



Ōmārama Gazette

April 2025

Farewell, Georgie Girl

It would be impossible to know just how many lives she touched
In fact, many of those she helped would have not even known her name.

Ōmārama's Georgie Robertson died in Christchurch on March 8.

Her death was announced by her family with this simple statement;
“A life well lived, Georgie was devoted to helping others and will be deeply missed by many.”

Georgie with husband Tim and the family began holidaying in Ōmārama in 2003 and moved to the town permanently in 2009.

She joined the Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade as a first responder in 2012.

It was for this work she was probably most widely known.

And despite the debilitations cruelly imposed by the illness she fought, and which she resented as a total inconvenience, she never resigned from the brigade, playing her part until the last.

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Where she loved to be - Omarama Fire Brigade volunteer Georgie Robertson right in the thick of it, working to clear drains in the July 2022 floods.



A tribute to Georgie Robertson, continued

In his final role as Ōmārama's chief fire officer Greg Harper paid tribute to his long-standing friend and colleague.

"Georgie will be sadly missed by all at the Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade.

"I would describe Georgie as one the most positive people I have known. She was also respectful to everybody and judged nobody.

"She was reliable and always keen to be part of any activities at brigade training and socially.

"Georgie kept up with our calls and was still giving valuable input right up till the last couple of weeks."

Senior first responder and close colleague Geva Innes said she was honoured to write this in honour of and in farewell to Georgie.

"Georgie wore many hats in this district.

"She battled continuously and successfully to achieve recognition and training that the First Responders required and deserved. A wonderful friend and work mate."

Georgie was there throughout major events which the volunteers faced and which were undisputedly life changing for all involved.

When she recounted the Lake Ōhau fire and those acts of bravery she recalled, with tears, how she and the team which had remained back at base had listened to the comms in utter fear as reality dawned, believing all those at the front could die. In the event not one life was lost.

And she pushed that fear into practical action helping 'man' the evacuation centre, offering reassurance and comfort.

She was there again in the early hours in the July 2022 floods first helping with the evacuation of residents then 'manning' the evacuation centre.

It was all hands-on deck that night and once again she recounted the unvoiced fears when that night played out, and the just sheer exhausting physicality of the job the volunteers faced when the Ōmārama Stream broke out of its channel.

She well and truly earned her stripes.

So, let's not sugar coat this.

She had stinging words for those who stood in the way of what she thought was best for her beloved community and, as her friends have said, she did not suffer fools.

She defied the ruling from above that said she should not respond to those who called her personal phone and asked for help but should have them make the 111 call, 'put the siren up' and wait for the formal response. While she respected the reasoning she said she could never turn anyone away.

Although her fire brigade family held a special place in her heart, she embraced any opportunity to help others with enthusiasm.

When Covid 19 hit the town bringing with it all its uncertainty she was again on the front line, helping lead the community care response with arranging meals and care packages for those isolating despite her own vulnerability.

She may not have ever said the words but all knew she stood for equality, inclusivity and natural justice.

Georgie was inducted as a Justice of the Peace in February 2016. Cate Bole was the North Otago JPs' registrar at the time.

She remembers a “very approachable, effective and capable Justice of the Peace” who she knows will be missed by the community.

Dedicated to the role she travelled to Oamaru for training and education evenings, taking part by via Zoom in recent times. She also travelled to Dunedin to take part in Issuing Officer training which she qualified for in September 2018. “ – all of this to understand the seriousness and legality of the voluntary, sometimes time-consuming position.

“She was very interested, loyal and committed to her district’s people... Our sympathy goes to her family.”

Georgie was one of the founding library volunteers when the Community Centre library was formed. Friend and fellow library volunteer Glenys Dawson said Georgie was the first to put her hand up when a job needed done.

“She just got on with things with her no-nonsense approach.

“Georgie was hugely appreciated by us all, and the wider Waitaki District Library community....our thanks go out for all the time she gave”

Pam Young, a member of the former Ōmārama Business Group, said it was well aware how fortunate it was to have Georgie’s computer expertise, willingness and enthusiasm to develop the Discover Ōmārama webpage - “putting Ōmārama on the world stage in technology”. And to take chances on new ideas.

“It is said; ‘Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away. You my dear friend have been an inspiration to us all in making Moments Happen. Rest easy.”

Georgie worked for Glide Ōmārama from 2013 to 2018. Owner Gavin Wills says she was a highly skilled computer whizz... “wonderful with clients and fellow staff, she was a mediator, wise, calm under pressure, whose positive cheerful spirit enlivened all”.

More than anything Georgie loved to fly, he said.

“On any excuse she was off on a gliding adventure; further, longer or higher was better! My last flight with Georgie, we flew four hours down the Maniototo, then west past Cromwell into the remote Branches Station. In the lee of Mount Aspiring we climbed to 5000m and flew home in the sunset via Mount Cook. That was the kind of flight she loved.”

“She’s greatly missed by all her gliding family.”

Former Ōmārama Gliding Club chief flying instructor Gavin Wrigley said Georgie’s enthusiasm and energy for the Ōmārama community never waned.

“Her love of flying and her ongoing enthusiasm about the ‘new look’ Ōmārama Gliding Club and the wellbeing of her flying friends continued to the end.

“She was really pleased that the OGC open day could be supported by the Simon Gault event, and her final flight with Milan [Kmetovics] meant a great deal to her. She did not think that it was going to be possible. We will always be grateful for having had the lovely Georgie in our midst,” he said.

Her final gift to her community and in particular to the recently-formed MenzShed was to stage the Simon Gault Event in November.

To her absolute delight not only was the event declared a success, brought all parts of our community together and managed to raise a little money to give back, also everybody had fun!

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A tribute to Georgie Robertson, continued

Simon has sent this message to be shared with the Ōmārama community.
“I’m so incredibly sorry to hear that Georgie has passed. She was such a special person, and I know how much she meant to the community.
I feel truly grateful to have been able to visit her for the MenzShed, and it means a lot to hear that it lifted her spirits. She was an amazing woman, full of kindness and strength, and she will be deeply missed.
“Please pass on my condolences to Tim”.

Most of all our hearts go out to Tim, Georgie’s husband of 44 years, to her “girls” and their partners; Bridget and Simon, Gemma and Jeremy, Justine and Dan, and to her beloved grandchildren Rosie, Emma, Abby, Fergus, Max and Francis.

*Our sincerest condolences and love to you all.
Thank you for sharing Georgie with us.*



Chief and 'chiefette' take a step back

The 'Chief' and 'Chiefette' maybe taking a step back. But for Team Harper the Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade family will still be a key part of their lives.

This week Greg Harper stood down from the role of chief fire officer and Ōmārama Deputy Chief fire officer Jack Zorab has been appointed to the role.

It was "Ōmārama's worst kept secret," Greg said.

When he took on the role he had intended five years would be his limit, he said, and it had been almost six since he stepped up to fill the vacancy left by Terry Walsh.

It had been a momentous few years punctuated as it was by 2020.

That year saw the beginning of the Covid 19 crises, and two of New Zealand's largest wildfires – The Lake Pukaki fire in August and the Lake Ohau fire in September. "They were really big calls."

His lasting memories will be "how the team pulled together".

"Covid was the worst time"

There was such uncertainty.

"[There was] stuff thrown at us all the time...it was so fluid. That was one of the toughest things."

Coincidentally, in 2020, and sneaking in just prior to the first Covid lockdown, there was another major event. The Ōmārama Brigade staged the 50th Wajax

Team Harper celebrate 25 years with the Fire Service in 2022. Photo: Donald Lamont, Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade

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Chief and 'chiefette' take a step back - continued

competitions, drawing brigades from throughout the south to celebrate the jubilee of the first unofficial Wajax pump competition, in 1970 between rural brigades in Stewart Island and Glenorchy and Ōmārama.

A significant highlight and one he had found most rewarding was serving alongside and acknowledging the achievements of brigade stalwarts.

Being there to oversee operational support volunteer the late Denise Tamati awarded a life membership, the life memberships and service medals given to Geva Innes in 2023 and Liz Komen in 2024 were highlights.

Nowadays Fire and Emergency New Zealand was instructing brigades to encourage diversity and equality within its ranks. In this aspect, he was proud to say the Ōmārama Brigade had led from the front, Greg said.

The equipment provided had improved during his tenure. The brigade was on to its third truck and was recently given a new tanker.

A regular challenge was the turnover of volunteers often only completing a relatively short stint before they left town.

Nonetheless, it was a "good team:" with those from outside the area making positive remarks about how professional it was.

On a more personal note, Greg achieved his gold star – 25 years' service - in 2022, and last year he became Otago Southland Provincial Fire Brigade Association president – made all the more poignant, he said, because the conference where he was sworn in was held in Ōmārama. Greg stands down from this position in May. Being involved with the United Fire Brigades' Association including the various fire fighter challenges for the past 15 years had taken him from Whangarei to Stewart Island and he had made life-long friends.

"There's a lot of communication done at those events."

There had been significant changes within the Fenz organisation and a move to more centralisation and uniformity of regulations.

Plus, there was now a much more positive working relationship with St John thanks



to the improvement in the Memorandum of Understanding.

"We have a great relationship with our St John team."

Medical calls have always made up a high proportion of the brigades work. Last year 46 of the 129 calls the brigade attended were medical calls.

"There's been the tough stuff too." – the hard calls, the life changing events."

Greg is quick to acknowledge he has not held the role on his own, with wife Adrienne – the 'Cheifette' - at his side as "a sounding board".

Greg will continue to volunteer for the Omarama the brigade as senior fire fighter "I've got a few to annoy yet."

"As I say we have to keep heading toward the future. The future is in front of us not back in the past."

New fire chief Jack was appointed deputy fire chief less than six months ago but was more than capable of filling the role, Greg said.

"The brigade will be in good hands with a new management team going forwards."

And he was looking ahead to the next appointment – that of possibly Ōmārama's first woman deputy fire chief.

Fly-in ends with tragedy

Police have confirmed one person died and another was critically injured following the light plane crash in the Dingleburn Valley on Saturday.

The plane which crashed near Lake Hawea was taking part in the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) Autumn fly-in.

Former Gore man Ivan Van de Water, who had retired to Wanaka, has been named as the person who died in the crash and friend Don Grant was cut from the wreckage of the plane and flown to Dunedin Hospital in a critical condition.

Maritime New Zealand's Rescue Coordination Centre was alerted to the crash and Lake Tekapo and Ōmārama emergency services were called about 1:30pm, and firefighters were flown into the scene.

In a post on the Lake Tekapo Fire Brigade Facebook page it said Tekapo volunteers were "deployed in support of Ōmārama Fire Brigade".

"Tekapo have flyable cutting gear and flew with MacKenzie Helicopters".

Police will make inquiries on behalf of both the Civil Aviation Authority and the Coroner to determine the cause of the crash.

AOPA told Radio New Zealand its members were "deeply upset" over the fatal crash and would help the authorities in any way requested to determine its cause.

About 33 planes and one helicopter, took part in its Autumn fly-in at the Omarama Airfield.

On Saturday, after the mandatory briefing and once the fog lifted the 70 visitors headed off in four groups to explore the Upper Waitaki, Maniototo and Mackenzie Country in clear skies.

Those taking part in the fly-in event travelled from as far away as the North Island and "deep Southland", the West Coast, Canterbury and Otago.

The group used Discovery Countrytime Hotel Ōmārama as its base.

Operation Dragon update - the numbers are in

Police have released the numbers of infringement notices and warning handed out to motorists stopped during Operation Dragon at Waitangi Weekend.

Road policing teams together with the NZTA regulatory staff stationed themselves in and around Ōmārama for about four days from February 1 as part of the wider Operation Dragon exercise which ran from January 29 to February 9.

Last month, figures provided to the Omarama Gazette showed 473 were stopped at road police checkpoints on SH8 and Ōmārama Ave.

In response to an Official Information request National Road Policing director Superintendent Steve Greally said during that time police issued 147 infringement offence notices and 14 written traffic warnings in and around Omarama.

It was reported earlier to the Otago Daily Times that across the Central Otago and Queenstown Lakes to Milford Sound area in those 12 days 260 infringement notices were issued.

Overall, motorists were pulled up on excessive speed, not wearing seatbelts, use of cell phones, and overtaking with insufficient room or on no-passing lines, police said at that time.

NZTA began the process of taking over all safety camera enforcement from the police in July .

However, last month it told the Omarama Gazette it had no plans to install a permanent safety camera in Omarama. In the initial part of its plan it will add 27 new cameras. Overall, there will be 51 new cameras, it said.

“Although we’re not considering this location for a new safety camera, we will work with NZ Police on enforcing speeds here,” the NZTA spokesperson said.

This could be via the future operation of a NZTA operated mobile safety camera or via NZ Police operating a speed radar.”

As part of Operation Dragon members of the police commercial vehicle safety team and NZTA regulatory officers focused on unlicensed tourist operators around Te Anau and Omarama.

As a result, four unlicensed tourism operators were found and follow up investigations initiated.



Celebrating a powerful achievement

It was not quite the arrival of the Queen of Sheba, nor could it match the excitement of a visit by a touring 'log of wood'. In fact, last week's delivery of the new community generator barely raised even one bushy eyebrow.

None-the less there were subtle signs that the wee crowd of our staunch MenzShed blokes who gathered to take possession of Omarama's new community generator may have been just a little excited.

Omarama MenzShed are panning to officially introduce Jenni the Generator to the community that she will serve at a sausage sizzle at the Ōmārama Community Hall at the end of the month. An invitation is extended to all. (*See poster over*)

About Jenni, the Generator.

This generator has been gifted by the community to:

- Ōmārama MenzShed
- The Ōmārama Emergency Management Group
- The Residents Association of Ōmārama

Corporate sponsors

Otago Community Trust \$10,000

The New Zealand Community Trust \$10,000

Meridian Waitaki Power Up Community Fund \$10,000

Emergency Management Otago paid for the purchase and installation of the change-over switch.

Community sponsors

- * Peter and Adrienne Borrie
- * Ruth Dolan
- * Merino Lodge
- * Ōmārama Rodeo Club
- * Graeme and Andy Oxley
- * Sierra Motels

- * David and Anne Coulter
- * Ian and Jan Mckie
- * Jenny Mollard
- * Omarama Gazette
- * Blair and Alona Shaw



Celebrating a powerful achievement - continued

Here are the **facts** about why this project was initiated:

- *The Omarama Emergency Management Group (Fenz, SAR volunteers and Omarama Police) - decided, in the case of disaster, a 40KVA generator is required to run the Community Centre, hall and kitchen.
- *The Centre is the nominated community shelter in case of an emergency. As such it will be a communication hub. The medical clinic can be used to treat those injured. The Centre is owned by the Residents' Association of Ōmārama.
- *The generator will also be used to provide power to the Omarama MenzShed facility adjacent to the Centre. In return MenzShed will maintain and service the generator.
- *Because of Ōmārama's location it is considered highly likely that during a disaster - the Alpine Fault rupture, flooding or snow, the township may be cut off from help for some days, if not weeks. Should power be cut it could be some time before this could be restored. The concern is during winter months people could be at risk with not having warm shelter. Along with warmth, there is a need for cooking facilities to heat and refrigerate food to cater for a large number for a length of time.
- *Electrician Brent Fokkens carried out the initial assessment of the size of generator needed to run the community centre, which includes heating, lighting and the kitchen, as well as medical centre. He recommended a 40KVA diesel generator.
- * For it to be used by Ōmārama MenzShed and for other community projects it needs to be portable – on a trailer. Being transportable also makes it easier to service and refuel.
- * There is no generator in Ōmārama with the capacity to run the necessary facilities at the Ōmārama Community Centre in an emergency.
- * The Fire Brigade generator is not owned by Ōmārama Fire Brigade and can be requisitioned for use anywhere in the district.
- * The Ōmārama Search and Rescue generator does not have the capacity.
- * Other large generators in the district are privately-owned, mostly by dairy farmers. In case of an emergency these would be used on the farm because farmers are legally required to continue to operate to prevent animal welfare issues.
- *Although in a disaster an emergency generator could be helicoptered into the areas isolated by a disaster event, there is no agreement in place for this to happen in a timely manner. The availability of a large capacity generator cannot be guaranteed and would require a heavy lift helicopter. Also, in the initial stages of a disaster helicopters would be busy dealing to medical emergencies and emergency assessment activities.
- * The Ōmārama Community has always prided itself on being self-reliant when outside help is not immediately available.
- * The Ōmārama MenzShed is a relatively new group of volunteers which is already benefitting the wider community, specifically through completion of projects at the school, the community gardens, at the Community Centre, and Rodeo club, and for the elderly. These would otherwise prove too costly or difficult to achieve.
- * They have a strong core group of members and are actively encouraging new members of all ages from throughout the region to join.
- * They have basic facilities which are gradually being enhanced as funds and time allows. There has been a generous donation of tools.
- * The lack of a power source is hampering their attempts to grow and to tackle a wider range of projects.
- * In return for the use of the generator - their contribution will be to service and maintain the equipment to keep it in working order at all times – this includes keeping the generator fuelled and the trailer roadworthy – a not inconsiderable commitment



We'd like to introduce you to...

Jenni



Omarama MenzShed is having a free sausage sizzle
11am, Saturday, April 26,
at the Omarama Memorial Hall

Come grab yourselves an expertly cooked snag, enjoy a brew
and meet our new community generator.

It's our way of saying thanks to our sponsors
and our community.

Your generosity made this happen!



'Hots Shots' end on a high

The North Otago Tennis 'Hot Shots' programme finished on a high last week. Coach Becky Martin who travelled to Ōmārama to run the programme each week said the season had gone well.

Last week, the group's top six players travelled to Twizel School to compete against their top six junior players.

While the unofficial tournament ended in a draw the enthusiasm of the players and support from the parents was evident, Becky said.

Last week also marked the end of 'cardio tennis' which Becky also coached.

Cardio tennis is a fun, social, group tennis-fitness programme for all ages and abilities - even non-tennis players.

While there had been a slow start to this programme the season ended with up to nine people taking part, Becky said.

She has been giving some thought as to how this adult group might continue through the winter months.



New co-ordinator for rural support trust

The Otago Rural Support Trust has a new North Otago co-ordinator.

The announcement was made on the trust's Facebook page by chairperson Tom Pinckney following the Wanaka A&P Show, last month.

Gareth Isbister, who lives in Five Forks, Oamaru been a trustee since 2021.

He has farmed in the region for the past 20 years.

Gareth will mainly cover the North Otago area but will also be supporting fellow co-ordinator Joc Kinney, who is based in Hyde, to cover all of the Otago region.

Gareth takes over from Lindsay Purvis, who was co-ordinator for eight years.

Lindsay will move from the 'grassroots' co-ordinator role to fill Gareth's vacancy as a trustee on the board.



Otago Rural Support Trust
on 0800 787 254

ANZAC DAY

Lest We Forget

25 April

Upper Waitaki Services

6.20am: Parade forms up on Hakataramea main street and will march to the Cenotaph.

8.15am: A wreath will be laid at the Kurow Cemetery Gate.

8.45am: Poppies will be laid at the Otekaieke Memorial Gate.

9.15am: A wreath will be laid at the Duntroon Cenotaph.

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

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.

AF8 Roadshow 2025

The Science Beneath Our Feet



Thursday 3rd April, 7pm Ōmarama Community Hall

We can't predict earthquakes, but we can prepare for them!

Join us for a public talk to hear from leading Alpine Fault scientists about the likely impacts of an Alpine Fault earthquake in your region, and how we can be better prepared for such an event. Bring your questions. First in, best seated.

All welcome | Free | Hosted by Emergency Management Otago



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Whakamātauranga



**Emergency
Management Otago**
Te Rākau Whakamarumaru Ōtākou

What caught your eye this month?

Here are last month's amazing photos captured by readers

We each do many different things and have unique perspectives so we really do love to see your photos - your take on things.

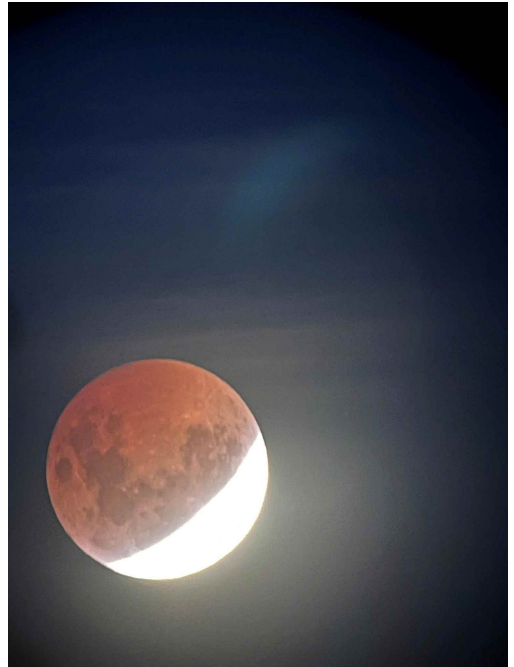
On the Omarama Gazette Facebook page most Fridays there is a segment where you can share your photo of something that has caught your eye or made you smile.

We'll then also share those photos here in this section.

Below: The partially eclipsed 'Blood Moon' captured by Jess Smith on March 14 through dad Bean's scope.

Below left: The rising sun by Summer McDougall.

Below right: Merino Ram by Bruce Dow.



The Noticeboard

To have your community notice included here



Many happy returns to Paula Wright on the occasion of her 80th birthday. Photo: Supplied.

Another round of congratulations goes to Ōmārama rower Sadie Mason, who together with fellow Twizel Area School pupil Kiara Thyne won first place in the girls u18 double sculls at the South Island Secondary Schools Rowing championships at Lake Ruataniwha at the beginning of last month. They followed it up with a second place in the same event at the Maadi Cup Regatta at Lake Karapiro last week. In all there were 2236 competitors at that regatta. Twizel was ranked 42nd equal of the 116 schools competing.

The Ōmārama Calf Sale is on Thursday, April 3 at 2pm at the Ōmārama Saleyards.

Daylight saving ends on Sunday April 6 when clocks go back an hour and 3am becomes 2am. Remember, it's the perfect time to check smoke alarms.

Kurow Medical Centre Ōmārama Clinic at the Ōmārama Community Centre, is now open Tuesdays 9am to 5pm (Nurse only) and Thursday 8.30am to 1pm with Dr Tim Gardner. 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

The Ōmārama Community Library is open 9.30am to 11am, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Library hours can change. Contact Yvonne: 027 476 7473.

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:

Rev Lee Kearon, phone: 021 250 1060 or email: lee.kearon@gmail.com

The Ōmārama Golf Club Saturdays cards in 12.30pm, tee-off 1pm. 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 'Top Pub' - the Blue and Gold pub, in Kurow. 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 president Nic McKerchar 022 612 7570 rn.mckerchar@hotmail.com or secretary Olivia Black, 027 833 0869.

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 on Saturdays from 9.00 am to 12.00 noon at its flying ground at the Ōmārama airfield. All welcome - Contact Bevan Allan bjallan@xtra.co.nz

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

A gentle exercises and social afternoon group meets at the Otematata District Club at 1.30pm Thursday afternoons. Gold coin donation and a cuppa after the exercises. Contact Ethel Gray 03 438 7764.

Waitaki Newcomers Network: For more information about this group 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 May Issue of the Omarama Gazette
is Wednesday, May 7, 2025.**

**Please submit copy
by Thursday May 1, 2025**

Situations vacant

Caretaker / Handyman

This job requires you to handle general maintenance around the lodge and grounds, according to your skills; mowing lawns, recycling, feeding and looking after the pigs, servicing the spas, supply trips to Twizel, cutting and splitting wood and keeping lodge bins stocked, assisting with portering guest bags, over winter fitting snow chains for guests and much more. Never a dull moment.

This is a permanent position although will consider applicants who are ready to start and would stay until end of ski season, 28th September.

May suit someone locally based or we can provide accommodation.

Please email expressions of interest, include a CV, to mike@ohau.co.nz or phone Mike on 021 369 237.

Casual Motel Relief – Big Sky Motel, Ōmārama

We're looking for a friendly and reliable (perhaps experienced) local person to help us out at the Big Sky Motel from time to time, mainly over weekends, when we need to be away.

Right now, we need cover for a family event — Friday 11th to Sunday 13th April — to help with guest check-outs, some light cleaning, and check-ins.

It's not a regular job, but if you're the right fit, there could be a couple of weeks' work over winter too.

If you're interested, please pop in for a chat at Big Sky Motel, 52 Ahuriri Drive, Omarama, or give us a call on 0272 495 115 or 03 438 9538. We'd love to meet you!

Patrick and Rosalie
Managers





Apply now for Meridian's Power Up Community Fund

At Meridian, we only generate from 100% renewable resources: wind, water, and sun. We're committed to doing good things with our energy. That means good for people, and good for the environment.

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, Papakalo, Glenavy.

How to apply

Applications for the next funding round are open until midnight on Sunday 20 April 2025.

For more information and to apply:

- visit meridianenergy.co.nz/community-support/fund/waitaki
- email community.fund@meridianenergy.co.nz
- call 021 733 931

Do you know of a community project that's working to reduce carbon emissions? Visit meridian.co.nz and search "Decarb fund" for more information.



WILDING FREE
MACKENZIE

WILDING PINE

SATURDAY SESSIONS

Volunteers
receive a
COMPLIMENTARY GIFT
at every event.
PLUS, attend all three
events to receive a
larger surprise
gift!

EVENTS RUN FROM 10AM TIL 3PM

(NOV 2024 – EVENT COMPLETE)

SAT 5 APRIL 2025

QEII COVENANT
OHOU DOWNS STATION
LAKE OHOU RD

*Meet at 10am at the gravel pit

SAT 12 APRIL 2025

PUKAKI FLATS
CONSERVATION AREA

* Meet at 10am at the roadside
picnic area on HW8, immediately
south of Pukaki Airport

CUT WILDING PINES & ENJOY A FREE BBQ

Check Wilding Free Mackenzie website or social media for maps and further event info

The Community Reports

Ōmārama Police



Call triple one (111) when you need an emergency response from police, fire or ambulance.

Use Ten Five (105) to report things that don't need urgent police assistance.

Usual office contact details:

Senior Constable Nayland Smith,
Sole charge Constable / Omarama /
PO Box 101, Omarama 9448.

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

Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade



By Geva Innes, first responder.

March has nearly gone and with it a wonderful hot summer, now we welcome autumn with brilliant colours and falling leaves - to block drains and gutters.

A sad farewell to Georgie Robertson. It was a privilege to know and work with Georgie. She will be greatly missed in this district. We send Tim and family our heartfelt condolences.

The countryside is parched - like a tinder box - as I write there is a welcome shower of rain. Please light NO fires. Another busy month for our crews.

Azza Woods has just sent a message to say he has passed his course. Congratulations.

So far this month there have been 12 calls; one structure fire, two alarm activations and nine medical calls.

Last night - Wednesday 26 - was Greg's last practice night as chief fire officer. Thank you Greg, you have been an outstanding chief. We will continue to see you as a firefighter and first responder. You take a step back and Jack Zorab steps into your boots and helmet. All the best Jack and congratulations.

Thank you also to Adrienne, not only a great support for Greg but to the whole brigade. Always on hand with food for hungry people and ticking boxes for attendance. Most appreciated.

- hope I haven't forgotten to mention something or someone.

Look after each other.

Ōmārama Golf Club

OMARAMA GOLF CLUB

19TH APRIL 2025

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 16th April

SECRETARY@OMARAMAGOLFCLUB.CO.NZ or

Text Greg Stuart on 0274389018

Saturday Club Day: cards in 12.30 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

BOOTS AND JANDALS

SOCIAL CLUB

4X4 DAY OUT

**Boots and Jandals Omarama Hotel Social Club
4WD trip, Waihao Forks area, Sunday 13th April
2025, meet at Hotel Car Park 10am**

Social club member \$10.00

Non-social club members \$30.00

**Payable to Omarama Hotel Social Club ANZ
Bank Account 06-0966-0087386-00, including
name, details, by Tuesday the 8th April 2025.**

**Cost includes basic set buffet lunch at the
Waihao Forks Hotel.**

**Finger food on our afternoon return to the
Boots and Jandals Hotel Omarama.**

**For further information or general inquiries
contact Philip on 027410652**

I am happy to help and hope to see you there.

Ōmārama Community Garden

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

The group receives sponsorship from Age Concern.

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

And watch this growing space

Contact: Jennie Hales, jenniehollows@hotmail.com

Let's get growing together!

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 Nic McKerchar,
022 612 7570,
rn.mckerchar@hotmail.com
or secretary Olivia Black,
027 833 0869.



Antony Ford CA



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Brodie Craig CA

Age Concern Ōmārama

Coffee afternoons are from 1pm to 3pm on the second Tuesday of each month at the Omarama community Centre

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 / Thur- Fri 9-12.30pm



OMARAMA Pop Up Café

Guest Speaker:
**Lea Campbell - Whitestone
Funerals**

**Come along to find out more about
the services that Whitestone
Funerals provide.**



Join us!



**Tuesday 8th April 1pm to 3pm
Omarama Community Centre**



Ōmārama MenzShed



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

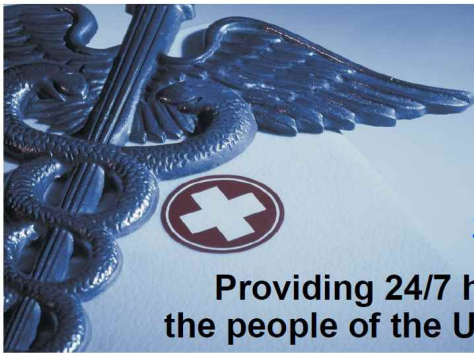
**For further information contact:
Malcolm Cameron 022 476 2225**



Ōmārama 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

Contact: Yvonne 027 476 7473



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

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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
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- * 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 \$45.00
Care Plus – Free to eligible patients only**

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

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

Opening hours

Kurow: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm and Friday mornings 8.30am to 1pm

Omarama: Thursday 8.30am to 12.30pm

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

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

**If you require further information or an appointment, please contact us on:
For Kurow 03 436 0760 or for Twizel 03 976 0503**

-Dr Tim and Juliet Gardner

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

Ōmārama School

- from the March 17 newsletter

Clay Cliffs Students Shine at Rippa Rugby and ANZAC Writing Competition

Several students from Clay Cliffs represented Ōmārama School at the Rippa Rugby tournament in Oamaru. To form a team, we entered the competitive Year 7 and 8 grade. It was a challenging day, but the students played fairly and represented Ōmārama with great pride. They maintained a positive attitude and gave their best effort in every game, narrowly losing by only one or two tries. An outstanding effort—well done to all involved!

In addition to their sporting achievements, Clay Cliffs students have been hard at work crafting ANZAC poems and essays for the Upper Waitaki RSA writing competition. Over the past few weeks, they have tackled creative challenges and developed thoughtful ideas. Students are now putting the finishing touches on their entries, which will be shared with parents and the RSA on Friday.

We are incredibly proud of their dedication and look forward to celebrating their achievements

Ahuriri Class sharing

As part of our Structured Literacy programme we read Big Books together every day. This is helping to develop fluency and expression. The components of Structured Literacy are identified and taught throughout the reading and this is building a love of reading aloud. Our students notice spelling patterns, compound words, count syllables, identify adjectives, nouns, adverbs etc. We are excited to see the engagement and this is a good lead up to speech competitions next term. We hope to share this collaborative reading on our SEESAW platform soon.

Swimming Results

Congratulations to the following students who qualified for the North Otago Swimming Championships.

8 yr boy : Max - 25m freestyle 9 yr boy: Tom - 25m freestyle, 25m backstroke 9 Yr boy: James H - 25m backstroke 9 Yr girl: Emilia - 25m freestyle, 25m backstroke, 25m breaststroke 9 Yr girl: Mazie - 25m freestyle 9 Yr girl: Briar - 25m freestyle, 25m breaststroke 12 Yr boy: James M - 50m freestyle, 50m backstroke, 50m breaststroke 12 Yr girl: Paige - 50m breaststroke.

The swimming display held at school earlier was very well enjoyed by parents, students and staff. It was exciting to include some additional fun events for entertainment. Our students definitely showcased their swimming skills and we should be proud that so many of our students are becoming talented swimmers.

- Alison, Jacob, Bailey, Kay and Ange

Ōmārama School contact details:

Phone: 03 438 9815

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

www.omarama.school.nz

Ōmārama Residents' Association

Chairperson's report, March 2025

By Michelle Kitchen omarama.chairperson@gmail.com

A letter has been sent to Berry & Co, the lawyers representing us in the St Thomas Church claim requesting that they write on our behalf to contend the equitability of the distributed funds from the sale of St Thomas Church. It is the Residents Association belief the land and building sale price should be included in the 50% equation because the community donated the land and materials to build the church.

This week I have had communication from Cyndi Christensen re: The Better Off funding application. The WDC are requiring a lot more information regarding the irrigation project. They would like to see a project manager appointed,

A written project masterplan with timelines for the whole proposed project including costings (not just the irrigation stage),

Alignment with any fiscal impact of the whole project on any future proposed development in the town – (Ōmārama Design Plan - Baxter Draft Masterplan 2020).

WDC and ECan consents would need applied for, approved and paid before any work could start. It was suggested that we could use BOF to pay for consents then raise funds for the balance of the project. I was assured the BOF money was still available to the Ōmārama Community to spend, approximately \$60,000.

The next meeting of the
Ōmārama Residents' Association is
7pm, Thursday, April 24, 2025
at the Omarama Community Centre

The minutes of the previous meeting are available from Vicky

Residents' Association of Ōmārama committee 2024-25

Michelle Kitchen, chairperson and hall curator

Vicky Chambers, secretary

Stephen Grundy, treasurer

Hank Verheul, building convenor

Malcolm Cameron, MenzShed representative

Natalie Beiboer

Maurice Cowie

Jennie Hales

Lindsay Purvis

Gary Sutherland

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, Ōmārama 9448.

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

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



Miles Anderson MP for Waitaki



*Wishing you a happy summer break, I hope you can enjoy
time with family and friends. Travel safe over the Christmas
and New Year period.*

*Our Wanaka and Oamaru Offices will be closed from
20th December 2024 and reopen on 8 January 2025.*

✉ Waitaki.mp@parliament.govt.nz

Oamaru
127 Thames Street
03 434 7325

Wanaka
Spencer House Mall
12/31 Dunmore Street
03 443 4820

Authorised by M Anderson, Parliament Buildings, Wgtn.



Ōmārama Gliding Club

OGC Captains Log ~ March, 2025

By Rod Stuart

Autumn flying is great!

This season still has a few weeks left in it yet! There is plenty of time for some thermal or wave flights before the winter paints our mountains white. We are lucky to have commercial gliding operators at Ōmārama. A tow plane is often available when they are launching. Be sure to turn up for the 10am briefing for more info. There are some great chances to launch using the winch over the next few weeks too.

5th, 6th April ~ Otago University Gliding Club Weekend. 18th to 21st April ~ Youth Glide Easter Weekend. Roger Read tells me everyone is welcome to join in, help out, launch and fly these weekends!

A great wave day in Ōmārama ~ 2nd March 2025: Some days just pump! You know it is going to be a great day when the morning briefing is busy! Milan mentioned the word 'wave' during the weather briefing and the excitement was building. An early start was declared with both winch and aerotow available. The OGC had just mobilized its full launch ability, and we all happily scrambled! The winch was already launching Youth Glide students skyward 2000' above the ground and showing us that the thermals had indeed started. I decided to give KJ a winch day. ~ 15 winch launches were made Bradan ND, Kelvyn OK, Angus GQ, Justin DMCC, Keith and Hannariina OD, Bradan ND, Aaron ZX, Griz MT, John ZS, Bradan OR, Rod KJ, Malcolm YT, Angus GQ, Terry and Karen TF, Rod KJ. ~ three Aerotows were made by Milan DD, Roger VT, Warren ZC. Everyone got away and the lift was smooth and plentiful. Thermals and ridge lift to 7000' and wave after that.



Gliding can be a punishing mistress. I bombed like a shot duck on my first launch. After just nine minutes in the air, I landed but was soon hooked on again and ready for more punishment! Second flight, I released straight into a thermal, climbed to 4000' and flew onto Mt St Cuthbert. My flight lasted for 2hrs and 45mins, I climbed to 13,300' in wave and completed a 143km cross country. Special thanks to Angus who gently coerced me into a stunning wave straight above Ōmārama. The highest I have been solo and my first time on oxygen in KJ. What a feeling! Ya-hoo-be-doo-be-doo!

Check out my rather amateur YouTube video taken in wave at 13,000'

Congratulations to Tuulianna Laukkanen on becoming the OGC's newest instructor at age 18! Gavin Wrigley and Ian Willows completed her training and our CFI Milan Kmetovics signed her off. Tuulianna hopes to teach her first students at the Otago University Gliding Club weekend April 5 and 6. Superb effort!

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.

- Copy and photo from the Upper Waitaki Young Farmers Club Facebook page

Last month we had our annual Bark Up at the Kurow Hotel which resulted in a great night thanks to our sponsors and everyone that turned up who entered a dog, placed some bets on auction items or just came for a night out.

We had a good turn out of dogs entered (as well as humans) and everyone ended up going home with something all thanks to the awesome spot prizes and placing prizes thanks to the sponsors who made the night possible.

Also a big thanks to our judges who did a great job on the night.

Enjoy the recap pictures from the night and congratulations to all our winners and those lucky people who went home with some great auction items.

RESULTS:

Overall top three:

1st - Kelsey (Jed)

2nd - Jake (Skid)

3rd - Kelsey (Dozy)

Best bitch top three:

1st - Kayla (Bess)

2nd - Jake (Bess)

3rd - Reese (Roo)

Team of three:

Kayla

Hamish

Jake

Anything but a huntaway:

Forbes (Gus)

Human Bark:

Kaitlyn and Jenna





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Justices of the Peace

JPs are available by appointment to:

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

The service is free of charge.

To make your visit quick and easy:

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



Vicky Munro

Otematata

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or Ph /txt 021572798

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

**Contributions are welcome.
omaramagazette@gmail.com**

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

Team

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Jess Mackay | Sales Consultant | 027 902 5529 | jess@mcre.co.nz

Rachel Sheridan | Property Management | 027 435 0187 | rentals@mcre.co.nz

LJ Hooker Twizel | 03 435 0170 | twizel@mcre.co.nz

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027 432 6615

gary.sutherland@tallpoppy.co.nz



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The Garden Diary - To Autumn

It is inevitable.

The light changes second by second, day by day.

The sun rises and it sets in pure vibrant colour – light so intense the mountains slice through its colours as they too change, brown to gold, blue to violet.
Or the sky flames – glowing embers of clouds fanned into a blazing sky.

The magpies' "quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle" across the reserve bookends the shortening days.

The land is hushed. Shut up my whirring, jangling mind and listen...

Cicadas strike up their autumn blues late morning now as the sun moves above the mists – more cello, less fiddle.

After an autumn shower, somewhere under the hedge, invisible between the cool, damp of the old railway sleepers a tree frog trills.

The dunnock sings too as it leaves the safety of the hedge at dusk to rustle through fallen leaves on the lawn and feast on the bugs beneath.

The riro riro grey warbler has returned to the garden and so has the flickering squeaky Piwakawaka Fantail. A golden shiver of leaves floats down and scurries to the east.

The mellow season of mists, fruitfulness and mess – the garden looks scruffy. So much still to do.

There are leaves to rake, windfalls to gather, seeds to collect, cutting back, clearing. And there is wood to stack. The rhythm of these days is sure and steady.

I strive to be silent in the days of raging storms and in the stillness of the dying light, Strive for the stillness needed to listen for the wisdom of its song.
And strive to let that lead me into a new day.

Whakataka te hau ki te uru
Whakataka te hau ki te tonga
Kia mākinakina ki uta
Kia mātaratara ki tai
E hī ake ana te atakura
He tio, he huka, he hau hū
Tihei mauri ora!
Cease the winds from the west
Cease the winds from the
south
Let the breeze blow over the
land
Let the breeze blow over the
ocean
Let the red-tipped dawn come
with a sharpened air.
A touch of frost, a promise of a
glorious day.





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

0800 RURAL HELP (0800 787 254)

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

March 2025

Highest temperature: March 21, 28.6C

Lowest temperature: March 13, -0.5C

Most rainfall: March 18, 22.6mm

Total rainfall for March: 32.8mm

The Ōmārama Gazette

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

To subscribe email:

omaramagazette@gmail.com

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