



Ōmārama Gazette

March 2025

Operation Dragon targets tourist hot spots

A combined police and NZ Transport Agency presence in Ōmārama and at other central South Island tourist hot spots over Waitangi Weekend aimed to target those illegally operating passenger services as well as other breaches of road rules.

However, it could still be a while before a permanent road safety camera is installed in the town, which is on the main tourist highway through to Central Otago, Queenstown and Te Anau.

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.

It was conducted through Central Otago and Queenstown Lakes to Milford Sound.

Across the area in those 12 days 260 infringement notices were issued.

In Ōmārama, figures provided show 473 were stopped at Road police checkpoints on

While traffic flows may have reduced to a trickle this week the police's 'Operation Dragon' stopped hundreds of drivers at checkpoints in Ōmārama over Waitangi Weekend.

- continued over



Operation Dragon targets tourist hot spots - continued

SH8 and Ōmārama Ave over three days.

But at the time of publication the Ōmārama Gazette had not received the numbers of infringement notices issued in and around the town. [PLEASE NOTE: This story will be updated with the numbers of infringement notices issued during the Ōmārama part of the operation once this is made available.]

Anyone providing transport for people “for hire or reward” or transporting more than 12 people needs a transport service licence.

Passenger safety can be put at risk because unlicensed operators tend not to keep logbooks, and often exceed the legal amount of hours they can drive.

Senior Sergeant Hugh Tait, of the Southern Commercial Vehicle Safety Team, said the operation was timed to coincide with Chinese New Year when there was an increase in Chinese and Taiwanese tourists travelling, and an increase in travel overall through Waitangi weekend.

Recent serious accidents near Lake Takapo and in Central Otago involving tourist buses – although these were licensed operators - was also a motivating factor, he said.

However, these exercises are carried out on a regular basis in the Mt Cook, Queenstown and Te Anau areas, he said.

Four to five CVST staff together with the NZTA regulatory team were in Omarama to check the safety of vehicles, drivers and operators.

As a result, four unlicensed tour operators were found and full investigations into each of these would follow, Snr Sgt Tait said.

Subsequently, one operator was “parked up” and alternative arrangements were made to transport the passengers. The others were able to continue on pending further investigation.

One of the four caught operating unlicensed was American.

The teams had expected to find more than four operators, he said.

“In those four days we stopped over 130 heavy vehicles, four out of 130 is quite low.”

However, “anecdotally” others were apparently bypassing the checks by turning off at Prohibition Rd, he said.

“Are we getting them all, definitely not.”

The maximum penalty for operating unlicensed was \$10,000.

The exercise was “primarily preventative” - to set a standard, to make sure the vehicles were in good order and the drivers not fatigued or impaired.

There are “good open roads” in this area, so speeds are “usually pretty high”. A permanent traffic camera “wouldn’t hurt”, he said.

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

Police issue notices from 62 speed cameras and 47 red light cameras around the country.

A NZTA spokesperson said in an email it was considering adding about 27 new safety cameras in an initial phase. Overall, there will be 51 new cameras.

“We are working through identifying locations across the country where we expect these cameras will save as many lives as possible. NZ Police are part of these conversations. At this stage we don’t expect to install any new safety cameras on this stretch of road in Omarama.

“Although we’re not considering this location for a new safety camera, we will work with NZ Police on enforcing speeds here. This could be via the future operation of a NZTA operated mobile safety camera or via NZ Police operating a speed radar.”

NZTA’s plans for safety cameras.

By 2027 NZTA will have:

- taken over existing safety cameras from NZ Police
- have its own mobile safety camera operations (enforcement begins by mid-2025)
- expanded the safety camera network by 51 new cameras.

Of these new cameras NZTA is:

- enforcing or has begun construction of 24 cameras
- identifying locations for around 27 new cameras to be spread across the country
- We’re prioritising average speed/ point-to-point (P2P) safety cameras as these are proven to be the most effective camera type at reducing deaths and serious injuries.
- Roads with average speed safety cameras require two or more cameras. So, there will be a limited number of roads getting these new safety cameras.

Read more here:

<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/safety/driving-safely/safety-cameras/safety-camera-partners/partnering-with-nz-police/>

<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/safety/driving-safely/safety-cameras/about-safety-cameras/how-we-choose-safety-camera-locations/>



Ōmārama base for new varsity gliding club

If there is any such thing as a healthy addiction then this could be it and it's one well worth sharing, new gliding club organiser Amy Smith says.

Amy is in her third year at Otago University, studying law and commerce with finance "But don't hold that against me".

This year she has been instrumental in founding a new university club – the Otago University Gliding Club which has 35 members and counting.

This past summer Amy has been in Omarama working with the Omarama Gliding Club as a winch operator.

British born, she moved to Kapiti when she was nine-years-old and was in the control seat of a glider by 15 flying solo.

She was taught to fly gliders by her father, who is also a powered aircraft pilot, and became a member of the Wellington Wairarapa Gliding Club.

"I grew up around gliders, ...going to lots of competitions...that was how my summers were spent."

As far as she was aware, although usual overseas, there was no other university gliding club in New Zealand.

Amy set up a stand introducing gliding to potential members at the University's clubs' day during orientation week.

About 200 people called to the stand to find out more and the new club was born. "A lot of people don't know what gliding is,"

Her goal was to get as many as possible signed up to the 'introduction to flight packages' which gave people the opportunity to take three flights over an organised club weekend trip to Ōmārama.

The first flight experience weekend is at the end of this month and nine have signed up for that.

She hopes to repeat this multiple times during the year and "keep them coming back and learning".

Amy said she put her flying aside when she first began her studies but is now starting to "get back into it".

She has her Cross-Country Pilot (XCP) certificate from Gliding New Zealand which is the qualification needed to fly a glider beyond the airfield's range.

This means she can "expand distances" and "adapt to the environment" beyond the reach of the airfield.

Of course, in Ōmārama it was all about "mountain soaring" - cross country soaring in the mountains.

Looking ahead she would "love to do her instructors licence".

When considering taking up flying the sail planes many think that it is more expensive than it actually is.

It was still affordable on a student budget but often it was time which was the biggest barrier she said.

For those who are keen, if you were under 26 then joining Youth Glide New Zealand had definite benefits, financial and otherwise. "It's what makes it more affordable.

" But when you're just so addicted you just really want to keep going back ... it's definitely better than cigarettes."

“Gliding’s so amazing. Once people get hooked and realise how awesome it is [They also] realise how much there is to benefit from it. There’s so many personal development options ...I’d be a completely different person if I wasn’t hooked into the sport.

“You learn so many different life skills - you can’t stop once you start.

“Throughout the time you’re working up to go solo, you’re in a team environment, you’re given responsibility and you’re practicing decision making skills.

“The sense of responsibility and sense of purpose that you get when you’re part of that team, it really helps develop you as a person,”

Amy said.

Right: the new Otago University Gliding Club logo.



(Below) The Otago University Gliding Club which will have Omarama as its base for instruction is the brainchild of glider pilot and student Amy Smith. Photo: Supplied.



Paddy and Jade make their mark

Jade could well be a champion in the making.

She's "a nice wee dog", one observer, well-known Ōmārama triallist Ginger Anderson said.

Heading dog Jade, who was campaigned at the Omarama Collie Dog Club trials by triallist Paddy Henwood, head shepherd at Ben Omar Station owned by the Andersons, worked hard to gain third place in the intermediate section of event I, the long head, with 90.5 points.

She also won praise from judge John Scott who noted her potential.

Of the locals campaigning in that event Paddy and Jade were placed second, behind Rick Aubrey and Monty and before Ginger and Jet who were third.

This continues the winning form of the man and dog team seen at the Strath Taieri Club trials last month.

Paddy and Jade won the maiden title in in event I at those trials with 88.5 points and were also fifth in Event II, the short head and yard, with 90 points and were placed first in the intermediate and maiden sections in that event.

Paddy is a member of the Ōmārama club's committee.

The 110th Ōmārama Collie Dog Club two-day trials were held last weekend at the club grounds on Dalrachney Station.

The numbers of entries for the day's runs were good, club secretary Elizabeth Bertenshaw said.

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



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

Those officiating were:

Event I, Long Pull, judge John Scott, marshal Rick Aubrey

Event II, Short Head, judge Jimmy Longley, marshal Ginger Anderson

Event III, Zig Zag Hunt judge Jock Mehan, marshal Scott Hunter

Event IV, Straight Hunt judge Todd Rowland, marshal Angus Fraser

Omarama Collie Dog Club trials March 1 and 2, 2025

RESULTS

Event 1: total runs, 62

Open: Boyd Tisdall and Zed 95.5, 1; Rick Aubrey and Monty 95, 2; Robbie Calder and Hawk 94.5, 3; Eion Herbert and Steel 94, 4; Paul McCarthy and Pete 93.5, 5. Intermediate: Rick Aubrey and Monty 95, 1; Kohri Brown and Punch 91, 2; Paddy Henwood and Jade 90.5, 3.

Maiden: Greg Metherall and Mick 79, 1; Harry Smith and Herb 75, 2; Regan Bell-Taylor and Spy 74, 3.

Local: Rick Aubrey and Monty 95, 1; Paddy Henwood and Jade 90.5, 2; Ginger Anderson and Jet 90.

Event II, total runs: 82

Open: John Caley and Ed 97.5, 1; Lloyd Smith and Guide 97, 2; Pip Flower and Hurricane, 96, 3; Lloyd Smith and Code 95.5, 4; Rick Aubrey and Trump 95, 5.

Intermediate: Pip Flower, Hurricane 96, 1; Scott Hunter, Larry 94, 2; Ginger Anderson, Ben 93.5, 3.

Maiden: Rick Aubrey, Trump 95, 1; Luke Duncan, Ace 91.5, 2; Nigel Bertenshaw, Steel 89.5, 3.

Local: Rick Aubrey, Trump 95, 1; Scott Hunter, Larry 94, 2; Ginger Anderson, Ben 93.5, 3.

Event III, total runs: 81

Open: Scott Hunter and Hood 97, 1; Todd Rowland and Demo 94, 2; Todd Burke and Rob 93.5, 3; Lloyd Smith and Barney 93, 4; Andrew Goulding and Pearl 92.5, 5.

Intermediate: Todd Burke, Rob 93.5, 1; Todd Burke, Mac 91, 2; Nicole Pope, Grit 90.5, 3;

Maiden: Luke Duncan, Grace 90,1; Lloyd Smith, Jerry 89.5, 2; Greg Metherell, Brin 88, 3.

Local: Scott Hunter, Hood, 97; Todd Burke, Rob 93.5, 2; Todd Burke, Mac 91, 3.

Event IV, total runs: 80

Open: Scott Hunter, Hood 97, 1; Andy McNabb, Kahn 96, 2; Boyd Tisdall, Gee, 95.5, 3; Lloyd Smith, Barney 95, 4, Ed Aubrey, Charlie 94.5, 5.

Intermediate: Cam Burgess, Bluff 94.25, 1; Rick Aubrey, Bert 94, 2; Lloyd Smith, Jerry 93.5, 3.

Maiden: Lloyd Smith, Jerry 93.5, 1; Hamish Foster, Stan 92, 2; Rory Moore, Quake 91, 3.

Local: Scott Hunter, Hood 97, 1; Ed Aubrey, Charlie 94.5, 2; Rick Aubrey, Burt 94, 3.

The Farmlands North Otago Centre Championships are at the Patearoa Collie Club Trial Grounds Hamilton Road, Patearoa on April 28 to 29.

The 2025 South Island and New Zealand Championships, hosted by the Canterbury Centre are at Lochiel Station, Hanmer Springs and begin Sunday, May 25.

Confidence and prices lift at sales

Vendors left this year's Omarama fine wool lamb sale and ewe fair with smiles as a general air of confidence lifted spirits and prices.

PGG Wrightson Area Livestock Manager/Head Auctioneer Mark Yeates said there was a yarding of just over 19,000 lambs and a "really good crowd of buyers" at the lamb sale. "It was the second biggest yarding in 16 or 17 years," he said. Vendors from Central Otago had sent stock which in the past would have been sent to the Cromwell Saleyards, Mr Yeates said. "It was a very good yarding."

As a "broad overview" of sale prices, in the merino wether lamb section, Tara Hills Station sold about 1200 wether lambs which made \$147 to \$121 a head, "very outstanding". Ben Dhu Station put up 500 as two lines which went for \$126 and \$127. In the merino ewe lamb section Tara Hills had 400 which went for \$88 to \$119. In the quarter-bred wethers the top yarding was a draft of 708 from Glen Foyle which went for \$137 and 596 ewe lambs went for \$141. In the half-bred wethers Cluden Station's draft of 400 made \$131 to \$140. In the half-bred ewe lambs Glenbrook station had 88 at \$146. There was one line of 681 SufTex cross which went for \$145, from Bendigo Station. It was the first time the station had been represented at an Omarama sale, Mr Yeates said.

At the Ewe Fair, "there was a bit more confidence, in general". The best way to "extract a premium" when there is good demand is to put stock to auction, to take advantage of the "competitive auction atmosphere", he said.

In the five and six-year-old merino ewes section the top drafting was Ben Dhu Station at \$151. Benmore Station made \$146 for six-year-olds and Ben Dhu featured again with \$145. "There was a nice line from Lake Ohau Station which went for \$133." The median price was between \$110 and \$120. The lighter ewes went for \$90. In the annual draft merino section, the range was from \$80 to \$90 across these. There were three pens of half-bred ewes which made \$104 with very limited demand, Mr Yeates said.



Rare and unusual locals take the limelight

Last week a group gathered at Corbies Creek near Omarama to be introduced to some rare and threatened native fish who ordinarily prefer to live life out of the glare of publicity.

The 'fish celebration day', was organised by the Ahuriri Catchment Community Group and was run by EOS Ecology scientist and 'Wai Connection' regional coordinator Helena Quilter and Doc Twizel/Te Manahuna non-migratory galaxid lead Dean Nelson.

Two species of the nationally vulnerable and one nationally endangered species of galaxias can be found in 12 spring-fed or wetland-fed streams in the Upper Waitaki/Mackenzie area. An ancient fish species without scales, they are related to whitebait but don't go out to sea and they don't for the love all things mother nature go in a patty.

It is the nationally endangered Lowland longjaw Galaxias which has made a small pool in Corbies Creek its home and which is under close watch and the protection of conservationists. Doc estimates there are only 250 mature adults left and they are only found in five tributaries in the Waitaki catchment in a handful of side channels and small springs. Natural barriers like waterfalls or built barriers protect the threatened species from competition or predators such as Kaoro and trout by preventing access and ultimately extinction.

However, barriers can be breached with devastating results. In January 2023, Doc recorded just under a 100 longjaws in a 25 m² area of Corbies Creek but by April 2024 only 12 were found in the same area. On the same day Doc staff found the cause – two brown trout had managed to bypass the barrier. It was thought likely the large overland flood in July 2022 carried trout into the stream upstream of the barrier, Mr Nelson said.

The fish face threats from other causes – sometimes natural - springs dry up or move, as well floods, drought and changes to water quality also have an impact Willows whose roots mat can affect spawning sites as can aquatic weeds like Monkey Musk which Doc staff had battled to eliminate at the Corbies Creek site.



ICYMI Scandalous practice unearthed

Threatened with disqualification for being grown and raised outside of the region and also outside of the bucket, late entrant from Canterbury, Peter 'Casso' Casserly's efforts by far outweighed and outnumbered the harvest of any others of the 29 competing in this year's spud-in-a-bucket competition.

The giveaway, which prompted legendary judge Laurie Ruddenklau to issue his harsh ruling may have been in the fact that the shore also looked a little too 'shovel-ready'?

After lodging a protest and arguing the toss with the judge, whose word is final, Casso ultimately escaped the ultimate humiliation of ultimately being barred, when adjudicators decided to create a new category for the illegal move to resolve the dispute.

We're a little unsure just what that category was but it avoided what might have been an historic low for the competition – the first ever actual disqualification.

Plus, was the fastest way to get a quiet beer.

Rumour has it that Casso is already planning to comeback stronger than ever for the 2026 season.

Laurie, ably assisted by scrutineers Ross Tangney, Malcolm Cameron and Philip Jannink had earlier duly screened all other entrants without disruption commenting that this year's harvest had not been quite as prolific as in days past.

This year's winner was Ali Brosnan, of Oamaru, with 14 spuds.
The record set by Colin Herd in 2019, of 29 potatoes, still stands.

The potatoes and buckets were supplied to contestants – members of Boots & Jandals Hotel Omarama Social Club at the end of last year.

Following the competition, social club members were treated to a barbeque tea with buckets of new spuds on the side.

With thanks to all who volunteered to make it another 'best day of the year' event.

RESULTS:

First, Ali Brosnan with 14 spuds;

Second, Jenny Cameron with 12;

Third, Ken Martin with 11.

Worst Spud: Lindsay Purvis.

Best potato: Kunyane Panthong.

Best quality potato; Greg Harper.

Children's winners were Toni and Charlotte Hales.



What caught your eye this month?

We have a new regular feature on the Ōmārama Gazette Facebook page - Photo Friday.

It is where we invite you to share a photo of something that has caught your eye or made you smile during the previous week.

We each do many different things and have unique perspectives so we really do love to see your photos - your take on things. On Facebook we invite you to post your 'Photo Friday' in the comments. We'll then also share those photos here in this section. Here is last month's selection:

Above: A rest stop and views from Bog Roy Station on the Sailors Cutting to Benmore section of the Alps to Ocean Trail by Fiona Chamberlain.

Below: *The David O'Neill Contracting team is captured busy on the job... mowing on the plains of Ōmārama. Video: FarmShop.*

This made Michelle Kitchen smile as she thanked the Green by Nature team for picking up all the overflow rubbish

Four likely lads wait for the CSI Charity Bike Ride to hit town for a lunch stop, by Michele Patterson. A double rainbow brightens up the view east, by Fiona Chamberlain.



Let's brainstorm this together

Come October and I will have been guardian of this publication - the Ōmārama Gazette - for ten years.

So, I feel it's time for a bit of a refresh. I'd love your thoughts on planning ways to update our approach.

as we head down the track if you don't mind testing out a few ideas on behalf of all of us and giving your feedback then please email omaramagazette@gmail.com and I'll add your name to the list.

The responses to last month's questions were unanimous in the view that the news stories, community reports and the noticeboard mattered the most to readers. - It's about where we live and news we can use.

This month's pause for thought...

Do you think the Gazette is too long? We lead busy lives so maybe smaller bites of info would be better.

What say instead of all the info coming to you once a month it was divided into News, Community Reports and Advertising with each section emailed at a regular but different time during the month? e.g - the news came out on the first Wednesday, the community reports a fortnight later and an advertising supplement at another time.

As well I've been researching a new way to send bulk emails. The present provider is also popular with spammers because it's free and so servers are inclined to block the Gazette and prevent it getting through to subscribers.

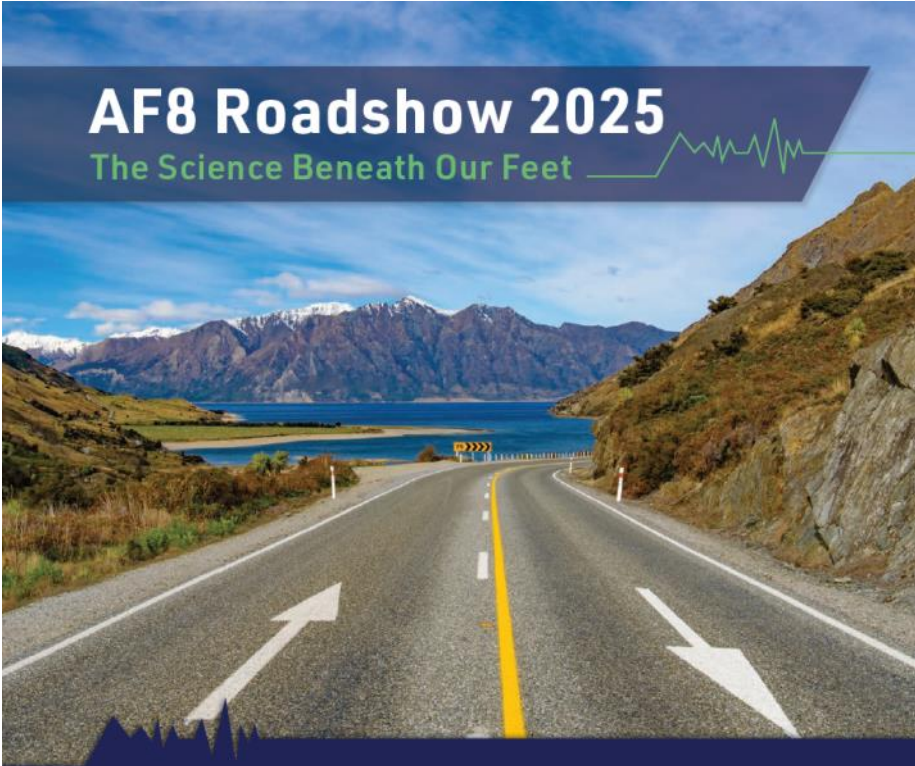
Have a look at this - <https://substack.com/about>. and let me know what you think. omaramagazette@gmail.com

Most importantly any new email system needs to be user friendly, photo friendly and have a clear layout.



Roadshow coming to town


The AF8 Roadshow will visit Ōmārama for a presentation to Ōmārama School, and a public talk will be held at the Ōmārama Community Centre from 6pm to 9pm, Thursday, April 3. More info to come...



AF8 Roadshow 2025

The Science Beneath Our Feet

"I'm really scared of earthquakes. But now I understand why we have them and what I can do about them, I feel much better. Thank you for coming."
- Student, Tasman



AF8 ALPINE FAULT MAGNITUDE 8

Natural Hazards Commission
Toka Tū Ake

Emergency Management SOUTHLAND

Emergency Management Canterbury

Emergency Management Otago
Te Kākau Whakamarumaru Ōēkou

Te Rūnanga o NGĀI TAHU

WEST COAST EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

NELSON TASMAN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Marlborough Emergency Management

National Emergency Management Agency
Te Kākau Whakamarumaru

QuakeCoRE

University of Otago

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

UCV UNIVERSITY OF CANTONMENT

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
TE HIRANGA WAKA

GNS SCIENCE
TE PŪ AO

The Noticeboard

To have your community notice included here

Our sincere condolences to husband Russell and the family and friends of Zeta Gard, who died in Australia last month.

Happy Birthday to you all: There were a flurry of birthdays celebrated last month including three of our 'Last of the Summer Wine' former and present rural mailmen Lex Perriam, Malcolm Cameron and John Rogers.

Thank you from the O'Neills.

Words will never be enough for the outstanding medical service we received from the Omarama first response and fire brigade, Ambulance Service, Paula Trembath, Carol Harding, Police and the Otago Southland Rescue Helicopter in the early hours on the 5th February. We are forever so grateful, especially to the amazing people of our small community who have had the tough job of being called out to these types of calls. Thank you to everyone else for all their phone calls, texts and offer of help during this time. Thank you to all our staff for taking on such a big job ensuring that Dave's Empire continues to run smoothly, which hasn't gone unnoticed. Thank you to all our clients for all their ongoing support and understanding, as well as the many phone calls and texts wishing regards and get-well-soon messages. Dave is recovering well and is pleased to be home again. Once again, thank you *from Prue, Dave, Samantha, Jack, Ben and Izzie.*

Congratulations to Ōmārama rower Sadie Mason, who competed in the NZ Rowing Championships at Lake Ruataniwha, last month. She and fellow Twizel rower Kiara Thyne were placed fourth in the women's senior double sculls and third in the B-Final of the women's senior coxless pair, oars. She also placed sixth in the women's senior single sculls.

The South Island Secondary Schools Championships begin Friday and the Maadi Regatta, at Karapiro, starts March 24.

The Community Generator project team have advised the generator is due to arrive by the end of this month. Watch this space.

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. Twilight golf 5pm Thursdays. 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 Mc Kerchar 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 April Issue of the Omarama Gazette
is Wednesday, April 2, 2025.**

Please submit copy
by Thursday March 27, 2025

The Community Reports

Ōmārama Police



Hi all,

First off, I would just like to say thank you to everyone within the community that helped Ōmārama Search and Rescue with their recent Cavalcade fundraiser. I had offers of assistance from members of the local community, cribbies, family of locals and also three good ol' boys from our local MenzShed. We also offered Mackenzie SAR (Twizel) to partake so we could get the numbers of drivers we needed. As a result we managed to raise \$4000, the majority of which will go to Ōmārama SAR. The gents from MenzShed have kindly offered their earnings of

\$750 to the Ōmārama First Response Unit.

It's probably worth mentioning that in the event of any large-scale search the first point of call for us as a small group is Twizel and vice versa so I'm pleased we were able to help them out as much as they helped us. But my wholehearted thanks goes to all of those members of the community for both Twizel and Ōmārama who kindly donated their time to help us out.

Lastly, I would also like to thank two local businesses who have once again shown their support Bruce 'n' Julie Dyson from BOOTS n JANDALS HOTEL, and Sandra and Martin from TRAIL JOURNEYS who kindly lent us their vans so that we were able to transport all of our drivers around - For FREE!

In other news I've been concentrating on traffic duties a fair bit recently, due to holding very few files that require investigating. It is probably no surprise that tourists are the main focus of my attention due to speed and poor driving behaviour, but not all. There are certainly some Kiwis that need educating in road safety as well.

The Police are shocking for using acronyms for everything.....for example PST (Public Safety Team), RPG (Road Policing Group), CVST (Commercial Vehicle Safety Team). I'm sure you get the idea. We have acronyms for absolutely everything, Ange calls it my police speak. My bosses want me to concentrate on another acronym - RIDS which is a call to say enforce Restraints, Impairment, Distraction and Speed.

They reckon these four things are the key factors to lowering our road toll. They regularly check on each officer's numbers to make sure we are performing to their expectations.

No, we don't have a quota but if we are seen to not be focusing on these areas when doing road policing duties questions are asked as to why not. So, with very few files currently in my tray, it is rightly expected that my ticket numbers should increase.

So, be warned, especially around drink driving. Where as you may get a warning (from me) for slightly breaching the speed limit, you will definitely not get one for drink-driving.

I have recently been approached by a landowner who owns a local farm. He has concerns that persons are taking liberty and driving onto his farm without permission and illegally hunting. I'm sure that's not the case. As I explained to him anyone that did so would likely be facing prosecution or at the least lose their firearms licence. Unless you have express authority to be on private land to hunt, don't do it. If you are found on private land with a firearm you are immediately suspected of 'Unlawful Hunting' and presumed guilty. It is up to that person to prove to Police that they weren't hunting not the other way around. It is also something Police take seriously and will seek to prosecute on most occasions.

Lastly, small communities like ours rely heavily on volunteers, I know that both FENZ and SAR are fairly low in numbers at the moment so if you are thinking about joining make contact and get into it. You won't be disappointed.

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

Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade



By Lynley Pryde

We certainly can't complain about the weather in February, it's been glorious but with hot sunny days comes the extra risk of fire. We are in a prohibited fire season and would remind you to all be vigilant around activities that could create sparks or heat.

The fire siren has again been busy during February with nine calls to date for fire, alarms and medicals. One of our calls was to a cyclist on the A20 and we quickly activated our team and dispatched our fire truck and 2 medical utes as well as Search and Rescue, Police and the Otago Southland Rescue Helicopter. Luckily our cyclist walked down the bank to a boat

and got a ride back to Sailors Cutting but it was good practice for us to activate our response plan and have a good outcome.

The Ōmārama Fire Brigade has completed three Home Fire Safety Visits within the local community over the past month. These visits aim to assist households in evaluating and improving fire safety and preparedness. During these visits, we have successfully identified potential risks, discussed evacuation plans, and assessed the placement of smoke and heat detectors. Additionally, we have installed several smoke alarms and highlighted various hazards that can be reduced through increased awareness. If you would like to schedule a Home Fire Safety Visit for your home, please email the brigade at omarama@fireandemergency.nz or request a visit through the FENZ website <https://www.fireandemergency.nz/home-fire-safety/home-fire-safety-visits/>, and we will make the necessary arrangements.

On a fun note we completed our water training at the Ōmārama School Pool. It was a perfect night to do this as we had another hot day in Ōmārama and so all of us welcomed the chance to jump in and have a bit of fun. We did however complete the training and are skilled up for how to respond in the lake or floods.

We would like to welcome Paige Robinson to the Brigade, Paige is new to the area and will train as a fire fighter and we wish Azza Wood all the best when he heads away on his seven-day recruit course at the end of March after a busy six months of hard graft.

Photo: Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade

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 are welcome.

Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade chief fire officer Greg Harper, 021 293 1171



Antony Ford CA



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If you would like us to visit you, please call and arrange a time.

e. office@fordsimpson.co.nz

w. www.fordsimpson.co.nz

PHONE 03 687 2080



Brodie Craig CA

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.

Twilight Golf: Thursdays, tee-off 5pm to 5.30pm.

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

Ōmārama Community Garden

Last month these volunteers; Vanessa, Tracy, Kathryn, and Jess led by Jennie helped at the first Omarama School Garden Club session for the year. The pupils were planning and planting winter crops for the school and community gardens.

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!



Age Concern Ōmārama

Come along to the Ōmārama Community Centre
1pm to 3pm, Wednesday, March 12
for an interesting surprise afternoon!
NB Change of day this month

Coffee afternoons are on the second Tuesday of each month
at the Ōmārama Community Centre.

From last month's meeting: Several of those who attended enquired about donating blood. While there are no New Zealand Blood Service visits to the area there are several visits scheduled to North Otago and South Canterbury in 2025. These are: Oamaru - July, 1-3 and Oct 28-30; Timaru - 1-3 April 1-3, July 15-17, September 2-4 and December 9-11. If the group is interested in visiting any of those collections, we can organise a group booking. Please let Kathryn know.

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

Ōmārama MenzShed

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

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





The Age Concern Ōmārama van trip to a restored hydro-era house in Twizel evoked many memories for the group.

Last month, a van load of 10 women – including seven from Otematata - travelled courtesy of Age Concern Otago-Waitaki District to Twizel for a tour of the refurbished 'Hydro house'.

The group was shown around the display at the entrance to the town by Twizel Heritage Group representatives Rick Ramsey and Ivan Stratford.

The standard 76 sqm Ministry of Works "Reg 130" house, which was donated to the group and shifted to Wairepo Rd, has been restored to replicate its construction era roots, right down to the utensils found in the kitchen drawers.

The recreation won the ultimate seal of approval from those in the group who had lived through the construction days.

The visit included a tour of the canal system and a picnic lunch together in the high-country sunshine in the Twizel Market Place.

Photos by: Rick Ramsey and Kathryn Bennett



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

Last month, the Ōmārama Library volunteers gathered for a catch-up over lunch at Ōmārama Lodge. *Photo: Supplied.*

The library volunteers would love to welcome others who are interested in joining the team. If you are keen to know more

contact Yvonne 027 476 7473.



Ōmārama School

Welcome to Omarama, Jacob.

Ōmārama School warmly welcomes Jacob Hannagan to the senior classroom.
By Alison Holden, Ōmārama school principal.

Jacob has been teaching at South Westland Area School in Hari Hari on the West Coast where he held the role of the assistant principal.

He is an enthusiastic educator with a great sense of humour and is committed to engaging students by connecting learning to their interests.

He is skilled in digital technology integration, music creation and film editing.

Jacob believes in creating a positive classroom culture where students feel valued and show kindness to one another.

He has a comprehensive understanding of the New Zealand curriculum with active

engagement in structured literacy and structured maths and he brings many other attributes to the position.

This will be of great benefit to our students. He will be living in the school house with his dog called "Rilla". Jacob will be a real asset to our school!

He has an interest in coaching sport and organising internal and external school events.

We are excited to have him join our staff and look forward to working with him and building another strong teaching team for 2025.



Other Notices

We have an exciting year planned for our students so please look out for our school Facebook page that we intend to launch soon, our school website (see below).

A reminder to families that the school runs a Headstart programme for four-year-olds on a Wednesday afternoon.

Enrolments are most welcome. Please contact the school office on 03 438 9815 or email office@omarama.school.nz or principal@omarama.school.nz

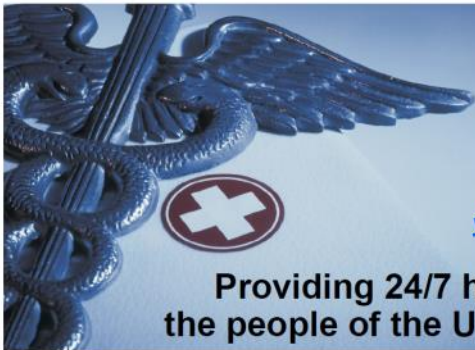
Alison, Jacob, Bailey, Kay and Ange

Ōmārama School contact details:

Phone: 03 438 9815

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

www.omarama.school.nz



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**

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are proud to offer our registered and casual patients the following services

- * Ultrasound performed by a qualified clinician (great for minor fractures, gall stones, kidney stones, heart and lung problems, foreign bodies, blood clots, detecting early pregnancy and much more!)
- * Minor surgery
- * Vasectomies
- * Mole checking and removal
- * Steroid injections
- * Venesection
- * Aviation, workplace and driving medicals
- * Botox for Wrinkle reduction
- * Workplace health screening
- * Counselling
- * Spirometry to diagnose asthma and COPD
- * Hearing and sight tests for adults and children
- * Ear syringing
- * Liquid nitrogen for warts, verruca's and skin lesions
- * Cardiovascular risk assessment and diabetic checks (funded for eligible patients)
- * Travel advice and vaccination
- * Cervical smears (funded for eligible patients)
- * Seasonal flu shots and shingles vaccine (funded for eligible patients)
- * Childhood immunisation
- * Before school checks
- * Postnatal and six-week baby health check

And much more!

**GP consult fees: Under 14yrs Free; Adult \$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

Wellness matters

A health column from the Kurow Medical/Mackenzie Health Centre Team

- By Fiona Chamberlain

Autumn is in the air and the leaves are changing. Unfortunately with the lower temperatures comes influenza (flu). Flu is different to a cold, but people often confuse the two. Both are caused by viruses but if you have flu, you become much more unwell. Flu primarily impacts the respiratory system, including the nose, throat, and lungs. When someone with flu coughs, sneezes or talks they release droplets into the air. Others can catch flu by breathing in these droplets. You can also catch flu by touching surfaces like door handles that have the flu virus on them and then touching your nose or mouth. Some people have a higher risk of getting flu which includes people over 65, pregnant women and people with some medical conditions. They also have a higher risk of becoming much sicker with the flu.

Symptoms of the flu usually last for about seven days and include;

High fevers and sweats, Runny nose and eyes, Cough, Sore throat, Sneezing, Muscle and joint aches. It is common for coughing to last for several weeks after the other flu symptoms have gone.

Self-care for the flu

Rest and drink plenty of fluids to replace any fluid you lose by fevers and sweats. Water is best, try to avoid alcohol, tea and coffee as these can dehydrate you. Drink lemon and honey mixed with hot water for a sore throat or dry cough. Be sure to wash regularly and keep linen clean and dry. Medicines for flu. Antibiotics do not fix the flu as it is a virus not a bacteria. You can take paracetamol and ibuprofen to help relieve your fever and aches and pains. As with all medicines be careful to take the correct dose. It is very important not to take more than the maximum dose. Take advice from your healthcare provider or pharmacist if you have underlying medical conditions or are unsure

“Red flag” symptoms

It is important to understand that most people with flu can manage at home. However sometimes flu can be serious. Seek care if you are concerned or have any of these red flag symptoms; A high fever that is not coming down with the self-care measures and medications (especially if you are pregnant), Chills or severe shaking, Difficulty breathing or chest pain, Purple or bluish discolouration of the lips or extremities, Seizures or convulsions, Signs of any other serious conditions for example meningitis - rash, severe headache, unable to look at light, Signs of dehydration such as dizziness when standing, not passing urine regularly

For babies or children all the above apply as well as:

Noisy or fast breathing, grunting or wheezing, Pale, drowsy, difficult to wake, Irritated/ always wanting to be held, Limp or unable to move, Dry nappies or no tears when they cry

Preventing the flu

Having a flu vaccination every year is the best way of preventing the flu and this is available from around April 1. It is recommended everyone over six months old gets a flu jab every year. It is free for those 65 years and over and people with; Heart disease, Respiratory disease including asthma (on regular preventative therapy), Diabetes, Chronic renal disease, Cancer, Immunity problems, Pregnancy (any trimester), Children under 4 years with a history of significant respiratory illness, Some mental health conditions, *Other. *See here for a more detailed list www.schedule.pharmac.govt.nz/ScheduleOnline.A

To help stop spreading the flu to others:

Carry and use disposable tissues, masks and hand gel, Cover your nose or mouth when you cough or sneeze, Use good hand hygiene – washing regularly/hand gel, Stay home from work, school, and gatherings to protect other people if unwell, Even if you are usually healthy you can still catch the flu so don't let the flu get you, Get your flu jab .

Ōmārama Residents' Association

Chairperson's report, February 2025

By Michelle Kitchen

This February has been a busy time dealing with funding applications and the upcoming Long Term Plan.

Saturday, February 15 saw Maurice Cowie, myself and Community Board member Mike King on the Ahuriri Long Term Plan bus trip for the afternoon.

Also on the trip were Mayor Kircher, Councillor Cowles, Councillor McCone, Finance and Corporate Development group manager Paul Hope and Lucianne White, Community Engagement Lead, plus nine community members.

It was a fact finding trip about the upcoming issues that affect the Ahuriri Ward. Lots of discussion regarding the proposed Wind Farm in Kurow, community halls, short term holiday let levies, council housing, water metering and the need to conserve water going forward.

It is imperative that the community get behind the issues that affect them and have their say.

Our community hall is very important to this community.

Over the years we have put a lot of volunteer time, money and effort into making it the fabulous asset it is.

We get regular feedback on just how good our community hall and centre is.

It is well used on a regular basis generating an income that off sets the hall rating account.

Without the hall we would have no doctor's outreach clinics, no library, no playgroup, no Age Concern gatherings, no housie, nowhere for functions, gatherings or funerals, no meeting room, nowhere for large conferences or school productions.

It is important the community has its say.

The Better Off Funding application for the sports field irrigation project was sent on February 2, 2025.

To date we have not received any correspondence back.

We need this on the next agenda for the Ahuriri Community Board meeting in March to meet the funding deadline.

The RAO are also putting in a funding application to the next round of the Waitaki District Council Community Group Grants for the sealing of the carpark.

The grant fund will not cover the full cost but should go some way towards it.

The Emergency Generator connection point will be installed Monday February 24th.

omarama.chairperson@gmail.com

The next meeting of the
Ōmārama Residents' Association is
7pm, Thursday, March 20, 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



Ōmārama Gliding Club

OGC Captains Log ~ February 14, 2025

By Rod Stuart

What a staggeringly successful season the OGC has had. The Regionals, the Nationals, Youth Glide, Whio Glide, Christmas camp, continuous instruction, overseas visitors, potluck dinners, superb flying weather, outstanding distance flights, and finding time to relax in the Wave Lounge. There is a lot to reflect on! This wee newsletter can only touch on some of what happens at the Omarama Airfield.

A BIG thank you to all the OGC Team on the ground at Omarama Airfield:

The real heroes of our club must surely be 'Team OGC' running the operations on the ground. Brian Sharpe as manager and Gavin Wrigley as CFI and their teams have given their heart and soul to keeping our club in the air for over two years now. Our president Alex Boyes and his team of executives have made some prudent decisions to keep the OGC flying and financially sound. Milan has recently stepped in as CFI. This season we have run two very successful competitions, offered top class instruction to many student pilots, maintained a fleet of club gliders and created an enjoyable flying experience for many pilots.

A BIG thank you to all the tow pilots, winch operators, launch crew, maintenance crew, instructors, office staff, executive members, airfield maintenance team, cleaners, team Omarama Soaring Centre, Youth Glide, our IT experts, helpful pilots and anyone else I have forgotten. You have all pitched in to help make Omarama a top mountain soaring destination. Please take a bow and know you are appreciated! Our flying season traditionally ends at Easter and Good Friday is on 18th April this year. There will be time after Easter to reflect on what we did well and how we can improve on what has been an amazingly successful season. Creating ways to spread the workload for Team OGC is perhaps a top priority.

Welcome to our new instructors:

Having visiting overseas instructors on the airfield has made a huge difference to our club the last two seasons. So many new and current students have benefited immensely from your efforts. We are now up to instructor numbers four and five for this season. A big thank you to Michael, Phil, and Dave who have finished their tours of duty at the OGC. A fond farewell and safe travels home for all of you. And a big welcome to Poul from Denmark and Andy from England who are seeing us through the last of the summer flying.

DUO UO Update:

Our duo discus UO is soon on its way to Auckland to be repaired by Ross Gaddes and his team. In a quick call to Ross today he explained that part of the lower surface of the right wing was removed in Omarama. This gave him confidence that a repair can be attempted. All going well UO will be on her way home in March.

Thank you to Milan and Kahu Soaring:

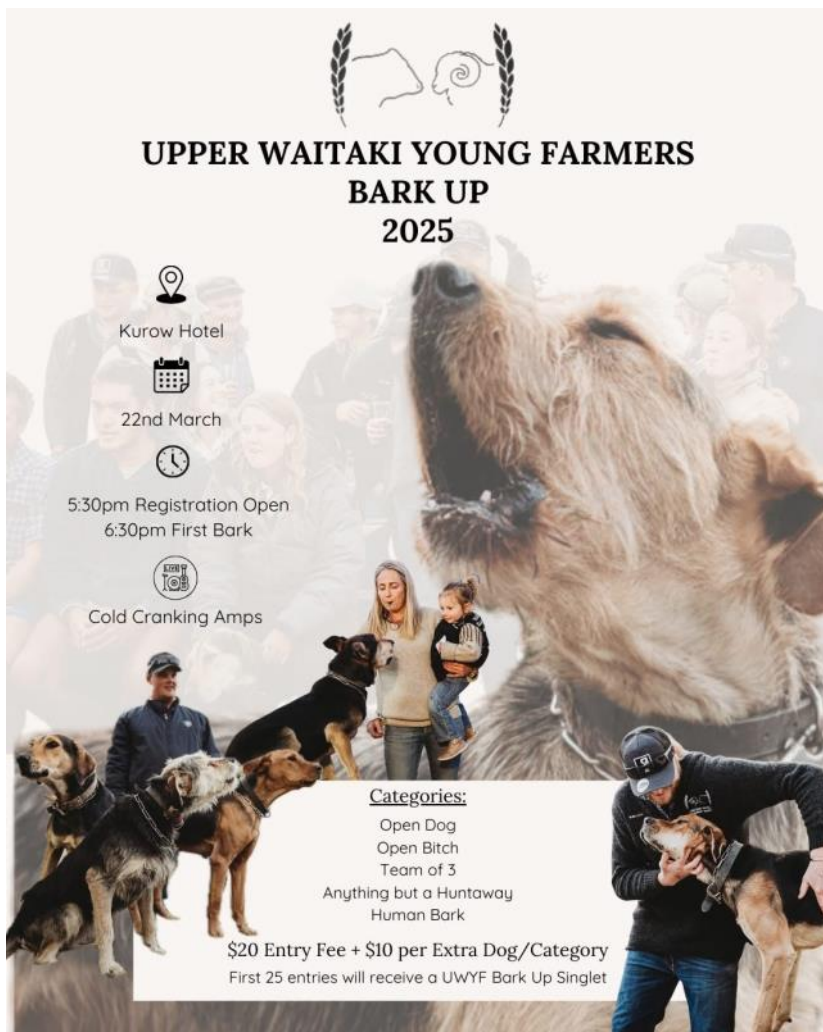
Special thanks to Milan who has stepped in as our Chief Flying Instructor for the rest of this season. Thank you also to Kahu Soaring for presenting the weather at the 10am morning briefings. Thank you Felix and Dan for stepping in sometimes too ~ you both present well. And on the winch front...all is well. We were fortunate to get local ace mechanic Dean Warnock on the job of replacing the damaged torque converter. As soon as parts arrived in to Christchurch on Wednesday and Thursday morning, I drove them south and Dean was ready and waiting to install them. The winch was run that evening and on Friday morning, we did the first launches to test it was all good.


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.







UPPER WAITAKI YOUNG FARMERS BARK UP 2025


Kurow Hotel


22nd March


5:30pm Registration Open
6:30pm First Bark


Cold Cranking Amps

Categories:

- Open Dog
- Open Bitch
- Team of 3
- Anything but a Huntaway
- Human Bark

\$20 Entry Fee + \$10 per Extra Dog/Category
First 25 entries will receive a UWYF Bark Up Singlet



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

The service is free of charge

To make your visit quick and easy:

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



Georgie Robertson
Omarama

03 438 9554 027 4861525



Vicky Munro
Otematata

03 438 7855 021 438745



Alona Shaw
Omarama

027 773 4214

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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

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.

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.



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

A photograph of a modern office interior with vertical blinds, a potted plant, and a desk area. The background is a light, neutral color.

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Gary is proud to be covering the Waitaki Valley - with **over three decades in the Real Estate industry** in the Waitaki, Central Otago and Mackenzie Country, selling residential, lifestyle & commercial property.

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Business Partner & Sales Consultant
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gary.sutherland@tallpoppy.co.nz



TELc PLAYGROUP

Thursday's 11am - 12pm

Come and join us for an hour of exploration and play at the Twizel Early Learning Centre. Nurturing young minds.

1 Market Place, Twizel | (03) 435 0640



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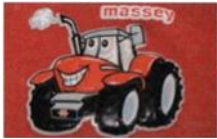
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The Garden Diary - Turn and face the sun

It seems to me it's change, not always choice, which takes you to a 'place', and shapes not only how plants grow but also how we grow.

As they say, it's how we respond to that which impacts us that counts.

"When you can't control what's happening, challenge yourself to control the way you respond. That's where your power is."

This quote is often attributed to Viktor Frankl, a Holocaust survivor and psychiatrist. A Greek philosopher and exponent of stoic ethics – Epictetus – who lived in the first century probably said it first. And, yes, "there is nothing new under the sun".

Contemplating that while pulling weeds and watering tomatoes, I look up.

It's hard not to make comparisons to the sunflower towering above me – and also hard not to regurgitate twee and sentimental claptrap while doing so. A plant is a plant. It must bloom where it's been planted.

I've had sunflowers each year and not for the first time this year's specimen was gifted to us by the birds.

It has been an unusual hybrid - one plant, three to four metres high with, at the time of writing, 23 heads and counting.

It can't help but get attention even from the garden non-enthusiast.

And so, it jump-started my husband's curiosity - if the flowers follow the sun, tracking it from east to west through the day then how to they get back to their starting point by next morning?

Fair question. Turns out that thought has also preoccupied (other) scientists. They could have been tackling the chores rather than spending hours watching sunflowers at work, don't you think?

And isn't that just a little bit creepy that they move and you never see it happen? Timelapse photography along with some serious study of plant cell biology, has given us some answers.

According to researchers only young sunflowers will follow the sun.

The flowers follow this circadian rhythm to receive the most light for photosynthesis necessary for growth.

However, once mature, the flowers will mainly face east.

This is because bees like warm flowers, and the flowers facing the east are the warmest.

But how do they do this and how do they go back to the start to begin a new day?

In daylight hours, so that the sunflower buds and young flowers can track that centre of their universe, they produce more cells or grow more quickly on the east side of their stems than the west. Once the sun goes down, they do the opposite and grow more cells on the west facing side than the east which means they get back in time to greet earth's rising star at dawn.

We know it's happening but if it wasn't for the wonders of time-lapse, we'd never actually see it.

'Being There', By Lauris Edmond

"There must be a moment when
a flower opens
a bud splits
a leaf breaks and falls –

you never see it, you wake up to find
mushrooms in the autumn paddock,
a fully expanded pink impatiens cluster
where last night one flower
bloomed in the dusk,

the speckled scarlet day lily
a dried husk which minute by
midnight minute shed yesterday's
necessary sun. Nobody's ever there.

But I was. I am, indisputedly, here;
The jasmine tangle on my shed wall
Moved, it just did, and a geranium flower
Opened its last petal. It's out. Now.

For a day, a week; an invisible step
In the dance of creation
Pointed its toe, put it down
Tap, tap, without a sound
On the shimmering floor of the world.

Bars, locks, fists of blood, bombs falling
Couldn't stop it happening."

*The Garden Diary is by Ruth Grundy,
I garden a small space under the big sky in Ōmārama.*

When preparing this story, I read:

<https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/buffalo/weather/2020/08/29/the-science-behind-why-some-sunflowers-move>

<https://blogionik.org/blog/2016/10/12/sunflower/#>

<https://thewonderofscience.com/phenomenon/2018/6/15/why-do-sunflowers-follow-the-sun#>





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

February 2025

Highest temperature: February 3, 31C

Lowest temperature: February 12, 6.2C

Most rainfall: February 10, 17.8 mm

Total rainfall for February: 28.4 mm

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