



# Ōmārama Gazette

April 2026

## ICYMI - Breaking news on April 1

In a plan unveiled late last night and approved under the Government's Fast Track Approval's Act 2024 permission has been granted to a gold mining company to begin excavation of a small opencast mine in the Recreation Reserve adjacent to the Omarama Hall.

The Act makes it faster and easier to get resource consent and other regulatory approvals for mining, housing, urban development, and infrastructure and has been used to fast-track other gold mining consents in the region.

While little information was available publicly last night, rumours have been circulating New Zealand First leader Winston Peters together with Associate Energy

*- continued over*

*Excavators arrive to begin work*



# *ICYMI - Breaking news on April 1 - continued*

Minister Shane Jones paid a quick visit to the proposed site on their return this weekend from community meetings at arguably the country's mining capital – Blackball.

It coincides with the New Zealand First's announcement of its campaign policy that will see 50% of any royalties gained from mining directly returned to the region from which it came.

The Fast Track consent granted for Omarama allows short-term gold mining on the site at present designated recreation reserve under the Waitaki District Council District Plan, and encompasses the present dog park, former sports field but not the Omarama Playground. This area sits over old alluvial braids of the Ahuriri river.

In December 2016 Thomson Aviation, of Australia, were commissioned by New Zealand Petroleum & Minerals to carry out airborne geophysical surveys of parts of New Zealand, including Omarama, to gather comprehensive geological information. Two helicopters and a small team of staff were based in the area for several months to carry out the work.

The helicopters were fitted with a magnetometer housed within a boom beneath the craft and the information collected was collated with water and soil sampling and then used to map areas where the geology indicated there is potential for further exploration for minerals.

The potential for further mining in the area has long been acknowledged. The nearby Lindis Pass Historic Area has significant archaeological remains of the alluvial mining from the 1860s – including sluicing faces, a water race, and tailings – and represents the first gold rush in Otago.

Reportedly, further positive signs indicating this was the place to dig were uncovered when samples taken prior to the construction of the wastewater disposal to land project at the airfield and its monitoring bores showed gold bearing deposits in sediment samples taken from shallow depths.

In order to quickly circumnavigate the consent process representatives of the company – Gold Recovery Inc, whose tagline is 'creating your field of dreams'. have proactively engaged environmental consultants to provide a comprehensive survey of the prospecting area.

Native lizards - notably the Southern Grass Skink - have been identified by a herpetologist as potentially present in the project area from a desktop assessment. These would be dealt with under the council's Lizard Management Plan put in place in 2021 when the council undertook its Ōhau Bridge project across the Maitland and Temple Streams, company communications lead Neva Bell-Eve said in the late media release.

The company wanted to encourage public engagement in the conservation process and would be rehoming some of the lizards in specially designed lizard habitat areas in the playground as an educational tool for Ōmārama's children.

Nearby properties will be purchased under the Public Works Act for the dumping of tailings – later to be landscaped, and the mine's sluice box.

In the accompanying documentation the company has said impacts on airfield activities are expected to be minor or less.

In further move designed to sweeten the deal, the company has drawn up a Memorandum of Agreement with the Omarama Residents Association to be signed by representatives at noon today.

The agreement states that on completion of the work the reinstated site plus a small share of the company profits will be used to develop the area into a multi-use sports field incorporating an athletics track, rugby field and cricket pitch – something it is aware the community has long-held as a priority.

Gold Recovery Inc has hired the Omarama Community Centre as its base for the duration.

Project coordinator Noah Lott said this would be the company's main hub for communications with the community about the project.

He noted that the centre was a “great facility” and thanked the association for giving its approval at the eleventh hour for its use as a site office for the project.

The nearby sports courts were ideal for the staff who are required to break their 18-hour shifts in the drivers’ seats with spells of R&R and hit things for their mental wellbeing, he said. The company plans to donate the tennis equipment once the project is complete.

In an aside, parties interested in securing one or more of the available prospecting licences for the small plots – which the company has made available – must have the relevant paperwork in order and need to apply to the site office before the official signing, he said.

The company wanted to encourage the community to attend the signing today at 12 noon where a presentation would be given and further information would be forthcoming, Mr Lott said.

*Below left: New Zealand First leader Winston Peters together with Associate Energy Minister Shane Jones speak to a packed community hall on Saturday; Photo NZ First Facebook page. Herpetologists have designed these lizard habitats for the playground. Photo supplied.*



# ANZAC DAY

*Lest We Forget*



**25 April**

## Upper Waitaki Services

- 6.20am: Parade forms up on Hakataramea main street and will march to the Cenotaph.
- 8.15am: A wreath will be laid at the Kurow Cemetery Gate.
- 8.45am: Poppies will be laid at the Otekaieke Memorial Gate.
- 9.15am: A wreath will be laid at the Duntroon Cenotaph.
- 11.00am: A service will be held at the Omarama Memorial.**

*Wreaths will be laid at all services.*

*Medals and hats may be worn at all services.*

*Medals of deceased Service Personnel may be worn by family members on their right-hand lapel.*

# Footpath issues on community board agenda

The Association representing the interest of residents and ratepayers of Omarama will take its concerns regarding the lack of footpath maintenance to the Ahuriri Community Board meeting this month.

Last month, the Residents' Association of Omarama sent the results from a survey it conducted of the town's footpaths to the Board formally expressing concern about longstanding and widespread footpath maintenance issues in the town. It has asked to be told what the board's plans are to remedy or improve this present situation in the immediate term and to speak to these concerns at the Board's meeting in Omarama. this month.

The council says the last significant work – the “replacements” of footpaths in Ōmārama - was undertaken in 2017-2018.

With \$126K plus [as at June 30, 2025] sitting in the Omarama township amenity fund – collected from rates to be spent on the likes of kerb and channel, footpaths, streetlights, stormwater and plantings, and which was reported in the Ahuriri Community Board February financial update, questions are being asked about what will be done and when.

The amenity fund is administered by the Ahuriri Community Board on the advice of council staff.

At its February meeting council representatives told the association's committee that there was a limited footpath budget, that Omarama was not the only community with footpaths that needed attention, and the immediate plan was to 'sweep' the Omarama footpaths in an effort to improve their functionality at an estimated cost of \$7,000.

The Omarama Gazette covered that story in the March issue.

## The Ahuriri Community Board will meet at 2pm at the Omarama Memorial Hall on Monday, April 13.

There is a public forum at the start of this meeting and members of the public are welcome to speak.

You may register in advance and advise the council of the topic, which helps ensure the appropriate staff are present to respond to questions. If you choose not to register, you can still attend on the day and ask to speak.

To find out more about this follow this link: <https://www.waitaki.govt.nz/Council/Council-Meetings>

Representatives of the Residents' Association will be present to speak to the above concerns and its report..

### **In small communities volunteers wear many hats.**

Declaration: I am married to Stephen Grundy who is Residents' Association of Omarama committee chairperson.

I attend the public meetings of the association as a Waitaki District Council ratepayer, an Omarama Hall ratepayer and the editor of the Omarama Gazette. I speak to issues relevant to each of those roles as necessary.

# Farewell Howard and Denise, all the best!

After almost half a century of living in the high country by the time this goes to print Denise and Howard Williams will have made the big move to the deep south.

"We really want to thank Omarama for the memories... it's a very close community, everyone steps up, it's an awesome wee community," they said.

Now they are excitedly looking forward to setting up home in another wee community with the same sense of closeness – Tuatapare.

Howard and Denise moved to their first home in Omarama in September 1984, when Denise was four months pregnant with Christopher, "and stayed ever since".

Other young 'NZED families' had newly shifted to the town because it had been expected that the town of Twizel would be dismantled once construction on that government department's Upper Waitaki Hydro Electric Power Scheme was complete. While back in the day the menfolk's lives revolved around work, wives and children, when not at school socialised as part of the daily routine.

Howard was initially a "shift sparkie" on the batcher for the Ministry of Works, then the New Zealand Electricity Department which was the forerunner of Meridian Energy.

After Christopher came baby sister Anna, and both went through Omarama School and then on to high school at St Kevin's College, in Oamaru. The family moved to the 'little house on the hill' and the lifestyle - life sentence - block in September 1999. Over the years the couple have kept Kune Kune pigs, cattle, sheep – a wether named Houdini and a few ewes employed to settle him down - alpaca, chooks plus



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rooster, and peacocks on their block. The trees they planted as saplings have reached maturity, there were peonies but mostly it was “green grass, green grass and trees”.

Howard, who joined not long after arriving in town had 33 years in the volunteer fire brigade and was fire chief for 14 of those – only matching the late Fred Hondelink in years of service in that role. He says it was rewarding to have brigade numbers double to 18 during the time he had been in the job and still more young people coming through when he handed the helmet to Terry Walsh. It was just as the service was transitioning to Fire and Emergency New Zealand, with the merger of urban and rural fire services.

A highlight was seeing the complete refurbishment of the fire station, completed in 2014, and the establishment of the brigade’s first response unit.

As well, he could not understate the importance of the camaraderie through the years. “We’re all one big family.” Memories made in Fire Brigade service “are huge”, not just the operational side but also the social side, Howard said.

It was not only the fire brigade which benefited from the couple’s volunteer hours. Over the years they helped with the playground committee, playgroup, Plunket, school working bees, gun club, brownies, scouts - digging the foundations for their community den which came to be the home of Omarama MenzShed - and where Howard has also been a valued volunteer and enjoyed great times with other local menfolk setting the world to rights. “We have a brew, do some work”.

Moving to Tuatapere will bring them closer to Anna and the grandchildren, something they have missed.

Home would be a small cottage and plans to renovate were high on the list of priorities.

The new place is in walking distance to most amenities and they are looking forward to getting out and meeting the locals, doing some exploring and some fishing – sea fishing, Howard said.

Ironically, there is a fire siren for the Tuatapere Volunteer Fire Brigade across the road from their new home.



# Ōmārama's gentlemen's cycling club hits the trail

## G.T. Cyclers (geriatric teens) tackle the A20

*By Cycle Club chronicler G Harper*

Like anything that sounds like a great idea nobody is putting up their hand to say just whose it was, or was it that none of us could remember?

None-the-less sometime in 2025 four 60-plus (and perhaps a little bit more) hatched a plan to cycle the Alps 2 Ocean trail.

We held a meeting at a member's home to get this adventure organised.

We decided that summer would be too hot so mid-March into April looked a better bet as Easter fell in there somewhere.

We decided to book a night's accommodation at Ohau Lodge for March 11 with the idea the trip would start at Tekapo on the 10th. That was the original plan but more on that as we go.

Let's start with the training.

Now, unspoken team protocols mean I can't speak for the team, and persons should remain anonymous.

G. started training in January.

"I got the bike out of the shed, dusted off the cobwebs and blew up the tyres then promptly put the bike back in the shed.

"It was far too windy for biking. What was I thinking ?!"

The next training ride was motivated by team member 'T' sometime in February.

"Off we head up Broken Hut Rd, a nice ride, thank god it was downhill coming back. I only had to run the E-bike in ECO mode but it was nice to get that ride under our belt."

T and G started doing the odd ride together which was actually quite satisfying. We even managed a few solo rides.

Enter team member R who thinks he is up to the mark and 'match-fit' having been for a few rides around the village followed by some ice cream.

A week before we begin we take a ride around the block (Probation Rd) then tackle another ride down to Chain Hills and back. "Job done."

Enter H the fourth member of the team. He thinks he works hard enough not to train for this ride. Two weeks before we are due to start, he gets on his bike as the backside may need some conditioning.

"I can assure you he was right and it was not only his backside!"

It is now the start of March. R gives G a call thinking he has found an "out" by promising to work on some renovations.

Then H follows suit saying he is off to Aus for a well-earned break and a grand child's first birthday

– "That possibly trumps the renovations excuse, R!"

We drop the idea of Stage 1; R is still renovating but H is back in the country and rearing to go.

D-Day arrives - we're up bright and early, hook up the trailer, load G's bike and head to H's. There's a last-minute hiccup – T is on the phone, he has a puncture, but all is not lost, he has a spare bike. "Phew!"

With itinerary adjusted slightly G. T. and H. head to Twizel with the trailer which soigneur KV will tow home.

[ A soigneur (pronounced swa-nyur and often called a 'swanny') is a vital, non-riding support staff member in professional cycling, responsible for rider welfare. They manage logistics like transfers, feed zones, and post-race care, often providing massages, nutrition, and psychological support. They are essential to team operations during long races, such as Grand Tours. – ED]

We enjoy a lunch at a local café and about 1pm off we head, destination Lake Ōhau. But wait, not without the team photo – this time swanny A steps up.

“The first hour or so are in ideal conditions very little wind and a cloudy sky, nice and comfortable but when we hit Lake Ohau (the place of wind) there is a strong westerly blowing. It's not too bad at this stage as it is a cross wind and we are protected from it by

the manuka adjacent to the track but as we turn the corner at Shelton Downs 60km-plus winds blast straight into our faces. Oh, what fun the next 40 minutes are banging into it until we reach the lodge.

“We book in to have a well-earned shower and head up to the common room to debrief stage two – our first day on the trail – technically we skipped stage one but we will do at a later date.”

Swanny A joined the team for the evening, a nice meal, a couple refreshments and great company. The next morning there is a missed call from R. On following up, R had found some free time and would join us for stage 3, Ōhau to Omarama.

G. T. and H manage an extra coffee while swanny KT brings R up to the lodge.

“Still, we're away nice and early, 10.30am. [Gentlemen's hours]. There's some lovely scenery on the way up past Freehold Creek.”

G stopped for photos, "It could be nice to see where we had been."

“It starts to rain, lightly, but enough to put on rain jackets and then there's a steady climb to the summit.”

G and T are at the Tarnbrae summit some time before H shows up (on his peddle power bike) and R the renovator reaches the top.

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## *Ōmārama's gentlemen's cycling club hits the trail - continued*

"There was a good spell had there. "Maybe we stayed a bit too long as a lady not all that much younger on a peddle bike pulled up while we were recuperating. She had hardly broken a sweat (well done).

"We start the downhill run 200m down the track. G's. headlight falls off. Thank god it's daylight!

"It's downhill all the way to the woolshed at Quailburn, but no woolshed? That's right DOC pulled it down.

"There's time for a snack break before heading down Quailburn Rd, off the gravel and onto the tar seal with great coasting all the way until we hit the strong easterly. "H is bugged and R not much better as he saving his last bit of battery for the rise at Ahuriri Heights.

"We stop at the Ahuriri River bridge to work out a safe way to cross - that worked well, not, as none of crossed as we planned.

"Up the last hill at Ahuriri Heights and R's battery dies."

But the last stop was in sight. And a very welcome sight it was –

"Boots and Jandals, liquid refreshment and lunch, high fives all around and then off home with very tender backsides."

"H thought he may be able to get a backside massage, but it the swanny's vote was unanimous and binding – Massages below the shoulders were not in the terms and conditions!"

*To be continued, G*

**Author's note:** This portrayal is the author's view and no discussion will be entered into. You wouldn't want to let the truth get in the way of a good story!

**Editor's note:** In a comprehensive investigation comparable to that undertaken by Reuters recently to uncover the identity of street artist Banksy we are able to now reveal the true identities of the four members of the Elderly Gentlemen's Cycling Club who undertook this great adventure. They are Greg Harper (author), Tim Robertson, Hank Verheul and Ross Tangney. I won't reveal who the wives are!



# Learning from lived experience

Your future self will thank you.

Be it fire, flood or windstorm, the better prepared you can be for sudden disaster, the better.

Whatever you do, do not plan to have time to spare to get ready.

These were the words of advice from those who spoke at the Omarama Resilience Group's open day - Understanding ways a crisis can affect communities – last month.

Barbara MacKay, who together with husband Norman, and their dogs lived through the Lake Ohau Village fire, recounted her experience, “a true-life story”.

Roused by neighbours in the early hours of October 4, 2020, they could not hear the village sirens for the noise of the wind. “When we left the house was not on fire,” Barbara said.

But a change in wind direction put the whole village in the direct line of the fast-moving blaze. As dawn broke, the evacuees watched from the head of the valley to where they had escaped.

“We watched the village burn,” fellow resident David Stone said. He and wife Jill Stone said to expect and plan for the worst.

When they were allowed back into the village, Barbara said she just felt numb. They returned to rubble. “I was looking at the wood pile and it was still burning,” she said. Look at your house now, look carefully at replacement insurance, David said.

“– what does it exclude...to replace costs more, take photos ... and keep them up to date.”

“We had nothing...it's just incredible, we had nothing,” Barbara said.

Get insurance, keep your info stored on the cloud, keep receipts of chattels, “if you do nothing else” .

“Bad things do happen”, Barbara said.

“Fires – house fires - do happen. They could happen to you,” David said.

Natalie and Erwin Beiboer had owned the Omarama Top 10 Holiday Park for just on a year when the flood waters came through sweeping the hard work of 12 months away.

“We had three snow dumps and then it froze,” Natalie said.

“When it did start to rain it had nowhere to go. We had been keeping an eye on [Omarama] stream levels and could see it was rising.”

Thinking the threat would come from the west if the Stream overflowed its banks they urgently began moving caravans away from the banks and up to the higher ground of the Church carpark.

The Lindis closed because of the weather and the Beiboers began taking in the stranded travellers. About 11pm cold wet and tired, Natalie headed for bed leaving Erwin and her father to deal with matters when an urgent call came from Erwin. Water was coming down the road and into the park at the entrance and taking caravans with it, he told her.

Not having any idea where the water was coming from they called 111.

The stream had jumped its course upstream above the bridge and was carving a new channel down past the school, onto the main road and down through the entrance way into the camping ground and houses along the stream

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## *Learning from lived experience - continued*

She remembers “in my pjs” running to get everyone out , but not knowing quite what to do or where to go, just that “we’ve got to get out of here.”

Frustratingly, guests did not heed instructions, some just taking their time.

“Caravans were floating, the water was at knee level... the fireys came and helped ... and we were told we needed to get out too.”

The family, including baby Elora (1) left with others for the Heritage Gateway Hotel and refuge, but “very little sleep”.

“Everyone was wet and cold.”

At 4am Natalie ventured out to check on their home. The waters were almost level with the deck of the house which had been built to sit high above low lying ground. But the house was still above water.

“Having had the business for only a year everything we had worked for had been washed away.”

And to top that off, a few days later the family came down with Covid.

Ironically, in September after the floods - it happened again in August - the Beiboers were awarded the most improved Top 10 Holiday Park for that year of work.

“It sucked big time at the time, but we were able to benefit from it, not that we would ever wish for it,” she said.

“The house was not touched but we couldn’t heat the place. It was like sitting on an island.”

People, including the fire brigade volunteers, came together to help with the clean-up and in time the insurance payouts “allowed us to do more”.

“The community was fantastic.”

Natalie’s advice was to always “expect the unexpected”.

“Come up with a plan should it happen again...you’re not going to stop it, it’s just going to do its thing.”

*Strong winds fanned the wildfire which destroyed Lake Ohau Alpine Village in October 2020.*



She was disappointed a state of emergency was not called, especially considering the town was blocked off for two days.

The emergency hub at the hall was not in place at the time and she had not known where to send people, something she now knew.

Emergency Management Otago Waitaki advisor Danny Fountaine told the group about the experience of community volunteers who helped during and after the recent wind storms in the Clutha area.

They were in “various states of readiness” for a rare event which “caught Clutha out”, he said.

Ultimately it was the community’s responsibility to take care of themselves in the first instance.

“It is incorrect to think civil defence will come in to take care of us.”

All the “lifelines” go down – power, cell phone communications, water “does go down”.

Along with “more personal preparedness” businesses needed to have business continuity plans in place to get them through.

Generator resourcing was a big issue in the Clutha event. Everyone needed power.

“Think about not having power for a week or more.”

Community Resilience Groups were key.

“The public need to know where to find information and keep connected.”

“[They can be] the voice of calm in the storm,” he said.

Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade chief Fire officer Jack Zorab said in an emergency it was key “not to plan that there will be any time.”

“The longer you wait the more at risk you are. If you are told to go or if you see the danger then go.”

The Resilience Group is a made up of volunteers who formed the group to help the community get prepared for disasters like a rupture of the Alpine Fault following the AF8 Roadshow last year.

*The Omarama Stream floods the Top 10 Holiday Park in July 2022*



# Club marks 50 years since clubhouse opened

Recounted memories at the recent celebrations were less about the game and more about the hijinks and hard work which went into setting up the Omarama Golf Clubhouse 50 years ago.

Last month, the Omarama Golf Club held a weekend event to celebrate the opening of its clubhouse. The weekend began with a social gathering on the Friday night when the clubhouse was packed with members and invited guests for the speeches, reminiscing, cake cutting and catch-ups.

A plaque was unveiled by two life members Dave Hutton and Jim Harkin and former members Ann Patterson and Jean Ross (an original member aged 90) cut the celebratory cake.

Saturday featured a fun nine-hole ambrose tournament where a commemorative trophy was played for best nett. This trophy will now form part of the annual line up of trophy matches. Trevor Caton, of Otematata, was the inaugural winner.

As recounted in the September 2024 issue of the Omarama Gazette, in 1974, two indomitable forces of nature – Ada Patterson, of Longslip Station, and Prue Aubrey, of Dalrachney – both enthusiastic golfers, combined strengths and called a meeting to see if there was enough interest to form a golf club. A committee was formed. The first 'official' club house was a small two-room hut bought in February 1976 for \$500. Opening day was recorded as March 6, 1976, with the local rules drawn up later that year.

The present club house was bought in 1977 from De Geest's for \$7,000. It was built as an eel factory but not completed. At the time he moved to Ōmārama Dave worked as a builder but then got a job at the Ōmārama Hotel.

Because he worked shift work and often had Sundays and Mondays off, he would put in time at the golf course. "I was over there most mornings... Wattie Munro also did a lot of work. It was a very, very good club."

Fundraising schemes were impressive and donations generous. Materials, machinery and debentures were sought from and donated by the community. There were raffles, housie, produce stalls, catering for car rallies and stock sales, balls and cabarets, and the "very popular" luncheons held in the gardens on the various stations, Ada's daughter-in-law Ann Patterson said.

Club member Christine Bowman collated and prepared several large photo albums recording progress and past events for display at the function. Prizes for the event were sponsored by David O'Neill Contracting.

*Omarama Golf Club life members Jim Harkin and Dave Hutton unveiled a commemorative plaque at last month's celebrations. Photo: Christine Bowman*



# New speed limits for SH8

As part of the Government's 2024 plan introduced under the Land Transport Rule new speed limits are to be introduced for SH8 in Ōmārama, outside the school.

At the start of last month, the New Zealand Transport Agency announced new variable speed limit signs would be installed in coming weeks outside 16 Otago schools to slow traffic. These signs will operate at peak times.

As well as the electronic signs the 50 km/h town speed limit in Omarama will be extended slightly further west, and the short 70 km/h section will be removed.

"This creates one clear change point from 100km/h to 50km/h, giving drivers a more consistent threshold as they approach the township," NZTA Regional Relationships director James Caygill said.

"It also supports the school VSL and aligns with the approach used at similar state highway school sites."

The VSLs operate for up to 45 minutes before and after the school bell and can also be activated for short periods at other times when there are significant numbers of children around.

All VSL sites have been approved under the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2024 and will be legalised through the National Speed Limit Register, making them subject to enforcement when they 'go live'.

In 2023, the Waitaki District Council with the Ahuriri Community Board undertook a community consultation process before installing 30kmh signs on TA Munro Ln and Pinot Noir Court as part of its Interim Speed Management Plan. At the time there was no proposal to change the speed limit on SH8.

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## Twizel Medical Centre wins national award

Twizel Medical Centre has been awarded the 2025 National Award for Emergency Response and Healthcare.

The centre was given the award in recognition of the clinical leadership and coordinated emergency response to a high-impact multi-casualty bus collision near Lake Pukaki. On July 18, 2024 at about 8:30 am, emergency services and local healthcare teams responded to the major incident where two busses carrying around 100 Chinese tourists crashed on an icy portion of State Highway 8 between Lake Tekapo and Twizel.

The Twizel Medical Centre Primary Response in Medical Emergency team and 40 firefighters from Twizel, Lake Tekapo, Omarama and Otematata plus Hato Hone St John - nine vehicles and three helicopters - attended the large scale emergency event. Prime operates as part of New Zealand's rural emergency care network and involves specially trained rural clinicians to ensure patients receive timely care when traditional ambulance services may be geographically limited.

To improve response times in winter conditions Twizel's High Country Medical Trust is fundraising to build a garage to house the Prime vehicle which will save time clearing snow or ice before heading to emergency situations.

The Trust is selling 4000 raffle tickets to go in the draw to win three prizes including a 2026 Toyota Hilux to raise the funds.

To find out more go to the High Country Trust Facebook page. The raffle will be drawn on April 9.

# The Noticeboard

To have your community notice included here  
email: [omaramagazette@gmail.com](mailto:omaramagazette@gmail.com)

**Congratulations** to Omarama netballer Hazel Mason (Twizel Area School) who has been selected for Netball South's 2026 Steel Steps accelerator programme.

**The Omarama Calf Sale** is at 2pm, Thursday, April 9, at the Omarama Sale Yards.

**Correction:** In last month's farewell to Lynda Allen it was mentioned the postmistress was a Mrs Budd. The postmistress at the time was Alison Butt.

**Notary Public Services:** Notary Public David Stone at Lake Ohau Alpine Village at present. He is available in the area to provide notarial services. As a Notary Public he can certify and witness documents for use overseas only. (Justices of the Peace provide that service for local use ie use in NZ only.

Unlike JP services there is a charge for a Notary Public's services. This depends on how many documents require to be Sealed and the time expended plus travel if required. Current Photo ID of the appearer is required and the originals of documents, copies of which are to be certified must be produced for sighting. Contact details: 0274 909 188 [david@stone.org.nz](mailto:david@stone.org.nz)

**Kurow Medical Centre Ōmārama Clinic** at the Ōmārama Community Centre, is on Tuesdays. Appointments are available 9am to 4.30pm. To make appointments for all clinics, order repeat scripts or make enquiries please contact Kurow Medical Centre 03 436 0760 or Mackenzie Health Clinic 03 976 0503 . [www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz](http://www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz)

**The Ōmārama Community Library** is open 9.30am to 11am, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Library hours can change. Email: [omaramalibrary@gmail.com](mailto:omaramalibrary@gmail.com)

**Ōmārama MenzShed** meets each Saturday at 10am and at other times too. For further information please contact Malcolm Cameron 022 476 2225

**St Thomas' Ōmārama Church Community:**

Kurow Presbyterian Parish: Rev Eymbert Johannes Schoneveld, Interim Moderator, Kurow Presbyterian Parish, Waiareka-Weston Community Presbyterian Church, 48 Main Street, Weston. Phone: 022 683 5117  
email: [westonminister@gmail.com](mailto:westonminister@gmail.com)

**The Ōmārama Golf Club** Saturdays cards in 12 noon, tee-off 12.30pm. Club captain: Greg Stuart 027 438 9018, secretary: Arron Chambers 027 203 2340. [www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz](http://www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz)

**The Ahuriri Community Catchment Group** meets once a month. For time and place contact facilitator Bridget Pringle, 021 072 2113 or [bridget@irricon.co.nz](mailto:bridget@irricon.co.nz)

The Upper Waitaki Young Farmers Club meets at 7.30pm on the first Monday of each month at the Kurow Hotel. All welcome. Join the Facebook group.

Ōmārama Playgroup meets at 9.30am each Wednesday during the primary school term at the Ōmārama Community Centre. For more information phone or email president Olivia Black 027 833 0869, vice-president Jess Townsend and secretary Bridie Brosnahan 027 341 3010 [omaramaplaygroup@gmail.com](mailto:omaramaplaygroup@gmail.com)

**Bridge Club** - The Ōmārama 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 Ōmārama Model Aircraft Club** meets regularly at its flying ground at the Ōmārama airfield. All welcome - Contact Bevan Allan [bjallan@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bjallan@xtra.co.nz)

**FENZ Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade** meets at 7pm each Wednesday at the Ōmārama Fire Station and has its meeting on the third Wednesday of the month. If anyone would like more information about the various volunteer roles available within the fire brigade please get in touch. Email [omarama@fireandemergency.nz](mailto:omarama@fireandemergency.nz) or contact Jack on 020 4045 0909. You can follow us on Facebook (Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade)

**During winter months a gentle exercises** and social afternoon group meets at the Otematata District Club at 1.30pm Thursday afternoons during winter. Gold coin donation and a cuppa after the exercises. Contact Shirley - 021 165 6439, or Diane 021 237 9636.

**Waitaki Newcomers Network:** For more information about this group and to subscribe to regular updates send contact details to E: [waitaki@newcomers.co.nz](mailto:waitaki@newcomers.co.nz)  
W: [www.newcomers.co.nz](http://www.newcomers.co.nz) F: [facebook.com/WaitakiNewcomersNetwork/](https://facebook.com/WaitakiNewcomersNetwork/)

**Plunket Line:** 0800 933 922

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To read more, enjoy more photos and watch our place 'come to life' check out our Facebook page and website.

[www.facebook.com/omaramagazette/](http://www.facebook.com/omaramagazette/)  
[omaramagazette.nz](http://omaramagazette.nz)

To receive email alerts between monthly editions of the Omarama Gazette sign up to our 'Local List'. Email [omaramagazette@gmail.com](mailto:omaramagazette@gmail.com)

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

**The May Issue of the Omarama Gazette  
is Wednesday, May 6, 2026.**

Please submit copy  
by Thursday, April 30, 2026



## Apply now for Meridian's Power Up Community Fund

We're proud to back local projects in the 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, sustainable communities. Power Up Waitaki provides grants for projects in Aoraki/ Mount Cook, Twizel, Omarama, Otematata, Kurow, Hakataramea, Duntroon, Ikawai, Papakaio, Glenavy.

### How to apply

Applications are open until midnight on **Sunday 26th April 2026**. For more information and to apply:

- visit [meridian.co.nz/community-support](https://meridian.co.nz/community-support)
- email [community@meridianenergy.co.nz](mailto:community@meridianenergy.co.nz)
- call 021 733 931



POWER UP  
COMMUNITY  
FUND



**BULL  
WALK DAYS**  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May  
& Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May  
1pm-4pm

**Fossil Creek Bull Auction - Tuesday 9th June 2026, 2pm**  
80 Powerful R2 Angus Bulls with a rock solid guarantee

[www.fossilcreekangus.co.nz](https://www.fossilcreekangus.co.nz)

 @Fossilcreekangus

Blair and Jane Smith: (027) 4324154 / (027) 3841424

[newhavenfarms@netspeed.net.nz](mailto:newhavenfarms@netspeed.net.nz)

# The Community Reports

## Ōmārama Police



Call triple one (111) when you need an emergency response from police, fire or ambulance.  
Use Ten Five (105) to report things that don't need urgent Police assistance.

### Usual office contact details:

Senior Constable Nayland Smith

Sole charge Constable / Omarama / Po Box 101,  
Omarama 9448.

Phone: (03) 438 9559 / Ext: 34580 /  
mailto:nayland.smith@police.govt.nz

## CHIROPRACTIC CARE OMARAMA

### Chiropractic is more than pain relief... here's why!

Most people think chiropractic is only for sore backs and stiff necks — but there's so much more to it. Many people use chiropractic to keep their bodies functioning and performing at their best, day in and day out.

We often see positive changes in other areas such as: better range of motion, balance, increased quality of sleep, supports immune function, better muscular recovery, better posture. Increase in energy levels and more!

You don't need to be in pain to take care of your spine. Just like servicing your car, a little regular maintenance can make a big difference to how you feel and function.

If you're curious about how chiropractic could support your lifestyle, we're here to help.

Small changes change everything

**Get in contact with us or book online to  
start your journey towards better health**

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### Where you'll find us:

#### Omarama Practice:

Omarama Community Hall  
35 Chain Hills Highway,  
Omarama, 9412

☎ 03 433 1888

@ info@waitakichiropractic.co.nz

🌐 www.waitakichiropractic.co.nz



**WAITAKI**  
CHIROPRACTIC



## PROJECT UPDATE

Progress continues on the Waitaki Valley Health Hub, and it has been incredibly special for the Trust to see the level of support coming from across our community.

Alongside the amazing cornerstone pledges of \$1.5 million from two local families and \$1.3 million from a local trust, we are thrilled to have now reached the \$3 million milestone.

Planning is also moving ahead behind the scenes, with detailed working drawings now underway for the Hub. Work will begin over the coming month on the helipad, with local contractors taking on this important job — an exciting first step in bringing the project to life.

One of the most humbling parts of this journey has been watching donations of all sizes come in from our community. From \$10 through to \$100,000, every contribution plays a part. Whether it is from swear jars, community raffles, club collections or personal donations, we love them all and are incredibly grateful for the support behind this project.



## HELIPAD ANNOUNCEMENT

What's happening on the corner of Gordon Street?

Work has begun on the Waitaki Valley Health Hub helipad, made possible thanks to a \$73,000 grant from the Otago Southland Rescue Helicopter Trust. This long-awaited helipad will help expedite critical patient transfers from the Health Hub and our wider rural community - particularly at night and in poor weather conditions.

A huge thank you to the Trust and the incredible team of pilots, paramedics and support crews who serve our region. Local builders Tim Frame, Ben Warren, Garry Hawkins and Calect Electrical will soon begin work - one of the first visible steps in bringing the Health Hub to life.



## BOARD UPDATE

A huge thank you to John Sturgeon, who has retired from the Waitaki Valley Health Trust after many years of outstanding service to healthcare in our valley. We welcome Michael Pavletich, who has been co-opted onto the Board.



## IN MEMORY DONATIONS

We would like to make special mention of the families of Helen Blick and Richard Sime, who asked for donations to the Waitaki Valley Health Hub in lieu of flowers. Both Helen and Richard had deep connections to our area and were wonderful contributors to the community. These donations are very special to us, and we will be finding a meaningful way to acknowledge them within the Health Hub.



### WANT TO HELP?

Have an idea for an event for the Hub?

Let us know - we are happy to help with promotion and resources.

### LEAVE YOUR MARK

Would you like your name connected to the Hub? Rooms, spaces and car parks are available for sponsorship or to acknowledge a special person, place or family.

### *Want to find out more?*

To join our mailing list please email  
Kate Gibbon or Juliet Gray at [info@waitakivalleyhealthhub.nz](mailto:info@waitakivalleyhealthhub.nz)

[www.waitakivalleyhealthhub.nz](http://www.waitakivalleyhealthhub.nz)

Facebook @WaitakiValleyHealthHub



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**Saturday 11th April,**

ROCKY POINT  
STATION

**Kurow Hotel**



**Halter.**

**3pm Start Time**

**DONAGHY'S**  
PERFORMANCE FIRST

**MC SKIMMING  
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**BIG MONEY • BIG NIGHT**

ALL FUNDS RAISED GO TO:



**GET TO KUROW & HAVE A CRACK!**

**ENTRIES OPENING SOON!**

# Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade



- By Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade chief fire officer Jack Zorab

Looking after our volunteers, before, during and after the job

The Brigade has been exceptionally busy in recent times, with a number of incidents reported on in the media. We've been incredibly grateful for the support and well wishes from the community — but one question I keep being asked is how the team are doing. How are they coping after some of the more traumatic calls, and what kind of support do our people get these days?

They're good questions. Support for our volunteers doesn't begin after a difficult call — it begins from the moment someone joins the Brigade.

From the outset, we talk openly about the types of incidents we may attend, how those experiences can affect us, and what support is available. As training progresses, we build not just technical skills, but habits that protect our people — including minimising exposure where possible, working as a team, and debriefing as a normal part of how we operate.

We debrief all big or unusual calls, both to improve how we work and to make talking about our experiences routine. After particularly traumatic incidents, that includes a brief debrief on scene, followed by a more comprehensive one back at the station, and continued check-ins in the days that follow. If needed, further support is available through peer supporters and professional services.

Most importantly, we never respond as individuals. We respond as a trained, equipped team — and we deal with the aftermath together. Looking after our volunteers, physically and psychologically, is fundamental to how we operate. What that looks like in practice is reflected below, shared by one of our newest volunteers, Alona Shaw.

As the siren goes up, we head to the station, gear up, and deploy to the incident. Our senior officers pretty much straight away start evaluating risks, in an effort to minimise the crew's exposure to possibly distressing scenes, and assign tasks based on differing skill levels and experience.

As a member of the crew, my adrenaline kicks in and my thoughts skip between the type of incident we are attending and what we might be tasked with ... and whether I've closed all the locker doors on the truck properly! ☐

"Always Improving Operational Readiness" is something Jack mentioned when I first joined, and it still resonates. My training has been varied, all of it sitting under this umbrella. I've learned many practical skills and safety techniques, alongside tools to help build personal resilience.

While no one can ever be fully prepared for serious or traumatic incidents, when the enormity of a challenging situation presents itself, the importance of all that training becomes very clear.

Time on the incident ground depends on the type of callout. Everyone is assigned responsibilities, and the team works together — communication is key. Even with a particularly difficult event, there is comfort in knowing that we have given it our all, to the best of our abilities, to help whoever needed help and to save property where possible.

Once back at the station, the crew debriefs. This is another essential tool that helps promote resilience and supports our mental wellbeing. We all have the option to discuss and talk through events, which helps us understand our own experiences and emotions, and to normalise reactions.

The Brigade has a dedicated wellbeing officer who is always available for one-on-one support, although everyone supports and looks out for each other — often without even realising it. Further peer support is also available through Fire and Emergency New Zealand if needed.

For anyone thinking about joining, I'd say give it a go. Come along and see for yourself what it's all about. Be open to stepping a little outside your comfort zone, and try to let go of any insecurities about your own abilities — we all bring different strengths to the table.

Looking back on my time since joining the Brigade, the first thing that stood out for me was how supportive and encouraging everyone was. I've learned a wide range of new skills, improved my health and fitness, and experienced personal growth along the way. Most importantly, I've become part of a great team of people who share a strong sense of camaraderie and a commitment to helping our community when it's needed most.

## **March Update** - *By Madison Innes*

It has been a busy month with 17 callouts; one vegetation fire, two other fires, nine medicals, three alarm activations and two motor vehicle crashes.

A few weekends ago, AC (Arron Chambers), Jim, Ema, and I attended our Rural Recruits course. It was a great experience - we had a lot of fun and learnt so much along the way. From hose work to creating fire breaks and using handheld radios, it was a valuable weekend for all of us. We also have recently received our yellow helmets.

Alongside call outs, we've also been putting time into our weekly training to keep our skills sharp and learn new things. For example, we went out to check that all the fire hydrants were working, so had to flush them out to make sure they weren't clogged or covered by grass. So, if you have a yellow hydrant on your front lawn of roadside strip, please ensure the area is free of long grass, shrubs, and gravel.

Also, in mid-April Alona will be heading off to Christchurch to complete her recruit's course so she too can receive her yellow helmet and come back full of knowledge to serve the community. Good luck Alona we are all rooting for you.

Lastly remember we are still in a restricted fire season, so you still need to require a permit before you light a fire. Visit [checkitsalright.nz](http://checkitsalright.nz) to find out what kind of fires need permits and the current requirements in your area.



# Ōmārama School

Ōmārama School contact details:  
Phone: 03 438 9815

[principal@omarama.school.nz](mailto:principal@omarama.school.nz), [office@omarama.school.nz](mailto:office@omarama.school.nz)  
[www.omarama.school.nz](http://www.omarama.school.nz)

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## Ōmārama MenzShed

The Ōmārama MenzShed meets  
at 10am each Saturday  
and at other times, too.

**For further information contact:  
Malcolm Cameron 022 476 2225**

---

## Ōmārama Playgroup

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

For more information contact:

President Olivia Black 027 833 0869, vice-president Jess Townsend  
and secretary Bridie Brosnahan 027 341 3010  
[omaramaplaygroup@gmail.com](mailto:omaramaplaygroup@gmail.com)

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Brodie Craig CA

# Ōmārama Community Garden

*By Jennie Hales*

The Omarama School garden group would like to thank the Waitaki District Council Community Groups Grant Fund for the donation of for \$2000 for a new tunnel house at the school.

Omarama MenzShed will install the tunnel house during the upcoming school holidays.

We would also like to thank the MenzShed for building Ōmārama's Community Pantry to share surplus produce from the community and local gardens. (See below)

Winter greens - brassicas, spring onions and leeks have been planted in the raised beds so if anyone is passing through if you would please turn on the sprinkler using the timer it would be much appreciated,

We are a group of gardeners who work together to create something for everyone in our community

Anyone is welcome to pop along to the Community Centre and have a potter, and also to pop in any plants they may have ready to go in. Join the Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/742877880594146>

And watch this growing space

Contact: Jennie Hales, [jenniehollows@hotmail.com](mailto:jenniehollows@hotmail.com)

## Let's get growing together!



# Ōmārama Community Pantry

## The doors are officially open!!!

With a massive thanks to our lovely Omarama MenzShed volunteers, and under the guidance of Neville Kitchen the doors of Ōmārama's Community pantry are open!!!

On March 8 the doors opened and shelves filled with surplus autumn harvest and generous donations from local gardens. Turnover has been great with shelves filling as quickly as they empty. Plus those who are generous with their time have been turning surplus into chutneys and relishes.

No donations are necessary but if you'd feel more comfortable giving a small koha any funds will go to our two community gardens, at the community centre and the school.

The Ōmārama Community Pantry is at the entrance to the community gardens and picnic area at the Ōmārama Memorial Hall and Community Centre.

## Take what you need, leave what you can.



# Ōmārama Collie Dog Club

Trialists flock to Ōmārama Club day.

The Ōmārama Collie Dog Club two-day trials were held last month at the club grounds on Dalrachney Station.

The number of entries this year was well up on the past few years, as the dates slotted more easily into the dog trial season calendar, club secretary Elizabeth Bertenshaw said.

Triallists had come from as far away as Cheviot, Culverden, Wanaka, Roxburgh and Alexandra to campaign their dogs.

In all 77 entered Event I, 97 entered Event II, there were 95 in event III and 96 in event VI, Mrs Bertenshaw said.

The trials are hosted by the Aubrey family and Dalrachney provide the half-bred ewe lambs and two-tooths for the competition.

This year's president is Angus Fraser, catering convenors were Carla Hunter, Andrea Aubrey and Micayla Jopson. The liberating convenor was Luke Duncan, who is also vice-president of the club.

Those officiating were:

Event I, Long Pull, judge Daniel Adam, marshal Rick Aubrey

Event II, Short Head, judge Boyd Tisdall, marshal Ginger Anderson

Event III, Zig Zag Hunt judge Tim O'Neill, marshal Scott Hunter

Event IV, Straight Hunt judge Zac Gilmore, marshal Todd Burke

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## Age Concern Ōmārama

Kathryn Bennett is the coordinator for Age Concern Waitaki, based in Oamaru.

Kathryn's contact details are: 03 434 7008, 027 4347 089

NthOtago@ageconcernotago.co.nz

Hours: Mon-Wed 9- 4.30pm / Thurs - Fri 9-12.30pm



### Omarama Pop Up Café

All ages welcome



Join us!



Omarama Community Centre  
Monday 13 April from 1.00pm - 3pm

# Care in the community

## Ōmārama Community Care Group

If you are in need of any assistance please do not hesitate to contact Ruth Grundy 021 294 8002 and we can work together on options and put you in contact with those who can help or for whatever will best suit you.

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## Twizel Community Care Centre

If you need any of the services listed below please contact:

Twizel Community Care Centre

Mount Cook St, Twizel

Phone: 03 435 0687

Email: [admin@twizelcare.co.nz](mailto:admin@twizelcare.co.nz)

Hours of opening: 9am - 3pm

Days of opening: Monday - Friday

- **A reminder we have a food bank** available with no questions asked  
Our contact details are 03 4350687 and email [admin@twizelcare.co.nz](mailto:admin@twizelcare.co.nz) if you would like to arrange a convenient time to collect a parcel. (Donations of non-perishable or foods that can be frozen always welcome)
- **Twizel-Tekapo Community Car bookings** – this is a community car that picks you up from your house and takes you wherever you need to go such as town here in Twizel or Timaru for an appointment, whatever you need. There is a cost involved depending on destinations. Monday to Friday
- **Work and Income** – assistance with applying for benefits, helping with queries regarding superannuation, and any other financial assistance you may receive. Printing and scanning of documents.
- **Inland Revenue** – queries regarding anything IRD related, access to forms.
- **Immigration** - passport and other Government agencies.
- **Cancer Society Navigator** – support for anyone with any cancer each third Thursday of every month
- **Home Delivered Meals** – We have small roasts for \$10, Regular meals for \$8 and small snack meals for \$4. We can deliver to your home.
- **Printing/scanning services**
- **Arowhenua Whanau services** – Free health clinic on the first Wednesday of each month.
- **Access to a computer**, printing, free WIFI, community notice boards

# Ahuriri Catchment Community Group

Upper Waitaki catch cropping trial shows early nitrogen reduction results

By Kim Thomas, *Environment Canterbury Ahuriri project communications.*

Early results from a catch cropping trial in the Upper Waitaki show promising reductions in soil nitrogen following winter grazing, with researchers reporting strong crop yields and nutrient uptake.

What the trial is testing

The Canterbury Regional Council (Environment Canterbury) is funding a two-year trial run by the Bioeconomy Science Institute in the cooler high-country climate, where the potential of catch cropping to reduce nitrogen (N) soil levels is not well understood.

Why catch crops matter

Previous research by Bioeconomy Science Institute in other parts of the South Island found catch crops can:

- Reduce nitrogen leaching by up to 60 per cent.
- Reduce sediment runoff by around 40 per cent after winter forage crop grazing.
- Increase forage production per hectare and farm productivity.

Early results from Upper Waitaki

In the Upper Waitaki study, three farms within a 20-kilometre radius of Ōmārama were planted with catch crops of forage oats, ryecorn, Italian ryegrass and/or tetraploid hybrid ryegrass in August 2025.

By December 2025:

Best yield produced was 9.3 t DM/ha from a crop of forage oats and Italian ryegrass. The same crops had the highest nitrogen uptake 76kg N/ha.

These results suggest catch cropping could play a role in helping high-country farmers reduce nitrogen losses.

Lead researcher Brendon Malcom said first year results were in line with other high-country trials, with strong yields and nitrogen uptake.

"Farmers were also very encouraged by what they saw, and we were having conversations about how they could make this practice work in their systems."

Brendon says it would be interesting to see how the crops perform in the second year of the trial, particularly if there was a cold, harsh winter or spring in the Omarama Ōhau basin.



# Upper Waitaki Young Farmers Club

The Upper Waitaki Young Farmers Club  
meets at  
7.30pm on the first Monday  
of each month  
at the Kurow Hotel.

All welcome. Join the Facebook group.



The Difference

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Business Development  
Manager  
0274647751  
pmrentals@mcre.co.nz

 **LJ Hooker**  
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Agents (RECA 31048)

# Kurow Medical Centre

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

E: [info@kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz](mailto:info@kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz)  
W: [www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz](http://www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz)  
[www.facebook.com/kurowmedicalcentre](http://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 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 \$50.00**

**Care Plus – Free to eligible patients only. Community Services Card \$20**

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

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

## **Opening hours**

Omarama: Tuesdays 9am to 4.30pm

Kurow: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 1pm

Twizel: Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm, 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*

# Mackenzie Health Centre

## Medical Receptionist Position

We are seeking to employ a Part-time Position or casual for a Rural Medical Receptionist.

### **Kōrero mō te tūranga - About the role**

The applicant must be reliable, have excellent presentation, attention to detail, proficient understanding of English and a professional, helpful manner. Indici experience is preferred. Computer confidence and excellent telephone skills are essential, as is being able to liaise with Patients and other Medical providers.

**Hours and days negotiable for the successful applicant.**

### **Mōu - About you**

#### **Key Responsibilities:**

- Meeting and greeting patients
- Answering phones
- Assisting patients with their queries both over the phone and via email
- Scheduling appointments
- Processing invoices and payments
- General office administration including processing referrals and procedures

#### **Our ideal candidate will have:**

- Indici experience (preferred)
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Ability to multi task with a can do attitude
- Meticulous attention to detail
- Culturally sensitive and aware of diversity within our population
- Experience and interest in working with Māori and other ethnic health an advantage

You must be a New Zealand resident to apply for this position.

**To apply for the position please send your CV and cover letter to the Practice Manager Tom**

**McCarthy: [tom@kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz](mailto:tom@kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz)**

# Ōmārama Residents' Association

The April meeting  
of the Ōmārama Residents' Association is  
7pm, Thursday, April 16, 2026  
at the Omarama Community Centre

The Secretary, P O Box 93, Ōmārama 9448.  
The association's email address is [omarama.committee@gmail.com](mailto:omarama.committee@gmail.com)

The minutes of the March meeting are available from the secretary

## In small communities volunteers wear many hats.

### Declaration:

I am married to Stephen Grundy who is Residents' Association of Omarama committee chairperson.

I attend the public meetings of the association as a Waitaki District Council ratepayer, an Omarama Hall ratepayer and the editor of the Omarama Gazette.

I speak to issues relevant to each of those roles as necessary.

## ŌMĀRAMA 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 5446  
or email [hallhire.omarama@xtra.co.nz](mailto:hallhire.omarama@xtra.co.nz)



# Ōmārama Golf Club

Saturday Club Day: cards in 12.30pm and tee-off at 1pm.

If you are interested in joining the club  
email Arron Chambers,  
secretary@omaramagolfclub.co.nz for details.  
Club captain: Greg Stuart phone: 027 438 9018  
Secretary: Arron Chambers phone: 027 203 2340  
email secretary@omaramagolfclub.co.nz

www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz

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## Ōmārama Community Library

The Ōmārama Community Library's  
opening hours are 9.30am to 11am,  
Wednesdays and Saturdays,  
at the Ōmārama Community Centre.  
omaramalibrary@gmail.com

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## Knit Night Ōmārama

Knit Night Ōmārama  
5.15pm each Tuesday  
at the Omarama Community Centre  
Gold coin donations towards room hire would be appreciated.

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## Omarama Storage



- Secure Lockup Storage
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Don't let the weather deteriorate your caravan, boat or motorhome over winter. Spaces available now.  
Contact Bridget – [bridgesp@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bridgesp@xtra.co.nz)  
or Ph /txt 021572798

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'The Community Reports' is  
dedicated to news  
from clubs, groups and sports teams.

Contributions are welcome.  
[omaramagazette@gmail.com](mailto:omaramagazette@gmail.com)

# Waitaki District Council - news in brief

**Council meetings are recorded and can be found on its YouTube channel**

**For insight into the strategic direction** the council plans to take in the next few years – given the challenges of water reforms, building reforms and local government reforms – read Waitaki mayor Mel Tavendale’s column in the Oamaru Mail Friday, March 27, edition.

She includes a brief discussion about “stranded overheads” — the fixed costs that remain even when part of the council’s work moves to another entity. <https://digital.oamarumail.co.nz/html5/default.aspx>

**Yesterday, the mayor and councillors decided** what the council’s approach will be to producing this year’s annual plan.

The annual plan is produced in the years in between a Long-Term Plan and is an update on what the council planned to deliver in year two of its LTP.

There is no legislative requirement to consult on an annual plan unless it contains significant changes from the LTP to which it relates.

The LTP is the council’s key strategic document and as adopted in June 2025 it set the 9-year budget.

If it is forecast there will be a significant change, then an LTP amendment is required which triggers mandatory community consultation and audit process.

Council staff have recommended against any significant change because of its “limited financial capacity” for such a plan.

**Also, on yesterday’s agenda the council controlled organisations presented their Statements of Intent and Half-Year Reports.**

**Omarama Airfield** presented its Statement of Intent although it is no longer determined to be a CCO for audit purposes. This is still required as agreed with the shareholders of the company to the standard required in the Local Government Act 2002.

The airfield company is due to repay, by May 27, the loan of \$415,000 plus interest which it received to complete the development of the Nimbus Rd subdivision. It was intended that this be paid off as the sections sold.

However, in its December half-yearly report to shareholders the airfield company reported that during the period one property sale was settled and a second went unconditional for settlement in 2026, and enquiries for the period were slow



# Mayors Taskforce for Jobs supports future in shearing

The Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs together with with McSkimming Shearing and Phil Cleland Shearing joined forces to train young people in shearing, through an Elite Wool Industry training course held at Mt Parker Woolshed near Ikawai last month. Waitaki -based shearing businesses approached MTFJ Waitaki coordinator Greg Pestell and asked for support for nine of their young staff to attend the four-day course.

While the MTFJ role is to help young people into employment, it is also to support sustainable employment for young people, and support local employers to develop and retain staff in the Waitaki District, Mr Pestell said.

Elite Wool Industry Training Ltd tutors were calm and encouraging of the students but ensured they all met the physical and mental demands of shearing during their assessments, he said.



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**Vicky Munro**

Otematata

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**Alona Shaw**

Omarama

027 773 4214

# Miles Anderson MP for Waitaki

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[waitaki.mp@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:waitaki.mp@parliament.govt.nz)

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# Garden Diary - 'Earth laughs in flowers'

We've hardly had a summer, or so it seems.  
Although Autumn is my favourite season I want it to hold back.  
No strength of will may do so.

Too soon it feels, and the leaves laugh as they tumble and dance on the back of the wind.  
Wood smoke drifts in the damp air.

Apples, pears, quinces fill out and glow with ripeness against overcast skies.  
The fantails have returned to lower slopes.  
We can no more own this than we can catch the wind

There is war, and rumours of war. Gathering closer to our insulated and smug islands.  
I push broad beans into the still summer-warm soils in my small enclosure in a bee-loud  
glade and wonder.

The boastful preen and shout and brag, they are tales told by idiots, 'full of sound and fury  
signifying nothing.'

Noise from those who follow their greed-led visions to own the land and all that is in it.  
"Tis mine, my children's and my name's. How sweet the west wind sounds in my own  
trees!"

'The earth laughs in flowers.'

To resist seems futile, like spitting into the wind.  
"The gardener digs in another time, without past or future, beginning or end..."

Is it in denial or in defiance that I dig and plant?  
The great cycle of seasons churn through the timeline of history and all the turmoil  
mankind creates with inevitability, underlining our transience. Autumn, Winter, Spring,  
Summer, Autumn.

It may not stop a war, or meddling or gossip or harm.  
We may not reap the harvest. We may not  
see the result.

Still, I choose to push beans into the still sun  
-warmed soils, scatter carrot seed and firm it  
in ahead of the rain.

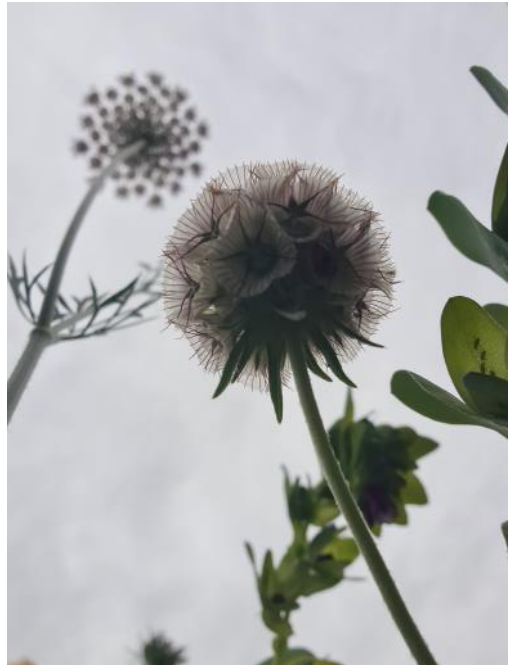
"In a very little while, it may be,  
When our impulsive limbs and our superior  
skulls  
Have to the soil restored several ounces of  
fertiliser,

The Mother of all will take charge again,  
And soon wipe away with her elements  
Our small fond human enclosures."

So small we are in time.

*By Ruth Grundy,  
I garden a small space under the big sky in  
Ōmārama.*

Macbeth, By William Shakespeare  
Hamatreya, By Ralph Waldo Emerson  
Modern Nature, by Derek Jarman  
Pause, By Ursula Bethell





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

March 2026

Highest temperature: March 5, 29C

Lowest temperature: March 3, -1.2C

Most rainfall: March 9, 11.9 mm

Total rainfall for March: 26.1 mm

## The Ōmārama Gazette

Ōmārama's news delivered to your inbox  
the first Wednesday of each month

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