

-Omarama Gazette -

February 2018

Sponsored by
Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee

Whither the weather? The O.G. investigates

If you want to start a conversation this month, you'll find talking about the weather's a breeze.

There's no argument it's been an absolute roller-coaster of weather conditions and that's just this past fortnight.

MetService's Tara Hills station recorded a high of 35C on Monday, January 29, after a string of temperatures in the 30s, a low of 5C less than a week later on Sunday (February 4), we got drenched when 60.2mm of rain fell in one 24-hour period (February 1 and 2), and when we woke Friday morning (February 2) there'd been a quiet dusting of snow on Benmore and Totara Peak, all gone by lunchtime.

It's been a thriller of a summer ride - so no debate there.

But, it's when it comes to 'reading' that weather we may have a few quibbles.

We're not talking forecasting here.

Every forecasting agency you turn to is fogged-over with fine print and legal disclaimers.

No-one wants the blame if more than your tomato sandwiches turn a little soggy or your chook house takes flight.

No, forecasting's a weather conversation best left for a long, wet spell.

Rather, it's the data we're after - that 'where, when and what' of the weather that was.

As former title holders of record national temperatures – albeit usually the coldest ones – Omarama has more than a merino-vested interest in the immediacy and accuracy of readings.

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This issue is brought to you by ...

Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee

Managing and protecting our water – the precious resource that's important to us all – will continue to be the focus of the community-led Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee in 2018.

The committee, made up of community members, rūnanga and local council representatives, meets monthly to address key issues and identify actions around water quality and quantity in the Upper Waitaki. Meetings are open to the public and all are welcome.

Chairperson Simon Cameron says everyone in the community is affected by decisions made around water. "Whether it's to drink, gather food, use on farm or for power generation, or enjoy for recreation or as a special cultural place – it's integral to life.

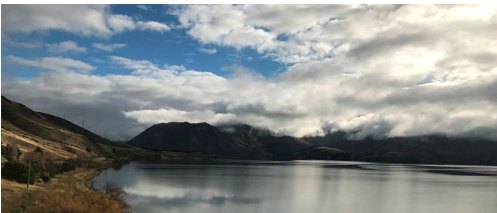
"Water management is now a high profile topic but many people don't realise we have our own local water zone committee to make recommendations for the Upper Waitaki river and lake catchments.

"If you are interested in what is happening with water management in 2018 – with issues such as demand from tourism and new farming regulations developing quickly – then get in touch or come to one of our meetings."

The committee allocates \$100,000 funding each year to partnership biodiversity projects through Environment Canterbury's Immediate Steps fund. At present, this includes a large project to improve water quality in Willowburn Stream with significant stock fencing and riparian planting.

Get in touch with the committee if you've got a great idea for a project.

The committee's next meeting is 9.30am February 16, at Mackenzie Country Inn, Twizel. All welcome.



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We want to know the minute we can whip those ugg boots off Ophir's feet and set Omarama back in it's rightful place in the record books. -21.6C in 1995? That's practically tropical, we can do better than that.

So, where is the best 'go to' place to find up-to-the-minute observations of our weather?

In 1949, the New Zealand Meteorological office, MetService, set up its official weather station at what was then Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Tara Hills Research Station. It's recordings are available online, albeit listed under Canterbury High Country.

But Tara Hills, while still in Otago, is some 10kms out of town.

To be fair, when it was set up those decades ago they were not setting out to record Omarama's weather as such.

Should it be moved?

MetService spokesperson John Law says one good reason stations are not moved arbitrarily is because it is important to keep historical records going.

Meteorological data services manager Kevin Alder takes up the story.

Initially at Tara Hills, readings were taken manually, each day at 9am, he says.

On April 2, 1985, an automated station was set-up and, subsequently, on January 1, 1986, the pen was put down for the last time and manual station shut down.

Tara Hills is a "quite important site", a "base-line" station - one of 14 regional sites nationwide used to collect long-term climate data which contributes to global climate science, Kevin says.

Maintained by MetService field engineers, who travel to the site regularly to ensure equipment is scientifically calibrated, it is also checked remotely every day.

All the sensors must meet international standards so data can be compared with confidence.

Tara Hills is trusted and of "real value", the climate scientists must be able to "rely" on its accuracy, Kevin says.

There are other sorts of weather stations and each of these is also likely "fit-for-purpose".

He thinks it unlikely MetService would establish a weather station in Omarama itself.

However, John says it is not completely out of the question.

"Blenheim, Dunedin and Whanganui have done that."

"When we pick a site we need it somewhere secure, representative, ideally not affected by winds and trees.

"Airfields are often used. They give a really nice, open space."

There is the cost to set-up and ongoing costs.

In the past MetService has worked with regional councils to resolve that and so Environment Canterbury would be the ones to approach if people were keen, he says.

"[It is] awesome to have more weather stations... we love to have more data coming in."

Private forecasting company WeatherWatch owner and head analyst Philip Duncan is at pains to point out it uses only proven data in its forecasts.

At present, WeatherWatch is in the midst of a tussle over access to MetService and Niwa data which it says should be publicly available. Minister of Research, Science and Innovation Dr Megan Woods is to decide.

Continued over...

Whither the weather? The O.G. Investigates

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But that's forecasting and the conversation we've saved for that rainy day. In the meantime, when it comes to daily weather observations WeatherWatch keys into data recorded by private weather stations and channelled through US company Weather Underground.

And here there's a little confusion which, thanks to the Omarama Gazette's query, should be put to rights shortly.

The WeatherWatch map which shows up-to-the minute observational data of Omarama's weather shows the readings are supplied by Station ID: IOTEMATA3 and come from "Omarama Airfield, Otematata, Haast ", meanwhile its pointer is directed at Tara Hills. Someone's a little lost. Can we blame that on the weather?

"I'll get rid of that right now," Philip, an Aucklander says.

There is a summary of how WeatherWatch observational data is collected on its website.

Philip, too, says any additional authenticated observational stations are welcome.

Glide Omarama general manager Guy Sanders said it established its own solar-powered weather station at the airfield at a cost of about \$1500 because accuracy is essential. Its station is part of the global network of Holfuy personal weather stations and the data it collects is updated regularly and can be checked online on its webpage or through an app. Search for Omarama. Guy is unsure who maintains the other station at the airfield - IOTEMATA3, linked to Weather Underground and WeatherWatch.

None-the-less the Omarama Airfield if not in Haast or Otematata is still some 3.5km away from Omarama's town centre.

Omarama Gazette's amateur meteorologist, our own 'Weather Man' Graham McLean provides the readings for the Gazette's 'Weather that Was' segment .

He believes a weather station which met all requirements could be set up close to the Memorial Hall.

A rough comparison - the recent rain event.

Met Service at Tara Hills recorded 60.2 mm from 4am, February 1, to 8am, February 2, with 11mm falling between 11am and noon on February 1.

The Weather That Was @ 44°29'29.4"S 169°58'19.7"E recorded 65.5mm for the same period.

Glide Omarama - Holfuy - recorded 39mm.

This year we begin a new series - The Omarama Gazette Investigates – delving into those little things that perplex and maybe vex us.

Next month: How do feel about the service you get from courier companies? Let me know your questions and I'll see what I can find out.

Wilding pine control to begin at Lake Benmore

Work to control wilding pines on the Lake Benmore islands is scheduled to begin within the next two months.

Pete Caldwell, Boffa Miskell biosecurity consultant to Land Information New Zealand, which is to carry out the work, told the Omarama Gazette he hoped to arrange a public meeting to discuss the plans prior to work starting.

Meridian Energy and Linz initially gave notice of the control work in the Timaru and Waitaki Herald in January of last year.

Pete said there was a "limited response" to those public notices.

Work did not begin last year, as planned, but some ground control work would begin anytime from next month through until May, he said.

Control work will take place "predominantly" on Black Jacks Island.

It is being carried out in consultation with the Department of Conservation, Environment Canterbury, Iwi, Meridian Energy, the neighbouring landowners, the Waitaki Lakes Shoreline Authorities Committee, and Waitaki District Council's biodiversity co-ordinator Max Crowe "is being kept in the loop".

Mr Caldwell said the work was necessary because, not only had the pines begun to spread onto neighbouring farmland, there were endangered native plants on the islands which, although they had survived because there was no grazing, were now threatened by the encroaching trees.

"Protecting native biodiversity is a key reason for carrying out control here, as these species will otherwise disappear when outcompeted or shaded by conifers.

"We will have measures in place to ensure threatened native species are protected, which may include covering them, or excluding spraying in certain areas."

Mr Caldwell said measures would be put in place to minimise any other risks.

The herbicide used would "soften" the wood, breaking it down into smaller pieces.

In his experience, dead trees were less likely to fall in a wind event because defoliation and branch weight was reduced and, because of the actions of the herbicide which would break down the wood, it was less likely whole trees would fall into the lake.

There was an increased fire risk once the trees were dead, but conifers posed a fire risk, regardless.

Measures may be put in place to exclude the public or ban fires, he said.

Mr Caldwell said he welcomed feedback and urged people with concerns to contact

LAND INFORMATION NEW ZEALAND

Notice of tree removal at Lake Benmore

All users of Lake Benmore are advised that Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) and Meridian Energy plan to remove some wilding conifers (an invasive pest tree) on Blackjacks and Junction Islands at Lake Benmore and around the Benmore Dam.

Active management is required to tackle wilding conifers which now cover more than 1.8 million hectares of land and are spreading at an estimated rate of five percent per year.

Seeds from the trees in question are spreading to adjacent land which is a perpetual cost to landowners to remove each year.

The work is planned for the summer of the 2017/18 programme.

LINZ and Meridian Energy will consider a replanting programme to replace the trees with native species and uphold the aesthetics of the area.

If you have any feedback on the proposed control work, please contact:
linz.biosecurity@boffamiskell.co.nz

Let us introduce Lindsay

Sometimes in this game of life you get thrown more than your fair share of curve balls.

While you know it's down to you to tackle those, it's always easier when you can call on the coach to give you a few tips and point you in the right direction – and that's where Lindsay comes in.

Lindsay Purvis was appointed Rural Support Trust Otago co-ordinator in September. Rural Support Trusts help those who live and work rurally through tough times.

Trust coordinators also have defined roles in civil defence emergencies and co-ordinate government relief packages when severe weather events strike.

His first few months have been busy.

He has been getting a “feel for the job, getting trained up”, familiarising himself with agencies which offer a wide range of support, and at the same time responding to requests for help.

“This next phase is about getting out and making myself known.”

His role will take him throughout North, Central and East Otago and to all kinds of farming businesses - horticulture, sheep and beef, dairy and cropping farming.

He's there for owners, managers, staff, and contractors alike.

“Farming is a lonely job.”

Socialising in rural communities has changed since he was farming.

Where people once routinely drove into town and the pub on a Friday night and

“got it off their chest”, drink-driving laws have put a curb on that.

“Not that alcohol is a solution but those ‘Country Calendar nights’ had a place.”

And more joined Lions or other service clubs, or fire brigades - groups which met regularly and, while there might not have been any “offloading” as such, those connections did help when times were tough.

An Omarama business owner for 24 years, Lindsay is no stranger to farming or the ups and downs that go with it.

He and wife Bev farmed deer at Waianakarua through the 80s, before becoming shopkeepers – they owned Merino Country Café and Gifts.

The 80s was a particularly tough decade for North Otago farmers who, among other things, had to ride-out an infamous North Otago drought, faced the removal of farm subsidies, record high interest rates and, in the high country, plagues of rabbits.

Lindsay remembers there were those who took up the government buyout of \$45,000 and walked away from farming.

He believes those life experiences make him “well-positioned to help” farming families through challenges.

It's important to say it is not part of a trust co-ordinator's role to “solve people's problems”.

Rather, co-ordinators help assess the need and point people in the direction of professionals who can provide further support and advice.

Sometimes it is friends, family or neighbours who take a concern to a co-ordinator.

“People are afraid they're being nosey, but it's all done out of care.”

At present, farmers in Lindsay's area are watching neighbouring regions closely as droughts are declared close by and mycoplasma bovis threatens to spread out of its containment area.

He has been meeting with industry players “to get a feel for how deeply the drought is biting”.

Irrigation has helped.

“But there is a need to understand how much an irrigated area can stand.”

Those who have newly invested in irrigation are hit hardest as costs of that are on-going even though the water may have run out.

The advice is, if you find problems are starting to build up seek help or share a concern sooner rather than later.

“Very few people find themselves ‘suddenly in trouble’.

“There’s always a lead-up.”

Stepping in early can reduce issues to something manageable.

“Often sitting down and having a yarn is enough,” Lindsay says.

If you need to get pointed in the right direction for advice or information, are concerned about a friend, a neighbour, a worker.... or just need a private chat, Rural Support Trust services are free and confidential

0800 RURAL HELP (0800 787

254) www.rural-support.org.nz



RuralSupport
0800 787 254

*Otago Rural Support
Trust is pleased to
introduce Lindsay Purvis*



Are times a bit tough? How about talking to someone who really understands the pressures of rural life?

We are local rural people that know from experience that severe weather, finances, relationships, and work pressures can all mount up.

Contact us any time for a confidential chat about you, your business, the weather, your finances; or a neighbour, partner, friend, family member, or worker. Our support is FREE

And if you need more than a chat, we can point you in the right direction.

For free confidential help contact:
0800 RURAL HELP (0800 787 254)

Otago.rural-support.org.nz

Come, lend a hand...you'll make the

When that 'hooter' goes off there's a group of dedicated men and women who will drop what they are doing and race, adrenaline pumping, to help at whatever emergency it is that is unfolding. Will you join them?

In their own words, let them tell you what it takes...

Maurice Cowie (66), Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade station officer, and Graham McLean (72), "the old bastards", have been members of the fire service all their working lives.

Maurice joined when he was 20 years old.

His brother Graeme was a founding member of the Omarama brigade.

"It's about paying it forward - hopefully someone will be around to look after my family if I'm not about." Maurice says.

Graham joined the Otematata Volunteer Fire Brigade when he was 25 and rose in rank there to deputy chief fire officer.

Most of the staff where he worked at the power station - the New Zealand Electricity Department's Benmore Power Station - were in the fire service.

"It's about helping people out, I suppose.

"There's always people worse off than you and they need a bit of help," Graham says.

"The biggest thing is -it doesn't matter what you are doing, or where you're doing it, when the hooter goes off you turn out, and that could be any time day or night."

Logan Adams (29) is the Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade's newest recruit.



world of difference to our place.

He joined when he moved from Wellington a year ago to get involved with the community and to get to know more people.

"I joined up ...three weeks later there was a fire at Otematata.

"I've been to a few accidents, I haven't been up close...they ease you into it."

Alexia Trusler (25), mother Sonya and father Peter have recently moved to Omarama from Duntroun where they were all fire brigade members.

Alexia began by going along to practice with her father then joined when she was 16 and at high school, bringing along a friend for company.

"There's been some very inconvenient times [when the siren has gone off]...I've been in the shower when it's gone off and shot off to the fire-brigade with shampoo in my hair... the stories you hear, the things you see..."

"Some people even forget to put their teeth in," Maurice says.

Understandably, in most cases it's the first call-out as a recruit that stays in the memory, Graham says.

"The first car accident I went to, its always in my mind. I don't why that is.

"The guy was a bit unfortunate he didn't get through it...and yeah, its always stuck in my mind.

"Everyone's the same after their first big crash or whatever."

"We always used to come back to the station and talk about it amongst ourselves," Maurice says.

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Come, lend a hand...you'll make the

Times have changed and nowadays, the Fire Service have formal support networks in place.

One of the most exciting call-outs Alexia, who has a farming background, has had was when bales caught alight and fire-brigade members and tractors pitched in to pull the burning bales apart.

"I just had fun pulling apart the bales, rolling around in the muck, I wasn't allowed to do it after that 'cause I got too dirty," Alexia says.

"It's just exciting, something I'll always remember."

"In a small town, 'medicals' are hard, especially if you know the people. [But] I quite enjoy the farm callouts.

At his first fire Logan just got "straight into it".

"...onto a branch, bushes alight all around me. I had a qualified firefighter behind me telling what to do.

"I felt comfortable."

"They do say there's a pyromaniac in every fireman," Maurice says.

"You learn more from those sort of things than you'll ever learn in training."

"[But] you've got to do your training because everybody relies on everybody else."

"You've got to be prepared to learn, you've got to know what your equipment is and how to use it ...that's a big percentage of it," Graham says.

"Once you've found out what the equipment's for and how it works and are trained to use it, yeah, basically you haven't won, but you're bloody close to it."

Within the brigade there is room for additional training, at your own pace, and advancement through the ranks.

"You've got to be open to new ideas and learning, you've got to be happy to learn... willing to listen," Alexia says.

A key attribute is to be able to work well under pressure, Logan says.

"You'll be put into situations you've never been in before ...you have to listen to the officer in charge.

"The recruitment course is amazing. It really does test you. They put you in a room full of smoke. I went into a burning house."

He says the real aim is to test yourself and recruits come away from that with a real sense of accomplishment.

"You've got have dedication. You've got to turn up to practice that's when you learn," Graham says.

"Most of the time, in our situation, you attend road accidents and fires ...you've got to do the training because everybody relies on everybody else.

"You've got to learn to put your trust in fellow firefighters," Maurice says.

"You've got a social life within the brigade as well," he says.

There is fun and adventures to be had, and many opportunities. There are inter-brigade, national and international competition.

Some fire fighters answer the call to help fight fires in other countries.

There is the chance to get to know people from one end of the country to the other and form friendships that last a life-time, Graham says.

There are opportunities to gain skills that bump up your CV, like heavy traffic licences, first aid, and leadership skills, Maurice says.

"The fire-brigade put me on my first plane ever, to go to Auckland to train," Alexia says.

world of difference to our place.

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"Basically, the way we try to promote it is; your family comes first, your work comes second, the fire service comes third, even though at the drop-of-the-hat you're gone - but those other things, they're more important," Maurice says.

Of the Cowie's four children, two have been in the fire service.

"Even when they're kids the brigade involves them, they gain a respect for the fire-brigade."

"I didn't have any problem being in the fire brigade, [while] being at high school...in jobs, they were really understanding, Alexia says.

"[The fire brigade] it's like a family...they treat me like a family member...I found it easy enough to manage,"

"Nine time out of ten the chief of the fire-brigade knows the boss.

"My last boss, he'd ring me and say there's been a call out ... I'll do your work, go on, off you go."

In a small town everyone gets behind the fire brigade because they know they could be the next ones to need help, she says.

"[But] not everyone can make it to a call-out because of other commitments or working out of town.

"The ones that are there fill in for them," Graham says.

"That's why its important to have good numbers because at any time at least fifty percent aren't able to turn out," Maurice says.

Alexia remembers embarking on a particularly dark, disorientating training session with her friend.

She struggled with her 'lefts and rights' so they agreed Alexia would signal her by tugging.

"'I trust you Lexie,' she said... and that's how it is... you never go it alone."



Introducing Employee

***We're a small town with so much talent. Together we do so much.
We're starting another new series - Employee of the Month - to learn a little more about how our people spend their day.***

Hers is such a welcome face in emergencies on this side of the Alps, you may be surprised to learn those on the West Coast know and love her too.

For seven days at a time Liz Komen is home in Omarama on her “days off”, when she volunteers for the fire brigade's First Response, and is called on to attend medical emergencies, mostly motor vehicle accidents, from the Lindis Pass to Ruataniwha and as far east as Otematata.

Omarama's been home “on and off” since 1991 and Liz was one of the first cohort of eight to train as a fire service co-responder.

For the seven days that follow she is on duty and on-call 24 hours, including the weekend. She has crossed the Alps to the small West Coast town of Hannah's Clearing, just south of Haast, pulled on her jerkin, grabbed her stethoscope and bag, and at 8.30am, in her role as Haast rural nurse specialist, she opens the doors of the nurse-led clinic.

“I've got to know the roads well and I enjoy driving.

“It takes three hours from Omarama, on a good day.

“It's a road of two halves, really.

“[In winter] There can be snow and ice on the Lindis – it's just beautiful – then there's the lakes, and once you reach Makarora, the bush.”

Her Haast patients know the routine.

They're often waiting for her to open the doors.

“People are supposed to book.”

But the reality is it can be difficult to co-ordinate the booking system with urgent issues.

“I might have a really busy day but just have to see them then and there because they have come so far.”

A doctor visits for two days every second week, but for the most part she works alone and is “first on the scene”.

Liz has her Masters of Nursing in Rural Primary Health.

She has worked in all of the five South Westland clinics, initially stationed in Whataroa, north of Franz Josef, which was a five-and-a-half-hour trip from Omarama and almost seven hours from Oamaru where her daughters were at boarding school.

Communication is a bugbear. There is no cell phone coverage, no satellite system, the rural nurses have St John Ambulance radios in their cars, but otherwise its old technology – landlines – and many patients do not even have those.

Since Christmas, even the landline system has been faulty, she says.

At one point she had no choice but to leave a patient in need of critical care on their own while she left to radio for help from her car.

The situation has made the news recently with people calling for change.

Liz's role includes district health, public health, Prime and emergency care - the pager never leaves her - and palliative care, as well as administration.

“The important thing to say is; I just love it.”

of the month - Liz Komen

Video conferencing with specialists like dietitians, or diabetes specialist nurses is often used to save patients a journey.

"We try to prevent people going to [Greymouth] hospital - four to five hours by road." District ambulances "leap frog" along the route and carry patients in relay to the hospital.

It is about 1 ½ hours by helicopter, depending on the wind.

"We see people pre- and post-operatively, from straight forward to very complicated. "I have to know a little bit about everything or I have to find the answers."

Palliative care tends to be the time-consuming part of the role.

There are patients living where there are few amenities, no power, or running water. It's about making those difficult decisions with the doctor, patient and the families about the safest options, Liz says.

Like Omarama, in the off-season numbers in the town are about 270 to 300.

But when it's white-bait season the population swells to almost 3000, plus the numbers of summer visitors are increasing as tourists make the pilgrimage to the end of the now busy Coast Road.

Winter is quiet and time to catch up on the paperwork.

Of course, there have been the adventures.

Liz tells of one particularly stormy West Coast night when news came in a whitebaiter had fallen off a ladder and was injured, but couldn't be found.

It was dark, the river was rising. The road, not much of a road at the best of times, ran out quickly.

Together with Search and Rescue, equipped with life jackets but battling bulky wet weather gear and laden down with medical bags, they went in search.

Arm-in- arm and at times roped together they negotiated the stormy weather, the rising river and slippery tracks

and made their way up to a hut to find the man badly injured but "tucked up in bed, quite happy".

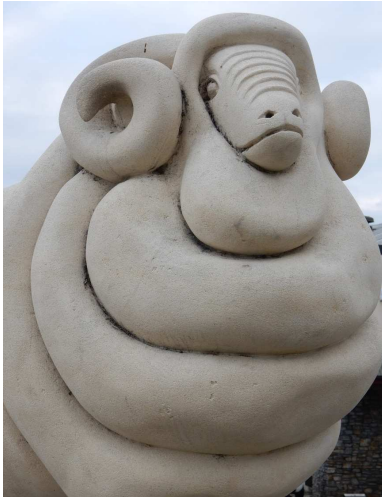
Arrangements were made for the helicopter to fly in when the weather cleared the next day to pick him up.

In the meantime, the rescue team had to find their way back out and across the river to get home.

"People are so helpful. "Sar, the police, we all work very closely."



The Noticeboard



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

The judging of this year's Spud in a Bucket competition at Boot & Jandals Hotel Omarama is at 4pm, Sunday, February 11.

If you would like to take part in a survey about internet broadband speed during the peak visitor months in Omarama, please contact Stew Dovey STEWDOVEY@hotmail.co.uk

Arborist and mulcher in town: Wanaka Tree Care will visit Omarama in early April. If you would like work done phone Lindsay Purvis 027438 9630

Kurow District Flower and Produce Show is on Friday, February 16, at the Kurow Memorial Hall.

Entries to be set up in hall on Thursday Evening 7pm-9pm or Friday morning 9am - 10.15am

Adult section entry fee 50c per entry, children's entries are free. Public viewing on Friday from 2pm to 4pm with presentation of trophies and prizes at 4pm. Entry for adults is \$4 and includes Devonshire tea. Schedules are available at various Kurow businesses.

For more information please contact Janet McGregor 03 436 0404.

Omarama Playgroup meets at 9.30am each Wednesday during the primary school term at the Omarama Community Centre. For more information phone Petrina Paton 027 345 6192 or Carla Hunter 03 976 0504

The Omarama Community Library is open 7pm to 8pm Tuesdays, and 9am to 10am Wednesdays and Saturdays, at the Omarama Community Centre. Contact Anna: 021 132 5586

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

The Kurow Medical Centre holds a clinic 8.30am to 1pm, and 2pm to 5pm, on Tuesdays at the Omarama Community Centre. Please phone Kurow Medical Centre, 03 436 0760, for appointments. On Fridays phone 0274 347 464 because the Kurow Centre is closed.

The Omarama Model Aircraft Club meets 9.30am to 12 noon Wednesdays and Sundays at its fly-ground at the Omarama airfield. All welcome. Phone Graham McLean 03 438 9832.

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

The Omarama Golf Club - Saturdays tee-off 1pm, twilight nine-hole golf tee-off 6pm, Thursdays, all welcome. Club Captain Adrian Tuffley 027 3478276. www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz/

Plunket Line: 0800 933 922

Omarama Plunket Committee: Lisa Crawford, phone 021 126 3113

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

Breastfeeding Works: Claire Hargest-Slade 03 684 3625, 021 493 863
clairhs@me.com

In case of emergency: to prevent any confusion about the location of Lake Ohau

Alpine Village in an emergency, the following points should be noted:

When phoning 111, advise that Lake Ohau is in South Island and the nearest cross road is State Highway 8 and Lake Ohau Road. Also mention that Lake Ohau Alpine Village is on the shore of Lake Ohau, and is 20 mins (40 km) from both Twizel and Omarama. This will assist the operator to find the required information to enter location in the system and allowing the call to progress to the next screen in the system.

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

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**The March issue of the Omarama Gazette
is Wednesday, March 7, 2018.**

**Please submit copy
by Friday, March 2.**

The Community Reports

Omarama Golf Club

Copy and photos : Christine Bowman

The weather has been great and the golf club has been well utilised over the summer period by locals, members and holiday makers.

Our annual New Year tournament exceeded all expectations, with a record 71 golfers from 16 different golf clubs across the South Island. The golf course was at its summer best with ball's flying everywhere. There were many laughs and much banter throughout the day.

The day produced a number of outstanding scores, however there can only be one winner for each section. Congratulations to:

Senior men's - Dave Trevathan
(overall winner)

Junior men's - Richard Kitto

Ladies - Mary McIlraith

We would like to thank all our sponsors and make special mention of our main sponsor, Glide Omarama, who donated our major prize of a glider flight.

A big thankyou to all the members that turned out for the Christmas working bee, and those that mow and keep the course in great order during the year. There were many comments on how well the course looked and how well the greens played.

A warm welcome to our new members to the club: Mary McIlraith, Tony Chapman and Corey Tamou. We have a number of different membership options, so **if you are interested in joining please contact Christine Bowman 027 209 2320.**

Big congratulations to Mary McIlraith who won the ladies section at the Otematata Golf Club December tournament.

Planning is well under way for our Easter tournament on Saturday 31st March 2018. More details will follow in the March issue.

The Omarama Golf Club: Saturdays, cards in 12.30pm, tee-off 1pm; twilight nine-hole golf Thursday tee-off 6pm. All welcome. Club Captain Adrian Tuffley 027 3478276. www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz



Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade



It has been a busy time in January.

We have had a mixture of fires, car accidents and medical calls.

We have had some new members join over the last couple of weeks, which is great, but there's still room for more.

Remember if you see smoke, dial 111.

Be safe.

Chief fire officer Terry Walsh

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Would all residents please make sure their
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Malcolm McMillan, Lake Ohau Village
438 9798 027 438 9798



Georgie Robertson, Omarama
438 9554 027 4861 525



Kia ora Omarama Community, Happy New Year to you all.
Omarama School started back last week and all are looking forward to a new year of fun and learning. *Nga Mihi - Kim McKenzie, principal.*
Omarama School: State Highway 8, Omarama, 9448. School telephone: 03 438 9815. Email: principal@omarama.school.nz

Omarama School Board of Trustees:

Chairperson: David (Gundy) Anderson, 021 457 073, Jan Thomas, James Kerr,

Friends of Omarama School

Chairperson: Emma Moore 027 635 5664

Vice chairperson and secretary: Fiona Bochel, Treasurer: Tania Innes, committee members: Kirsten Mathias, Ange Smith, Kerry Thomas and Lisa Anderson

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To make a booking for an upcoming event or for more information about hall hire and availability please contact Charlotte Cook, 027 940 1648, or email charlotte.omarama@gmail.com. Keys and fobs are collected from GlenCraigs



Talking bags of rubbish

Waste Management has advised it will no longer provide the yellow pre-paid rubbish bags as part of its service in the Waitaki district.

The bags are no longer on sale and it will stop collecting bags after February 28.

Instead it is offering wheelie bin services the cost of which begin at \$6.20 a week for an annual subscription for a 140l bin to be collected and emptied fortnightly. For more information: www.wastemanagement.co.nz or phone: 088 101010.

Wasteco offers a wheelie bin service to the Waitaki Valley. For a 140l bin it costs \$5.95 a week. For more information: www.wasteco.co.nz or phone: 0800 341 11 11

The Waitaki District Council resource recovery parks charge a 'drop-off' fee of \$4 per 65l bag for general rubbish. www.waitaki.govt.nz

There is no rate-payer funded collection.

To make appointments for all clinics, order repeat scripts or make enquiries please contact Kurow Medical Centre 03 436 0760 (Monday to Thursdays). On Fridays you can contact us by phoning 027 434 7464

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Omarama Satellite Clinic – Omarama Community Centre

Open Tuesdays, 8.30am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm

Twizel Satellite Clinic – 3a Benmore Place, Twizel

Open Monday and Friday, 8.30am to 1pm
and 2pm to 5pm

Twizel nurse-only clinic - Open Wednesday 8.30am to 1pm

Kurow Medical Centre

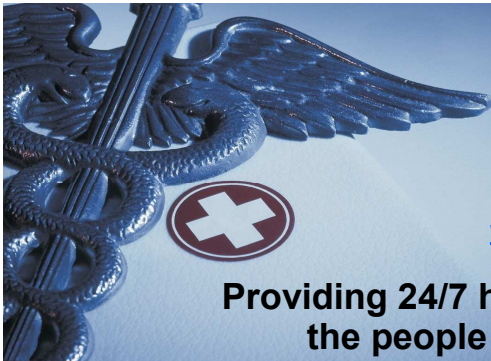
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Omarama Residents' Association

From the minutes of the last meeting...

Judy Piner has spoken with Erik van der Spek of the Waitaki District Council, who said the council would be sympathetic to providing another toilet in the playground. The cleaning contract for these new toilets, could 'piggy back' off the town toilets contract. Hank Verheul said he had spoken to a plumber and confirmed a toilet could be built on the northern side of the playgroup room. The construction material would be Bondor Panelling, which is self-supporting, durable and easy to clean.

The council asked for community feedback by December 20 about heritage listings to be considered as part of its District Plan review. Ruth Grundy proposed the group place a submission that the council retain its present listings for the Omarama sites. That motion was carried unanimously. Discussion also raised the possibility of adding the Omarama church building to the Heritage listing. Secretary Craig Dawson declared a conflict of interest because of his role as district councillor and so Ruth agreed to place the submission about the present buildings, and Charlotte Cook said she would place the submission recommending the church building be considered. Jemma Gloag said she had talked to contractors carrying out resurfacing of the Twizel Courts. They are using Tiger Turf because it is more versatile. They also raised the point that the layout of the marking is very important, such as marking the tennis court lines inside the netball court lines to avoid confusion. She is to investigate further.

Hank said he was concerned about the owners of the Omarama Hotel building fencing off the adjacent carpark. He said that this could create chaos with parking over the busy Christmas period. As this is private land Craig Dawson said there is little that could be done but asked those present to take photos and report issues to the council so he could take a case back in the new year to ask councillors to consider options for providing extra car-parking.

He reminded those present, that the "Visioning Sessions" will be held in February 2018 and these sorts of issues will be discussed and that everyone available should come and have their say.

Lorraine King has been seconded on to the committee.

There was discussion about the provision for rubbish removal in the town. Craig confirmed the council has arranged to have two skips put in place by the toilets for extra collection capacity.

Next meeting: 7.30 pm, Thursday, February 15, at the Omarama Community Centre. Contacts: Ann Patterson, chairperson, 03 438 9493, Craig Dawson, secretary, 0274389132

**'The Community Reports' is
dedicated to news
from clubs, groups and sports teams.
Contributions are welcome.
omaramagazette@gmail.com**

Waitaki District Council - news in brief

‘Visionary’ meetings: Meetings are to be held in Omarama, Otematata and Kurow next month so people can put forward ideas about how they would like future growth in the towns to be managed. The feedback from the meetings will contribute to the review of the District Plan. The council aims to have the draft Waitaki District Plan notified in 2019.

“The sessions will be about two hours long and will be very much participant driven, with emphasis on what our ratepayers want to have happen for their towns,” Ahuriri Ward councillor Craig Dawson says. The meetings will be:

Omarama: 10am, Saturday, March 3, at the Omarama Community Centre.

Kurow: 7.30pm, Thursday March 8, Kurow Memorial Hall.

Otematata: 10am, Saturday, March 10, Lakes Centre, Otematata.

For further information contact: Craig 027 438 9132

Tourism Waitaki Ltd has appointed Margaret Munro, general manager at Earth and Sky, Lake Tekapo, to the position of general manager of the council-controlled company. Mrs Munro will take up the role March 12.

**The next Ahuriri Community Board meeting is
3.15pm to 5.15pm Monday, February 26, at the
Lakes Centre, Otematata**

www.waitaki.govt.nz

Environment Canterbury news in brief

The number one complaint on Canterbury waterways this summer has been about boaties breaking the speed limit. Navigation safety officer Gary Manch, from Environment Canterbury’s harbourmaster’s office, said it was the skipper’s responsibility to know and adhere to the rules.

“If you’re within 200 metres of the shore or within 50 metres of another boat or swimmer, you are required by law to go no faster than five knots. That feels like a fast walking pace, which means you won’t be creating any wake behind you.

“The speed limits are there for a reason – to make sure everyone can safely enjoy our region’s many waterways.

“No one wants to be that jet ski that seriously hurts someone because they were going too fast to slow down in time,” Gary said.

ECan has endorsed Fonterra’s farm environment plan template, the Tiaki FEP template, which it says meets the requirements of the Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan (LWRP). Under the LWRP, all farms requiring a land use consent to farm must produce an environmental plan to support it. Tiaki can be populated electronically with data from various sources including field inspection. It is designed for use across the country using data relevant to the region.

Under Schedule 7 of the LWRP farm environment plans can be prepared either by landowners themselves or using industry-prepared templates and guidance material.

A ‘Can I Swim Here?’ online tool is available to advise users of rivers, lakes, and beaches. Created by Land, Air, Water Aotearoa, it shows the most up-to-date water quality information for nearly 100 sites across the region and is free at LAWA.org.nz/swim

Keep Waitaki lakes beautiful



Take your rubbish with you and use the toilet facilities provided

The Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee is a community led committee supported by local councils and Environment Canterbury.



Waitaki
WAITAKI DISTRICT COUNCIL
TE KAHUNHERA A KIOHE O WAITAKI

 **Environment
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The Good Food News from GlenCraig's Pantry

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CHEWY MUESLI BARS (Paleo)

Ingredients

- 2 C finely chopped nuts, unsalted (I used mixed nuts)
- 2 cups finely shredded unsweetened coconut
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- Pinch of salt
- 2 tablespoons almond flour
- 1/2 cup Coconut Oil melted
- 1/2 cup honey or other preferred sweetener if wished
- 1/4 cup almond butter
- 1 large egg
- OPTIONS: 1/2 C choc chips and 1/2 C chia seeds (I do both!)
- Also – cranberries or raisins are great as an extra



In a large bowl, combine nuts, coconut, cinnamon, salt, and almond flour.

3. In a small bowl, mix together coconut oil, honey, and almond butter. Microwave for 10-20 seconds if needed to get smooth.

4. Pour coconut oil mixture on the dry ingredients and mix until fully incorporated. Add the egg and stir again.

Turn into pan, flatten down and bake for about 30 mins until edges are slightly brown (don't overbake or it loses its chewiness). You can drizzle additional dark chocolate over the top if you prefer (as shown in the picture)..

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Understanding our native fish

A study on how to better protect a rare fish found in the Mackenzie Basin - the tiny bignose galaxiid - is underway.

Environment Canterbury's science and biodiversity staff have been capturing, counting and measuring the vulnerable fish, as well as assessing its habitat at 11 sites in one catchment.

The fieldwork is part of a five-year research project into how fencing stock away from waterways and riparian planting impacts the habitat of the species and is run in partnership with the landowners of Gray's Hill Station.

Other recent initiatives to help protect native galaxiids in the Waitaki River catchment include the placement of fish gates to keep out introduced predatory species, such as trout.

These projects have been supported by the Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee through Environment Canterbury's Immediate Steps Programme, the Department of Conservation and the NZ Defence Force.

The Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee is a community led committee supported by councils.

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Hāngī by the stream

Talking about tuna, learning about local water management and enjoying a delicious hāngī were part of day out of the classroom for Oamaru School students.

The whole school - that's 39 kids - was invited to Oamaru Station by rūnanga and landowners. They got to learn about the native tuna (native long fin eel) relocation programme and to join in the Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee hāngī after its meeting.

The outing complemented the work the students were doing in the classroom and at their school camp around tuna and their ecosystems.

The Upper Waitaki Zone Water Committee is keen to get the public involved in its management of water in the lakes area. Get in touch if you would like to find out more, or come along to a public meeting.

Oamaru School students (left to right) Robbie Anderson, Arabella Thomas and Archie Bochel with their plates of kai

The Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee is a community led committee supported by councils.




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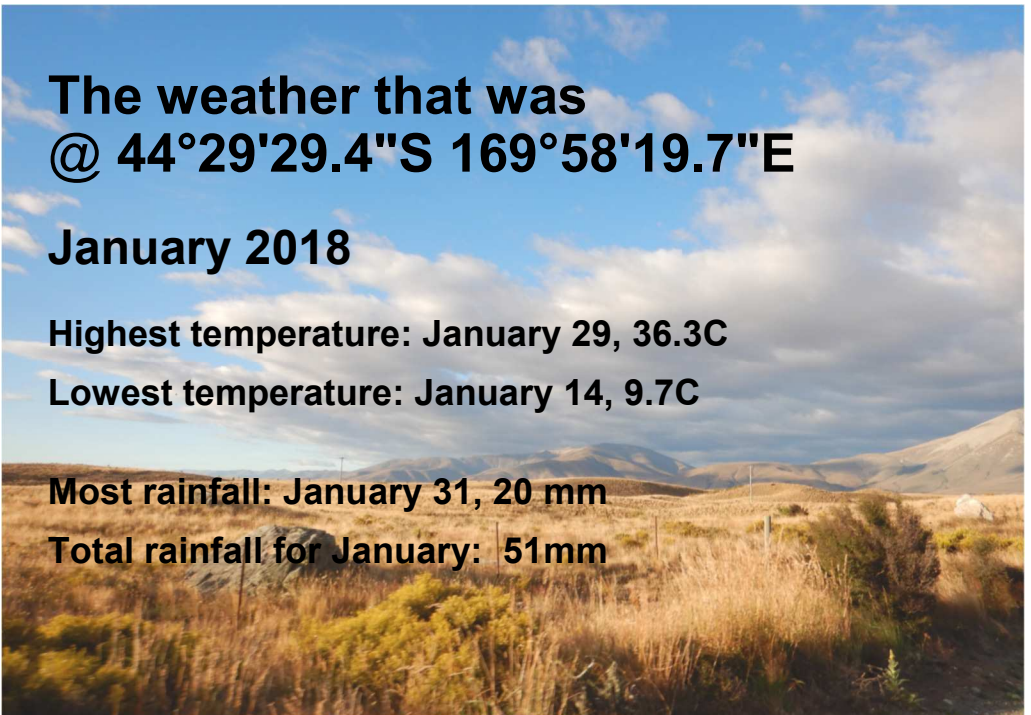
January 2018

Highest temperature: January 29, 36.3C

Lowest temperature: January 14, 9.7C

Most rainfall: January 31, 20 mm

Total rainfall for January: 51mm



The FAQs - Those Five Awkward Questions with...

Jeannette and Rudi de Ridder



Jeannette and Rudi have lived in Omarama on and off since 1978.

Their three children went to playgroup when it was held at Buscot Station and then on to Omarama school. Rudi has worked as chef at most of the towns restaurants at one time or another. He worked at the Countrytime Hotel when it newly-opened as the Stagecoach Inn. Most of his time was spent at the Omarama Motor Lodge, now the Heritage Gateway Hotel, where Jeannette has also worked in the restaurant, bar laundry and reception, where she still works as receptionist and duty manager.

What is the best piece of advice you have been given?

People said to us, 'Omarama is the best place to live and bring up kids and that's what we did.'

Tell us something about Omarama we might not know?

At one time, the Omarama town boundary was about where Pat and Doreen Leopold live now, on Blackpeak Rd.

Who would you invite to your dream dinner party?

Neil Diamond - Jeannette

Rachel Hunter - Rudi

Best day outside the office?

Any day that involves horses and ponies. Taking part in in-hand showing, going to the competitions. Our granddaughter is into show-jumping. - Rudi

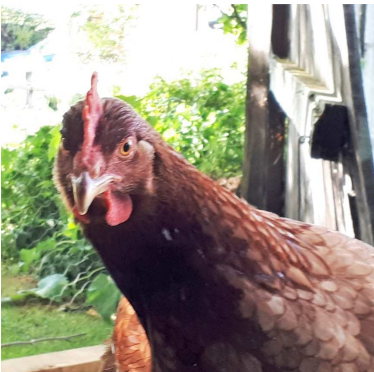
Enjoying something quiet, having a wine with a few friends - Jeannette

What is one thing that would make the world a better place?

Legalising marijuana, we could all walk in harmony! - Rudi

If the different religions could come to an understanding, we could all live in peace and do our own thing. - Rudi and Jeannette

The View from the Chook House



We,
the closest
living relatives of
velociraptors,
greet you!

The Garden Diary - “Before and after’ scenes

I hate housework. Every chore vies for the top of my most hated list. My oven is glowering at me as we speak.

I say, 'The house is messy because I'm in the garden', then again, my garden's well and truly scruffy too.

It is a truth. You only ever notice when chores are not done. Sigh.

However, I do so love that sense of orderliness and calm when they are.

But, that unwarranted smugness that follows the sense of accomplishment never does last long. Halos slip so easily and can strangle one.

In this garden, jam-packed with perennials and over-run with errant and wilful climbers there is much to be done to strip away the tangled, the old, the burnt out and the dead to get back to those simple shapes and straight lines my eye craves in mid-summer – it's too hot for hectic.

Roses need dead-heading, ramblers need pruning, herbs need cutting, lavender trimming, apples and grapes need leaf thinning, and the rampant need reined in to let their more reserved companions breathe. Everything is crying out at once, demanding of attention.

Some kind of messy is only natural – annuals and biennials seem so much happier and healthier when I let them gracefully bend their heads and go to seed on their own choice of 'real estate'. Gardening is a work in progress.

But then, what to do in the gaps?

Smug is the word when I manage to nail it and have a “here's-one-I-prepared-a-little-earlier” moment as I barrow a blooming beauty straight into the gap.

Gaps are also an excuse to pick up a bargain from the nursery – that is if you dare risk transplanting in mid-summer in the high country. I say, 'Who dares wins'. Or not.

Also, if I've managed to be organised in November (what?, me? really?) and carry out our Southern Hemisphere version of the 'Chelsea chop', or 'cut and come again', then those under-layers will have made their way up ready to join the asters, rudbeckias, phlox, and penstemon, to paint the beds lilac, mauve, pink, blue and gold for autumn.

But right now, it's calm I'm after.

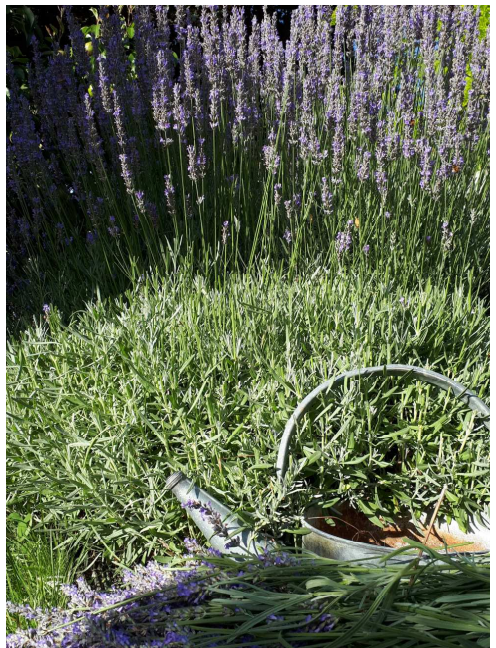
To see simple shapes, hedges and edges back in line, and, once done, to relax in our blue and gold summer and soak up the tranquillity of 50 shades of green.

It is not often I envy minimalists.

And I'm surely not disciplined enough to remain in that moment for long.

Ruth Grundy

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



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