



Ōmārama Gazette

March 2026

There's a new cop on the valley beat

Moving to a role in Kurow has given the new constable on the beat more freedom and a chance to follow his dreams.

Constable Angus Ellingham has taken up the role as Kurow's sole policeman following the retirement of long-serving and much-loved Senior Constable Peter (Scotty) Scott. And like Scotty, he will spend a good proportion of his time in and around Omarama.

Gus, who has been on the job since mid-January, hails from Hawke's Bay. He has worked in that region and on the east coast of the North Island for the past seven years.

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Meet Constable Angus (Gus) Ellingham, Kurow's new sole charge policeman.



There's a new cop on the valley beat - continued

"I've been a few places, I know what a rural space is like," he said.

He had been searching for a quieter pace of life when his sisters – spread out across the South Island – recommended Kurow as the place to be.

"I wanted to spend more time with family... and I'm really into hunting.

"I have some [hunting] aspirations, I've been dreaming about it since I got the job."

He was looking forward to exploring the different options hunting in the South Island high country offered and to getting familiar with the different terrain.

And he may consider joining LandSar once he has settled in and those hunting bucket list items have been ticked off.

Back in the valley and he has been loving meeting people.

"Everyone has been so welcoming."

They stopped for a chat, and it was easy to while away an hour or so.

Having the freedom to do that, to get talking to people, to get to know them and not to be "run off my feet from job-to-job" had been great.

Gus said he had already spent a lot of time on the road between Duntroon and the Lindis Pass. "It's nice and relaxing, checking out the scenery." – in between "ticketing the tourists".

He was looking forward to winter too and seeing a hoar frost, first hand.

Omarama Resilience Group's invitation to all **Understanding ways a crisis can affect communities.**

The Omarama Community Resilience group would like to invite the community to its next meeting.

**It will be at 11am, Saturday, March 21,
at the Omarama Community Centre.**

Speakers will be:

* Natalie Beiboer speaking about her experiences with the floods in 2022.

* Barbara Mackay speaking about escaping the Ōhau fires

* Emergency Management Otago Waitaki advisor Danny Fountaine talking about the response to the Southland storms.

As well there will be displays of 'grab bags' and other helpful information to use in an emergency.

Lynda says a fond farewell

A life-time of memories come flooding back when long-time resident Lynda Allen starts reminiscing about almost 50 years spent living in Omarama.

Lynda retires from Mobil Twizel where she has worked most recently for Richard and Nicola McKerchar on March 22, and will make the move to Ashburton to be closer to family.

She started with the McKerchars a year ago when they bought the service station from Terry and Michelle Walsh and she will be greatly missed, they said.

"She was really instrumental ...[in making it] a smooth transition from Terry and Michelle's ownership," Nicola said.

"All the staff here look up to her... she has calming influence, she knows what to do."

Lynda is not only retiring from her longstanding career she is also leaving the town which has been the backdrop to her life for 47 years.

Lynda moved to Omarama in 1979 for a job at the Oasis Cafe.

Her mother had rung the Oasis about a job which came with a single bedroom on the Monday and she started work on the Wednesday.

"I had no idea where my parents were taking me."

My mother said I was not to ring up and say I was homesick, she said laughing.

She left it three weeks before making the first call and then they were both doing their best not to cry.

Family connections with the owners grew tight with frequent visits and her identical twin sisters also did a stint at the café confusing patrons when they both chose to wear the same brown, green or yellow smocks on the same shifts.

When Lynda arrived in Omarama the Paulsons had the camping ground, the Faheys had the shop, Blackie had the Caltex garage and Dave and Shona Smith had the Mobil. Colin and Jenny Bain had the pub and Mrs Budd had the post office. – "you only ever called her Mrs Budd".

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Omarama identity Lynda Allen (centre) retires from Mobil Twizel, owned by Nicola (left) and Richard McKechar, this month.



Lynda says a fond farewell - continued

Aileen Woods had her shop (Merino Country Crafts), Jan and Rob Perriam had the Omarama Motor Lodge.

And it was Russell and Lorraine Poole owned the Oasis and gave her her first job.

There was a carpark at the t-intersection of SH8 and SH83 for busses and trucks. The Ministry of Works houses close to the entrance to Omarama Station were filled with workers and their families, and as for the rest, to her young eye she had the impression it was largely horse paddocks, she recalls.

The Stage Coach Inn now the Discovery Countrytime Hotel opened on the outskirts of town in 1978 and Lynda was later employed for a while there. "I still have the ashtray they gave me when I left."

But there was not much work at the hotel through the winter and in 1999 she moved to Mobil Omarama owned then by Lyall and Melanie Smith – beginning what was to be a 27-year career in customer service with New Zealand's oldest oil company.

There can be no-one that is more familiar with the front desk technology.

She remembers the days of mechanical cash registers which moved through different prototypes to electronic systems with their vagaries. She saw though the Millennium Bug fears, the early 'tracker ball' technology to reach the sophisticated systems used today.

And she still remembers the old codes – it was 111 for the pie and 555 for a coffee. "There's still no-one who knows the till better," Richard said

Sharon and Steve Reeves took over from the Smiths in 2001, and from 2009 she worked for Terry and Michelle which took her to Mobil Twizel when Tasman Fuels bought the Omarama site. "There have been awesome people to work with here over the years."

The commute to Twizel had been a daily pleasure. "I love the drive here – the scenery."

And it's the weather and people, too, she will miss.

She has done her share of volunteer work and broke new ground doing it. A member of the Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade, in a competition in Wainuiomata, in 1990,



she was one of the four-woman Omarama High Country Fire women's Wajax team to set a national record for the fastest time for their event, under New Zealand competition rules, which has not been beaten.

Naturally, Omarama had changed over time, she said. Back in the day everyone looked out for each other, the kids would go off fishing and eeling together. And there had been some hilarious times.

Once, there was two inches of snow and a man, naked except for his socks and shoes, leapt out of a car, jumped on the ram, "got straight back off" because it was so cold but he couldn't get back in the car.

The occupants had locked it because they wanted a photo of him and hadn't had time to get their cameras out.

All this unfolded in view of a Contiki tour bus and just as a cop came down the road, she said.

While adults will have fond memories of great times spent with Lynda, Ōmārama's children will not forget the buzz Lynda gave them to keep boredom at bay through the Covid 19 lockdown.

Building on the 'teddy bear in the window' idea Lynda not only created tableaux for bored young pedestrians to view as they passed her place, she accompanied these with inventive narrative poems – Teddy's Antics – featuring local personalities and which she later self-published.

Could more writing be on the horizon? "I'd love to write some more," she said.

Below: The winning Wajax women's team, Saying goodbye to Mobil Omarama, and Lynda with her soft toy family creating "Teddies' Antics."

Photos: Supplied



Footpaths once again in the spotlight

You might be forgiven for thinking the council has been 'kicking the can down the road' when it comes to dealing with footpath maintenance in Omarama – they certainly couldn't kick it far down the footpaths.

The Omarama Gazette has covered the matter of the lack of repairs to the town's footpaths almost annually through the past 10 years.

Residents have worn their fingers to the bone using “snap, send, solve” to highlight problems and have become frustrated with seeming inaction.

The council say the last “replacements” of footpaths in Ōmārama were undertaken in 2017-2018. Although, maintenance was done last year when timber edging was repaired on Airport Road.

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 and stormwater, plantings, and which was reported in the Ahuriri Community Board February financial update, questions are being asked about what will be done and when.

When those questions were raised at last month's informal meeting of the RAOI – there was no quorum and no written agenda – they remained largely unanswered. Although, the good news is it is to be proposed a council footpath strategy be developed for the district which will set objectives for 10, 20 and 30 years' time, and the Black Peak Rd footpath between its intersections with SH83 is to be “swept” at a cost of about \$7,000.

As well, via email separately, Infrastructure manager Joshua Rendell has said council was undertaking a new survey of the district's footpaths “from which a revised forward work programme will be developed”.

The topic came to the attention of Omarama's Residents' Association when the committee was told at its December 18 meeting there had been a ‘walk around’ a few days earlier between Ahuriri Community Board representative Mike King, council staff, Whitestone Contracting Ltd representatives and a community member to discuss the present state of the footpaths and possible remedial work. The committee was not invited to this meeting.

At the same RAOI meeting it was also noted there had been correspondence from Jacqui Eggleton of CCS Disability Action Oamaru asking to speak on the subject of footpaths and accessibility in the township.

The committee decided unanimously to invite Ms Eggleton to speak and also that it would conduct its own footpath survey to collect and log relevant information. These topics of discussion for February's meeting were published in February's Omarama Gazette.

Two committee members were tasked with the RAOI survey job, and it was presented at the February meeting. A copy of the survey was given to Mr King and to Waitaki District Councillor Brent Cowles, who had paid an unannounced visit. The copy of the RAOI survey and report is available from the RAOI secretary.

Mr King told the group, as a result of December's ‘walk around’ the footpaths were to be “swept” in an effort to improve their functionality.

Cr Cowles said there was a limited footpath budget and that Omarama was not the only community with footpaths that needed attention.

He said he had been appointed chairman of the council's assets and infrastructure committee for this triennium, and it would be meeting the following day He believed the topic would come up for discussion.

This is Cr Cowles fifth term in local government. He was elected to the Ahuriri Community Board in a by-election in 2014, serving for two further terms and was elected unopposed as Ahuriri Ward Councillor in 2022 and again in 2025.

He told the group his goal, in his new governance role, was to have a district-wide foot path strategy which would set standards and a direction for the council for the next "10, 20 or 30" years.

When pressed on what was to be done this year and how the Omarama Township amenity fund was to be spent he either could not or would not add anything further to Mr King's information.

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

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We took over 100 geotagged photos, which recorded problems across the town.

Map



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.

Footpaths once again in the spotlight - continued

When asked who those questions should be addressed to – should they be addressed to council infrastructure manager Joshua Rendell? – Cr Cowles asked this reporter if she wanted to go back to all of her questions "being 'OIA-d [Sic]'" in reference to the previous council practice of choosing to send all Gazette questions through the council's Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 process. That practice ceased at the time the Council's new communications policy was adopted in August last year. Cr Cowles repeated that statement.

The questions have since been directed to Mr Rendell. (*See responses below*).

At the annual plan submissions and hearings in May Ms Eggleton asked the council to consider both remedial work and additional footpaths for Omarama. The annual plan sets the programme of work and budgets for the year ahead. She said she was "fully aware" collaboration with the NZ Transport Agency would be required when addressing state highway issues.

However, turning a wheelchair was impossible in places and those with accessibility issues were having difficult getting to the doctors and going to events at the Hall from their homes to the south of the highway.

She was told the work would be "considerable" and "expensive". Maintenance work would come from rates, but a loan would need to be raised to fund any new work.

Last week, the Gazette put the following questions to Mr Rendell and council staff responded within two days.

Here is their full response.:

1. When was the last time maintenance work was carried out on Omarama township footpaths?

Maintenance was carried out on Airport Road last year. Vegetation control (weed spraying) has been undertaken earlier this month on various footpaths/roads/berms within Ōmārama.

2. What was the work carried out? *Timber edging was repaired on Airport Road.*

3. In the February 2, 2026, financial report to the Ahuriri Community Board it was noted the Omarama Township amenity fund sat at \$126,718 at June 30, 2025. How are/were these funds to be spent?

Amenity Funds can be used for any improvements in the road corridor including new infrastructure (ie. kerb and channel, footpaths, streetlights and stormwater, plantings, etc. as well as aspects of the Omarama Masterplan). Expenditure of these funds is to be approved by the Ahuriri Community Board.

[Omarama ratepayers are levied the amenity rate calculated on land value annually i.e. ratepayers have already paid this money -Ed]

3. On December 16, 2025, as noted in Ahuriri Community Board member Mike King's report, a meeting was held on Black Peak Rd, Omarama between Mr King, council staff and a community member to discuss footpaths and berms. [As an aside, the RAOI committee was not invited to this meeting.] What was the outcome of this meeting? What work is planned as a result of this?

Officers were asked to get a price to sweep footpaths from Black Peak Rd to the petrol station. The price was approx \$7,000. There was concern that with no proper path underneath, sweeping was likely to cause hazards. Officers are currently getting a price to cut and dig out tree roots in the path to resolve risk of trips and falls. Work has been planned to sweep the path.

4. During last year's Long Term Plan process the streetscaping fund, of \$32,000 funded from depreciation, and set aside for Omarama which was to be spent in 2026, was pushed out until the 2029/2030 year. What was the reason for this decision?

To manage rate increases. This would have been used for streetscaping work, not renewal of footpaths.

[This streetscaping fund has been set aside since at least 2018 as reported in the June 2018 Omarama Gazette and not been spent. At the time Councillor Craig Dawson tried to find out what the money was for. While he was not given a definitive answer, he was told it would be best not to commit it to anything because the council expected implementing the town masterplan would require extra funds - Ed].

5. In November 2021, Assets Operations Manager Joshua Rendell reported in the Assets Group Activity Report to the council "in 2020, the Asset Management Team (AM Team) engaged WSP to complete a footpath survey of the full network." At the time he told the Omarama Gazette; "the survey revealed that in Ōmārama 97.4% of the length of the footpaths did not show faults. "[However] there were faults observed in 2.6% of the length of Ōmārama footpaths, of these faults 32% were rated very poor, 26% Poor and 42% Fair. "Of the repairs being programmed [through the district], 19 are in Ōmārama."

What proportion of this planned work was subsequently carried out?

"Maintenance work has been undertaken since that period to address some of the very poor areas. Further renewal work was planned to be undertaken; however, budgets were reduced and expenditure had to be prioritised to the poorest condition footpaths in the district. Footpath work is programmed across the district based on safety and condition, and where possible also aligns with other work such as water and sewer renewals to maximise efficiency. Council's current footpath budget is 1/3 of what would be required to optimally renew the footpath network on a cyclic basis. Council is currently undertaking another footpath survey of the footpath network in the district from which a revised forward work programme will be developed. Co-funding from NZTA for footpath maintenance and renewals has been reduced significantly with the current government's policy statement on investment priorities. The last replacements of footpath in Ōmārama were undertaken in 2017/18 and are detailed below:

- *Teal Cres, Black Peak Rd - both sides*
- *Black Peak Rd, Teal, Keene, LHS*
- *Black Peak Rd, Keene, Totara, LHS*
- *Black Peak Rd between Quailburn Dr and SH83 RHS*
- *Benmore Pl, BlackPeak Rd, both sides.*

6. On the State Highway sections of the Omarama township at what point on the highways does NZTA's responsibility begin?

NZTA does not take responsibility for footpaths in Ōmārama given the speed limits within the town. Council responsibility for paths starts from behind the kerb and on side roads 10m from an intersection.

The next meeting of the RAOI is 7pm, Thursday, March 19, 2026

- The minutes of the February meeting are available from the secretary.

Do you remember Woodsy's old car?

WRIGHTSON
Auction of Vintage Cars, Parts,
Tractors and Sundry Items
ON A/C Est E.J.F. Woods
24 Omarama Avenue, State Highway 8,
Omarama,
SATURDAY 23rd MARCH 1996
commencing at 11am
ITEMS OF INTEREST INCLUDE:
1908 Lister Engine (size L 4hp),
1926 Ford Model T, 1951 LIP Vauxhall,
1957 Vauxhall, W4 McCormick-Deering
Tractor, T.20 International Trac Tractor,
All the above are fully restored.
1928 De Soto, 1957 Vauxhall (both partly
restored).
1973 Mini Clubman (1 owner) 61,600 kms.
We will also offer a very large collection
of sundry vintage parts, wheels, tyres and
chassis, far to numerous to mention.
This AUCTION would appeal to ALL
CAR ENTHUSIASTS.
Further enquiries:
C.A.H. (Chris) Mears (03) 434-8977 a.h.;
Wrightson Omamaru (025) 720-996 work;
Livestock/Auctioneers manager
(03) 434-9854 fax.
Absentee or phone bids accepted – Cash or
BankCheque only on day.

Timaru vintage car enthusiast Kurt Pearce is looking for old photos of a car now in his possession which was once owned by Omarama identity Eion Woods.

Mr Pearce owns Mr Woods Canadian built 1926 Model T Ford and has been in the process of restoring it to get it back on the road.

He wants to know if anyone in Omarama remembered the car because he is trying to find old photos of the vehicle.

He understood the car sold at an estate sale in 1996 in Omarama to Bruce Hayman of Tasman Downs Station, Lake Tekapo, who died in 2008.

“It sat for a long time in a shed in Waimate,” Mr Pearce said.

“Then I have purchased it and have put it back on the road again.”

Mr Pearce plans to have on display at the Caroline Bay Rock and Hop in Timaru from March 19 to March 22.

If you have any information or photos you can contact Mr Pearce at 021 052 9815.



Questions linger over roadside caravan fire

A caravan fire which sparked a vegetation fire near Sailors Cutting last month has left some unanswered questions.

Oamaru man Simon Mather captured footage of the caravan fire just east of Sailors Cutting on SH 83 shortly before the Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade arrived on the scene.

Mr Mather said he and his partner had been enjoying a coffee at the Oasis Café when they saw a car towing a caravan come “flying around the corner” through the intersection being followed by a police vehicle.

“You don’t expect anything exciting to happen in Omarama,” he said laughing. Within minutes they left the café and were traveling back to their Sailors Cutting campsite when they saw “a cloud of smoke” just past the turnoff.

On investigation they saw the caravan on fire, but no vehicle attached. They watched the tyres pop and catch fire.

“The gas bottle blew up but didn’t explode.”

The grass on the side of the road caught fire and was beginning to spread.

They had not been the ones to call the brigade, but it was promptly on the scene.

The couple wondered if the incident they had seen in Omarama and the fire were related and if the caravan had been stolen.

Mr Mather said the fire spread in “only a matter of minutes” and it had been a sharp reminder to check the state of the extinguishers in their own caravan.

“We’re getting new extinguishers this week,” he said.

Constable Angus Ellingham, of Kurow Police, said he was investigating a couple of events, which occurred on that Saturday morning including this fire which may or may not be related to those.

[DID YOU SEE ANYTHING? If anyone has any information about this incident could they please contact Angus: 021 191 2490]

A Fire and Emergency New Zealand Incident report shows the Omarama Brigade was called to a vegetation fire at 10.58am on Saturday and spent just over three hours dealing with the incident. The Omarama Gazette understands traffic flow was slowed for some time during the aftermath of the fire.

Oamaru man Simon Mather captured this footage of a caravan on fire near Sailors Cutting



Taking the next steps with church sale funds

The next steps in the process to create a community care centre from the dispersal of the funds from the sale of St Thomas's Church are being considered and community input will be sought.

In December, funds of \$97,500 were vested in the Residents' Association of Omarama after, at its November meeting, it reluctantly accepted the offer as settlement from the proceeds of the sale of the church building and land. from the Presbyterian Synod of Otago and Southland and the Otago Foundation Trust Board. The sale price was \$750,000.

At the meeting the motion to accept the monies unreservedly was replaced with that they be "accepted reluctantly". This was because some of those present and in the community including former church members - had voiced the strong opinion – some in writing – that all of the funds from the sale ought to be returned to the community. One vote was recorded against accepting the offer and it was noted in the minutes there was disappointment in the response received. It was also voiced that potentially the Synod could be approached for help with funding the related community care project.

The funds from the dispersal have been secured in a term deposit account along with an additional \$21,407.80 in a second term deposit account. This is the balance left from the former church committee's working account when it was wound up. Both are ringfenced to be used for the purpose for which they were given by a bylaw to the RAOI constitution adopted at the annual meeting after the required publication and consultation. The bylaw was available for viewing from the beginning of September and in the Omarama Gazette September 3 and October 1 issues prior to the October 30 annual meeting. It that meeting – where written submissions in support from those who could not attend were presented - it was adopted unanimously with no changes to the wording.

This year at its February meeting those in attendance – there was no quorum – agreed the proposed care centre project would be discussed at the March meeting when the committee will set its priorities for the next stages of work including consultation with the community. The concept plan for the care centre which was put to the synod was approved by the RAOI at its June 2024.

At its heart of the concept is the goal to honour the legacy of those who gave of their time, effort and money to build St Thomas's Church in Omarama, to use that legacy to provide sanctuary, a place for stillness, meditation and prayer and equally to provide a multifunctional space for socialising, fun, connection, and inclusion for all ages. As well it is envisaged that as the community continues to grow and because it is the designated community shelter in an emergency more space is needed at the community centre.

At that time the RAOI appointed Ann Patterson to run the project and she has been assisted by Gary Sutherland.

Mrs Patterson would like to ask the community to take a moment to consider the proposal carefully and to put their thoughts to a public meeting date to be advised. Fundraising and donations will be sought to complete what will be a long-term project.

The next meeting of the RAOI is 7pm Thursday, March 19, at the Omarama Community Centre.

Lamb sale and Ewe Fair prices astound

It appears prices for fine wool lambs at the Ōmārama sale are following trends throughout the region.

In what was possibly close to another record yarding, about 20,000 lambs were on offer at the Ōmārama fine wool lamb sale at Ōmārama sale yards, last month.

PGG Wrightson auctioneer Mark Yeates began the day with a line of 88 merino wether lambs from Tara Hills Station which went for \$204. A second line of 722 lambs from Tara hills went for \$205. Last year there was a yarding of just over 19,000 lambs which was the second biggest yarding in more than a decade.

Last year, Tara Hills sold about 1200 wether lambs which made \$147 to \$121.

Anecdotaly, demand for lambs grown in the district was good because they were renowned for their shifting quality, with potential to grow and develop, particularly those off the hard country back towards the alps.

Market indicators, particularly for strong wool, are pushing prices up across the region and with good feed reserves around buyers are feeling confident they can grow them on and still make good margins, analysts say.

Two exceptional features marked this year's Ōmārama Ewe Fair.

"Phenomenal" prices not seen for almost 50 years and a rainy day.

"It's the first time I've had to wear a rain jacket to a sheep sale before," former Omarama saleyards director and veteran Omarama farmer, Tony Gloag said.

And he said he had not seen the "phenomenal" prices stock was fetching since the early 80s. The top line of 330 mixed age ewes on offer from Benmore Station fetched a record \$252. While first off the lot, Tara Hills Station's line of 136 merino three-shear ewes, went for \$234. Local vendors were joined by those further afield - Lorne Peak Station near Garston in Northern Southland and Connemara Trust near Waimate – contributing to a yarding of just over 4,000.

Buyers were continuing to snap up what was on offer on the back of a strong market for fine wool and because the stock offered good lambing potential, plus there was plenty of feed available this season. Buyers, as for the lamb sale the week before, came from as far away as Marlborough.



Buckets of fun at competition judging

It was bigger than Christmas, bigger even than Valentines Day!
(Nothing says I'll love you more than a good spud)
It's the day everyone waits 364 days for ...

Boots and Jandals Hotel Social Club Spud in a bucket 2026,

And an enquiry was launched in the opening seconds of competition - caught on camera with the footage moving across cyber space faster than that Cold Play concert video – What? Really? Are you sure about that?!

Entries, however, were down on previous years and observations were that variable growing conditions had also affected quality. Seasoned judge Laurie Ruddenklau said he had hoped this year's contest might pass without controversy. But Casso, Laurie?

First bucket on the ramp and through Laurie's measuring sieve was one of three the legendary blade shearer, Peter Casserly, had entered. But, but, but, but, they were red! Contestants had been given Nadine seed potatoes – a white potato – with their bucket to cosset for the growing season.

Disqualified but confiscated. "We'll eat them anyway," assistant adjudicator Malcolm Cameron said as Casso sped off to find the right bucket.

He had decided to grow potatoes for busy first response volunteers Lynley Pryde and Vicky Chambers. Vicky went on to win the largest spud grown in the competition. What did you guys do to deserve a friend like Casso?! (In all seriousness, that was really kind, Peter) And there's nothing in the rule book that says you can't grow potatoes for someone else. Apparently, there's a rule book.

This year a young(er) apprentice assistant joined the judging crew and underwent somewhat of an initiation by fire (He's use to it, he's a fireman.) learning on the job as he tackled his first international event - the only complaint being he was far too honest – so quick was he to flash a yellow card at the ref (though it was probably just the clipboard) and to spill the beans.

"Vicky didn't grow those, Casso did.," he said.

Arron Chambers may well require additional training before next year's event.

Spud in a Bucket 2026 Results:

Kris Morton 18, 1; Neville Kitchen (by lot) 16, 2; Ken Morton 16, 3.

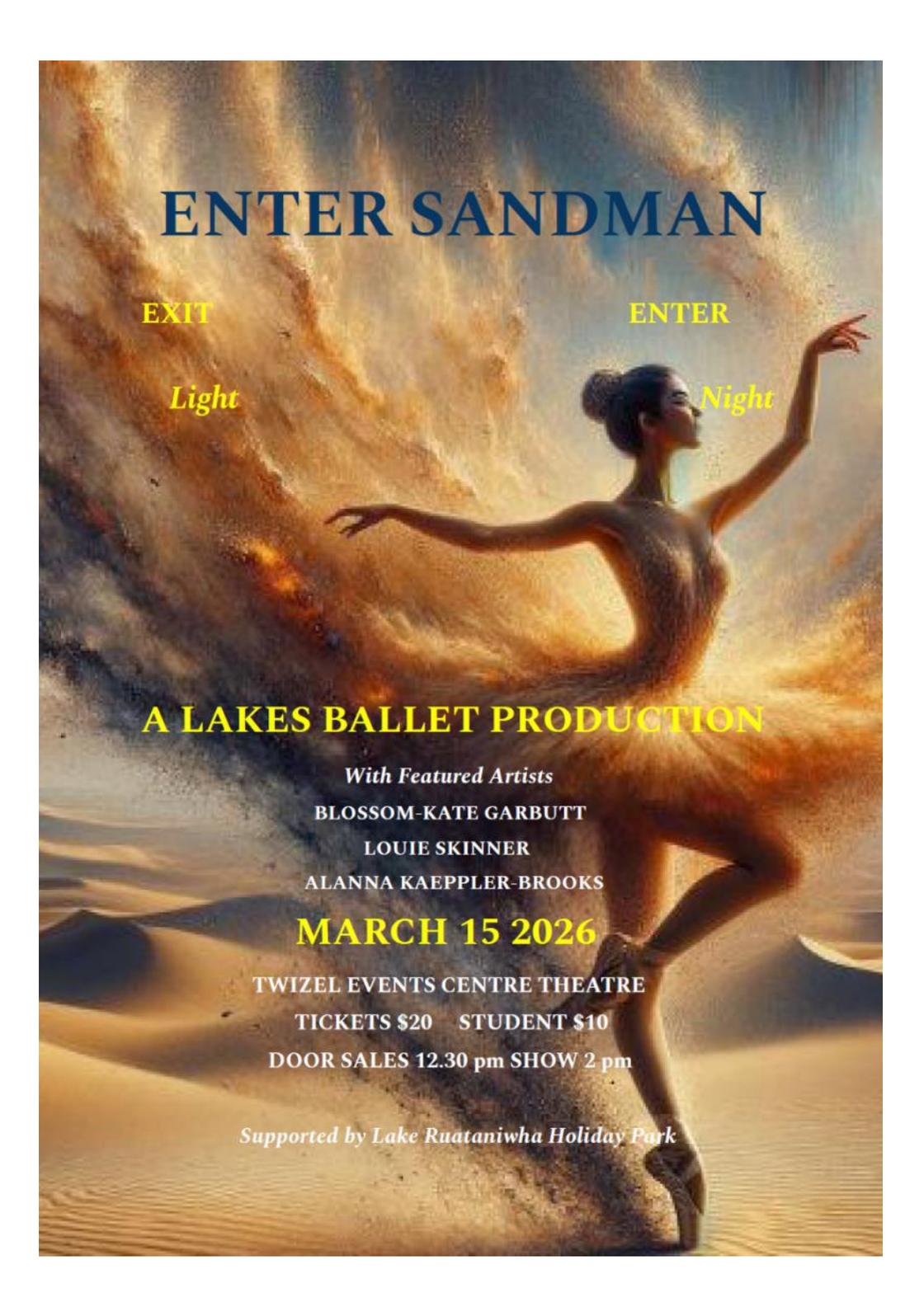
The Largest Spud: Vicky Chambers

Best Spuds: Jennie Hales

Worst Spuds: Fiona Chamberlain

Children's section: Charlotte Hales 1; Toni Hales 2.





ENTER SANDMAN

EXIT

ENTER

Light

Night

A LAKES BALLET PRODUCTION

With Featured Artists

BLOSSOM-KATE GARBUTT

LOUIE SKINNER

ALANNA KAEPLER-BROOKS

MARCH 15 2026

TWIZEL EVENTS CENTRE THEATRE

TICKETS \$20 STUDENT \$10

DOOR SALES 12.30 pm SHOW 2 pm

Supported by Lake Ruataniwha Holiday Park

The Noticeboard

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

Our sincere condolences to David and the family and friends of Helen Blick, of Otematata. Helen spent 10 years as a relief teacher at Omarama School, retiring in 2018.

Sincere condolences to Diane and the family and friends of Stephen Loach, of Otematata, who died in January. Stephen dedicated many hours to volunteer work in Otematata and, in particular, was a staunch champion of the Otematata Wetlands.

Many happy returns for last month to these birthday boys - Lex Perriam, Malcolm Cameron and Blair Shaw!

Congratulations to Sadie Mason who gained a silver medal in the at the NZ Rowing Champs Women's Premier Coxless Quad Sculls

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

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

The Ōmārama Community Library is open 9.30am to 11am, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Library hours can change. Email: 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

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

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

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

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

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 or contact Jack on 020 4045 0909. You can follow us on Facebook (Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade)

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
W: www.newcomers.co.nz F: facebook.com/WaitakiNewcomersNetwork/

Plunket Line: 0800 933 922

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

Thank you to all who share your stories
and contribute in other ways to the Gazette.

We all really appreciate what you do.

**The April Issue of the Omarama Gazette
is Wednesday, April 1, 2026.**

Please submit copy
by Thursday, March 26, 2026

Working for Waitaha Canterbury

Making a difference for the region's
environment and communities.

The draft Annual Plan outlines our
proposed priorities for the year ahead.



Share your feedback
ecan.govt.nz/annualplan26

Environment
Canterbury
Regional Council
Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri



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
- email community@meridianenergy.co.nz
- call 021 733 931



POWER UP
COMMUNITY
FUND

The Community Reports

Ōmārama Police



Hi all,

Another month has passed and I'm sure the majority of you have met Kurow's new police officer Angus Ellingham. If you get the chance introduce yourself he's a good bugger and will fit in well both here and Kurow. As for Scotty? He's retired and will be missed by his community and me alike. He's bought a new boat so can't wait to go out in it with him.

I thought it may be of more interest to you all to give you a brief run down of the main jobs

I've attended since my last news and highlight anything that may be of more interest such as a burglary etc. When not dealing with this stuff I do me paperwork and write the crazy tourists tickets.

So in the last month I've attended:

Driving complaints – 17

Vehicle crashes – 9

Burglaries – 2

Breach of bail – 1

Trespass – 1

Drink driving – 1

Public relations – 2

The two burglaries are quite separate and do not indicate a rise in this area. One burglary was of a houseboat at Sailors cutting, the offender knew the victim he was arrested and charged.

More concerning was the second burglary of a farmhouse, the occupants inside asleep. Although it appears to have been an opportunist type burglary, the offenders were able to walk through the unlocked front door and steal valuable items. I know it's hard to fathom but times have changed, and you do need to take extra precautions to keep you and your family safe. Lock your doors, lock your cars, lock your diesel away, don't leave keys in the ignition.....sure I don't need to go on.

The drink driver was an idiot from Cromwell who decided to go see a mate in Fairlie – he blew 970 mgms, the limit is 250. A local man was also arrested for breaching his bail conditions.

The other morning I assisted in the serious crash in the Lindis Pass, our poor Firey's had been there since 4am. It got me thinking that at least I get to finish the job and go home and get a sleep (and get paid) they have to go home and then go to work. I know I give the Fireys a hard time for not being as cool as police but in all seriousness you guys rock!

Angus is investigating the Caravan fire (previously reported by Omarama's Lois Lane) and the earlier pursuit of the caravan, as far as I know this is still under investigation, so not much to report at the moment.

Ōmārama Police news - continued

Lastly, from just over two years ago when I first arrested a local man for domestic assault he has been convicted and sentenced to seven months home detention and following that deportation. All I can say is good riddance. For those that knew of the assaults and allowed it to continue, and refused to talk to police, you should go join him there's no room for people like you in our community.

That's about it from me....can't wait for summer!
Bean

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>

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

	 <p>Ford Simpson Ltd Chartered Accountants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Farm Accounting Expertise• Business Advice• Family and Succession Planning <p><i>If you would like us to visit you, please call and arrange a time.</i></p> <p>e. office@fordsimpson.co.nz w. www.fordsimpson.co.nz PHONE 03 687 2080</p> 	
Antony Ford CA		Brodie Craig CA

Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade



- By Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade chief fire officer Jack Zorab

The brigade has wrapped up its final week of running the weekly meat raffle at the pub, bringing to a close 12 weeks of fundraising. A huge thank you to the brigade members who volunteered their time each week, and to everyone in the community who came along and supported us by purchasing tickets. Through the raffle we raised around \$1500, which helps support our volunteers to head away for training and competitions to continue building their skills.

We'd also like to give a special shout-out to Craig and Karen at Four Square for their generous ongoing support with prizes.

The past month has also seen the brigade attend a number of significant incidents, including the motor vehicle crash at the Ōhau Road junction and the caravan fire near Sailors Cutting. Our volunteers train hard year-round so they're ready when these bigger calls come in, and that dedication really shows when you see them in action. The Sailor's Cutting incident in particular involved a vehicle fire that spread to nearby vegetation on a busy stretch of highway. Managing this safely required a full team effort — urban firefighters working in breathing apparatus, rural firefighters tackling the vegetation fire, Operational Support managing traffic and keeping bystanders safe, and our medical first responders supporting post-fire decontamination to reduce long-term health risks from contaminants. Ōmārama is very lucky to have such a broad mix of roles and skills within the brigade, and we're looking to continue expanding these capabilities over the coming years to meet the needs of our area.

Best of luck to our four recruit rural firefighters who head away this weekend for their basic training — a big milestone in their firefighting journey.

We also wish our competition team of seven all the best as they travel to Christchurch this weekend to compete in the UFBA South Island Firefighter Challenge. These competitions are a great way to build strength, technique and teamwork, and our crew has been training hard in preparation.

As always, thank you to the Ōmārama community for your continued support of the brigade.

[From the Otago Southland Provincial Fire Brigade Association Southern Challenge Oamaru, Results: Open male section, Jack Zorab, Omarama, 13; Jase Pryde, Omarama, 18; OSPFBA relay, Omarama, 4; OSPFBA Tandem, Omarama AC's 9; Omarama J team, 12. ---ED]

Overleaf: The brigade packing up following the Sailors Cutting fire; firefighters train to use the post-fire decontamination kits; Competition team at the recent challenge in Oamaru. Photos supplied.

Omarama Fire brigade news - continued



OMARAMA GOLF CLUB

04TH APRIL 2026

EASTER TOURNAMENT

Stableford

Report time: 11.30 a.m Tee Off 12.00 p.m.

\$45 Per person Entry (limited to 60 entries)

All Welcome – EFTPOS available

Self-Contained Campervan Friendly

- Great Prizes
- Cash Bar
- Raffles
- Meal after Event
- BBQ on course during play

Entries to be received by Wednesday 01st April

gregstuart10@gmail.com or

Text Greg Stuart on 0274389018

Ōmārama MenzShed



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

For further information contact:
Malcolm Cameron 022 476 2225



Four Square Omarama

Your local
fresh grocer



Thanks for supporting local

Ōmārama School

By Omarama School principal Alison Holden

Omarama School Leadership Camp

Our Year 7 students; Briar, Maddie, Gemma, James, Toni, and Emilia attended Leadership Camp at Peel Forest a couple of weeks ago. The first evening was spent building connections, playing soccer, and enjoying board games together near the fire, a great way to settle in and strengthen teamwork.

Day 2 brought more wet weather, but that didn't dampen spirits. The students travelled to the Orari Gorge for an exciting abseiling experience. It was fantastic to see them stepping outside their comfort zones, encouraging one another, and demonstrating resilience and courage.

William Pike Challenge - 2026

This same group of students will participate in the William Pike Challenge this year. Please contact the school on 03 4389815, if you or your business has some community service work that our students could get involved with for their community service.

Omarama School Job Vacancy

Omarama School is looking for a Part time teacher to fill a 12-month maternity leave position, from early Term 2. This position is advertised in the Edgazette.

Job Application Vacancy reference #: 1HArNT

If you know of someone that may be interested in this position then please ask them to contact Alison Holden at principal@omarama.school.nz or phone the school office 03 438 9815, Omarama School: 2 Omarama Avenue. office@omarama.school.nz
Learning and thriving in the place of light - Ki te Whei Ao, Ki te Marama e!

Omarama School Swimming display

Last week Omarama School students held their annual school swimming display. This event is held to showcase our swimming skills taught through classroom swimming lessons, supported by Kay Mason, our local swimming coach. We always conclude our swimming display with a BBQ for our parent community and students.

School Donations - Thank you for your support

As a small rural school we are very grateful for donations made to the school to enable some extra curricular opportunities, equipment purchases and to help us sustain excellent learning opportunities for our wonderful students.

* Wendy and Richard Parsons (Twinburn Ltd) - Sale of cattle beast

*Rodeo Committee - Two separate donation

* emma Gloag - Rodeo donation

High Country Salmon - donation from visitors

A big thank you also to all of our parent community and wider community who give them time and labour to support Omarama School. This is very much appreciated and does not go unnoticed.

Ōmārama School contact details:

Phone: 03 438 9815

principal@omarama.school.nz, office@omarama.school.nz

www.omarama.school.nz

Ōmārama School Board of Trustees

By presiding member Jemma Gloag

Omarama School continues to be in robust health, and that is very much thanks to Alison and her dedicated teaching team, alongside a committed and invested Board, and Friends of the School, working hard behind the scenes. It is a credit to everyone involved that our school remains strong, positive, and future-focused.

One of the key areas the Board has been working on recently is our school bus route. We have been in ongoing discussions with the Ministry of Education about creating a service that is more practical and flexible for our families. With many households now having both parents working, a reliable and adaptable bus run is increasingly important to support access to schooling and the long-term success of our school. As is often the case when working through central systems, progress can be slow, but we continue to advocate strongly for what our community needs. In the meantime, we have implemented an interim solution to ensure families remain supported while discussions continue.

We are also currently under review by the Education Review Office. The review process has been largely very positive, affirming the many strengths within our school while identifying a small number of areas for continued development, which we welcome as part of our commitment to ongoing improvement.

Another exciting development is our work with SUPA Community Energy to install a fully funded solar energy system at the school. Not all schools meet the eligibility criteria for a positive return, but Omarama School does. From day one, the school is expected to receive approximately \$120 per month in additional revenue, and after ten years, the system will be fully owned by the school. Even more exciting is the potential for the system to generate excess power, which could provide affordable electricity to up to seven local homes. It is a project that benefits both the school and the wider community.

We are also looking ahead to improving our playground, which is due for a refresh. We aim to create a space that better caters for our younger children — somewhere engaging, safe, and suited to their stage of development. We have already received some generous donations to help fund this project, and we are grateful for that support.

One of the ongoing challenges for Omarama School is not a lack of enthusiasm — or even, at times, funding — but people. Like many rural schools, we are finding it increasingly difficult to fill key roles, including teacher aide, caretaker, relieving teachers, and we are now seeking a teacher to cover an upcoming maternity leave position. We may also need to find accommodation to go with the role. The strength of a small school relies heavily on the people within it.

As always, we look to our surrounding community for support. Everyone benefits from having a thriving local school, and being involved is both meaningful and rewarding. We only need to watch “Good Sorts” on 1 News to see examples of people giving back to their schools and communities.

Are you a good sort? We encourage you to think about how you might support our small but vibrant school — whether through time, skills, or simply spreading the word. Together, we can ensure Omarama School continues to flourish at the heart of our community.

Ōmārama Gliding Club

To Our Omarama Family

David MacKenzie, (aka Pipe, Mac, Time Lord and other monikers), sadly passed away on February 6, two days shy of his 85th birthday, at home, dreaming of returning to Omarama, his caravan on the Gliding Club campground, and relaxing on the deck of the Kahu Café (now The Glider Cafe), with pipe in hand and a long black on the coffee table, surrounded by his friends from far and near, telling tales of derring-do, landouts, results of gliding tasks, weather, retrieves, co-ordinates, fishing and the ones that got away, beer preferences, whiskeys, and a myriad of other interesting and important topics.

David left his caravan to return home to Mississauga, Ontario in Feb. 2019, fully intending to return, as he had for 19 years, in November, for another summer season with his Kiwi friends, and continuing conversations left off as he had to get to Queenstown, timetables taking precedence over lingering conversations and another long black!

Unfortunately, those conversations couldn't be continued as David had a debilitating fishing accident in July 2019 that left him grounded, no pun intended, as he was found lying beside his favourite fishing spot between two boulders, unable to move due to a ruptured spleen and other injuries suffered from a fall backwards down a rain-soaked incline he climbed up to reach his car.

He was alone, out of cell phone range, and wasn't discovered until a day and a half later when he didn't show up for his Sunday dinner as planned. After three months in hospital he came home to live a more sedentary life with memories of Omarama and his friends but unable to travel.

David was an interesting chap with a magnetic personality, a calm, gentle demeanour and a natural talent for witticism, often answering questions or replying to comments with wit first. Answers, comments or explanations came later.

Friends gathered around him at his 'local' home, flying and soaring clubs as well. His memory was phenomenal as was his interest in many topics. He could converse and contribute to any conversation but mostly he preferred to listen, one of his most endearing talents.

He was a kind, generous and loving husband, a friendly, humorous and caring father and his family and friends will miss his friendly banter, witty advice, smiling eyes, Santa beard and love and respect for Nature and the world around him.

David's was a life well lived with no time wasted on regrets.

Yes, he was a teacher too but he wasn't perfect...

'Constable Bean' will remember being called out in the early hours to try and find David. He had gone to pick up Bill and his hang glider after a successful flight from Magic Mountain. (It was David's 'job' to drive the hang glider guys up Magic Mountain so they could fly wherever, then drive back down Magic and wait to be called to pick them up.) Bill had given him the co-ordinates to follow to accurately find him as he had landed far along Lake Ohau. The trouble was, David mixed up the numbers and instead of driving along the south side of the lake he drove along the north side!

-continued over

To our Omarama family, continued

Bill ended up sleeping to the lowing of cattle while David slept in the truck. Early morning glider flights (thanks to Gavin and Annie) found both of them with Bean's help and the 'all clear' was thankfully given. Bill was driven back to the Kahu Café and David showed up later; he went to Twizel first to pick up some pipe tobacco and a much needed long black

Thank you Omarama for many years of friendship, tall tales, excellent gliding and wonderful shopping :o)

- Eillean MacKenzie

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

Age Concern Otago-Waitaki Bus Trip, March 2026

Save the date

Monday, March 16, 2026

Pick up and drop off.

All welcome.



An indication of numbers would be appreciated

Ph/txt 027 201 2312 or 021 294 8002 to book

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.



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

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 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

Ōmārama Golf Club

In the Omarama Gazette, September 2024, you would have read that on September 7, 1974, Prue Aubrey and Ada Patterson, two enthusiastic local golfers called the first meeting to see if there was interest to form a golf club. A committee was formed to investigate the feasibility. After a lot of hard work and commitment from many in the community, the opening day of the club is recorded as March 6, 1976. The club is celebrating this significant milestone the weekend of March 13 and 14 2026. (refer to invitation below)

If anyone has any old photo's or memorabilia etc from the previous 50 years, could you please contact Christine Bowman (email: bambamclarke@yahoo.co.nz) so we can get a copy to put in our photo albums for posterity. We welcome all past, present and future members, sponsors and supporters to join us on this special occasion.

Also please share the message with anyone you know that has been involved with the club.

If you could please register your interest, for catering purposes to bambamclarke@yahoo.co.nz.

We look forward to seeing some of you then, as we would love to hear old stories etc from the last 50 years. - *Christine Bowman*

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

OMARAMA GOLF CLUB INVITE YOU TO JOIN US TO CELEBRATE THE

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLUB'S OPENING

Friday 13th March 2026 – 6.30 p.m. at the clubrooms

Tour course/clubrooms, drinks (eftpos available), speeches etc and social catch up

Saturday 14th March 2026 – 12.00 p.m.

Join us on club day for 18 holes or a fun 9 hole ambrose option

Please register your interest by 6/3/2026 (for catering purposes) to bambamclarke@yahoo.co.nz

Ōmārama Community Garden

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.

Contact: Jennie Hales, jenniehollows@hotmail.com

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

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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Manager
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Kurow Medical Centre

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

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

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

**Kurow Medical Centre and its satellite 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

Boots and Jandals Hotel Social Club

ANNUAL MEETING

To all Boots and Jandals Hotel Omarama Social Club Members
Boots and Jandals Hotel Omarama Social Club
annual meeting is at
11am, Sunday, March 15, 2026
at the Boots and Jandals Hotel Omarama.

- Phillip Jannink

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**

ACC Accredited and registered - no referral required

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



Ōmārama Residents' Association

The March meeting
of the Ōmārama Residents' Association is
7pm, Thursday, March 19, 2026
at the Omarama Community Centre

The minutes of the February meeting are available from the secretary

The Secretary, P O Box 93, Ōmārama 9448.

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

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



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.

Omarama Collie Dog Club

The Omarama Collie Dog Club Trials
will be at the club grounds at Dalrachney
Station, 2180 Omarama/Tarras Rd
on March 7 and 8.

Entries Close 10am, second Day.
Elizabeth Bertenshaw, phone 027 740 9742.
Email: elizabeth.mitchellgreen@gmail.com

Omarama Storage



- Secure Lockup Storage
- 3.6m h x 3m w entry
- Short & Long term

Don't let the weather deteriorate your caravan, boat or motorhome over winter. Spaces available now. Contact Bridget – bridgesp@xtra.co.nz or Ph /txt 021572798

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

Contributions are welcome.
omaramagazette@gmail.com

Waitaki District Council - news in brief

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

Remuneration for councillors and community board members was discussed at the December meeting of the Waitaki District Council, after finalising the governance structure – committees and portfolios - for the new triennium.

Under the new structure it was proposed an Ahuriri Community Board member will receive \$6,973 p.a. and councillors who hold a committee chair will receive \$47,655 p.a., up \$7,942 since the previous review.

The Waitaki District Council has decided to join Southern Waters, a new joint council-controlled organisation, formed to manage water services delivery. However, Timaru and Mackenzie councils will not be joining the group.

At a meeting last month, the mayor and councillors directed council staff to develop its Water Services Delivery Plan with the Southern Waters group of councils, after working with consultants Morrison Low, and discussions with six councils about potentially creating a larger joint council-controlled organisation.

It voted unanimously to join the Southern Waters group of Gore, Central Otago and Clutha district councils.

The two Canterbury councils decided to form a joint water organisation together, separate from Southern Waters. The Waimate district – another possible partner - decided to go it alone

Last year the council voted for water services to stay 'in-house' but that plan was rejected by the Department of Internal Affairs, and Crown facilitator Amy Adams was brought in to help develop a new plan.

Councillors commented variously on their decisions most agreeing that a joint organisation offered cost-savings to ratepayers in the long term.

Cr Dan Lewis said the ability to collaborate and work-in with other councils of similar sizes would be a real strength.

“Southern Waters are further advanced and recognise the importance of rural water as a ‘fourth water.’”

Cr John McCone said he believed 'in-house' was the best option, “but the DIA thought otherwise and I disagree with that decision”. He supported “going South”.

“... given that the structure is already in place and the provincial rural systems are recognised in the way they are.”

However, Councillor Sven Thelning warned no matter what option councillors picked ratepayers would pay, “It’s going to hurt”.

Although, under the new plan, water services delivery costs will now be levied separately from council rates, consumers will still be charged for services by the new entity.

“There’s massive price rises on the horizon, regardless — there’s a lot of work to be done and it’s going to cost — and your elected council no longer has the ability to kick the can down the road — which is how we’ve got here.

“[However] We should have better asset management over time, to prevent this happening again,” Cr Thelning said.

The outcome of the Southern Waters councils decision to accept Waitaki or not will be known by April 1.

The council has said it will continue the review of the condition of its water assets, as required by the DIA and will submit its WSDP to be part of a larger joint entity by the deadline of 30 June 2026.

Waitaki's new township signage closer to reality

New signage for Waitaki's townships and district gateways has moved a step closer. The council has asked for quotes for the manufacture and installation of replacement signs across the district.

The designs were developed in-house by the council's Strategic Communications and Engagement team.

The present signage was installed about 16 years ago and in Omarama has long been dilapidated.

The council's preferred option is a detailed corten steel design, that is graffiti-resistant, requires no ongoing maintenance, and has a lifespan of 20–30 years.

The council has said, provided quotes come in within the approved budget, the project will proceed with the detailed corten steel option, with installation expected to begin this financial year and the project completed by the end of the year.

If costs exceed the budget, the council will need to decide to increase the budget or select an alternative format.

One-hour free parking in the Oamaru CBD is to stay pending further development of a parking strategy.

But drivers will need to enter their plate number into a parking meter to activate it.

Drivers are also required to activate a meter or the app within 15 minutes regardless of their planned stay time. There is no grace period. This is to comply with Council's Parking by-law.

Parking fees remain at \$2 per hour, and can be paid for in 30 minute increments at meters, or using the app.

Parking will also remain free until 10am and after 5:30pm Monday to Friday, until 10am and after 1pm on Saturday and all day on Sunday and Public Holidays.

Meters can be paid for using contactless cards, payment enabled phones, or the PayMyPark App.

Drivers can use any meter to enter their plate number, not just the one nearest their park, within 15 minutes of parking.

The new strategy will include options to extend metered parking to currently free car parks, potential changes to the one-hour free and free parking for over 80-year-olds.

The strategy will be presented to the mayor and councillors for their decision later in 2026.



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Garden Diary - Feeling blue

“Blue at its most true is found in nature but rarely,” Nori Pope, Colour By Design.

It is as if the sky wants that ‘building block’ of colour all to herself.
She guards it jealously but it will not be held.

Blue is the space between, a far-off mountain smudge, unreachable horizons - on a clear day you can see forever blue, the colour of infinite space.

Blue is the colour of water and not – shape shifting – light falling into the blue.

Blue is light playing with you, catching your eye, tagging behind in shadows, running ahead, a sprite that chuckles at its own joke as it skims across the river beside you.

Then serene one minute and sombre the next.

There is the blue-deepened purple bruise of thunder clouds in the great churning of a storm.

Like the sky I want to gather it all and hold it in the garden but must be content with what I can catch.

Paua blues cover the hosta leaves as the sunlight tickles the raindrops after the thunderstorm. A bud unlocks and in a hush a white poppy unfolds to the light with the blue shadows of snow in its crinkled folds.

Down by the lake a friend knits a jersey to hold winter warmth and weaves in the blues of a dappled summer’s day on the lake shore.

She shows me and I can see it as clearly as being there.

And looking into the deep dark eye of the cornflower I see the universe awakening in twilight blue, sparkling with stars.

*“To see a world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour.”*

- Auguries of Innocence , by William Blake

By Ruth Grundy,

I garden a small space under the big sky in Ōmārama.





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

February 2026

Highest temperature: February 12, 29C

Lowest temperature: February 23, 2.2C

Most rainfall: February 26, 22.8 mm

Total rainfall for February: 49.8 mm

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the first Wednesday of each month

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