurice Cowie who was a member of the first Omarama team. Well done Maurice and good luck Omarama!

This is also where we hone our skills to use on the fire ground.

It is almost time for me to start to 'Harp on' about smoke alarms again, a timely reminder as unfortunately there have been a few fatalities in house fires in recent times. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any concerns about your smoke alarms.

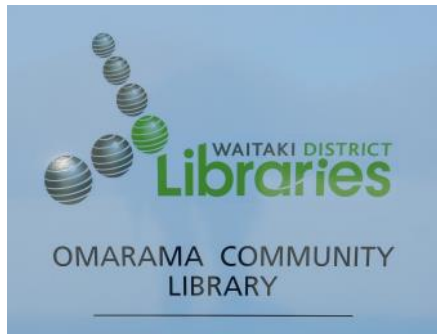
- Keep yourselves safe. Chief Fire Officer Greg Harper

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

Omarama Community Library

Contact: Yvonne Jones 027 476 7473.

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



Equipment already a game changer

Photo: Meridian Energy

The newest piece of equipment in the Fenz Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade tool kit has already proved to be a game changer.

Last month, the brigade, with help of a \$6000 grant from Meridian Energy's Power Up Fund, a \$1000 donation from St Thomas's Church Community and donations from Omarama businesses was able to purchase a thermal imaging camera.

Fenz Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade chief fire officer Greg Harper said barely a week after taking possession the camera was used for the first time at a cabin fire in the Ahuriri Valley.

"These cameras are a tremendous tool to have in our toolbox.

"It allows firefighters to search a burning building in a fraction of the time and we're really proud to have one available for every call we attend."

The camera allowed firefighters to check other parts of the building and identify hotspots to make sure that the fire was fully extinguished before the brigade left.

Greg said both the Omarama and Otematata brigades were called to the incident in Birchwood Rd, last week.

The Omarama Brigade turned out the tanker and smoker chaser as well as the fire truck and could have accessed water from irrigation ponds if the need had arisen. Communications were "sparse" once the crews left SH8 and headed up the Birchwood Rd but they were able to use a satellite Phone and there was access to a land-line, if required. Greg said.

An investigation into the cause was underway.

Greg said while there were other brigades in the region who already had thermal imaging cameras, it could be up to a 30-minute wait for one to reach Omarama, time someone might not have in an emergency.

"This kind of technology is a game changer in allowing us to assess things from a safe distance."

Not only can it be used to check hotspots, it can also be used to locate people in a burning structure and, as well, it can be used out in the field to help with search and rescue operations, Greg said.

It will help save lives and keep firefighters safe when responding to anything from a house fire, to a car crash, to a hazardous chemical incident, he said.

Meridian Energy asset maintenance manager Mat Bayliss said volunteer emergency services were a priority for the Power-Up funding panel.



"Helping fund valuable equipment purchases like this translates into improved services for our small rural communities that rely on our amazing volunteers".

Omarama Residents' Association

From the February meeting

There were 12 people present.

The renewal of the community library lease agreement was discussed.

Residents' association chairperson Tony Chapman will arrange a meeting with Waitaki District Libraries manager Philip van Zijl which will also be attended by secretary Yvonne Jones, who is a library volunteer and library co-ordinator. Georgie Robertson to discuss the lease and report back. All volunteers have an employment agreement with the Waitaki District Council.

Sports Courts - Tony thanked all involved for their hard work. The courts are being well used. The toilet is now complete and open for use. The accountability report for the Otago Community Trust has been completed by project coordinator Jemma Gloag.

Another single gate will be installed on the car park side fence to enable pedestrians to access the courts from the car park. Jemma suggested it be spring-loaded.

Hank is to price the installation of a single basketball hoop for another activity on the courts.

A letter is to be sent to the council recreation manager formally handing the sports complex over to them for maintenance and upkeep.

Financial Report: Report presented by treasurer Stephen Grundy. The February statement of accounts will show the Sports Complex fully paid.

McKenzie and Co Chartered Accountants have completed the financial accounts for the year.

A letter has been sent by hall curator Charlotte Cook to all regular users as a reminder it must be left in a clean and tidy condition and locked securely.

General

Ahuriri Community Board: chairperson Vicky Munro sent a message via Ross Menzies praising the Committee for taking on the sports courts project and saying how lucky the community is to have people of the calibre required to complete such a project.

Building coordinator Hank Verheul said he had raised the issue of frost protection for the drinking fountain with the council.

Committee member Lorraine King said the drinking fountain was not wheelchair "friendly". Again this is a council issue and anyone who has concerns should contact the council individually, in the first instance.

Town map payments – This has not gone smoothly and several questions are still unanswered.

In the past the Omarama Business group has run its own bank account and Tony will look into whether this could be used by businesses to manage these payments in the future.

Footpaths and Roads around Omarama – Ross Menzies attended a meeting at end of January and brought the issue of the general tidiness of the town to the attention of Mayor Gary Kircher and chief executive Fergus Power after discussion with council staff proved unhelpful. He said they agreed Omarama was untidy compared to other townships. Ross said a result will come but it will not be a quick fix. There is a broken fence and Ross was told whoever owned the land on either side needed to fix it. The council owns the land.

Pub Charity Funds – Ann Patterson had been advised there could be funds available for playground equipment for children and adults. Ann to proceed to do forms and Jemma has offered her help. Ann will get costing's for adult outdoor exercise equipment.

Memory wall/signboard outlining the history and anything unique to Omarama – the concrete block wall has proved unsuitable for the purpose but laminated signboards would be suitable. Also suggested was cut out metal which will last. Jemma will contact AccuCut regarding cost etc. A graphic design will be put together for discussion with the Committee.

Ross Menzies discussed the reserve area behind the playground advising it needs to be mowed and could be used for other sports. The council used to mow this area and the contract for mowing is coming up again. Should Omarama take on this project? The Council supplies the mower? Ross also advised there was seven weeks to apply for funding for any new project.

Suggestions that the irrigation system should be upgraded. Ruth Grundy advised that 18 months ago the trees in the main street were starting to die and Jane Machett through the community board set aside funds for it to be repaired/replaced where necessary. Despite further requests nothing was done about this. Lucianne White has since taken over Jane's role.

NB: CHANGE OF MEETING DAY

The next meeting is 7.30pm Wednesday, March 18, 2020.

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 Charlotte Newfield, 027 940 1648, or email charlotte.omarama@gmail.com
Keys and fobs are collected from Charlotte



Youth Glide New Zealand

By Roger Read, Youth Glide New Zealand

After the frustration of the shipping delays for our new Skylaunch winch, it finally arrived at Omarama just before the New Year.

Ed Jones from the manufacturer arrived shortly afterwards and spent 10 days helping get the operations in place and some key personnel trained up on the new machine.

The first launch was made on January 6 and it exceeded expectations with over 2300 ft achieved in calm wind conditions.

The inaugural Waitangi Winch Weekend was held at Omarama over the long weekend and it was an outstanding success.

It gave Youth Glide members an opportunity to get more training in overall winch ops and those who attended all made good progress towards getting checked out in the various roles as part of the winching team. 48 launches were completed and those who wanted to get away soaring achieved this off their launch.

It was great to see a number of local club pilots getting involved and private owners taking launches then having awesome soaring flights.

On the social side; a Mexican-themed fiesta on Saturday night was well attended and enjoyed by all at the Soaring Centre.

Monthly winch weekends are planned and we look forward to getting more local pilots and helpers trained up on winching ops.

Photo supplied: YGNZ members learning how to “drive” the new winch under the instruction of Tim Tarbotton seated in the centre



St Thomas' Church Community

- from a recent meeting of the management committee

By Kay Verheul (treasurer) and Rev Ken Light (chairperson)

St Thomas', since moving to the Community Hall has had good attendances at their services.

The Christmas service was attended by 37 and the 2019 Easter Service by 15 people.

We have given generous donations to Omarama Fire Brigade, Omarama First Response, Omarama SARS and Friends of Omarama School.

We intend to give back to the Omarama community on a regular basis.

The next annual meeting will be in June (date to be advised) and all are welcome to attend.

Services and communion continue to be 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. The contact for these is Kay: 027 489 5149

The Easter service this year will be 9am Easter Day at the Omarama Memorial Hall.

Thanks to all who attend our services.

Easter Day Church Services

Omarama

9am, Sunday April 12
Omarama
Memorial Hall

Tarras

11am, at the
Tarras
Community Church



Kia Ora, Omarama Community,

I hope you enjoy reading about our school's show day in the recounts.

Colour your day (see poster at front): The school will be participating in this but thought other members of the community might like to join us in raising funds for St John. - School principal, Kim McKenzie

Omarama Show day.

On Friday the 7th of February we had the Omarama School show day.

There were lots of events to enter and things to make at home.

There were sand-saucers, cake baking, the biggest vegetable, best in show ponies, horses, lambs and chickens including the Gloag's chicken Darren.

We had a tug of war with the students against the parents. The parents won two tugs and we won one. We rode horses and had races including the three legged and wheel barrow races. We played lots of games including gumboot throwing and wood stacking.

We even had a Bbq lunch.

It was lots of fun.

By Lleyton, Jessie, Arlo, Makenzie, Toby, McGregor and Maddie. Room One.

Omarama Show

On Friday we had the Omarama show day. I enjoyed the biggest vegetable, vegetable animal, and gumboot throw. I also enjoyed watching the recycled wearable art costumes, because you could see what people could make from recycled stuff.

I liked the biggest vegetable because I had a huge cabbage that I entered into the competition. I enjoyed the vegetable animal because I carved it all by myself and came second place in that category. Tug of war was my favourite because we had to pull, so hard against the adults. The gumbooting throwing was a lot of fun.

I thought it was going to be really easy but it actually was really tricky.

In my opinion the show day could have been improved by having a longer tug of war rope so everyone could fit on it easier.

Show day was a fun day for all especially me!

- By Robbie Anderson



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



Malcolm McMillan
Lake Ohau Village

03 438 9798 027 4389798



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)

Omarama show day

On the early morning of the 17th February Omarama school teachers were preparing a game day, Omarama school show day they called it, a day that parents and pupils such as ourselves would gather together and play challenging games and enter competitions for the best baked cake or the best decorated biscuits and so on.

After the adults had judged everything we moved onto

Omarama show day results.

Best decorated biscuit- Arabella Tomas.

Best decorated and tasted cake- Poppy Radford.

Biggest vegetable- Robbie Anderson.

Funniest vegetable- Saedy and Arlo Zeestraten.

Vegetable animal- Ben Hay senior, Amelia Paton junior.

Sand saucer- Sam Hay senior, Brydie Ferguson junior.

Best in show pony/horse- Arabella Tomas.

Best in show lamb- Amelia Paton.

Best in show poultry- Angus and Toby Gloag.

Recycled fashion- Maggie Radford.

Senior Activities.

Gumboot throw- Nick Murray.

Toss the caber- Ben Hay.

Three legged race- Cam Innis and Nick Murray.

Junior Activities.

Gumboot throw- Ashley Russbatch.

Firewood stack- Liam McLeod.

Three legged race-McGregor Hay and Jack Bochel.

Student and Parent Activities.

Three legged race- Mike and Jack Dorree.

Wheelbarrow race- Fiona and Archie Bochel.

Parents Vs Students tug of war- parents.

games. There was gum boot throwing, Fence post tossing, tug-of-war, three legged race and the wheelbarrow race.

Our favourite was the tug-of-war, the adults won twice and the kids won once. After the tug-of-war everyone settled up for the barbecue lunch, there were sausages and meat patties. After everyone had eaten all the prizes got given out, there were loads of prizes like shirts, chocolate, lollies and ice blocks. It was a great day for all of us.

Toby.B Toby.C Pippa.A
Ebony.S

Waitaki District Council - news in brief

The council's building services department wants to increase their fees and charges from the beginning of its financial year.

"For the average ratepayer it means nothing, except it will allow us to limit the impact on next year's rates. "For the property developer, building owner, new home builder and most renovators, it will mean an increase in consenting and inspection fees," the statement said. In particular, it wants to make those who submit poor quality building consent applications or have non-compliant building inspections pay more. It said the number of failed inspections and applications that did not meet council standards prompted that proposal.

"In the last 12 months we have seen a significant increase in noncompliance and a widening of the gap from the very good workmanship to the very poor. At Waitaki District Council we think it is only fair that those who cause the most work pay the most." To accompany this, a new guidance document will be produced to explain what is chargeable and how applicants can keep their cost down.

Anyone who this planned fee increase will affect is asked to give their input by emailing building@waitaki.govt.nz The responses will be collated and go into a report being prepared for councillors.

The council wants to hear the community's views about the proposal to grant of a lease of part of Awamoa Park, Oamaru to St John to build an ambulance centre. At its last meeting it will authorize staff to begin public consultation on the issue. Awamoa Park was previously thought to be a Crown-owned reserve, but an investigation found it was actually owned by the council, its statement said.

Because the proposed lease will be for more than six months the council is required to consult with the community. It intends to open the subject up for 30 days for consultation both in writing and online. It will make the final decision about whether to grant the lease once consultation closes.

The Kurow Duntroon Irrigation Company's variation to its application for its pipeline has been submitted within the required timeframe and a council planner says it addresses the main issues identified, - the visual impacts of the above ground sections of pipeline.

"The application is considered to be sufficiently complete to progress, however, further information has been requested and we await the response from KDIC.

"An Independent commissioner will decide on the application, including whether there are any grounds for notification."

Waitaki District Council is the event naming sponsor for the 2020 National Endurance and CTR (Competitive Trail Riding) Championship. The Waitaki Endurance and CTR Club will host the event in the Nenthorn Valley, Macraes, over Easter weekend from April 10-12.

Phone: 03 433 0300

Freephone 0800 108 081

Automated options after hours

E-mail: service@waitaki.govt.nz

www.waitaki.govt.nz

Invitation to apply for **COMMUNITY GROUP GRANTS**



Could your community group
use a funding boost towards
a special project? Big or small:
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

APPLICATIONS OPEN 17 FEB 2020

Applications close 20 March 2020

All information, including application forms, can be found at www.waitaki.govt.nz, Council offices in Palmerston and Oamaru, and at all Waitaki district public libraries.



www.waitaki.govt.nz



Waitaki

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APPLICATIONS OPEN 24 FEB 2020

For projects that take place between 20 April 2020 - 20 April 2021
Applications close 27 March 2020

All information, including application forms, can be found at www.waitaki.govt.nz,
Council offices in Palmerston and Oamaru, and at all Waitaki district public libraries.

Waitaki District
 creative
COMMUNITIES *nz*

www.waitaki.govt.nz



Waitaki
DISTRICT COUNCIL
TE Kaitiaki o Waitaki

Apply now for Meridian's Power Up Community Fund

At Meridian, we're committed to doing good things with our energy. To do good for people, and good for the environment.

So, we're proud to back local projects in communities around our wind farms and hydro stations with our Power Up fund.

With Power Up, your community has a say on what initiatives we support and fund. Managed by a panel of locals and Meridian staff, we're working together to build strong and sustainable communities.

Power Up Waitaki provides grants for projects in Twizel, Omarama, Otematata, Kurow, Hakataramea, Duntroon, Ikawai, Papakalo and Glenavy.

How to apply

Applications for the next funding round are open until 26th April 2020.

For more information and to apply:

- visit meridian.co.nz/powerup
- email community.fund@meridianenergy.co.nz
- call 03 357 9732



Meridian.

The Power to
Make a Difference.

Environment Canterbury - news in brief

The Canterbury Regional Council has adopted its draft 2020/21 Annual Plan. This plan will now be available for public consultation. The Plan is for 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. It is the activity proposed for year three of the current Long-Term Plan (2018-2028) and is largely unchanged from the activity agreed when that Long-Term Plan was consulted on back in 2018. Because there are no material or significant changes ECan will not be formally consulting, but would still like to hear from the community. A 9.8% increase in total rates revenue for the coming year is proposed, which is higher than the 5.5% increase signalled in the Long-Term Plan. Not everyone's rates will increase by this percentage. The bulk of the proposed rates increase is for improved public transport services, reserves to maintain and build flood protection infrastructure, and freshwater management.

The plan will be available for community feedback between 24 February and 25 March. Go to the Have Your Say online engagement site to give feedback on the draft or comment on the Council's future focus. Community members can also contact their local councillor. Councillor.Scott@ecan.govt.nz

ECan chief executive Bill Bayfield has resigned to take up the role of establishment chief executive for the new Taumata Arowai (Crown entity drinking water regulator). Bill will leave ECan after nine years as chief executive, on Wednesday 6 May. The recruitment process for his replacement will be determined by the Councillors and commenced as soon as possible.

The date and venue
of the March meeting
of Environment Canterbury's
Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee
is to be advised.

Minutes and agendas are posted at:
<https://ecan.govt.nz/your-region/your-environment/water/whats-happening-in-my-water-zone/upper-waitaki-water-zone/>

www.ecan.govt.nz

Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee news

Decisions address work on Ahuriri Arm trophic levels

Ecan's Upper Waitaki Water Zone management committee has decided to take a two-pronged approach to matters after receiving a report from farmers about work done since concerns were first raised about trophic levels in the Ahuriri Arm of Lake Benmore.

The first measure is to continue to support farmers in the catchment and it has formally requested ECan help with this in two ways; it undertakes "robust" compliance measures focusing on the areas of highest nutrient loss and it uses the compliance and land management information gathered in the past six months to help farmers take the steps needed to improve trophic limits.

As a second measure the zone committee will "revisit" the plans it has in place to manage the lake to make sure they will achieve the limits and the objectives it has set for the lake.

Considerable progress had been made by consent holders in the catchment since the matter first came to light last year, it was told in a presentation to last month's meeting by Omarama farmers, Lisa Anderson and Richard Subtil.

Last year in June, ECan's annual water quality monitoring survey for the Ahuriri Arm

- continued over



Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee news

- *continued*

showed the Trophic Level Index had increased to 2.9 from the previous year's TLI of 2.3.

This meant consent holders with water permits for irrigation in the catchment, whose TLI 'trigger' levels were 2.75, needed to take set actions as stipulated by their consents to reverse the trend.

If the TLI were to exceed the limit of 2.9 farming land use consent holders also needed to act.

The TLI measures four water quality indicators, including nitrogen and chlorophyll levels, to give a rating of between 1 and 7 – the lower the number the better the quality.

About 90% of farmers in the catchment attended a meeting in December, led by independent facilitator Nicky Hyslop, a director of Beef and Lamb New Zealand, and decided to create a catchment group.

A committee was formed to lead the group whose aim is to guide landowners in the catchment in collective action to protect the water quality in the Ahuriri Arm of Lake Benmore.

It also wants more community involvement and "will be shoulder-tapping" others in the community "to come on board", Mrs Anderson said.

"We're off to a really positive start."

Although Mrs Anderson and Mr Subtil were zone committee members both had stepped aside from decision making roles in this instance and instead were putting efforts into co-ordinating the work of the newly-formed catchment group and its committee, chairperson Simon Cameron said.

The new Ahuriri Community Collective is; Dave Ellis, Trent Spittle, Nic McKercher, Annabelle Subtil, Lisa Anderson, zone committee facilitator Tami Woods and ECan principal resource management advisor Marty Mortiaux. It is led by independent facilitator Stevie Young, of Seedforce, and met for the first time last month.

There was "unanimous support" from the farmers that came to those early meetings to do this, "they're not dragging the chain," Mr Subtil said.

Most had a good understanding of the farming Good Management Practice (GMP) standards and the majority were putting that into practice, Mrs Anderson said.

However, there were fears that even if all were farming at that level it still may not be enough to arrest or lower trophic levels.

"There is an awareness and a nervousness from us that we have got all these structures, like the TLI... already in place, that science might well be flawed," Mr Subtil said.

"Having these numbers and getting to them, and patting ourselves on the back, if that's not addressing the problem, if it doesn't work, we have to think way beyond the notional numbers established in good faith.

"Whether we are compliant is irrelevant if the water quality is not good enough," he said.

Given that, committee member Mat Bayliss asked if there was a "circle back requirement" to revisit that initial planning process and ask those questions.

"The TLI limit and Farming GMP are key planks in the planning framework we established and we have a credible opinion that the planning we have in place to protect the lake may not be enough," he said.

Mrs Anderson said it would be naive to think it did not need to be revisited because decisions had been made on the "science of the day" and it had changed in the interim.

Plus, perceptions had changed. Initially a TLI of 2.9 was seen as acceptable now perception was it was "bad". "So, it's also about how you want to interpret the information."

"Just ticking the boxes so it looks good but not achieving the objectives, that's really disappointing," she said.

Mr Bayliss said it was important that what was learned from last year's events fed into the planning framework.

ECan councillor John Sunckell said care need to be taken "before we head off in an unhelpful direction" because revisiting the science could result in consents having to be "re-litigated".

Ultimately, the information gathered about the event would feed back naturally into the planning process, and this may cause fewer problems for consent holders, he said.

The next set of TLI figures were expected in May and there were no guarantees after a "most extreme flushing spring" they would not be high, Mr Cameron said.

Mr Subtil said there were always going to be exceptional years, so it was important ECan resources "beefed up" and focused on the areas of most concern.

"There's no point treating everyone the same, we have to fix it where its coming from."

Mrs Anderson said regardless of whether the TLI levels dropped the new group would continue.

"It would be a tragedy if we lost the buy-in of the community," she said.

Department of Conservation and Ohau Conservation Trust combine efforts on Lake Middleton.

As an outcome of the zone committee field trip to Lake Middleton last year the Department of Conservation has begun discussions with the Lake Ohau Conservation Trust to come up with management options for the lake.

Lake Middleton is a Doc-managed reserve.

Department of Conservation water management coordinator John Benn sought to correct impressions he may have given at the zone committee's September meeting when matters arising from the field trip were discussed.

At last month's meeting he said Doc wanted a baseline vegetation survey carried out before any decision on hard structures such as walkways was made.

"If there are rare or threatened plants in the wetlands constructing a walkway through it may be inappropriate," he said.

He also said, although Doc's first responsibility was to the minister, it was not saying it was unwilling to work with communities and he could provide many examples where it was.

It had worked with local communities, private landowners and other organisations including ECan, the zone committee and Land Information New Zealand, including on the Fork Stream fish barrier, conifer control across the basin, and weed control in

Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee news

- *continued*

the Hopkins and Dobson valleys, he said.

Before Christmas, the Trust and Doc “had a chinwag together” to develop management options for Lake Middleton.

These will be driven by the trust and will involve the community, he said.

“Hopefully it will include everything, like the landscape plan for the lake whether the track goes there or not.

“With these discussions there hasn’t been any weed control.

“The willow trees and conifers along the highway are in the Waitaki District Council boundary and there hasn’t been any movement there, but we’re working on this now and with the Ohau Conservation Trust driving it, hopefully, we’ll get all those issues sorted out.

The trust has some funds as does Doc “so things will start to move forward”.

Committee member Mat Bayliss said he was pleased Doc was “engaging” with the Ohau Conservation Trust.

“When we went to Lake Middleton it was obvious they were seeking to engage with Doc so it’s bloody heartening to hear.”

Mr Benn said the vegetation survey would be undertaken in “about two to three weeks’ time.”

“Mid-March is the ideal time especially for smaller plant life.”

With regard to the recommended survey to determine where the Doc boundary lies, Doc staff have been in discussion with the farm manager.

There has been \$10,000 set aside for the survey but if agreement is reached and the survey is not required that money can be put towards the management plan, Mr Benn said.

Committee member Richard Subtil said defining the boundary was a significant issue which needed to be clarified because it was preventing other activities from going ahead.

As far as the oil slicks on the lake was concerned the policing of that came under the jurisdiction of the ECan coastguard., Mr Benn said.

Other topics of discussion at the meeting were: The Lake Ruataniwha E.coli



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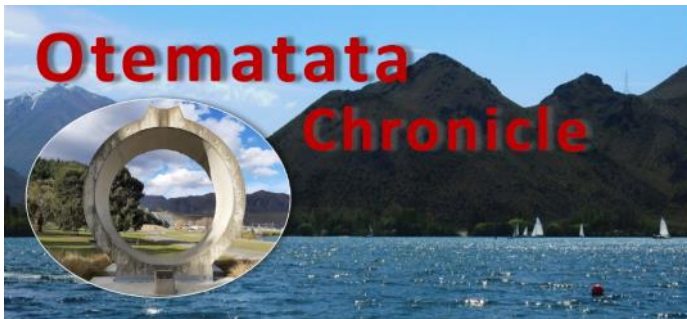
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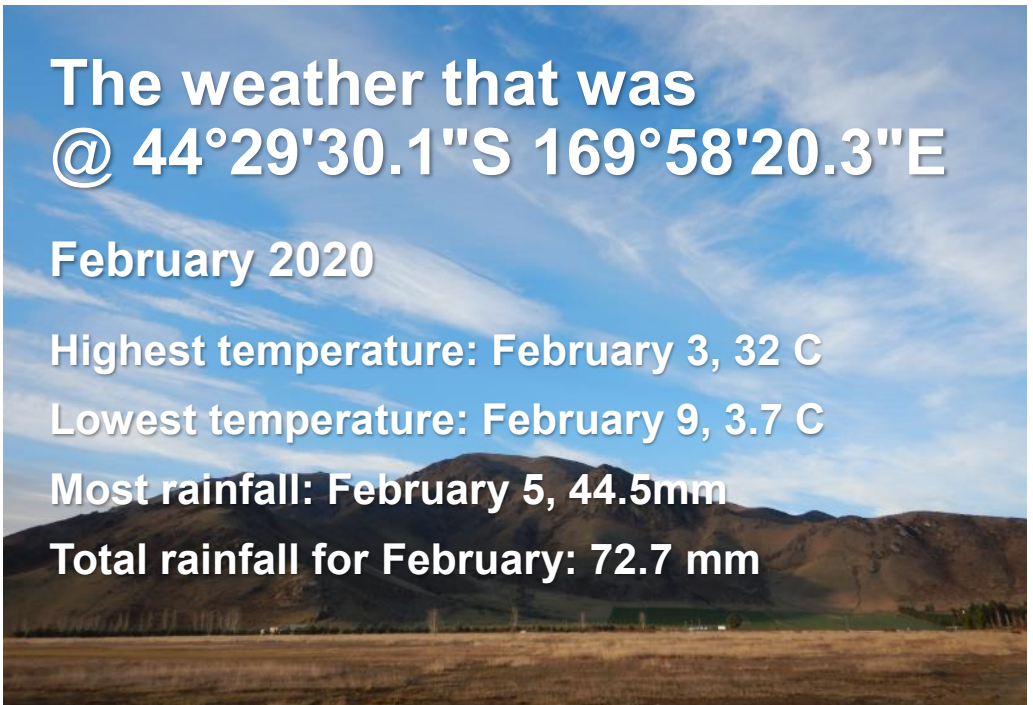
February 2020

Highest temperature: February 3, 32 C

Lowest temperature: February 9, 3.7 C

Most rainfall: February 5, 44.5mm

Total rainfall for February: 72.7 mm



The Garden Diary - Succession Planning

The change is as subtle as the changing light.

We're not yet in full-on Mardi Gras mode.

It's more of a nod to the cooling notes of the morning and diminishing daylight as late summer turns over to autumn.

For most, it is not yet time to stop storing up the goodness of sunlight.

The apple and peach trees are heavy with fruit but they're the late varieties suited to this inland basin, and still hard and sour.

Sometimes there are gaps in the garden where blooming is done and there's nothing to take its place. Sometimes, as one plant fades another steps forward to catch the light, almost as if I had planned it that way. Sometimes!

This year, the self-sown sunflowers are burnished coppery gold.

As their petals fall, leaving that lime-green collar and the ripening disc of seeds, the leaves of the magnolia grandiflora - their close neighbour – sturdily take up the brassy theme.

In the sunset garden, the old mauve delphinium – I swear it's been flowering for about 25 years – is past and has been cut back to see out another winter. The tendrils of its companion, a bergamot, have fallen away leaving it, too, with its lime green ruff. And the frothy meadowsweet (Filipendula) has made a quick costume change, exchanging white feathers and frivolity for tiny, elegant green beads.

The golden yarrow and deep blue salvia have pulled in the colours of the late summer landscape to hold them in the garden. Sedum 'Autumn Joy' has lifted its cauliflower heads but they're only hinting at the colour to come.

In the grassy mess that is the lower garden, that neither the chooks nor I have been able to tame, there are some sturdy survivors.

A yellow-green Kniphofia (red hot poker) I thought I had lost has pushed up spires. In the dewy morning light it's found its place alongside the other stayers – a shrubby potentilla 'Elizabeth' which has been covered in single primrose flowers since spring. A small and slow-growing conifer grown from a slip from a friend - Thuja occidentalis Rheingold - I think it is, will hold that colour into winter, it's lemony ruffles brightening bronze under frosts.

The conifers really are those reliable stalwarts behind the changing scene, the good bones, but they're not alone in providing structure – the sedum is another. But so, also is the persistent Euphorbia characias. I can't say it's my favourite ever plant and any seedling in the wrong spot is hauled out, but it can be depended on to dress an empty corner and not flake under hot sun or cold frost. Right now it's sidled up between a strappy lemon daylily which has had its day in the sun and the daisy chrysanthemums still a month or so away from doing their thing.

As thoughts turn to the seasons ahead there's another round of seed sowing to be done in the veg garden as parsnips, carrots and beetroot are pulled up – this time to be slow roasted, now the kitchen is cool enough.

Ruth Grundy

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