



Omarama Gazette

April 2021



\$2m expansion sign of faith in future

Faith in Omarama and optimism about the town's future, despite present challenges, is the motivation behind the substantial extension to Omarama's Sierra Motel and Apartments complex, the developer says.

When complete the \$2million expansion will add 13 self-contained units and two one-bedroom units to the accommodation business's existing 14 units.

Developer Steve Darling, of Twizel and Rakiraki, Fiji, said he was taking a "long-term view" of the post-Covid-19 situation and this was a sign of his faith in the future of Omarama.

"It's a perfect time for me to do it," Steve said.

"I have a fair bit of confidence in the area.

"I wouldn't be spending the millions we are if I didn't know it's got a great future.

"There's no point in letting the situation get you down, you just have to get on with it."

Steve was born in Christchurch but "bred" in Otematata and Twizel. His family moved to Otematata in 1961 at the close of the Benmore Dam construction era.

These days he and wife Gail spend their time between their property in Fiji, and Christchurch and Twizel.

Steve is managing his New Zealand projects from Fiji where he has been throughout the Covid-19 crisis.

The main tourism market there was American and with few travellers he was managing an upgrade of the resort there "while it's quiet" so he could continue to employ staff.

His next project here is a 31-unit two-storey complex in Twizel, and construction of that will start at the end of the year. He anticipates this will take 16 months to complete.

The Darlings also own the empty block of land between Boots and Jandals Hotel

Expansion sign of faith in future, continued

Omarama and Merino Country Café.

The couple were still weighing their options for the development of that block. Steve feels that what Omarama “desperately needs” is a “little retail centre” but he is still unsure about the feasibility of this.

“Retail is not really my game, it’s quite involved.”

Colin and Sue Harvey would continue to manage the Sierra Motels which had been “very well patronised” throughout by the cycle guides and Kiwi travellers, he said. Twizel builders Dave White and Ian Trainor are managing the build on the ground. The new “upmarket” units would be self-contained with their own washing machines, dryers television, air conditioning and so on, suited to couples, and they would be able to take small bus groups.

Steve said the plan was to have the build finished by Labour Weekend and open for



'Yellow helmets' making their mark

Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade's two new 'yellow helmets' have already made their mark in the community.

After six months as trainees and having successfully completed the recruits course, firefighters Jess Chapman and Tania Innes can now don the yellow fire fighter's helmet when heading out on a call.

For Jess, her initiation into the service was a baptism of fire, literally.

For Tania, it was a chance encounter which led her to make the commitment.

Jess joined not long after Covid-19 lockdown lifted, in July.

"I had Greg [Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade chief fire officer Greg Harper] for the last four years telling me to join.

"I've really enjoyed it. It's something I wouldn't have done if I wasn't encouraged to do it. Now I'm absolutely loving it."

Jess is Omarama Top 10 Holiday Park manager.

Tania was driving home to Dunstan Downs Station when she came across a motor vehicle accident and stopped to help.

"I could see people [bystanders] responding but not knowing what to do."

Omarama Brigade first responder Liz Komen was at the scene and soon had her "filling out forms".

Later, while telling mother-in-law Geva Innes, who has been a brigade first responder for 23 years, she decided she might quite like to give it a go.

However, with there being no first responder courses scheduled she signed on as firefighter.

She and Jess trained on Monday nights as well as at the regular Wednesday night practice sessions.

New Omarama Volunteer fire Brigade firefighters Tania Innes (left) and Jess Chapman don their yellow helmets of duty



'Yellow helmets' making their mark , continued

Fire fighter Jack Zorab's input to make sure they were equipped with all the skills needed for the tough recruit's course in Christchurch, was invaluable, Jess said.

But Jess arrived at the course already having some considerable, though unanticipated, experience under her belt.

Her "initiation" to the job was the Pukaki Fire – which was at the time was New Zealand's biggest wildfire – followed a month later by the much larger and devastating Ohau blaze.

The alert sounded that October morning at 3.30am and Jess was in that first crew to arrive at the scene. It wasn't until 9pm that night she packed up to come home.

"I got told after Lake Pukaki I'd never go to a fire that size again in my life."

"It [Ohau] was pretty surreal."

Despite having little experience she "was able to help the others ...was another pair of hands".

"Watching the others carry out some of the tasks, it makes sense why we do some of the drills and also [makes sense of] the pace at which some things need to be done."

Not content with the regular training schedule Jess also signed up for the Omarama team entry in the grueling United Fire Brigades' Association South Island Firefighter Combat Challenge, in Christchurch, last month. The team of four included – Jacob Cook, Charlotte Derosa and Jack Zorab. (See video below)

"It's bloody hard work."

In the team's relay event Jess was on the Keiser Force machine which simulates the chopping action required for forcible entry and in the tandem event each of the team tackled each of the tasks.

Back in her day job it's now routine.

When the fire siren goes it's also the call for staff at the park to head for the office as Jess rushes to the job.

Tania's work commitments mean she can be fairly flexible timewise – she's farmer, mother, self-employed accountant and a volunteer with other community groups.

It was great being involved and being part of the fire brigade "family".

Being out on farm meant it was all too easy to not get involved in the community she said.

And there was such a sense of achievement having completed the recruit's course, especially the more challenging aspects.

"I loved it. It was daunting to begin with. They walked you into it quite slowly and took you back to the start, retaught everything you thought you might know ...reinforcing all you learnt."

She particularly enjoyed training in breathing apparatus use and for search and rescue in the especially-designed realistic training buildings and simulators.

The buildings, modelled on an apartment block featured tunnels and ladders and taught skills like how to move backwards down steps and around obstacles while fully kitted out.

Tania still plans to complete the first responder training and is off to a Motor Vehicle Accident course in Invercargill next.

"I want to learn how to be a pumpy first, [Omarama's main appliance is a pump rescue tender]. I quite like the idea of driving the truck."

And Jess plans to "just enjoy being a fire fighter for a wee while".

Removal of rubbish costs \$2K plus so far

The council investigation into green and general waste dumping at the Omarama Stream reserve is ongoing.

However, it has removed the general refuse – which it described as being “from a refurbishment” - at a cost of \$2,232.88 plus GST, council recreation manager Erik van der Spek said. He provided no breakdown of the cost.

The dumping was brought to the attention of the Ahuriri Community Board in a report to its meeting last month. The board was told officers were seeking information “from the local community on where this might have come from”.

There had been “some promising leads”, interim Assets Operations manager Joshua Rendell told the board.

The rubbish would be removed and the costs recovered from the owner of the material, he said.

In discussion, with Omarama residents who attended the meeting, the board was told, traditionally green waste was heaped in the vicinity for a permitted burn mid-year.

In an email, last week Mr van der Spek told the Omarama Gazette the council’s regulatory department was yet to complete its investigation.

“If anyone in the community has further information, please ask them to contact the Regulatory Department on 03 433 0300.”

Photos: Before and after the household refurbishment waste was removed from the green waste pile at the Omarama Stream Reserve recently



Build up to SI/NZ dog trials continues

Omarama Collie Dog Club triallist Scott Hunter is continuing his build up ahead of the upcoming South Island and New Zealand Championship dog trials. Scott has already qualified three dogs - heading dogs Lucy and Rangī, and huntaway Hood - for the championships.

For nine-year-old Rangī it will be a return to the Greenvale trial grounds where he placed fourth in the Long Head in the island run offs in 2015.

So far this season Scott has campaigned dogs at 12 trials through Canterbury, North Otago and Southland and has recently judged in North Canterbury.

He and his team “had a bit of luck at the start” and qualified early in the season.

Lucy had a couple of wins at Oxford and Loburn, Rangī won at the Southland Centre championships. And Hood – an up-and-coming two-year-old Huntaway has had four wins this season.

Scott, who is Longslip Station stock manager, has had to pass on attending the North Island Championships in Masterton later this month because of work commitments.

In his trialling career Scott has placed in four South Island championships.

Last year’s Covid-19 hit championships at Masterton and Greenvale had been cancelled but the locations had “rolled over” into this year.

He said many triallists had made a point of going to as many trials as possible early in the season in case of cancellations this year.

The Omarama Club would have a strong showing at the championships with Rick and Ed Aubrey, and Ginger Anderson each qualifying dogs, and there were a “couple of young guys” close to qualifying, Scott said.

“Our [local] trial was pretty strong, and with young competitors coming through, the club is in pretty good stead,” Scott said.

Success often came down to “a bit of luck on the day”, the draw of the sheep and “if the dogs play ball”.

There were 270 competing in the national competitions.

This year’s event will be hosted by Southland Centre at Greenvale, inland from Gore, commencing Monday May 17, 2021 and held over five days.



Tackling the heart and 'sole' of that 'to do' list

If there's ever a pair who are going to make chores look like fun it has to be these two.

"Best mates forever" Heather Smith and Katrina Sole have combined their skills to launch a new business in town.

Omarama-based SoleSmith Home services will tackle anything, Heather said.

The services they offer are longer than everyone's 'To Do' lists.

Lawns, gardening, windows, walking the dog, pet minding, washing the car, stacking wood, cleaning out the crib for the winter shutdown, and spring cleaning when that time comes around.

Heather and Katrina came up with the idea to set up the business after "too many wines" and looking into who else might be offering the service in Omarama. Not only was there no-one advertising their services here but they were not able to find anyone close by who would come to Omarama to tackle tasks. They had always wanted to start their own business and seeing the gap thought it would be good timing.

Both Heather and Katrina have been locals "forever" and both have management experience in the hospitality industry. Heather is a keen gardener.

"We thought we'd build it around the things we enjoy doing," Heather said.

"We're locals, we know everyone, we know what people want .

"We can help newcomers, seniors, people that are busy.

"We love what we do and take pride in it."

Plus, with local knowledge the two women can call on a variety of external contacts to plug the gaps in their own skills.

If there was a job people thought SoleSmith might be able to help with, they could call to talk it through or ask for a quote.

The new business will service from Twizel to Kurow.

Contact:

Katrina Sole 022 020 8098, Heather Smith 027 330 0249

email: solesmith2021@gmail.com



Honours awarded after challenging year

The Covid-delayed 2020 Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade Honours night last month proved to be a significant occasion on many levels.

2020 saw brigade volunteers face the unique challenges of first the Covid-19 outbreak, then the Pukaki fire, closely followed by the Lake Ohau Village blaze – the Omarama brigade was first to arrive at that scene.

“It has been an interesting year, to say the least. Between Covid, the Pukaki and Ohau fires you have all put in a tremendous effort for which I would like to thank you, and for your support on many levels,” chief fire officer Greg Harper said.

Leading into the evening event long-serving volunteer Jimmy Courtney was bestowed a Long Service Good Conduct Medal.

The medal is issued by the crown on the recommendation of Fire and Emergency New Zealand after 14 years’ service.

The award was introduced by FENZ Central/North Otago area manager Keith McIntosh and presented by Waitaki Mayor Gary Kircher.

Jimmy’s father and founding and life member of the Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade, Lindis Courtney, (96) was present for the occasion.

In another special family moment Sally Galvin, formerly of Otematata, was present for the awarding of the five-year medal to son, Paddy. Paddy’s late father, Mike, was a chief fire officer of the Otematata Brigade.

Paddy qualified for the medal in 1994 but in an oversight had never received it, Greg said.

Greg also congratulated those who had completed training throughout the challenging year; Zane Lord and Jack Zorab who had completed station officer training; Jacob Cook became a qualified firefighter; and Tania Innes and Jess Chapman completed their recruit’s course.

Otago-Southland Provincial Fire Brigades Association president Mark Donald presented the United Fire Brigades Association awards which were:

Jack Zorab 3yr cert and 5yr medal

Paddy Galvin 5 yr medal

Liz Komen silver bar 7 yrs

Georgie Robertson silver bar 7yrs

Geva Innes silver bar 7 yrs

Peter Trusler silver bar 9yrs

Greg Harper silver bar 23 yrs

Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade awards were:

Fire Fighter of the Year, the Howard Williams Trophy: Jacob Cook

First responder of the Year, the Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade Trophy: Geva Innes

Best attendance to call outs, the G.J. Honderlink Trophy; Maurice Cowie and Charlotte Derosa

And the award for ‘embracing learning opportunities’ :) went to Aaron Ferguson.



Otago-Southland Provincial Fire Brigades Association president Mark Donald presents Omarama's First Responder of the Year, Geva Innes, with her seven year silver bar; Peter Trusler (right); Firefighter of the Year Zane Lord is congratulated by Station Officer Maurice Cowie; Paddy Galvin and mother Sally (centre) mark the occasion with friends Aaron Ferguson (left); Jimmy Courtney shares a moment with father Lindis Courtney (96) after being presented with the Long Service Good Conduct Medal.



Dunedin Writers & Readers Festival

Thursday 6 May –
Sunday 9 May 2021

   @dnwritersfest



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Community Trust

Tickets and more information at
dunedinwritersfestival.co.nz

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.

10.50am: Parade forms up at the Omarama Memorial Hall.

11.00am: A service will be held at the Omarama Memorial Rock.

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.

The Noticeboard



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

Kurow Medical Centre Omarama Clinic at the Omarama Community Centre, is open Thursdays, 8.30am to 5pm. To make appointments for all clinics, order repeat scripts or make enquiries please contact Kurow Medical Centre 03 436 0760 (Monday to Thursdays). www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz

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

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

The Omarama Golf Club Saturdays, cards in 12 midday, tee-off 12.30pm. Club captain James Moynihan phone: 027 215 8266; email jwmoynihan@2yahoo.co.nz. www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz

Omarama Playgroup meets at 9.30am each Wednesday during the primary school term at the Omarama Community Centre. For more information phone president Tarryn Benton 027 201 7065 or secretary Aimee Snelgrove 022 350 5536 aimeesnelgrove@hotmail.com

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

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

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

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

Plunket Line: 0800 933 922

Omarama Plunket Committee: Aimee Snelgrove 022 350 5536

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

In case of emergency: to prevent any confusion about the location of Lake Ohau Alpine Village in an emergency, the following points should be noted: When phoning 111, advise that Lake Ohau is in South Island and the nearest cross road is State Highway 8 and Lake Ohau Road. Also mention that Lake Ohau Alpine Village is on the shore of Lake Ohau, and is 20 mins (40 km) from both Twizel and Omarama. This will assist the operator to find the required information to enter location in the system and allowing the call to progress to the next screen in the system.

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

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

To receive email alerts between monthly editions of the Omarama Gazette sign up to our 'Local List'. Email

omaramagazette@gmail.com

and put 'Local List' in the subject line.

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

**The May issue of the
Omarama Gazette
is Wednesday, May 5, 2021.**

**Please submit copy
by Friday, April 30, 2021**

**Advertising pays for
production and distribution.**

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

The Community Reports

Upper Waitaki Police News



Hi everyone,

It's been a few months since my last report mainly because I haven't had much to report...(touch wood).

I have been to a few crashes however, in fact in 10 days I attended four crashes, almost like going back to pre-Covid times. The main causes were inattention for one, fatigue for another and just plain carelessness for the others - they weren't driving to the conditions or their experience.

I also recently attended a minor crash in which a tractor was holding up a caravan and behind that a car. As the road began to straighten out the car immediately

pulled out to pass the caravan.

A fraction of a second later the caravan indicated and also began to pull out to pass the slower tractor.

At this point the car was still behind the caravan and could see what the driver's intentions were, however he continued in his passing manoeuvre. The caravan could also see that the car behind him was not going to yield, but also continued to pass the tractor.

Basically neither driver was going to give in to the other. As a result, both vehicles now side by side collided, very slightly. In fact, one screw on the side of the caravan scratched the car.

However, this poor judgement by both drivers created an incident in which at one point there were three vehicles abreast of each other. All because both male drivers (both aged 50+) were too stubborn to give way as they thought they were in the right.

Both drivers were issued a Written Traffic Warning for their careless actions, and are very lucky to not be going to Court.

This is a stupid example of what can only be described as road rage, where two law-abiding, normally respectable, adult men had a brain fart and carried on like a couple of kids in a sandpit.

Except instead of sand in their eyes they could have killed themselves, their passenger or someone else.

Regardless as to whether or not you believe you're in the right, if you can avoid a crash but knowingly continue your actions and as a result do crash, then you're guilty of careless driving as well.

Not to mention just plain stupid if you could have avoided crashing altogether.

- continued over

Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade



Hello to you all,

It is time to check our smoke alarms again. Please give us a call if you find this difficult we are only too happy to come and check your alarms.

We are still in a restricted fire season please check before you light and remember you must have permit. checkitsalright.nz

You should have had your chimney swept for the coming winter season. If not try to get one booked. Try and make sure your

wood is nice and dry.

Well done to Tania and Jessie great to have you both able ride the truck.

To Zane and Jack for all your work towards your Station Officer accreditation, well done also. It will be great when we can sign you off in the next few weeks.

Stay Safe, Chief Fire Officer Greg Harper

FENZ Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade meets 7pm each Wednesday and has

Upper Waitaki Police news continued

Talking of stupid, I was recently on patrol near Twizel when I got a phone call from a local lass informing me that she had just been passed by three speeding motorbikes in the 50kph zone in Kurow. She gave me a brief description and I promised to keep an eye out should they come my way. Not long after, I see three motorbikes matching the description, heading north on SH8. I did a U-turn and noted that the two lead bikes had taken off, the third bike who had seen me beginning to turn was going nice and slow at 100kph. Noting that the two lead bikes were rapidly accelerating away I gave chase. Although they were modern powerful road bikes they obviously hadn't heard of the speed the Omarama Cop has available, which is 299,250 km/s. Yep that's the speed of radio waves! I called up me mate in Twizel who sat at the road works near Lake Ruataniwha and managed to stop the lead bike, while I dealt with the other rider who had been held up by slower traffic.

The lead rider was clocked at 219kph when he became aware of my presence and took off. The rider I dealt with was caught at 143kph. He was smart enough to pull over. My man was issued a \$610 fine and suspended from driving for 28 days. The gent who tried to get away is going to Court to explain his actions to the Judge.

That's it from me, stay safe.

Bean

Senior Constable Nayland Smith

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

Phone: (03) 4389559 / Ext: 34580 / <mailto:nayland.smith@police.govt.nz>

Ōhau Conservation Trust

By Viv Smith-Campbell

Chairperson, The Ōhau Conservation Trust

Restoration planting sessions at Lake Ōhau

Autumn is the time for planting at Lake Ōhau, and the Ōhau Conservation Trust is asking for volunteers to help us put in some new native plants, to replace those we lost in last year's wildfire.

Starting at 10am, Saturday 24 April (ANZAC weekend), we've got around 200 plants to go into an area we call "Poverty Point" – a small beech remnant on the lakeshore, just up Lake Ōhau road from the Village. The Trust volunteers had done extensive planting here in the past and here is a photo of what it looked like after the fire. We're keen to refill those empty wire plant protectors! (The bracken has grown up so the area looks quite different now).

Volunteers will need good footwear, gardening gloves, clothes you don't mind getting soot on, a spade or shovel (if you have one), warm clothes/raincoat (weather can be changeable) and a smile and willingness to help! Bring a hot drink and some lunch and enjoy being at the lake for a few hours.

Please follow instructions for parking your vehicle on the day.

Details about the planting session will be on the Trust's website

We'll only cancelled the planting session if there is extreme weather (if we do, we'll put a notice on the Trust website on the morning of 24 April).

We've got other sessions planned for May and we'll add information about these to our website as the dates and locations are confirmed. We'll also put information in the May edition of the Gazette.

We really appreciate the support the Trust has received for our work to help restore some nature at Lake Ōhau.

Photo - Poverty Point plant protectors after the 4 October 2020 fire. Photo: supplied



Omarama Community Library



By Ruth Grundy

After several unforeseen setbacks the Omarama Library refit is now good to go and the new room will be operational from 9am, Wednesday, May 12.

New Waitaki Libraries manager Jenny Bean, who replaced Philip van Zijl who retired last month, apologised for the delay.

The refit was initially planned for early March.

There had been “a lot to juggle” what with staff leaving and changing roles.

As well the bespoke cabinet required to store some of the new equipment had taken longer to build than anticipated, Jenny said.

There would be new shelving - two mobile units - and new IT equipment to be set up.

Three Waitaki Libraries staff would manage the change beginning Monday, May 10.

Up to three volunteers would be needed on Tuesday afternoon to help with the shift. Those able to help should contact Yvonne Jones 027 476 7473.

Five years on from its grand opening in the Omarama Community Centre the Omarama branch of Waitaki District Libraries will move to the centre’s meeting room and get a bit of a face-lift.

Two Oamaru Libraries staff, Jean Rivett and Lisa Potaka Ross, were now dedicated to working with the branch libraries and would be available to work more closely with volunteers. The librarians’ plans include working more closely with Playgroup and offering some technology/internet training to the community.

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

Omarama Residents' Association

From the March meeting

By Yvonne Jones

There were nine people present

The committee has agreed to advertise for a cleaner for the hall.

The Term Deposit money will be invested in the Waitaki District Council Rates Account which will gain interest. This will show on the March Accounts. The original Hall Loan from the WDC was not interest free so the balance will also be paid off from the Term Deposit money. A group from Mt Aspiring College used the Courts for four hours and were really happy with the Sports Complex.

When the centre's block wall is replaced the garden will be removed as it was mostly rubble.

In relation to the monies received in grants from the Ahuriri Community Board it was:

- \$200 for a spider swing and attachments
- \$250 for two Hockey Goals be constructed -
- \$6, 900 towards the History Wall

Replacing the Community Centre's block wall will proceed once the funding is through.

The Library move is set for May 10 and 11. Disappointment was expressed that this has taken so long after it was promised to be done end March at the latest.

Ross Menzies has looked at the proposed Health and Safety Document which Hall curator Michelle Kitchen presented last month and advised it was more than was required. Michelle will complete the document which will be put up on the notice board in the Hall.

Any contractors who work at the Community Centre will need to produce their own Health and Safety Policy. The volunteers who are at the Hall for whatever reasons are outside of the Act.

The sunshade over the sandpit has become a target for climbing, There has been a small amount of vandalism in the toilets.

The kitchen tap appears to be an on going problem with the complexities for using it. A standard mixer tap is to be added for simplicity

New charges for the Community Hall and Meeting Rooms (see over) were approved

THE ASSOCIATION HAS ITS OWN POST OFFICE BOX

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

The Secretary, P O Box 93, Omarama 9448.

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

The next meeting of the Omarama Residents' Association

is 7.30pm April 15, 2021

at the Omarama Community Centre

An invitation is extended to all

Contacts: Tony Chapman, chairperson, 027 242 8605.

Yvonne Jones, secretary, 027 476 7473.

New Hall hire rates

OMARAMA HALL HIRE –Casual Rates

Memorial Hall - \$5pp per day

Commercial Kitchen - \$150 per day (FOC for tea & coffee)

Meeting Room - \$40 first 4hrs, over 4 hrs \$60 per day

OMARAMA HALL RATING AREA RESIDENTS & ALL NOT FOR PROFIT ORGANISATIONS*

Memorial Hall \$3pp per day

Commercial Kitchen \$100 per day (FOC for tea & coffee)

Meeting Room \$20 up to 2 Hrs, \$30 up to 4 hrs, over 4 hrs \$50 per day

NOTE:

*Omarama Hall "Rating area residents" must also be "not for profit" for the discounted rate.

Special events & long term hire by negotiation with the committee.

OMARAMA COMMUNITY CENTRE HALL HIRE

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





VAN UPGRADE MAKES GROUP TRAVEL POSSIBLE

Omarama School year 7 and 8 pupils will be able to travel in style with the arrival of a new school van which can seat all 12 comfortably.

A generous donation of \$25,000 from Meridian Energy, together with a trade in of the old van and support from the North Otago Motor Group meant the school could upgrade to the late model 2015 Toyota HiAce, school principal Michelle Green said. Last week, year 7 and 8 pupils made the first trip as a group to technology classes in Twizel.

The fact they could all fit together in one van, and the larger luggage carrying capacity, opened up "a whole lot more possibilities".

The school placed an emphasis on education outside the classroom and with the help of parent volunteers the van would not only be used for camps but would make travel for other experiences possible, Michelle said.



Ahuriri Catchment Community Group

About 30 people gathered at the Wrinkly Rams last week to hear from Beef and Lamb New Zealand South Island environment policy manager Lauren Phillips – a specialist in the Government’s Essential Fresh Water policy.

Most people did not really want to involve themselves in policy changes, but just like cleaning toilets it was one of life's unpleasant necessities, she said.

Ms Phillips gave the group an outline of how various pieces of Government policy “fits together” and how National Policy Statements and National Environmental Standards worked under the umbrella of the Resource Management Act, and were administered by regional and district councils.

The new NPS for Freshwater Management 2020 had made a fundamental change to how freshwater was managed in New Zealand, she said.

More than just reducing excess nitrogen, phosphorus and E.coli all water users were now required to give the “health of the water in the environment” - Te Mana o te Wai – priority.

Secondary to this was the essential needs of people, followed by other uses.

The lynchpins of the legislation for farmers hinged on excluding stock from waterways, and tightening winter grazing rules.

The consequence of prioritising the health of waterways in this way could be that some would find they had less available water, she said.

Both those managing domestic water supplies and farmers needed to clarify and secure their water takes. There would inevitably be competition for water.

Although sheep and beef farmers and those who farmed extensively, as opposed to intensively, were affected to a lesser degree by the legislation than dairy, deer and pig farmers Ms Phillips recommended Omarama’s high country farmers look carefully at their present systems and water takes, especially for stock water, and consider formalising any informal arrangements and securing supply.

“If your stock can’t drink from waterways you will need to think about how to get them stock water.

“Start looking now at what you are going to do.

“Formalise a permitted take... do the maths, take into account the peak season.

“Are you taking water from a wetland because you won’t be able to... diversify your water sources if you can.”

There would always be competition for water and those “with deep pockets will be better off.”

Farmers must make sure they had their farm environment plans in place “to cover you”.

“Paperwork is your friend even if you hate it.

“Use that plan and have a backup plan.”

Farmers were “in for a bit of pain”.

“But the future is looking pretty bright,” Ms Phillips said.

The presentation was arranged by the newly formed Ahuriri Catchment Community Group.

ACCG chairperson Trent Spittle said the group was open to all in the community who wanted to work to protect the “unique area”.

The group wanted to hold events like this to educate and upskill, and was also planning a community riparian planting project along the Omarama Stream, with support from the Waitaki District Council and Environment Canterbury.

 *for community*

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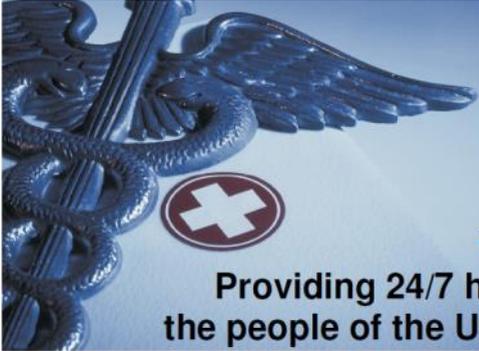
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For Kurow 03 436 0760 or for Twizel 03 976 0503 - Dr Tim and Juliet Gardner

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

Omarama Golf Club

The Omarama Golf Club's annual Easter Tournament was dubbed a great success yet again by visiting players.

In all, 65 golfers, from as far away as Templeton, Waimate and Maniototo, took to the course on a stunning autumn afternoon.

Players also celebrated the ability to get out and about after last year's tournament was cancelled because of the Covid-19 situation.

Omarama Golf Club Easter Tournament

Results:

Overall Winner:	Ken Wigley (Ben Ohau) 40 stablefords
Senior Men Winner	Wayne Burt (Templeton) 37 Stablefords Craig Booth (Waimate) 36 stablefords John Kreft (Maniototo) 36 stablefords
Junior Men Winner	Ken Wigley (as above) Neil Cunningham (Ben Ohau) 38 stablefords Phil Kennard (Omarama) 37 stablefords
Ladies Winner	Diane Jellyman (North Otago) 38 stablefords Christine Bowman (Omarama) 36 stablefords Kura Ritchie (Ben Ohau) 36 stablefords

Omarama Golf Club

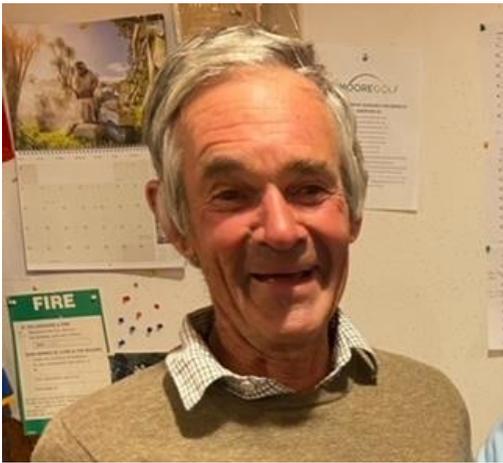
Saturdays; cards in 12 midday, tee-off 12.30pm.

Club captain; James Moynihan phone: 027 215 8266

email jwmoynihan@yahoo.co.nz. www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz

Omarama Golf Club Easter Tournament 2021: (clockwise from top left) overall winner Ken Wigley (Ben Ohau); Wayne Burt (Templeton); gathered in the clubhouse; those essential workers, and Diane Jellyman (North Otago). Photos: Paul and Christine Bowman





Omarama Collie Dog Club

Triallists young and old came from throughout the South Island to compete at the Omarama Collie Dog Club trials at Dalrachney Station last month.

And it would be fair to say it was a young' un that managed to pull a hat trick and give the oldies a bit of a lesson – although every dog does have its day.

North Canterbury triallist Ned George (23) placed first, second and third with his huntaways Base, Kaha and Pitch in the straight hunt event, and second and third with Pitch and Kaha in the zigzag hunt.

Club secretary Carla Hunter said it was a successful trial “with great entries and good sheep”.

“The weather played ball although it was a very chilly start on Monday morning, and well done to Ned George who had a very successful day.”

Judges were Jack Brennan, of Oamaru on the long head, Hamish Cameron of Waimate, on the short head, Boyd Tisdall, of Middlemarch, zig-zag hunt and Russell Smillie, of Hakataramea on the straight hunt.

The trials are hosted by the Aubrey family and held on the grounds at Dalrachney Station. Dalrachney also provided the Half-bred ewe lambs and two-tooths for the competition.

Omarama Collie Dog Club trials March 7 and 8, 2021

Results:

Event I - Long Head

Judge: Jack Brennan

H Ingles and Lou, 95, 1; S Hunter and Rangī, 94, 2; B Manson and Billy, 93, 3; I M Anderson and Jet, 92.5, 4; L Smith and Guide, 92.5.

1st Intermediate: L Smith, Guide, 92

1st Maiden: K Chittock, Tilly, 86

Event II – Short Head and Yard

Judge: Hamish Cameron

G Reed and Jess, 93.1; N Hore and Frank, 91.5.2; K Chittock and Lugs, 91, 3; M Evans and Dawn, 89, 4; L Smith and Guide, 88.5, 5;

1st Intermediate: G Reed, Jess, 93

1st Maiden: L Bayne, Pru, 83

Event III – Zig Zag Hunt

Judge: Boyd Tisdall

M Clark and Coke, 96, 1; N George and Pitch, 95, 2; N George and Kaha, 94.5, 3; T Rowland and Thomas, 94, 4; B Harris Slope, 93, 5.

1st Intermediate: N George, Kaha, 94.5

1st Maiden: M Baynes, Archie, 92

Event IV – Straight Hunt

Judge: Russell Smillie

N George and Base, 98, 1; N George and Kaha, 97.2, 2; N George and Pitch, 97, 3; M Benton and Maia, 96.5, 4; P Emmerson and Rua, 96.1, 5.

1st Intermediate: N George, Kaha, 97.2

1st Maiden: H Kopa, Tap, 93

PHOTOS AT RIGHT: (Top) Oamaru Collie Club member Angus Ferguson (87) and Jess; (centre) Omarama Collie Dog Club member Ginger Anderson and Boss; (Bottom) Carla Hunter (secretary), Sylvia Anderson, Andrea Aubrey, Tarryn Benton, Sarah Waldie (catering convenor), and Kim Doree make sure things run like clockwork indoors.





TWIZEL MEDICAL CENTRE

Community Owned, Community Focussed,
Community Operated

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

Hours: Monday to Friday 08:30 - 5:00 pm with extended hours over the summer months
Urgent and emergency care 24/7

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

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

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TWIZEL MEDICAL CENTRE

Introduction to Nina Boyes, Administration Manager, Twizel Medical Centre

"The dictionary defines caring as 'displaying kindness and concern for others'. Since moving to the Mackenzie Basin in early 2019 I have discovered that Twizel is a very caring place. From the woman a few streets over who offered to teach me how to knit then arrived with needles and wool, to the lady from around the corner who showed up at our door offering strawberry plants for our new garden, to the 'flash as' medical centre that made our family feel so welcome and reassured when we moved to town as first time parents - these experiences are why I'm very excited to have been appointed as the new Administration Manager at Twizel Medical Centre; it means I can now work within and for this caring community.

With 12 years' experience across the NZ education sector, 5 years in Training and Systems management in the West Australian mining industry and having worked in the Wakatipu basin as an award winning property manager I am well placed to deal with the complexities of managing the "behind the scenes" side of our busy and growing medical practice.

I look forward to supporting our wonderful clinical team as they work to ensure that the people of the Mackenzie experience 'legendary' care when visiting our health hub. "
- Nina.

SITUATION VACANT

Twizel Medical Centre is a well-established and growing local community organization. We are currently seeking a friendly front line services star to join our busy reception team for 10 hours per week on a casual contract.

You will be an experienced administrator with an eye for detail, excellent communication skills and a desire to go the extra mile to ensure high levels of customer care and satisfaction.

In addition to being a team player, you will be a self-starter who can prioritise workflows and trouble shoot under pressure. Daily tasks will include greeting patients, screening patients for triage as required, managing patient appointments, liaising with clinical staff, processing of payments and invoicing, accounts reconciliation as well as general office duties.

Experience with Xero or a similar invoicing system is desirable.

In addition to 10 hours per week this casual role may also include further hours for leave cover and special projects.

Applications close at 5pm on Friday 9th April.

All enquiries and applications to manager@twizelmed.co.nz

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April 12 - Owls Do Cry: Janet Frame's classic novel Owls Do Cry comes to life in an exhilarating multimedia visual experience, filled with fierce heart and visual splendour.

Visit oamaruoperahouse.co.nz for more details

The next meeting of ECan's

Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee meeting

is Friday, April 16, 2021

MacKenzie Country Hotel, Twizel

Minutes and agendas are posted at:

<https://ecan.govt.nz/your-region/your-environment/water/whats-happening-in-my-water-zone/upper-waitaki-water-zone/>

www.ecan.govt.nz

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Alona Shaw
Omarama
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Upper Waitaki Young Farmers

By Tom Adkins

In the last month the Upper Waitaki Young Farmers club ran the Kurow Bark Up fundraiser held at the Kurow Hotel. This was a great night with just under 20 dog entries and six team entries. A huge thank you to our sponsors who donated prizes and items to be auctioned off, it was a very successful night.

Coming up for April we are having a clay bird shoot for our members to get their eye in for opening weekend.

Our April meeting, due to the Easter weekend is being held at 7.30pm, Monday April 12 at the Kurow Hotel, new members always welcome.

[Facebook.com/UpperWaitakiYFC](https://www.facebook.com/UpperWaitakiYFC)

The Waitaki Newcomers Network

Contact: Christine Dorsey

027 242 8643.

waitaki@newcomers.co.nz

Abacus House,

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Oamaru

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How to apply

Applications for the next funding round are open until midnight on 25th April 2021.

For more information and to apply:

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



Getting BACK TO THE FUTURE

LONG TERM PLAN
Waitaki 2021-2031

What we will be seeking
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Document and feedback
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Council's Strategic Direction

What do you think we should be doing to achieve
our community outcomes and strategic priorities?

COVID-19 Recovery

What else can we do to support our community?

Climate Change

What should we be focusing on?

Waste management

What waste minimisation and education
activities would you like to see Council doing?

Indoor Sports and Events Centre

Which option do you prefer?

Rates affordability

Should we look at smoothing the rates
increases over two or three years?

...and anything else
you'd like to tell us

Waitaki District Council

Change of rates definition could affect Airbnbs

The Waitaki District Council wants to get feedback on proposed changes to its Revenue and Financing Policy.

The policy is reviewed every three years.

Several changes to the funding mix and rating tools used to fund council activities have been put forward.

Although the council believes the overall impact of the proposed changes is minor, it will have a larger impact on some ratepayers than others, the report to the meeting last week said.

It intends to contact those ratepayers directly so that they are aware of the proposed changes.

Specifically, it is reviewing the definition of 'Separately Used and Inhabited Parts' (SUIP), the amount the Oamaru business rate contributes to activities; the boundary for the Oamaru and Weston Amenity Rates, and the boundary for the Omarama amenity rate; hall rates; the reinstatement of the rates penalty; and a review of the exemption for the forestry roading rate.

The SUIP is used to determine if a ratepayer should pay one or more Uniform Annual General Charge, Ward Services Charge and Public Hall Rate.

Examples of two SUIPs on the same block of land would be a home with a flat attached, two or more houses on the same section, flats or apartments on one section or residential accommodation rented individually per room for example an Airbnb.

The council wants to change the definition an SUIP so, where formerly "kitchen facilities" has been used, this has been replaced with "cooking facilities".

If a second SUIP is used exclusively by family it can be excluded from the rate. This will require an annual declaration.

The council has developed a measure based on gross floor area for commercial properties and businesses.

The Omarama Gazette has asked for more information about the change to the Omarama Amenity Rate boundary but this was not available before publication.

Consultation opens on Friday and close midday Sunday, May 9, 2021.

Finding Information

To view a copy of the draft policy and make a submission go to www.waitaki.govt.nz

You can also get this information from:

- offices in Oamaru and Palmerston
- libraries in Oamaru and throughout the Waitaki District

If you have any questions about this policy review please call 03 433 0300 or email consult@waitaki.govt.nz.

Phone: 03 433 0300

Automated options after hours

E-mail: service@waitaki.govt.nz

www.waitaki.govt.nz

Ahuriri Community Board news

Further discussions to resolve traffic issues

Omarama's town centre traffic issues will be the subject of an upcoming workshop between Ahuriri Community Board members and Waitaki District Council staff. Members of the Omarama Community attended last month's meeting of the board in Omarama to hear from Waitaki District Council roading manager Mike Harrison about plans the council might have to address concerns.

The Omarama Residents' Association together with the community have wanted safety concerns regarding traffic flow and the mix of pedestrian, cycle and vehicle traffic addressed as a matter of urgency now for some years.

The council concept masterplan for the town did not address the issue.

To complicate matters, management of the junction of the two state highways – 8 and 83 - lies with Waka Kotahi /New Zealand Transport Agency.

The council owns the area in front of the shops which includes parking.

Mr Harrison said NZTA had looked at the problems at the intersection.

"To be fair they were probably not looking at it too hard."

The council could work with NZTA on the problem but NZTA "don't have the money" and are planning no further work at present, he said.

Councils, including Waitaki, are "going to the minister" to see what could be done about the agency's funding.

Mr Harrison said the council roading team had looked at the problem.

So far, "the vision" had been "vehicle centric".

But there was a need to look at other modes - walking and cycling and "see what we come up with".

"I've spent time looking at the problem and there are ways we can improve what is there that doesn't have to cost a lot. Especially when it comes to safety, it's not something I want to put up with."

Omarama resident Judy Piner said the layout at the intersection also made it awkward for pedestrians who might want to walk around the pub as there was not much room between the fence and the road.

Pedestrians might feel they were intruding on pub patrons and they could be forced onto the road, Mrs Piner said.

Ahuriri Community Board chairperson Vicky Munro said there were issues with the traffic mix and within the shopping centre.

"At one stage there were children coming through but that was fixed with the easement through Park Lane," she said.

Mr Harrison said the most successful way to direct pedestrian traffic was to build pathways "where people actually walk".

Mrs Munro said there were also issues where the Alps 2 Ocean Trail ended abruptly at the end of SH8 and it was not clear to cyclists where they should go.

In Finance and Corporate Development group manager Paul Hope's financial update to the board he pointed to the balance of the Ahuriri Ward Services rate which sat at \$479,634 in December.

Mr Hope said the board needed to put forward projects and proposals and make submissions to have them included in this year's Long-Term Plan.

"It is an accumulated surplus that will cover operational costs,"

And it could be used on a project like this, he said.

Mrs Munro said each town within the ward had different needs and "we want to support them all."

The fund could be used as a “good starting point for some projects or it could be seed funding”, Mr Hope said.

Waitaki Mayor Gary Kircher recommended a workshop be held to look at potential projects.

Mr Harrison said he was still “keen to hear from locals” about concerns.

Sandpit cover payment settled

An attempt to resolve an outstanding payment from the Ahuriri Community Board to the Omarama Playgroup has highlighted issues board members have getting items on to agendas for meetings.

In total the board has six meetings scheduled for this year and it may only make decisions - for example approve payments - at a public meeting.

For its March meeting, along with council officer memorandum reports there was one decision report which made it to the agenda. That was regarding the Omarama Residents' Association request for funding for the replacement of the block wall, and payment of \$5405 was approved for this project from the board's Community Grants fund.

However, the board asked for two further items to go on the agenda as late items so decisions could be made and not have to be deferred to its May meeting.

The first was for payment outstanding since October 2018 to the Omarama Playgroup for a replacement cover for the Omarama playground sandpit. This additional agenda item did make it to the table in time for the meeting.

The second item, which the Omarama Gazette understands concerned a grant of \$1,000 for seed funding for the newly-formed Ahuriri Catchment Community Group did not.

The board insisted the sand pit cover payment be brought to the meeting so it could be resolved “effectively for all parties” and to “maintain faith with earlier promises to the community”.

In October 2018 it had agreed to pay for the cover but for a lesser amount. Because the playgroup had been under the impression the board was happy to pay whole cost of the cover it had subsequently presented an invoice for the higher amount. However, no payments were made.

At its meeting the board agreed to to pay the new total , \$1308.13, because the Playgroup paid the invoice “in good faith believing the board would cover costs”.

To complicate matters, because of the delay the board was no longer able to pay the amount from one of its own funds and so had to recommend to the council that it be paid from its Ahuriri Playground Grant Reserve fund.

This was approved by the council at its meeting last week.

Ahuriri Community Board chairperson Vicky Munro asked Finance and Corporate Development group manager Paul Hope to ensure, once approved, the payment was made promptly to the playgroup. “This has got lost on the way and so we need to make sure it is paid this time,” she said.

As well as frustration over getting items onto the board meeting agendas there was also a request made to get earlier access to the minutes of previous meetings.

In the case of the March meeting, the previous meeting had been in December 2020. Ahuriri Ward Councillor Ross McRobie said it could be difficult to determine which matters needed following up when minutes were sent to the board only about 10 days before its next meeting.

Mrs Munro has asked the board see at least a “cheat sheet” of decisions made so it can keep on top of the action points.

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The next Ahuriri Community Board meeting is 3.15pm Monday, May 10, 2021 at the Otematata Community Centre

Minutes and agendas can be found here

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



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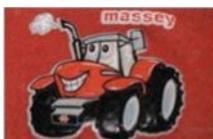
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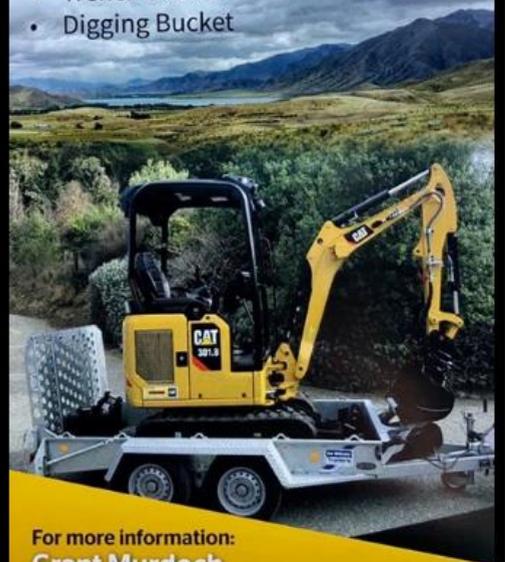
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The View from the Chook House



*"It's the leaving
and the time has come to say farewell, good friends."*
This will be the final 'View from the Chook House' for now.
Look for a brand new segment next month

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

March 2021

Highest temperature: March 14, 27.5C

Lowest temperature: March 17, 1.5C

Most rainfall: March 5, 13.7mm

Total rainfall for March: 36.1mm

The Garden Diary - As high as an elephant's eye

'Tis the season for giving and reaping and squirreling, gathering in before hunkering down. And cooking and baking using all those recipes tucked in the back of the book, saved for a 'glut'. To quote that old song:

"There's a bright golden haze on the meadow, there's a bright golden haze on the meadow,

The corn is as high as an elephant's eye, An' it looks like it's climbin' clear up to the sky." - Now try get that out of your head.

I may have lost all hope of stone fruit and pears this year but the garden is, as it always does, making up for it in other ways.

The freezer is stuffed full of corn – sweet Honey and Pearl cobs still sheathed in its leafy papery green wrap and just perfect to shove in the microwave, as is – no plastic required.

I'm not a preserver. I am envious of jars of glowing and honeyed fruits sliced and packed to perfection and stowed on pantry shelves but experience tells me I'll never open one for fear of wasting any - instead they'll age and mature until they're past even the fine wine stage and go to waste anyway.

The apples have been crisp and fresh and sweet – plenty to store in the spare fridge to use through winter, and some to give away. The windfalls are for the chooks and the birds and a friend's horses and most likely some will be stolen by those sly unmentionable vermin we all pretend we haven't got. The chooks repay the gift by speedily snapping up any codling moth

I have seven espaliered heritage apple varieties which blossom and fruit at different times. Not that I planned it but it has worked out perfectly because it usually means a couple of varieties escape the late frosts – we'll always have apples.

One variety melts into a perfect puree for sauces.

One is for drying, though as the nights cool down I slice them in half, sprinkle with chilli flakes and garlic and pop them under pork chops, in a tray bake to have with brown sugar kumara mash and greens.

The past few seasons Jack Frost knocked out the zucchini before they had even set fruit. This year they've made it through until this past week. The sun rose on blackened leaves and, now, what do I spy emerging from the shadows all dark green and slytherin? - the marrows. I could have sworn I'd picked all the zuc's. Although I hang out for late summer and the caramelised sauté of garden-fresh onions, zucchinis and tomatoes my absolute indulgence is Chocolate Zucchini cake. Tho' that might be for the cream cheese icing on top rather than the veggie intake? I use Alison Holsts' recipe – tried and true but, this year, inspired by Pip Cameron's of What's for Smoko I turned the mixture into jumbo muffin pans. And her tip about grating excess zucchini into those same muffin pans to freeze and bag up to use later is simply brilliant.

This is my 35th autumn in Omarama, my favourite time of the year. And it's my sixth season of the Garden Diary. Time for change. From next month a new segment will take its place. I hope you will find it fun and hope you will contribute

- Ruth Grundy

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



The Last Page is Classifieds

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