



Ōmārama Gazette

May 2025

Jack leads the parade to the skirl of the pipes.

Young bagpiper Jack Boon (18) took his leading role in the Anzac Day parade through his adopted town right in his stride, with nary a foot nor a note wrong.

A former St Andrew's College pupil, Jack graduated from the college at the end of last year.

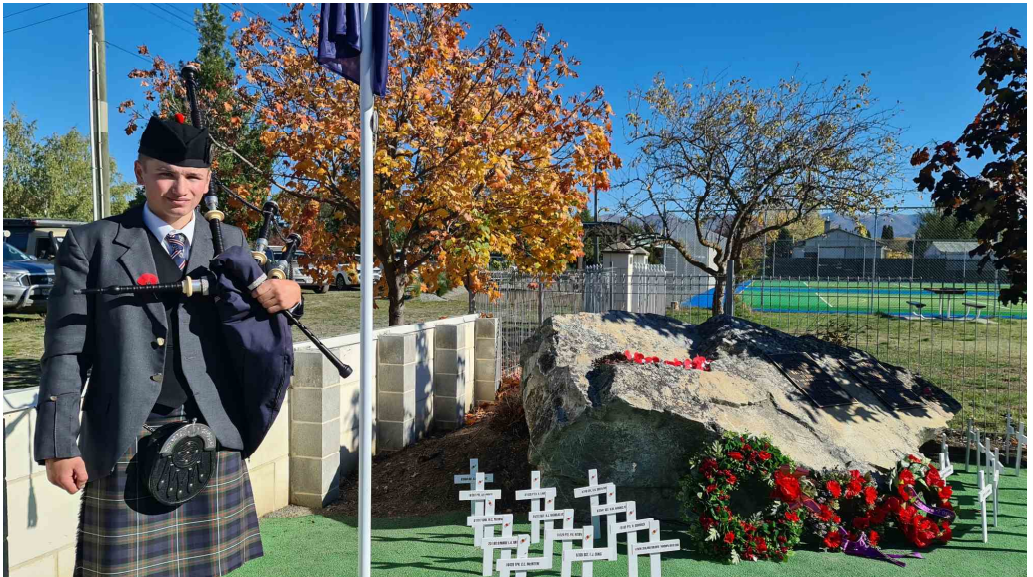
This year he was selected as one of the 2025 intake for the Growing Future Farmers' programme, and for the past three months he has been employed at Ōmārama Station.

Annabelle and Richard Subtil are two of the scheme's farmer trainers

On Anzac Day Jack offered to play the pipes for the traditional parade from the Ōmārama Fire Station to the Memorial Hall as well as during significant moments in the service.

A man of few words, on the day he let the pipes do the talking.

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Jack leads the parade to the skirl of the pipes.

The Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade marched down the state highway to the traditional tunes 'The Green Hills of Tyrol,' and 'When the Battle's O'er' , and during the wreath laying ceremony Jack played the poignant lament "Sleep, Dearie, Sleep" with confidence.

The lament is often used to signal the Last Post and was played at the end of Queen Elizabeth II's funeral.

Jack hails from Lincoln and from a farming family .

Growing Future Farmers students are enrolled in a New Zealand Qualification Authority-approved polytechnic course and complete Primary Industries (level 2 and 3) and the Certificate in Agriculture (level 3) Meat and/or Fibre strand over the two years alongside their live-in on-farm experience.

Their time with their farmer trainers is complemented by courses with 'expert trainers' in shearing, 4WD training, fencing, chainsaw use, animal health and dog handling, teaching the young trainees all-round essential sheep and beef farming skills. Three-month-old heading pup 'Nell' has already joined Jack for his on-farm education.

Prior to Anzac Day Jack had taken part in the station's autumn muster, helping to bring in 7,500 ewes – and yes, he had learned how to count sheep, he said, laughing. Never mind his mustering skills – and you never know what you'll need to put your hand to as a farmer - a week earlier he and the pipes took part in the filming of a New Zealand Merino Company Ltd promotional video on location at Ōmārama Station.

Jack began learning the bagpipes only two years ago. But the school values its strong Scottish connections and heritage. The St Andrew's College Pipe Band was formed 1919 and is widely regarded as New Zealand's premier school pipe band. Several of its members led Anzac parades at various Anzac Day services across the South Island this year.



Anzac Day in Ōmārama, 2025

The crowd who gathered for the Anzac Day service at the memorial hall stretched to the street.

Crowds gathered in their hundreds under bright crisp autumn skies in Ōmārama on Anzac Day to remember and honour those who serve and those who were lost in war.

The Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade parade marched from the Fire Station to the Ōmārama Memorial Hall to the skirl of the pipes - The Green Hills of Tyrol and 'When the Battle's O'er' - played by piper Jack Boon.

Upper Waitaki Returned and Services president Indi Gard and Ahuriri Community Board chairman Calum Reid gave the addresses.

Mrs Gard spoke of those who went to serve "knowing the presence of death", and the anguish felt by the families at home.

Anzac Day was "a shared spiritual experience for all New Zealanders" and it highlighted what it meant to be "a Kiwi and an Aussie", she said.

Today, news of new conflicts highlighted the "perils of war" and brought home the message of "how fortunate we are here".

The poppy was a symbol of both remembrance and hope, she said.

The wildflowers had been the first signs of life in the battlefield, signs of regeneration and growth.

Ōmārama school pupil Briar McKerchar read a poem she had written about poppies and remembrance. Briar's poem took second place in the Upper Waitaki RSA Primary School Anzac writing competition.

Ahuriri Community Board chairman Cal Reid spoke of the New Zealanders who served and lost their lives in the special services during the world wars, many of whose brave deeds were not able to be acknowledged publicly at the time because of the secrecy surrounding their missions.

Anzac Day gave a sense of unity and was an opportunity for the nation to pay its respects, he said.

Wreath laying was conducted to the poignant lament of the pipes, "Sleep, Dearie, Sleep", often used to signal the Last Post and which was played at the end of Queen Elizabeth II's funeral.

After the ceremonies the crowd gathered in the sunshine and in the Memorial Hall for morning tea.

Piper: Jack Boon

Master of Ceremonies: Mike King

Laying of Wreaths: Calum Reid, Jack Zorab and Michelle Kitchen

Poem: by Briar McKerchar

Reading of the Ode: David Somerset

Bugler: John Sturgeon

Padre: Karen Hofman

Flag orderly: Bill Wallace

Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade flag bearers: Jason Pryde, Arron Chambers.

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Anzac Day in Ōmārama, 2025

Below: The crowd stretched to the street.; Ōmārama school pupil Briar McKerchar reads her poem; Ahuriri Community Board chairman Cal Reid lays a wreath; Other wreaths are laid by Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade chief fire officer Jack Zorab and Ōmārama Residents' Association chairperson Michelle Kitchen, padre Karen Hofman reads the names of those who served, photos; Ruth Grundy Bugler John Sturgeon plays the last post, photo by Bruce Dow



Hard won dream almost in reach

As far as dreams that come true go this one seems pretty hard won.

Ōmārama's Sadie Mason, a Twizel Area School pupil and rower, has been selected for the New Zealand Under 19 Rowing Team to compete at the 2025 U19 World Championship Regatta in Trakai, Lithuania, in August.

Following on from last year's success in the sport, this year in March, Sadie 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 and went on to gain second place in the same event at the Maadi Cup Regatta at Lake Karapiro.

Last year, Sadie was named supreme winner at the Sport Twizel awards.

Following Maadi, Sadie was selected for an U19 trial at Karapiro where she spent the week seat racing – that is rowers are swapped between boats to determine the best possible lineup of crews - and time trialling. At the end of the week they were informed of the team selection.

Sadie will row in the women's U19 Coxless Quad at the world championships.

She told the Ōmārama Gazette she was "super excited".

"It's a dream come true. I'm just trying to make the most of it."

She said it was "a huge honour" and also to know she was the first rower to represent her school in rowing at this level.

"I've been rowing with the Twizel Rowing Club for three years, and this opportunity means a lot to me.

"It makes me very proud to be able to represent Twizel and Ōmārama at an international level."

She said it was "amazing" the support and the opportunities locals gave to children of the district in sport.

It all officially kicks off next month when she heads north to Cambridge where, alongside studying, she will begin a six-week training camp with RowingNZ at Lake Karapiro before the squad heads overseas.

The World champs run from August 6 to 10 on Lake Galvė in Trakai, Lithuania.

In the meantime, she is focussed on individual training in Twizel.

It means getting up around 5am most mornings to fit it all in – training plus study plus work.

It was about "doing the miles" going out on the lake plus indoors on the machine, she said.

Sadie is a year 13 pupil at Twizel Area School tackling five subjects; physical education, art, English, statistics and biology, with the aim of heading to university next year.

Twizel Rowing coach Kelvin Maker told the Twizel Update last week Sadie's success was "well deserved".

"Over the last three years Sadie has shown an aptitude and capability to rise to the top.

"Twizel Rowing Club and Twizel Area School are extremely proud of Sadie and now she will be representing New Zealand on the world stage."

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Hard won dream almost in reach - continued

But, and it is a significant 'but', it is estimated it will cost about \$20,000 to train at Karapiro and travel to and compete in Lithuania, and this is not funded. The rowers have to pay their own way.

So, Sadie is looking for grants, sponsorship and donations to make the dream possible.

"The donations, support and kind words that people have given me so far have been so encouraging," she said.

Here are ways you can support Sadie -- come along to the quiz night at the Combined Services Club in Twizel. Those details are here

You can make a donation. Here is the bank account: BNZ 02-1265-0043967-000

If you are thinking you may like to sponsor Sadie here is her email address smmason23117@gmail.com.

Needless to say, the family back home will be glued to the screen anxiously waiting the results of all the hard work.

Read more about the championships here: www.RowingTrakai.com



Left: Sadie's success is taking her to the worlds. Photo: Supplied.

Below: The New Zealand U19 Coxless Quad which heads to the world championships in Lithuania in August. Photo: Supplied



Injury fails to dampen enthusiasm

Young firefighter Gemma Patterson's bid to take on the Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge this month has been hit with an unexpected setback.

But hey, having emergency treatment for a flare up of an old back injury is not going to hold her back, she says.

"I'll still do the challenge ... I'm determined to give it a go. I know I can do it, I've done it in training."

Regardless of whether she is able to complete the climb on the day, all of the money she has raised - \$3,411 to date - will go to Leukaemia and Blood Cancer New Zealand – the challenge's chosen charity.

Gemma is a member of the five-member Oamaru Volunteer Firefighting team which has committed to climbing the 1103 steps of Auckland's Sky Tower in full firefighting kit. Together the team has raised \$6,509 so far for the cause.. Gemma became a firefighter little more than two years ago after attending an open day at the Ōmārama Fire Brigade.

About three years ago Gemma damaged a disc in her spine playing rugby and it is this which has caused an injury prone few months including an emergency trip by ambulance to Dunedin Hospital where she was laid up for a week before treatment kicked in. The latest round of treatment appears to have worked and she said she was itching to go back to work, to do the challenge but most of all "getting back on the fire truck".

"I've been bored out of my mind," she said and very much missing that adrenaline rush of a call out.

The competing teams from through New Zealand and overseas now have their muster times to meet at the bottom of the Sky Tower.

She said "really buff guys" can probably manage the stair climb in about 10 to 12 minutes, whereas she said it was likely to take her about 40 minutes plus.

However, she has promised to be sensible – if on the day all is not well, she will stand down and just be there as the team's number one supporter.

The climb is to be live streamed. You can still donate here:

<https://firefighterschallenge.org.nz/t/2025-oamaru-volunteer-fire-brigade>





All proceeds to
Breast Cancer
Foundation NZ

Pink Ribbon Brunch

11am to 4pm

Wednesday, May 28

Raffles, prizes, games

**Enjoy a two-course brunch
and a free glass of bubbles**

\$30.00 entry, pay on the day

Bookings are essential

Sales limited to 60 tickets

To book phone/text Lesley 027 780 0174



Let's go wild at our local this month

Our local Boots & Jandals Hotel is bringing something unique to the table for the month of May.

The Monteith's Wild Food Challenge is back after an 11-year break and Boots & Jandals is one of more than 100 venues across Aotearoa taking part.

The Ōmārama entry is a unique creation by chef Josh Willis.

He will serve Ōmārama Rāpeti – “rabbit poached in a stick liquid broth then pulled apart accompanied by fermented peacherine blended into a smooth consistency, and traditional Māori rewena (a bug fermented by potato is used to create a natural yeast) to make the brioche bun”.

During May, those venues taking part in the challenge are serving up daring dishes featuring the country's most unexpected and adventurous ingredients. Each restaurant or bar has created a one-of-a-kind dish that celebrates the wild, the foraged and the unexpected, designed to tempt adventurous palates.

The public – that's us - cast votes to determine a shortlist of five to go before an expert panel of judges who will determine the winner.

The three judges are: seafood specialist Sam Wild, a spear fisherman and marine biologist; trailblazer for locally sourced ingredients; chef Ben Bayly, who is known for his contemporary Kiwi cuisine, and Emily Lucas, founder of West Coast Pie Co.

DB Breweries marketing director Fraser Shrimpton encouraged Kiwis to step out of their comfort zones and experience something new while backing their local hospitality scene.

“We're hoping to see more than 30,000 Kiwis head out to support their local eateries,” he said.

Phone our local now, 03 438 9713, to book your place and dine wild in style.



Ōmārama triallists qualify for championships

Four Ōmārama Collie Dog Club triallists and their dogs have qualified to campaign in the South Island and New Zealand Championships, hosted this year by the Canterbury Centre at Lochiel Station, Hanmer Springs at the end of this month.

Ian M Anderson (Ginger) with Jet and Ben will compete in the Long Head and the Short Head and Yard events.

Rick Aubrey with Trump and Monty have also qualified to compete in events I and II as has Scott Hunter with Larry and Lucy.

Scott will also campaign Barb and Hood in the Zig Zag and Straight huntaway events as will Todd Burke with Rob and Mac.

The championships begin on May 25.

Sweet little business takes off

We're highlighting the newest and sweetest business in town.

Made with love and too good to eat, this beautiful range of biscuits are hand crafted by Tara and Hannah Parsons and available from the Oasis Café .

The twins - aged 18 - produce the custom iced cookies from their registered kitchen in Central Otago.

Check out their range of Mother's Day cookies here: [Instagram: Biscuit Barn](#)



Celebrating a powerful achievement

One of those strong silent types with a 'powerful presence', she doesn't have a lot to say but it was a warm welcome to 'Jenni the Generator' from her new home last month.

About 40 people gathered at the Ōmārama Community Centre for a sausage sizzle prepared by Ōmārama MenzShed, and the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the community's latest asset. The informal occasion was also held so the community could thank the various sponsors and donors who made the project possible.

In an emergency the generator can be used to power the Community Centre which is the designated community shelter. Otherwise it will be used on a regular basis by Ōmārama MenzShed for their projects both on and off site. MenzShed will maintain and service the generator.

Emergency Management Otago's Waitaki Emergency Management Advisor Danny Fountaine presented the Ōmārama Residents' Association chairperson Michelle Kitchen with a first aid kit for the Hall and roadside signage to use to mark the designated shelter in an emergency.

Ōmārama MenzShed convenor Malcolm Cameron cut the ribbon to mark the moment the group officially took possession.

The generator was gifted by the community to the Ōmārama MenzShed, the Ōmārama Emergency Management Group and the Residents Association of Ōmārama. It was made possible by sponsorship from Otago Community Trust, the New Zealand Community Trust, and the Meridian Waitaki Power Up Community Fund plus community donations.

With thanks also to these businesses who assisted in bringing this project together:

A2O Electrical
Brackens Print
Q Power Ltd
Redpaths

And the Waitaki District Council who paid for the purchase and installation of the change-over switch.



What caught your eye this month?

Here are last month's photos captured by our roving photographers.

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

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

Below left: The colours of autumn, by Michelle Kitchen.

Below right: A fairy village, by Shona Smith.

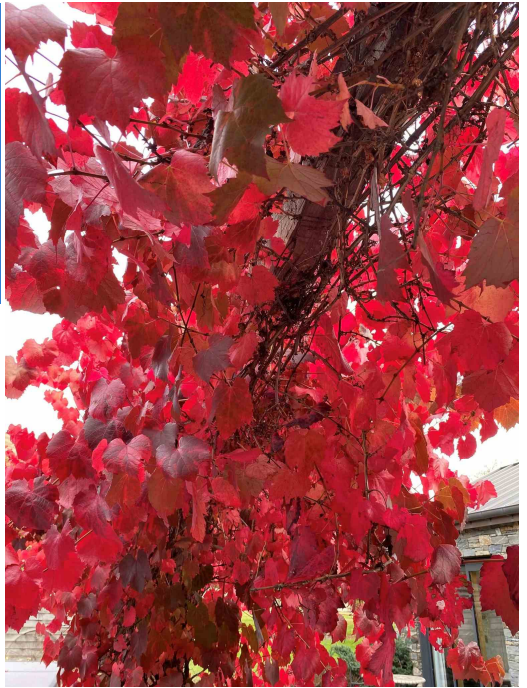
Over top right: Under the vines, by Anon.

Over top left: Into the big blue yonder - Nasa's second super pressure balloon was launched from Wānaka Airport on Sunday, by Fiona Chamberlain.

Over left: Two blokes, one hammer, one fence, you had to :) by Ruth Grundy.

Bottom right: Season of mists, by Hank Verheul.





Briar's poem for Anzac Day

The Poppy - by Briar McKerchar

**A sea of red poppies out in the sun rise
glow that mark their place we stop the foes
In the sky they will bravely lie the guns still
heard for those who gave their lives,
blood red petals dance all day in the field
we will pray cross on cross rows on rows
the larks bravely singing “just go”.**





Situation vacant. We are Hiring !!

New Zealand Registered Early Childhood Kaiako

The Waitaki Valley Preschool (WVP) operates within the progressive Kurow Valley township and supports a large rural area across the Lower and Upper Waitaki Region. We offer two rooms within the preschool catering for Tamariki from the age of 0 to 6 years.

We are inviting applications for a full-time teaching position in Kurow, and we anticipate the successful applicant will commence at the end of May 2025. We are searching for dedicated and engaging kaiako to join our talented teaching team. This position is suitable for provisional or fully registered kaiako and is an exciting opportunity to work within a progressive and growing rural community.

WVP currently operates 7-hour sessions, 5 days per week. Our ideal candidate will be a positive member looking to join a supportive teaching team where personal wellbeing is a priority. All applicants must hold a current first aid certificate, a recognised early childhood teaching qualification and be a New Zealand registered teacher. Primary qualified applicants will be considered.

The WVP offers extended pay parity, leadership opportunities, great working conditions, high quality professional support to all the teaching team, and ongoing professional development. The Waitaki Valley has great outdoor pursuits: lakes and rivers, walking and cycling tracks, ski fields in close proximity and is close to Oamaru, Tekapo, Queenstown, and Wanaka. Kurow has a range of facilities including Cafe's, Supermarket, Medical Centre, and various sports clubs. Community spirit is strong with many opportunities to become involved.

For a position description, application form or further information please email: careers@wvp.kiwi or contact Edwina on 03 436 0999.



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, Oamaru, Otematata, Kurow, Hakataramea, Duntroon, Ikawai, Papakaio, 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.



The Noticeboard

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



Our sincerest condolences and love to Doreen and the family and friends of Pat Leopold (Wingy) who passed away at Strathallan Rest Home, Timaru, last month aged 90 years. Doreen would like to thank all for the many cards, phone calls, and gifts of food and flowers. She invites all who would like to share their memories and drink to Pat to the memorial service at Boots & Jandals Hotel Ōmārama at 2pm on Saturday, May 10.

Our sincerest condolences to the family and friends of Rob Perriam who died at Cashmere View Care Home in Christchurch last month.

The Waitaki Valley Health Hub is in the final stages of securing the site for the facility. Stage one of this has been securing the funding from the Otago Rescue Helicopter Trust to set up a community helipad. With the land almost secured the trust will now focus on raising funds for stage two - the Health Hub building. The Waitaki Valley Health Trust has set up a Facebook page to keep the community informed about progress.

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

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

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

The Upper Waitaki Young Farmers Club meets at 7.30pm on the first Monday of each month at the '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. . If anyone would like more information about the various volunteer roles available within the fire brigade please get in touch. Email omarama@fireandemergency.co.nz or contact Jack on 020 4045 0909. You can follow us on Facebook (Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade)

A gentle exercises and social afternoon group meets at the Otematata District Club at 1.30pm Thursday afternoons. 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 June Issue of the Omarama Gazette
is Wednesday, June 4, 2025.**

Please submit copy
by Thursday May 29, 2025

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 Azza Wood, Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade firefighter,
Hi everyone,*

We seem to have ups and downs when it comes to call outs. I have only been in the brigade just over six months and have seen four call outs in one day.

We had just 14 for April, half of those being medical. The latest figures show in the 2023/'24 year, 94% of Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrests (OHCA) were attended by Fire and Emergency New Zealand crews. Survival from an OHCA is largely due to the quick actions of bystanders who initiate cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and use a defibrillator, highlighting the value in everyone having some form of first aid training and knowing where their nearest defib is

located. Ōmārama has defibs located at the Ōmārama Community Centre, Four Square, the Top 10 Holiday Park and the airport terminal.

Motor Vehicle crashes come in second for our April data, with four, mostly involving a single vehicle. In third we had two alarm activations and then tied for fourth and fifth with one each come a hazardous incident and a vegetation fire, where we were called out to a possible unpermitted fire, which was indeed permitted.

Even though this was a 'false alarm', in our neck of the woods it still pays to be vigilant. At home, remember to install smoke alarms, have an escape plan and a meeting point to keep everyone safe.

Coming into May and heading through the colder months, it's time to think about winter fire safety. Fenz has some messages to help you stay safe:

Check the heat before you sleep – check your electric blanket for hot spots.

Chimney alright before you light – get your chimney cleaned before you use it.

A metre from the heater – keep everything a safe distance from heat sources.

Cool ash before you stash – soak with water in a metal bucket.

A clean dryer avoids a fire – remove lint before every use.

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



Photo: Supplied

By Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade chief fire officer Jack Zorab

It's been a whirlwind first month in the chief role and I'm so grateful to the amazing crew we have in the brigade for all their support. The highlight for me has been seeing the team tackle a few large calls with absolute professionalism and humility - they really are fantastic.

If we haven't met before, I'm Jack and I live out towards Chain Hills with my wife Charlotte (also

a first responder in the brigade), our black lab Copper, and three horses; Monty, Daphne and Ziggy.

My day job is with Meridian Energy as a communications advisor and my unpaid, all-hours other job is now as the chief fire officer for the Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade.

I came across Ōmārama back in 2014 while on a year away from the UK and have never looked back - what a place to be able to call home.

In 2015, I joined Fire and LandSAR as a way of meeting people in the community and giving something back to the place that had given me a home.

It's a real privilege to take on this new role, following in the footsteps of some of Ōmārama's greats. For me, it's all about enabling our amazing group of volunteers to serve the community and help their friends, neighbours, and often strangers in their time of need.

Our brigade is made up of dedicated volunteers from all walks of life, each bringing their unique skills and a commitment to serve our community. If you've ever called 111 in Ōmārama then you'll know we've got a good bunch. For us though, there's no better feeling than knowing you've made a difference in someone else's life when they're having their worst day.

Over the next few months, we'll be advertising for a new deputy chief fire officer which is open to anyone in the brigade. We've got some great candidates and I'm looking forward to working with whoever is successful. We're also lucky to have former chief fire officer Greg Harper staying on as a senior firefighter and I'm grateful for the years he has given to the brigade as chief.

You'll see me starting to attend community meetings and events to say 'hi' and see how the brigade can better support Ōmārama, Lake Ōhau and the wider area. I can only go to the ones I know about so please let me know if there's something I should be at.

Finally, a special 'thank you' to our families and employers who support us tirelessly. Your understanding and patience allow us to respond to emergencies at a moment's notice.

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Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade - continued

We couldn't do it without you and I encourage everyone to take a look at our employers board outside the station and support those who support us!

Jack



Photo: Supplied.

Azza joined the Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade in August 2024 and recently attended his 7-day recruit course. Here's how it went...

By Azza Wood, Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade firefighter

Drive for 4 hours, meet a bunch of strangers, get in a van and drive across a city!!

This isn't a covert operation.....

I am attending my volunteer firefighter recruit course in Woolston, Christchurch.

After six months of training, sometimes twice a week, I was ready to go.

It turned out that the dedication of our then DCFO, Jack Zorab, and the other Firefighters at Ōmārama Fire Brigade, had put me in good stead for getting through the course.

The first day, 15 Recruits covered off Ladder skills. Including 'Slipping' the Ladder off of the Appliance, and 'Housing' it again. Climbing in and out of a third-floor window from a ladder is not for the faint-hearted!

A day of hoses for day two, where running out coiled hose lengths, and flaked hose lengths, is fun and wet! The rolling each one back up gets monotonous very quickly, but it's all in the name of qualifying as a firefighter. And we were all gelling as a team, helping others if we had finished packing our gear away.

Day three to five were the big days, Breathing Apparatus and full structural clothing, crawling and climbing through dark tight spaces in 60°C temperatures. Dragging equipment or finding patients, it was very intense. Being unable to identify the difference between a 'patient' and a Teddy bear proved entertaining for some. Hydrating beforehand and re-hydrating between exercises was a key to being able to complete the tasks, as many of us suffered from the heat and exertion.

By day six, we were all glad to be doing rural firefighting training, with our sore and bruised bodies given a chance to recover.

On day seven, our final day, it was clean the gear we had used, check and restock the Appliances, and then the graduation parade, which I was fortunate enough to have Jack attend.

We have a few recruits at Ōmārama Volunteer fire Brigade, but there is always room for a few more if you are keen.

Ōmārama Community Garden

By Jennie Hales

Thank you to all

- huge shoutout to the amazing men and women who came and helped to weed and dig over the raised beds at the community gardens. They look great and are ready for winter.

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

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

Contact: Jennie Hales, jenniehollows@hotmail.com

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.



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Brodie Craig CA

Age Concern Ōmārama

The next coffee afternoon will be
1pm, Tuesday, June 10
at the Ōmārama Community Centre.
There will be a guest speaker from the
Oamaru Branch of NZ Genealogists.
Find out how to begin the process
of finding your ancestors.
(NB there is no coffee afternoon in May)

Kathryn Bennett is the coordinator for Age Concern Waitaki, based in Oamaru.
Kathryn's contact details are: 03 434 7008, 027 4347 089
NthOtago@ageconcernotago.co.nz
Hours: Mon-Wed 9- 4.30pm / Thurs - Fri 9-12.30pm

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

Ōmārama Golf Club

April 2025

By Arron Chambers

A great few months for the course with some great growth/greening to fairways and greens are looking great. Big thanks to ALL the volunteers who have been working on the course as looking great and the past new plantings are really starting to develop.

Big thanks to Waitaki District Council for approval of a grant for more plants that we will see go into course next spring!

Great turnout for our Easter Tournament with weather behaving and entrants enjoying a well-prepared course. Big thanks to our sponsors and members who ensured great prizes/raffles and catering for all who enjoyed the day.

Ōmārama Golf Club Easter Tournament results

Men: Gus Chapman-Cohen (Tarras) 41 stablefords, 1; Robbie Pearson (Tarras) 40 stablefords, 2;

Elias Aboud (Canada) 39 stablefords, 3.

Women: Angela Mowbray (Methven) 35 stablefords, 1; Kathryn Clark (North Otago) 33 stablefords, 2;

Sheryn De Geest (Otematata), Sandra Kitto (Ōmārama), 27 stablefords, =3.

Membership continues to grow and great to see more women joining the course. Our club days are attracting good fields of around 20 to 25 most weeks with new members very welcome to join us on Saturdays.

Our Club days are on Saturday and, with daylight savings now with us for winter, the new tee time is 12.30 with a 12.00 muster. Look forward to seeing you on the course. Any enquiries can be sent to secretary@omaramagolfclub.co.nz. Enjoy the course and look forward to seeing you out there soon!



Saturday Club Day: cards in 12noon and tee-off at 12.30.

If you are interested in joining the club

email Arron Chambers,

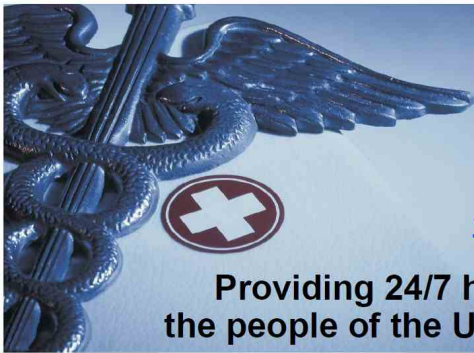
secretary@omaramagolfclub.co.nz for details.

Club captain: Greg Stuart phone: 027 438 9018

Secretary: Arron Chambers phone: 027 203 2340

email secretary@omaramagolfclub.co.nz

www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz



Kurow Medical Centre

8 Wynyard St, Kurow
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E: info@kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz

W: www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz
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- * Hearing and sight tests for adults and children * Ear syringing
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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

- contributed by Fiona Chamberlain

Winter is sneaking up on us and sometimes the colder weather can affect our health, especially people with long term conditions like asthma, COPD and immunity problems.

Prevention is an important aspect of keeping well in winter including;

flu vaccination, free for eligible people over 65 years or with certain health conditions.

Covid vaccination, free for everyone over 5 years. Boosters are recommended every 6 months (if you have not had Covid infection for 6 months).

Healthy homes

When homes are damp and cold, illnesses can be triggered or aggravated. Mould can develop easily and sometimes is unseen. As mould grows, it can release spores which become airborne and then inhaled. Inhaling these fragments can inflame the airways, causing symptoms like cough and throat irritation, wheezing and chest tightness. Exposure can also cause watery or itchy eyes and rashes. If you have a pre-existing lung condition, exposure to mould may cause a flare-up in your condition.

Heating homes is important but can be expensive. There are other less costly steps to help maintain a warm and healthy living environment for example;

- Insulate your home if you can. This helps keep it cool in summer and warmer and drier in winter.
- Try to keep the indoor temperature of your home at least 18°C where possible, or 20°C if there are children or elderly people.
- Draught-proof all windows and doors.
- Make the most of the solar gain having the curtains open when it is sunny and closing them before it gets dark to keep the heat in.
- Put lids on pots when cooking to reduce steam and humidity.
- Open windows in the bathroom and kitchen or use extractor fans to remove steam.
- Dry clothes outside or if using a drier ensure there is adequate ventilation.
- Open windows on fine days to let air through, and to reduce mould and dampness
- Wipe down and dry surfaces prone to condensation like windows and doors to prevent mould growth.
- Remove mould using a cloth or sponge and household bleach (1-part bleach to 9-parts water)
- Avoid using portable or unflued indoor gas heaters as it increases moisture and releases toxins.
- Wear layers and wool and beanies and coats when out and about.

Mental wellbeing

The dull days can also affect our mental wellbeing. Here are some ideas to keep the spirits up during winter;

- Keep active - be sure to move your body around. This can be hard in winter but even doing some exercise at home or following a YouTube workout can be very helpful. You also get the added endorphins which naturally boost your mood.
- Go outside and get some fresh air and natural sunlight; even just a short walk can achieve both.
- Eat a wide variety of foods, if possible, to get a balanced intake of nutrients to support your body.
- Leave time to unwind at the end of the day. Do things that make you feel de-stressed. This can be reading a book, watching television or having a bath and doing some self-care.
- Lastly, reach out to others when you are feeling low. Connection and support can help one feel better, and it is beneficial just talking to others about how you are feeling, even if it means all they need to do is listen.

A variety of free helplines can be found here <https://mentalhealth.org.nz/helplines>

Information sourced from Anxiety NZ and Healthify NZ.

Ōmārama School



By Ōmārama School Principal Alison Holden

Upper Waitaki RSA Primary School Anzac writing competition

ANZAC WRITING: Congratulations to Briar McKerchar for attaining second place and James Mason for attaining third place in the Upper Waitaki Anzac writing competition. We are very proud of you both! This is an excellent showcase of our writing programme.

Briar read her poem beautifully with fluency and expression at the Anzac service, unfortunately James

was unable to attend as he was on holiday. It was exciting to see Ōmārama School feature amongst the top three entries and that is testament to the engagement, compassion and dedication displayed throughout this writing unit. This competition was open to all students who reside or have family connections to the Upper Waitaki region.

William Pike Challenge

Year 7 and Year 8 students are participating in the William Pike challenge this year, as a point of difference for Ōmārama School. There are approximately 200 schools across New Zealand participating in this programme in 2025.

The William Pike Challenge Award is a structured, specialist year - long programme designed to foster personal development in year 7 and 8 students.

William Pike's tenacious passion for life has helped him overcome serious challenges, tackle new opportunities and enrich his skills as a leader.

There are three parts to the challenge; Passion Projects, Education outside of the classroom, Community Service.

If anyone or any local businesses have any sort of community service activities for our students to complete, we would really love to hear from you. This is unpaid work to benefit / support our local community. Please contact the school on 03 4389815. Our six students need to each complete 20 hours of community service throughout the year.

Headstart

This term our afternoon programme for four-year-old children in the area will run on a Thursday from 2pm until 3pm.

Please contact the school office or email principal@omarama.school.nz if you are interested in attending - this can be just on a casual basis.

Transition to School

We have a six week transition to school process that we implement. Please contact us if you intend on enrolling at Ōmārama School, or if you would like to come along to have a wander round and a chat. We warmly welcome new families to our school community.

- 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 Gliding Club

OGC Captains Log ~ May 2025, End of season

By Rod Stuart

As the official Ōmārama flying season draws to an end some great flying has been enjoyed.

Reflections on Gliding by Justin Wills

I recently had the pleasure of interviewing renowned glider pilot Justin Wills. He was sitting at his home in Ōmārama with his wife Gillian.

Justin has had some extraordinary flights this season and I wanted to find out more about some of them. What followed was a delightful two hours where Justin shared some of his thoughts about gliding, and his aspirations for the future of our beautiful sport.

In addition to his high performance gliding, Justin is well known by his vintage gliding friends for his ownership of one of the three original Rhönbussard gliders left flying in the world.

He inherited this glider from his older brother Christopher Wills who founded the Vintage Glider Club in 1973. Like Chris, Justin feels passionately that these historic gliders should be actively flying – preferably cross country!

I was given a very brief history of how gliding started in Germany and after searching on Google I realise it was just the tip of the iceberg. In the 1920s a group of gliding enthusiasts started flying wood and fabric gliders from the Wasserkuppe in the Rhön district. A local furniture maker named Alexander Schleicher was kept busy repairing these gliders and this soon became his main business.

Over the years he employed the services of several glider designers: Gerhart Waibel designed the ASW gliders. (Alexander Schleicher Waibel). Rudolf Kaiser designed the ASK gliders. (Alexander Schleicher Kaiser). Hans Jacobs designed the Rhönbussard and later engineer Eugen Hanle from Stuttgart introduced fiberglass into the design mix. His skills were honed by building wind turbine blades, and he formed the company Glasflugel.

Justin's Rhönbussard featured on the front page of The English Vintage Glider Club 50 year issue.

Justin's most recent adventure: Landout, venison stew, snow and a helicopter rescue:

I asked Justin, (78) if he is considering doing less gliding. "NO! I am always looking to learn more!" came the reply.

"I have been a little introspective about my flying recently. Four of my last six flights have ended in excitement!"

Three landouts and a cockpit fire in Hadleigh Bognuda's Arcus M. The cause? Shorted battery wires under the back seat which nearly burnt through a fuel line.

"A very quick descent with smoke filling the cockpit! Hadleigh did a superb job of getting us home where the canopy was opened and fire extinguishers used".

Landing out at the Upper Hawkduns proved to be as dramatic.

Justin was flying his Antares 18, with the goal to fly 1,500 kms to Omaka.

There was a building southerly system and just north of Rangitata a request for clearance was declined by Christchurch air traffic control due to busy traffic.

Justin decided to turn back to Ōmārama. However, the weather was deteriorating fast over the Hawkduns.

-continued over

Ōmārama Gliding Club - continued

Thinking he might be able to sneak in to Alexandra airport Justin said he soon found himself in 14knot sink with only one landing possibility - the Upper Hawkduns or 'Piano' strip.

He landed safely, uphill, with a difficult crosswind with weather and visibility fast closing in having covered 1200 kms.

Realising a retrieve would not be feasible, he prepared himself for a night in the cockpit. After a while, and much to his relief, four stag hunters arrived in a Polaris. They drove him to a hut 3kms away where he was treated to venison stew and a warm night in a bunk in front of a fire.

One of the hunters was CEO of Garmin NZ, so communication was enabled.

It was decided that Milan and Gillian would drive over for a retrieve the next morning. It snowed overnight and Justin's glider looked like an ice block!

While derigging the glider, Justin lost his footing on a grader berm and fell on his back. A loud 'CRACK' left him immobile on the cold ground while a rescue helicopter was arranged. Fifty-five minutes later the chopper arrived with two crew. Justin cannot speak highly enough about the New Zealand culture of helping others competently. After a 25 minute flight Justin was unloaded onto the rooftop of Dunedin hospital and whisked to the Emergency Department.

Gillian flew to the hospital with Justin while Millan completed derigging and heroically driving out in serious mud, slush and snow.

Justin is now sporting a back and neck brace and is recovering well.

His visit to the northern hemisphere has been delayed this year but X-Rays are proving positive and he hopes to be travelling within a few weeks.

The interview ended with Justin reflecting on the future of gliding as a sport. "Gliding is a very new sport. It is about developing a relationship with the air. Air seems to have no real substance or mass and therefore we find it hard to relate to. But in reality, air has mass, energy and forces of unfathomable scale. We are still learning how to exploit these forces. We all need adventure, contact with others and an interest. Gliding serves these needs perfectly. Gliders keep getting better and our frontiers keep expanding. Gliding has an exciting future!"

An Email from Amy: Hi Rod, Here's some photos from the inaugural Otago University Gliding Club Weekend! We had an awesome time, everyone has signed up as full members woo! We're very grateful to all the crew including Tuulianna who had her first go at instructing, a photo attached!! Cheers, Amy
Tuulianna instructing at the Otago University Gliding Club inaugural weekend in Ōmārama.

At Anzac weekend a meeting with representatives from the Waitaki District Council, Ōmārama Soaring Centre, Ōmārama Gliding Club and Ōmārama Airfield Ltd was held. Some good progress was made discussing a wider vision for the future. Details of a possible business structure where commercial operators, club pilots and visiting pilots can all enjoy flying in Ōmārama.

In Brian Sharpe's words: "I hope that the OGC will find a peaceful path into the future, and I very much hope that next weekend will mark the beginning of that journey ~ too much amazing talent in the room for that not to happen providing everyone listens to everyone else."

A message to Brian Sharpe from everyone at the Ōmārama Gliding Club [and your Ōmārama community] - "We miss you! Please get well soon .



Upper Waitaki Young Farmers Club

The Upper Waitaki Young Farmers Club
meets at
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of each month
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Ōmārama Residents' Association

The next meeting of the
Ōmārama Residents' Association is
7pm, Thursday, May 15, 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



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Vicky Munro

Otematata

03 438 7855 021 438745



Alona Shaw

Omarama

027 773 4214

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

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- creating your own budget that fits your life
- tackling debt
- simple power=saving tips

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**'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.
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The Garden Diary - growing together

I have been reading 'Companion Planting,' by Jon Day; an excerpt from 'In the garden – essays on nature and growing,' edited by Daunt Books.

It's a really good book when you keep going back to its wise words.

In this collection of essays I read in the new year the writers "...go beyond simply considering a plot of soil to explore how gardening is a shared language, an opportunity for connection and a practice that is always evolving".

I've been thinking a lot about 'community', what it means and what it is that grows a healthy community. And in the midst of those thoughts we had a working bee at the community garden to ready the plots for winter. I've joined in several in the four years since the Ōmārama garden was set up. Each time there has been a slightly different crew helping out, and each time we've left 'uplifted'. What is it with that?!

Some of the time we break a sweat and tackle the tough stuff. There's always someone to keep us on task. But there's time too to sit and soak up the sunshine, or sit at the tables and yarn, share a thermos and maybe a scone.

There's time to lean on the warm, grey sleepers, or on that spade and dig and chat and maybe get the world straight; clearing the mind along with the weeds. There are always a lot of laughs.

Author John Day writes about the evolution of his community's garden.

"People would come and see what we were doing and soon they'd have borrowed a spade and started weeding. Others would sit and watch, while children played in the park or ran around their legs. Talk was easy: focused on the task at hand, any silences were never awkward."

You don't need a garden to be a gardener, you don't need to be a gardener to connect over gardening. Best of all the harvest from growing together presents another opportunity to share. Every gardener knows there will always be times when you have far too much or not nearly enough. It's about spreading the load and sharing the rewards.

One thing we learn as gardeners is that some plants – quite unlike – grow better when put together – Tomatoes with basil; beans will lean on corn and zucchini shelters under them both; those garish bright marigolds that people love to hate cheerily protect those leafy cabbages.

"Companion plants are often very unlike in their pairings, but they go to build a community."

And to continue the parallel, it's not always a bed of roses. Or maybe it is. Sometimes some things need a judicious and careful prune. And there must always be vigilance to guard against threats. Crops which looked so promising can be wiped out overnight by a spreading blight. Unacceptable.

"Gardens are always mirrors of society. They can be exclusive, exclusionary places...with signs warning you not to pick anything or to keep off the grass. Or they can be messy open companionable endeavours, developing organically through the availability of resources...of those who are able to contribute to them."

"Gardens, like communities are places. But they are processes and conversations too. And they only make sense if they're shared."

The author asks whether community gardens can be "radical places" and his conclusion is 'no' – at least not in the way the world views radical. I think I disagree. I think they can be. It seems to me they encourage deep-rooted and sustained change, quiet - wordless even - revolutionary change at a fundamental level... like that story we all grew up with – The Selfish Giant, remember that?

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



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

April 2025

Highest temperature: April 4, 24.5C

Lowest temperature: April 24, -1.7C

Most rainfall: April 30, 20mm

Total rainfall for April: 72.1mm

The Ōmārama Gazette

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the first Wednesday of each month**

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