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Omarama Top 10 Holiday Park

Airfield in plan for pilot training venture

A plan set up an international flight training academy at Oamaru Airport which will also bring students to Omarama for mountain flying experience will benefit both the airfield and the community, airfield company chairman Clive Geddes says.

"We [both Omarama Airfield Ltd and Glide Omarama] are wholly supportive of the programme they are offering.

"At this stage it is just the one application for a camp but should there be further requests I'm sure airfield affairs could be managed around that.

"The prime attraction of Omarama as a flying site for both power flying and gliding is the enormous range of terrain close at hand to fly in.

"That is our main asset," he said.

At its February meeting, Waitaki Mayor Gary Kircher told the Ahuriri Community Board the council had been working on a proposal to establish the flight school at Oamaru Airfield and, while there was "still water to go under the bridge", it was "looking quite positive".

There was a "big market" internationally for new pilots.

Omarama Airfield was considered as part of the proposal because of the mountain flying experience to be gained there, Mr Kircher said.

In an interview, Jonathan Manuel, one of the two directors of New Zealand Airline Academy Ltd who plan to set up the school, said it had signed a Memorandum of Understanding and Deed with Waitaki District Council, "quite some time back".

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Omarama Top 10 Holiday Park

More and more Kiwis are seeking out the kinds of holidays they enjoyed while they were growing up.

Families have been making great memories at the Omarama Top 10 Holiday Park for generations, some have been holidaying there for up to 40 years, Tony and Amanda Chapman say.

Now those who came when they were young are returning and bringing their families. "We're finding it's a new generation of families and their friends seeking the same experiences they enjoyed as children - not only bringing their kids, but bringing back grandma and grandad as well," Tony says.

"Statistics show more kiwi families are seeking out those 'traditional' holidays which make the most of the outdoors - affordable holidays in a safe environment with all the amenities."

That is why the Chapmans recently applied for and were granted permission to build six new cabins at the Holiday Park. With construction of two oval cabins and two motel studio units the park will be able to offer up to 24 more beds.

Tony says other holiday spots like Cromwell and Wanaka are getting busier so people are seeking out quieter locations like Omarama where they can continue to enjoy holidays reminiscent of their childhoods.

Omarama Top 10 has everything that makes that traditional Kiwi holiday.

The generous caravan, campervan or tent sites under willows by a stream beneath those big skies are just the start. There are also the cabins or motel units - a bed for every budget - and to complement it all there are the well-appointed communal facilities.

The park also offers that other essential ingredient of a traditional Kiwi holiday - there's something to keep every family member entertained - young and old, adventurous or relaxing, and year-around. Not only can the whole family enjoy the playground and swimming hole right at the 'back door' or just kick back under the willows with a good book, but there's golfing, fishing, and gliding nearby. In winter its only a short trip to ski-fields to enjoy snow sports, plus, at any time of the year, you can take off and explore the cycle trails.

It's only ever a short journey from Omarama to practically anywhere else. It is a hidden gem, don't tell too many people, they'll all want to come.



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Plans were well underway and they were just awaiting final approval from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. He said the plan was to bring in about 30 international students at a time who will each pay \$65,000 to complete the course. Mr Manuel is a sales and marketing professional who works for Air New Zealand, holds a New Zealand commercial pilot licence, and is on the executive board of the India New Zealand Business Council. His profile states he has been actively involved promoting New Zealand's aviation training globally for the past eight years, and his efforts have seen New Zealand flight schools obtain approval from overseas civil aviation authorities and airlines. He is also a board member of Christchurch Educated which promotes New Zealand education, internationally. Fellow director Celroy Mascarenhas was, until recently working as instructor for Matamata-based New Zealand Aviation Ltd, and is still listed as director of that company on the New Zealand Company's website. Mr Mascarenhas is at present in a dispute with New Zealand Aviation over monies owing to him and this has now gone to mediation, Mr Manuel said.

When contacted, New Zealand Aviation chief executive Mitchell Coombe said the company wanted to "distance themselves" from the new venture. He believed the new company was actively trying to lure students away from the Matamata flying school. His concern was the Waitaki District Council had offered "huge amounts of discounts" to get the new venture set up in Oamaru but all the profits would go offshore. He had not spoken to the council about his concerns.

Mr Manuel strenuously refuted the claim. "That is just not true. It is absolutely false. We are trying to bring investment and revenue into the country." He estimates the new venture will bring in \$3million per annum to the Waitaki district. Not only will there be a regular intake of students, one aircraft will be provided for every five students. Accommodation has been rented in Oamaru to house the students and the business will also provide other employment opportunities. Competition between flight training schools was renowned for being intense which is why they deliberately chose Oamaru "specifically to stay away from all the other competition" and set up in a "place not touched by another business".

In an interview, Mr Kircher said he was "excited" about the opportunities the venture would bring to the district. "Essentially we have come to a good agreement with them around costs and our charges. The right balance has been struck between getting the revenue we should be getting and helping a new venture to become established. I'm very comfortable with what we are doing. We try to be fair with everyone we are dealing with and respond accordingly."

Mr Manuel said he had flown in Oamaru several times while completing his pilot training. He says international flight training experts say one skill new pilots can lack is "airmanship". New Zealand-trained pilots are sought after because students can gain experience flying in a wide-range of geography and meteorology which builds "pilot judgment". "That's what puts New Zealand-trained pilots on top of the list," he said.

North Otago Aero Club captain Sven Thelning said he had met with the flight school directors and was not surprised they wanted to set up in Oamaru because the airfield was ideal for their needs. The club runs the Waitaki Flight School but this is club-focused and concentrated on the domestic market, he said.

"I'm pretty optimistic...it will be great to have ...I think it will be really good."

Our remarkable men and their flying adventures

Wingy's story

If, as they say, life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away, then our Wingy's flight in a P51-D Mustang was a whole 45 minutes filled to overflowing with those breath-taking moments.

"I still remember every minute of it," Pat (Wingy) Leopold (83) says.

Many people know Wingy as the master of the infamous 'Dunny Door' table at Boots and Jandals Hotel Omarama. What some may not know is, in his younger days he gained his pilot licence and clocked up some 600 hours of flying.

Hence the nickname. What began as Wingy short for Wing-nut because of – well, you know – morphed into Wings before settling down to Wingy

He and wife Doreen moved to Omarama from Twizel 36 years ago to what was the 'last' house on Blackpeak Rd at the eastern end of town.

Wingy had been a machine-operator for the Ministry of Works in Twizel driving trucks and dozers in the construction of the New Zealand Electricity Department's Upper Waitaki Hydro Scheme.

When he moved to Omarama he began work at the MOW depot here. He recalls those days and being on call night and day. "The [Lindis] pass was never closed, back then".

Next he went into business on his own account and drove his own dozer for a few years until the withdrawal of farming subsidies in the early 1980s hit home and took "the cockies off track work". He worked for ABB for a time on the electrical automation of Waitaki and Benmore dams, and did "a bit of painting in between".

The love of aircraft and flying came early. He grew up in Dunedin, used to build model aircraft, and as a teenager "100 years ago" joined the Air Training Corp as a cadet. "I had the bug for it."

The Twizel of the early 1970s was a wealthy, bustling construction town. The Upper Waitaki Aero Club, based at Pukaki Airfield, boasted a strong family-orientated membership with two aircraft.

Wingy got his licence then and there.

He flew "every weekend" and was president of the club "for a couple of years".

There was "great camaraderie".

The well-patronised bar subsidised flying hours but it was "never opened until the plane was put away".

Wingy never flew commercially - there were 12 commercial pilots in the single men's camp at the time without jobs – there was no call for pilots, he says.

He flew the club's Cessna 172 locally and to rugby test matches, to Wellington, Hastings and to airshows at the Ohakea RNZAF Base, and over to the West Coast numerous times. "I loved going up and around the rock [Mt Cook], that was one of my favourite ones." He remembers when the "main strip" in Omarama was the main road and planes used to land and taxi out to Woodsy's [Eion Woods] to gas up.

Then there's the story we're not allowed to tell.

He was dubbed a 'gentleman' duck shooter by mates because on opening day he would fly to Naseby, land in a farmer's paddock, fill his bag and be back home by 4pm.

And so, what is the story about that once-in-a-life-time flight?

It was November, about 10 or 12 years ago.

Daughter and son-in-law Sharon and Steve Reeves owned the Mobil Service Station.

"I had done a bit by them when they owned the garage."

He had been planning to visit his brother in Perth and to take a trip on the Indian Pacific rail service. When Sharon and Steve said they would shout him either the train trip or the flight in the Mustang.

"Forget Aussie, I said, just forget Aussie."

"It was a bloody beautiful day."

Family travelled home for the event.

A last-minute hitch saw them all pile into a bus – grandson Daniel Leopold's 'bedroom' at the time - for the trip over to Wanaka airfield.

But that was not to be his mode of transport.

"Lindsay Purvis arrived in his Morgan and said; "Hop in mate, we're off to Wanaka."

"Well, that warmed me up, for a start."

"We went through the Lindis like it wasn't there."

Once Wingy was strapped into the 1945-era aircraft, Mustang pilot Robert Borrius-Broek took-off and with a circuit of Wanaka and a barrel roll headed for Big Bay on the West Coast where there had reportedly been a request for "flyby".

"I had a stick in the back ... I had my play on the way over to the coast."

Unfortunately, they encountered thick cloud so the pilot changed plans and flew back over Mt Aspiring, surprising a couple of climbers on the way, and paid two "courtesy calls" on Sir Tim Wallis before heading back.

"It took ¾ an hour and I won't forget a second of it."

"There was only one thing I missed, when you're on the ground you get a real snarl from the big V12 engine upfront, inside you don't get the same."

"I'd walk over there tomorrow to get another ride."



Our remarkable men and their flying adventures

Graham's story

Airplane enthusiast Graham McLean has gone to every one of the Warbirds over Wanaka International Airshows.

He has the programmes, caps, badges and a large plastic bin of other memorabilia to prove it.

He drags it out of nowhere for the photo, much to wife Lorraine's surprise.

She didn't know he'd kept all that.

This year was the 30th anniversary of the biennial event.

For the past three shows Graham has headed to Wanaka three or four days early to help set up.

The show usually employs between 250 and 350 volunteers, depending on the ground and air displays.

They help with all kinds of "on-the-ground" tasks which need to come together before the gates open and visitors swarm in.

Graham and his mates have helped with jobs like putting privacy screens around the toilets, filling in rabbit holes, laying sawdust on damp ground, whatever's down on their list to do.

"We're general dogs-bodies... we enjoy it, it's a lot of fun," he says.

Back in the event's early days about eight of them would travel and camp together at Luggate to go to the show.



"When we first started going there were no buildings.

"You could stand by the Spitfire as it started up then rush over to the runway fence to watch it take off, there was nothing in your way. It's changed a lot since then."

This year, two of them went and took the caravan.

"We're too old to live in a tent."

And instead of being "pressed against the fence" to get good views, nowadays Graham gets a three-day gold pass for the stand with a direct view to the runway.

Through the years any airshow has been a draw-card; he's been to Omaka in Blenheim and the VE Anniversary show at Wigram, among others.

Graham helps run Omarama's Model Aircraft Club.

It is aircraft modelling that drives his fascination with old planes, and that interest, in turn, drives the modelling. The amphibious Catalina which displays over Lake

Wanaka during the show looks a lot like Graham's Catalina, only bigger.

He finds it hard to pick the most memorable of the aircraft he's seen at Wanaka but the visit of the Polikarpov aircraft restored by the Soviet Aeronautical Research Institute on Sir Tim Wallis' behalf is up there.

And there's still nothing like the roar of the Spitfire and Mustang, he says.



Our remarkable men and their flying adventures

Ken's story

Ken Rogers always wanted a plane so he built one, he says in that understated way of his.

The result was an intricately crafted Vans RV 6 - Reg No.KRV

The I.D is no coincidence. He chose the registration, especially.

It represents the hours of work he and wife Kay spent on the build.

The Vans are the most popular home-built aeroplane, as opposed to a microlight, Ken says.

They come in a series - RV3, 4, 6 and 8 – and the RV6 is the side-by-side two seater.

When he first saw the RV4 – a two-seater front and back he was sold on the idea.

“I said if he [Richard VanGrunsven] ever invents a side-by-side we'll build one and he did, so we did.”

Ken, who is 65, has been flying for 43 years and had his pilot licence for 40 of those. He learnt to fly in Golden Bay.

“My wife let me waste the money.

“At the time, it was \$9 an hour which relative to wages was not too bad.”

Golden Bay is also where he was raised on the family farm and being raised on a farm in a remote area gives you a certain mindset, he says.

“You learn to do everything. You're expected to do anything.

“If you don't know how it works, you find out.”

The RV 6 kit moved into the Roger's basement in November 1995 and the eight-year build began.

At the time Ken was working shiftwork as an operator for what was the Electricity Corporation, now Meridian Energy, working four-days-on and four-days-off.

“I spent half my time building it

“It still took eight years.”

When winters proved too cold for work to continue in the basement the assembly moved upstairs to the lounge.

It was still possible to pull the couch out and push the plane behind it when guests came over, Kay says.

“Kay learned to swear [helping to build it]”, Ken says.

Although, experienced at metal-working he says he'd never driven a rivet “in my whole life”.

He and Kay drove in 13,000 rivets. Two holes had to be drilled for each rivet.

“Kay was at one end or another of each of those rivets.”

Nowadays, the kits are easier and much faster to build because much more is pre-fabricated.

KRV first flew in December 2003, one of the first of half-dozen of its type to fly anywhere in the world.

But before Ken could get in the cockpit for the first time the plane had to be put through its paces by a Civil Aviation Authority test pilot “to check no bits would fall off”.

“Then we went for a booze-up at the fire brigade.”

Since then the plane has clocked up 530 hours of flying throughout the country.

Kay and Ken have taken it as far as Nelson which took 1hr35min.

But it's been as far as Auckland on "one fill of gas".

It has a five-hour endurance and cruising along at 150 knots it can "get along pretty quickly".

It has a four-to-one speed ratio. So, it can go from 50mph – stall speed - to 200mph - the wing design allows that.

When it was first built Ken had installed a second-hand motor from a helicopter which proved to be a mistake because it was faulty.

It had three overhauls before they found out what was wrong and replaced the motor.

"It's not missed a beat since then."

The air force used the planes for training for many years.

Highly manoeuvrable, it is perfect for aerobatics.

"It can do loops and rolls very, very easily.

"It's a lovely wee plane, an incredible thing really."

And the all-important question, how much has it all cost?

Despite keeping all the invoices, Ken says has no idea because he never did get around to adding them all up.

But the cost alone was motivation to get the plane airborne.

"It's just about an anchor until it's finished."

However, once it was built that was just the beginning.

It is required to have exactly the same level of airworthiness as any other aeroplane, which is expensive.

It has to have an inspection every year "which basically means we have to pull it all apart and put it all back together again".

Ken obtained the licence needed to maintain it himself to cut some of the costs.

"The CAA are always coming up with ways to keep you out of beer."



WaterForce closing for winter break

Irrigation company WaterForce is to close its Omarama store for the winter months.

Waterforce Cromwell-Omarama branch manager Grant Kitto said WaterForce closed its doors on March 29 but will re-open in September.

The company opened the Omarama store in July 2016 and employed a full-time store manager.

“We’ve looked at the last couple of years of winter trading... it’s very quiet.”

While it was true some farmers' irrigation projects had been affected by recent consent decisions, none-the less, “over winter nothing much happens”.

“A number of projects have been put on hold until they get through the issues.

“Some projects will go through and some won’t.”

Regardless of new project work, WaterForce did not underpin business on “what might happen”.

The store was established to service existing customers, he said.

The break will allow time look at future staffing options.

It was possible he may recruit an intermediate engineer who was “ready for a new challenge”, or WaterForce may “resource it from other branches”.

“We’re still committed to the area. We’re not going to shut the doors and walk away,” Mr Kitto said.



Plans progress for sale of central Omarama block

Environment Canterbury and the other agencies involved in freeing up the land under its control in central Omarama for sale are continuing to step through the legal process.

The land in question is a 2.3ha block owned by the Crown that was vested in the regional council in 1989 when ECan was first set up.

It was given to ECan because it had previously been owned by the rabbit board and the new regional council was put in charge of pest -rabbit- control.

ECan is not able to offer the land for sale directly but must hand it back to the Crown for disposal.

In September 2016, when ECan began the process to return the land to the Crown its director of finance and corporate services, Miles McConway, told the Omarama Gazette, because pest control work as it was done in the past was no longer carried out, ECan had no need for the property.

Last week, in answer to an email from the Omarama Gazette querying progress Mr McConway said ECan was continuing to work through the process.

The first step had been to refer the matter to the Department of Conservation because it was the agency that administered land subject to the Reserves Act 1977.

Doc has to revoke the land as reserve land under section 24 of that Act.

Once this is done, the land becomes Crown land and available for "disposal".

Land Information New Zealand (Linz) administers the disposal of Crown land through the Land Act 1948.

"Doc has no legal authority to dispose of any revoked Crown reserve (hence Linz will do this) but Doc do have financial responsibility for the disposal (costs and revenue) so they will oversee the disposal process.

"Linz completes the disposal/sale of the land through an accredited agent, and this is the part of the process that this particular piece of land is in at the moment, " Mr McConway said.

"A Linz accredited supplier has been appointed to ensure all is in order for the sale and they are working through this.

"There are a number of legal obligations around the sale that the Crown abides by, including such things as; offering first right of refusal to Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu under the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998, any obligation to offer the land back to any former owner, and notification of the proposed disposal to other noted Crown and local government agencies who may be interested.

"There are other obligations under the Land Act 1948 also," he said.

Linz regularly posts a list of its current disposals on its website



Debating conifer control on Benmore Islands

Representatives of some affected parties but few other members of the public attended a meeting in Omarama last month and engaged in, what was at times, a heated discussion about Land Information New Zealand's plan to control wilding conifers on the Lake Benmore islands.

Linz is about to begin "ground control" work as the first step of a longer term plan to remove conifers and other pest species from the islands.

It wants to protect native plant species, some of which are threatened, and to stop the spread of wilding conifers onto neighbouring farmland.

The meeting was held so those doing the control work could explain what they planned to do to achieve this.

Linz will use a mix of methods including aerial spraying and ground felling to remove the pest trees and at the same time minimise any impact on the lake and on public use.

Longer term, it plans to plant natives on the islands and perhaps make them predator-free zones to encourage native fauna.

Linz Crown property biosecurity manager Kevin Gallagher, Pete Caldwell, who is Boffa Miskell biosecurity consultant to Linz, and Ministry of Primary Industries long term programmes senior advisor Alan Tinnelly led the meeting and outlined the plans.

"Whilst it [the islands] may not be a priority nationally, it is a priority for Linz...we take an awful lot of flack over not showing a lead in this, so here we are, we're getting into it," Mr Gallagher said.

The National Wilding Conifer Control Programme had "finally kicked off in earnest" and multiple agencies had come together to "get some work done".

Mr Tinnelly said, nationally, what the programme was trying to do was to use "any number of tools we can to get rid of these beasties" while keeping costs low.

Landowners were contributing between 25% and 30% of costs which was "crucial".

Mr Caldwell said while there was no contorta on the islands – considered the worst of the pest trees - Douglas fir and other pest species were spreading quickly and had spread onto the mainland.

Work had been done to map out areas of different densities of trees so the control work could be "tailored" to that, he said.

Waitaki District councilor Craig Dawson questioned the need for the work, and whether the risks to public safety and the visual effects on what was a popular area for boating had been properly thought through.

"I've boating there for about 27 years.

"The land surrounding those islands has not changed one iota. So, where's the problem?

"You're going to wreck an amenity that people have enjoyed, especially Junction Island, for many years and you're going to make it unsafe and uninhabitable, basically."

"The islands are Crown land ...it is our responsibility to work in conjunction with the national programme and do our bit," Mr Gallagher said.

While, the public might have to be excluded from some areas for a time to ensure

people's safety, long-term the "vision" was to have "something that's better than what is there".

"Leave them and they will close in. In due course they [the islands] will be unusable," he said.

Ahuriri Community board chairman Graham Sullivan said the board had serious concerns about clearing the islands.

"We've got a lot of people that are really upset."

However, board member Tony Chapman said Mr Sullivan did not speak on his behalf.

"You're not speaking for all of us...personally, I think we need them all sprayed and tidied up.

"What's the difference - wallabies and rabbits and wilding pines? They're a pest."

Mr Dawson said if aerial "boom" spraying was used there was a risk herbicide would get into the lake.

"It's inevitable...If you 'nuke' those trees, they all die ...it's going to look like a bit of a holocaust... they then fall over, become a mess, then what happens?

"If you poison a tree ... its either going to wind up in the lake and become a navigational problem, at the very least it's going to become a helluva an eye sore for probably 20 years before anything starts re-growing."

Mr Gallagher said requirements to consider any residual effects of herbicide use were mandatory and Linz had determined the effect on the lake, because of the volume of water involved would be negligible.

Previous experience with similar operations showed treated trees may stand for some time but lose wind resistance and "melt" and break down quickly once they do fall. It was less likely whole trees would fall in the lake.

Mr Dawson said he believed there were worse affected areas like Pukaki and that was where attention should be focused. "Pukaki, you can't walk through those trees."

Mr Chapman said, unless controlled, within a few years the trees on the islands would reach the density of those at Pukaki.

Board member Brent Cowles said he had no issues with the control work but was concerned he had seen no plan or time-line for replanting which, it appeared, could be quite some time off, and he questioned how that was to be funded.

"I'm partway through doing my skipper's certificate and wanted to take people up through there to show them how stunning it is. I may as well write that off."

Mr Sullivan said it seemed like the plan was a "foregone conclusion" and the meeting a "waste of time".

"You're going to do it anyway ...a lot of people will be up in arms.

"It's a tourist place up here ...a real tourist mecca, you're going to really ruin it."

Mr Caldwell said the first step was to get rid of the trees.

Just when replanting would occur and who would pay for it had not been decided but Doc and Ecan were likely funders.

"It is going to be an eyesore for a long time, that's unavoidable, but is it not worth it then, long term? Who's to say it won't be a tourist mecca once this comes into play," he said.

Kate Gibbon, of Te Akatarawa Station said doing nothing to control the spread of the trees was not an option but was also concerned there appeared to be no firm plan for replanting the islands.

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Debating conifer control on Benmore Islands

“Could a sum from Government funding be agreed on and documented now to allow for that re-planting in future?”

Mr Caldwell said that was something that fell outside of his brief.

Mr Sullivan asked if it was possible to leave the islands as is and clear only those trees on the mainland.

Lance Smith, of Environment Canterbury, said it was already working closely with those landowners but “if you’re always going to have a seed source it’s going to be never ending”.

Mackenzie Lakes coastguard Dene Madden, who is also a contractor to Linz and Meridian Energy, said he was one of the many employed by the Ministry of Works who originally planted the islands.

Most of what was there now, including the *carmichaelia*, was what the teams planted several decades ago, he said. To his eye few of those original trees had seeded.

Plantings were made close together to ensure survival and pines had been put in as nurse trees with the intention of following up with native plantings but then the MOW moved out of the area.

“When we started on those islands there was nothing, even the tussocks wouldn’t grow there.”

He doubted there would be any native regeneration once the pines were removed as



there had been no natives there to begin with.

“You’re actually going, as far as I’m concerned, to really destroy what people enjoy every year... and have it look like something out of Dante’s inferno.”

Mr Madden suggested the work would be better carried out in stages, clearing smaller areas and replanting, then, when those were established, taking out more trees, rather than leaving the islands “barren”.

Mr Tinnelly said there was merit in leaving selected species but it was important not to underestimate the potential for them to “run rampant”. It was a matter of working with the community to consider what options would work best rather than saying “this is not going to work”.

“There’s got to be a way through this.”

The land immediate adjacent to Benmore Dam which takes in the Lake Benmore Peninsula walk is Meridian-owned and, longer-term, is also to be cleared of

wildings.

Meridian Energy hydro maintenance generation and natural resources manager Paul Lloyd said it, too, had a responsibility to control the conifers.

"We need to do our part too... we're going to attempt to log it [the peninsula] out."

The fear was trees would end up in the lake and river and would be carried onto the screens at the dams.

The company's hydro asset maintenance manager, Mat Bayliss, said having "heavy debris" floating in the popular boating lake was "just not an option".

"Logs that hit our screens are a cost, that's bad.

"Logs floating in the lake that could cost someone their life, that's intolerable.

"No matter what you think of wilding pines none of us here want that on our conscience."

Laurie Forestry Ltd forestry consultant Allan Laurie said the natural process meant it was inevitable live trees would fall in the lake and some trees were not in places that could be logged.

The worst hazard was posed by a freshly-cut log or by live trees falling in the lake, he said.

"Spraying is the absolute right idea.

"They do just melt down.

"Very little debris will ever get near the lake.

"If you do nothing some of them are going to finish up as whole trees floating in the water.

"You're already seeing undermining of some of the root systems now so it's only going to get worse as the trees get older," he said.

"If they were all planted at the same time, if it's an even age forest they'll all tip over probably at the same time," Mr Tinnelly said.

Mr Gallagher said Linz has "a real desire to get these islands back into something that's mutually beneficial, that's what I'm taking away from this."

"What that recovery is and whether that is enough to satisfy future use as a public amenity or ... a nice ecological area for the public that remains to be seen," he said.

"All I'm seeing is a mess, Mr Dawson said.

"Once it's been poisoned it will look terrible for the next 10, 15, 20 years, and you haven't shown us any plan. You've got no plan. It doesn't make me feel very comfortable. I suggest take your time and give us something good."

The meeting was attended by; Waitaki District councillor Craig Dawson, Ahuriri Community Board chairman Graham Sullivan, and board members Tony Chapman and Brent Cowles; Meridian Energy hydro asset maintenance manager Mat Bayliss and hydro maintenance manager generation and natural resources Paul Lloyd; Kate Gibbon of Te Akatarawa Station; Department of Conservation Twizel senior ranger Dean Nelson; Steve Palmer and Lance Smith of Environment Canterbury; Twizel coast guard Dene Madden; Laurie Forestry Ltd forestry consultant Allan Laurie and Otematata resident Murray Dennison.

The meeting was advertised in the Timaru Herald, Otago Daily Times, Oamaru Mail, and Waitaki Valley community newsletters, and members of the Waitaki Lakes Shoreline Authorities Committee and Ngai Tahu were invited.

Association raises \$7000 for Child Cancer

Omarama merino growers were among the 170 who travelled to Central Otago last month for a two-day tour of eight merino studs.

Growers were able to visit Nine Mile Station, Malvern Downs, Earnsclough Station, Matangi Station, Little Valley Station, Matarae Station, Stonehenge Station and Armidale Merino Stud.

The tour culminated in the presentation of the annual Otago Merino Association awards at a formal dinner in Alexandra, at which Dee du Plessis spoke of son Frans' (10) battle with cancer.

Each year the growers put forward fleeces to be auctioned to raise funds for Child Cancer.

These fleeces are judged which is the basis for the awards.

This year the winners of the fine micron section and over all winners were Peter, Margaret and Simon Hore, of Gidding Downs.

Bill and Kate Sutherland, and Andrew and Deidre Sutherland, of Benmore, were placed third in the fine micron section.

In addition to the Child Cancer Fleece competition, the Heather Perriam award for outstanding service to the merino industry was presented to Mike Hargadon, of the New Zealand Merino Company.

Wool buyer Nikke buys the donated wool bales as its donation to the foundation.

In addition, they make two bolts of luxury merino fabric which is auctioned at the next year's event and made into suits by Sergio's Menswear.

This year the fabric was bought by Ross Ivey of Glentanner Station for \$2850 (plain fabric) and by George Collier, of ICL Chartered Accountants, for \$2050 (pin stripe).

A total of \$7250 was raised on the night.

Photos: By Jemma Gloag





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

Employee of the month...

James Hurst

*Ellis-Lea Farms Tara Hills manager and
Upper Waitaki Young Farmers club chairman*

We're a small town with so much talent. Together we do so much.

Each month we feature our 'Employee of the Month' - to learn a little more about how our people spend their day.

A seriously broken ankle meant he had to swap his gumboots for a moon boot but that still wasn't enough to keep James Hurst off-farm for long.

To say he is passionate about farming, especially working with cattle, would be an understatement. And it's no exaggeration to say farming is in his blood.

James, who is 26-years-of-age, moved to Omarama five-and-a-half years ago to work for Simon Croft at Berwen Station, before moving to Tara Hills to work for Dave and Karen Ellis four years ago.

He grew up in Georgetown, oldest son of Russell and Cathy Hurst, of Invernia, and grandson of Sid and Hazel Hurst.

"[Growing up] I was always out with Dad or one of the staff," James says.

Sid, who died in 2016 aged 97, was last month posthumously honoured with a

plaque unveiled alongside Bortons Pond commemorating him as a 'Visionary Farmer and Irrigation Pioneer; Champion of the Waitaki'. At 90 years-of-age Sid was still active in the family farming partnership on the 2000 hectare property milking 2000 cows and running 3000 beef cattle and 3000 fine wool Merinos.

James went farming as soon as he left school and has "been farming ever since – every spare moment".

Merino sheep are run at Tara Hills alongside the dairy grazing unit which supports other farms in the Ellis-Lea company, including The Glens. Fodder beet is grown for winter grazing. James' main responsibility is the cattle. Feeding, and shifting stock and irrigation "pretty much fills the day" through the summer months, and, in winter, feeding-out is the regular chore. This season he has charge of 4300 heifers – a mixture but mostly kiwi-cross dairy cattle.

His responsibility is to build young heifers



up from 100kg in weight to 500kgs in readiness for pregnancy, calving and then milking. The heifers are regularly 'weigh drafted' which means the lighter cows can be separated out and given extra feed to ensure they meet the target weights. Animal health is a priority and Omarama is great country to raise healthy stock, James says. Under irrigation, it has been proved that it is possible to grow here, in Omarama, the most grass in the shortest season in the country – more than Hawke's Bay, he says. He is pragmatic about the mycoplasma bovis outbreak.

It is not on the farm and all the correct protocols are in place and are stringently adhered to to keep it that way.

An accident at the start of the year while on a family holiday - he fell off the handlebars of a pushbike ridden by his brother - resulted in a helicopter trip to Dunedin Hospital for surgery. Initially on two crutches, now down to one, he was not allowed weight on the broken leg for nine weeks. Still in that time he only took 10 days off work and that was because of the painkillers he had to take. He says he hasn't found being on crutches too much of a handicap as he can manage most tasks on the farm bike.

In his days 'outside the office' he enjoys hunting and fishing but "I often end up at work in my spare time too." What?! Does he think Dave is reading this?

One of his other outside interests is Young Farmers Club.

He has been chairman of Upper Waitaki Young Farmers club for the past couple of years. The Upper Waitaki Club, part of the Aorangi Region of clubs, was formed in late 2010. Numbers did dwindle – "It got down to three, now we're up to about a dozen."

"When my father was involved [in Young Farmers] it was massive."

Members come from Omarama, Hakataramea Valley, Duntroon and Danseys Pass, and from all rural occupations. There's no need to be a farmer to join. The focus is on socialising and connecting with others in the community.

"We have school teachers, truck drivers, people who are new to the community and want to meet others."

The group takes part in various inter-club competitions and challenges ranging from ten-pin bowling to stock judging and fencing competitions, as well as fundraising for charity. The next planned activity is a bus trip to the West Coast and a visit to Gloriavale.

There is also the serious side – Young Farmers and its affiliated organisations offer support through the tough times. The Young Farmers organisation has brought its roadshow through. Farmstrong have run seminars and Rural Support Trust has held workshops with club members. "People need to talk and watch out for their mates," James says. "If someone wants to have a yarn its important to always have time for them."

Next week - Saturday, April 14 - Young Farmers hosts its Aorangi Regional final competition at the Waimate A&P Show Grounds starting at 8am, with an evening show at the Waimate Shears Pavillion hosted by Te Radar.

The winner of this advances through to the FMG Young Farmer of the Year Grand Final in Invercargill in July. It's the 50th anniversary of the Young Farmer competition which was first held in 1969.

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.

The O.G. investigates ... are our

Late last year, in an article published in the New Zealand Herald (here is the link) New Zealand Police Mid-South Canterbury area commander Inspector Dave Gaskin told reporter Lynley Bilby; "claims by officers patrolling the region's roads that foreign drivers were causing the bulk of driving incidents on South Island highways were not correct."

This was in response to comments made by Twizel Senior Constable Bruce Francis that 80% of the tickets he had recently issued had been given to overseas tourists. In the article Inspector Gaskin said:

"The Twizel officer and other local police were 'shooting off at the mouth' about overseas drivers and unfairly maligning foreign and foreign-looking drivers...Some of these guys in small areas will deal with a particular thing in their area and they shoot off at the mouth and are not quite correct. They [the officers] are suffering from tunnel vision."

Several people have contacted the Gazette, and while stressing their reluctance to encourage vigilante action, such as taking keys off drivers, have questioned Inspector Gaskin's statements concerned that the statistics for driving incidents on our high country roads could be different to national figures, and that he is undermining those police who serve in our region's small towns.

So the O.G is attempting to verify the statistics.

The first step:

The OG contacted the Police media centre on March 21 to ask Inspector Gaskin about his comments.

His spokesperson replied by email.

"Hi Ruth,

I've touched base with Inspector Gaskin and unfortunately we don't have these numbers and details to hand. This would take very significant time and collation and would need to be requested under the Official Information Act. He has told me that since the beginning of December 2017, nine people have died on the road in Mid South Canterbury Police Area. These deaths have occurred across eight crashes and only one of these people was not a New Zealand citizen but was residing locally. If you want to file an OIA for this information, you can do so here: <https://forms.police.govt.nz/oiarequest>

Step two:

The Official Information Act - OIA - request was duly filed and received by New Zealand Police at 13.41, Wednesday, March 21, 2018. The request is as below:

I would like to confirm/verify the information given to New Zealand Herald reporter Lynley Bilby by Inspector Gaskin for its article of December 29, 2017. 'Top cop: Don't blame tourists - local drivers are killing locals.'

The link is here: http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11967187

Despite Inspector Gaskin's comments, the general consensus of the communities in this area is that our regional statistics will differ markedly from the national statistics.

high country highways different

Specifically,

1. What was the number of driving complaints dealt with by each of the Fairlie, Tekapo, Twizel and Omarama police between December 26 and December 29, 2017?
2. What was the number of tickets issued for the same period by each of the above?
3. What country issued the driver's license in each case?
4. Of each of the complaints/tickets issued on those days, in each of those locations, how many of those involved were rental company vehicles?

Thank you for your help with this, Ruth

The police are required by law to give you a decision as soon as possible and no later than 20 working days after they have received the OIA request (unless an extension is made). If the police need more time, for example, if the request is for a lot of information, you will be advised and given an idea of how long it will take.

Depending on what the answers to our request are we also have several more questions to ask.

Will keep you posted...



The Noticeboard



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

The organisers of the Omarama Junior Sports Club Easter Raffle would like to thank everyone for their support.

The winners of the Four Square raffle were
1st – Nic Leopold, 2nd – Paul Bowman, 3rd – Glen Rutherford, 4th – Lucy Radford, 5th – Emma Moore

Upper Waitaki Hockey 2018

This year we are fortunate enough to enter three teams in North Otago Hockey - years 1 - 4 Ministicks, years 5 - 6 Kiwisticks, years 7 - 8 Kwiksticks. We are also on the lookout for a superstar in our community who has good hockey knowledge and experience to give our children. It

would only be a few hours a week to coach our amazing Upper Waitaki Wasps Hockey Team. The team comprises of a children from Duntroon, Waitaki Valley, Omarama and Twizel schools. They play on a Tuesday in Oamaru and we are flexible on the practice day. If this sounds like you, or your child is interested in playing for the 2018 season, or you are interested in further information then please contact me Suzie McIlraith. Email: andy.suzie@xtra.co.nz or phone 021 478 997.

It's confirmed. Glider pilot Keith Essex did set a new world gliding speed record from Omarama in February.

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 - The end of daylight savings sees Saturdays tee-off move to 12.30pm and twilight golf ends. 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 receive email alerts between monthly editions of the Omarama Gazette sign up to our 'Local List'. Email omaramagazette@gmail.com and put 'Local List' in the subject line.

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**

Advertising pays for production and distribution.

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

**The May issue of the Omarama Gazette
is Wednesday, May 2, 2018.**

**Please submit copy
by Friday, April 27.**

The Community Reports

Upper Waitaki Police News



By Ruth Grundy

Omarama senior constable Nayland (Bean) Smith and Kurow senior constable Peter Scott, together with a detective from Oamaru police, carried out the recovery of 22 cannabis plants found growing near an unnamed stream at Lake Ohau, this morning. (Wednesday, March 14, 2018.)

Bean estimates the mature crop, which was fully irrigated, to be worth several thousand dollars.

"It was an intricate set-up, a lot of time and money has been spent," he said.

"Enquiries are continuing to locate the person responsible."

Bean said they had "one person of interest" in mind.

Along with the cannabis police recovered about 40m of

alkathene pipe, garden hoses, 20kg bags of blood and bone and lime, netting, garden stakes, and other irrigation materials including two timers.

All will be destroyed "unless the person wants to come and talk to me about it."

Bean said he expected cannabis was grown in the Omarama area every season.

With news reports claiming methamphetamine, also known as P, is now easier to access in the regions than cannabis both Bean and Peter said it would be naïve to think that drug had not made it to the Upper Waitaki.

"Southland is rife with it, Christchurch, Wanaka, Queenstown... we're not immune to it," Peter said.

But, both strongly indicated anyone caught bringing methamphetamine into the valley would not find it a rewarding experience.

Contact Senior Constable Nayland Smith - Bean

phone 03 438 9559 ext 34580, 021 191 4808

or email: Nayland.smith@police.govt.nz



Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade

There were 11 calls for March, four personal fire alarms, five medicals and two motor vehicle accidents.

With daylight saving now here, its a great reminder that smoke alarms do save lives and that it would be a wise idea to change your batteries and check that the alarms are working correctly.

If you need a hand please feel free to contact me or any of the guys - it cost nothing to check.

- Stay safe. Omarama Chief Fire Officer Terry Walsh.

The Omarama Model Aircraft Club

The 2018 ANZAC Aerotow Omarama The Omarama Model Aircraft Club is all set to run the 2018 Aerotow. This will again attract model glider pilots and tow plane pilots from throughout the country as well as one pilot from Australia. The event appeals to the pilots as they enjoy flying with the backdrop of the hills and the good soaring conditions. It is a great experience to be able to fly alongside the full size counterparts. With the support of Omarama Airfield Ltd and Glide Omarama, it will take place from the 21st-23rd April. Planning is well under way with just the field preparation left to do. As we are operating from a full size airfield, safety is paramount. The club is affiliated with our national body, Model Flying NZ. With them, we have to meet certain criteria to get insurance cover for such like events. It works closely with CAA. For a model pilot, to fly at this event, they need to be a member of Model Flying NZ. Pilots must also have the correct qualification to fly at the event. This is not unlike full size, where a pilot will have various types of ratings to operate the aircraft they are flying. CAA has granted us a height extension to operate to 2000ft above the airfield. We are in constant radio contact with Glide Omarama as all full size operations take priority. If necessary, we will clear the skies of all models. Each day commences with a pilots briefing and a safety talk. There will be a wide range of models in operation during the event. The public are most welcome to come to watch. We will be flying between 9am and 5pm each day, weather permitting.



Justices of the Peace

JPs are available by appointment to:

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

The service is free of charge



Malcolm McMillan, Lake Ohau Village
438 9798 027 438 9798

To make your visit quick and easy:

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



Georgie Robertson, Omarama
438 9554 027 4861 525

Omarama Golf Club

Copy: Christine Bowman

The annual Easter stableford tournament was held on Saturday, March 31, in windy but dry conditions.

It was another great day with 50 entries from 10 South Island golf clubs.

Everyone commented how great the course was looking, freshly mowed by all our volunteers.

We wish to thank all our sponsors who donated prizes to make this day a success.

The main winners were:

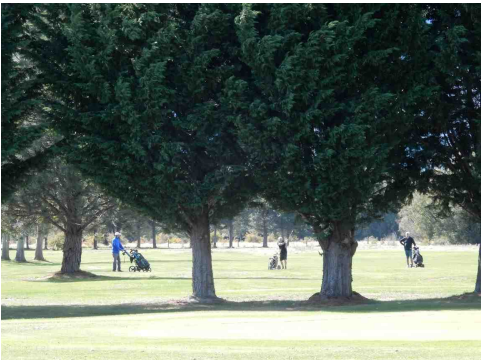
Overall winner	Stu Davies (Omarama)	44 stablefords
Senior Division	Lyndon Bailey (Waimate)	43 stablefords
Junior Division	Hamish Benny (Kurow)	43 stablefords
Ladies Division (1st equal)	Janeen Benny (Kurow)	37 stablefords
	Amy Zhang (Tokarahi)	

Now that daylight saving has ended twilight golf has finished for the season and tee off time Saturday is now 12.30 p.m.

Club Captain Adrian Tuffley
027 3478276.
www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz/

Photos below: Leanne Tuffley







Kia Ora Omarama Community,

Last month saw bikes, bikes and more bikes here at school with a focus on safe biking and walking practices. Our senior teacher Peter Schasching held a bike workshop on Tuesday and all bikes big or small received a safety check. On Wednesday afternoon Constable Carrie Hamilton, North Otago's youth officer, came and shared with us important information on safe walking especially in a car park, and road rules for the seniors who ride their bikes on our busy streets. Sadly we could not complete our obstacle course as it rained heavily on Thursday. Thanks to Lex our amazing bus driver for arranging a trailer to safely transport all the bikes to and from school!

Earlier in the month Toby Bochel, Lochie and Nick Murray, Laura and Gemma Patterson, Jessica Smith, Suzie Smith, Lillie and Dom Walsh and Ella Ferguson all qualified for the upper Waitaki Swimming sports .

Congratulations to Lochie Murray for placing 5th in the 11 year old boys 50 metre backstroke event; to Toby Bochel who gained 4th place in the 10 year old boys 50 metre breast stroke and to Laura Patterson who gained 3rd place in the 10 year old girls 50 metre freestyle event. Laura also qualified for the North Otago swimming sports, where she competed against a tough field of competitors.

The school swimming pool is still open for over the Easter and school holiday period. Please make the most of these last chances to swim as the pool will be closing due to cold weather on our return to school.

- Kim McKenzie, Omarama School principal.

Photos: Kim McKenzie





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

Omarama School Board of Trustees

Kia ora

- just a couple of things from the board. Firstly, a big thumbs up to Kim Mackenzie, our principal, who is doing an absolutely fantastic job leading the school and to the all the staff who are supporting her.

We are very privileged to have such a great team, which is evident from the reports we are receiving regarding student achievement which is, after all, one of our main concerns. We also see and hear happy students and parents commenting on how well their child is doing in school.

The Education Review Office team is coming in May to give the school a thorough going over and it is daunting to see the amount of information Kim is required to provide as well as keeping up with her already full workload.

Board elections will be coming up again next year and two current board members will be stepping down. Please give some thought to whether you could offer your services to support the school at board level, and no, you don't have to be a parent of a child at school. Come along to a board meeting and see if it is 'your cup of tea'. It is for a three-year term and there are generally eight to 10 meetings a year.

Regards, Jan Thomas, Board of Trustees, Omarama School.

Lake Ohau Alpine Village Residents and Ratepayers' Association

*From the Lake Ohau Village Residents and Ratepayers Association newsletter
- Elfrida Ward, chairperson. elfridaward@yahoo.co.nz*

At Easter, the Ohau Conservation Trust volunteers planted more than 50 beech trees in the Aubrey Reserve and in the terrace across the road. The Waitaki District Council approved the planting which is consistent with the planting plan for the area.

A new blue and white toilet sign was installed on the main Lake Ohau Rd to make the Lake Middleton facility more obvious to freedom campers and other passing tourists. The request for the sign was in response to an increase in human waste deposits being noticed by local walkers.

There is a new temporary speed limit sign of 70kmh in place which begins just before the A20 Cycle Trail meets Lake Ohau Rd as you drive toward the village and continues until the Ohau Lodge turn-off. Traffic counters were in place in January for two weeks and there will be further counts taken in April and June.

To set-up an account for the opt-in fortnightly rubbish service, contact Allister Murdoch: Waste Management NZ Limited 13 Industrial Place, Oamaru, 9401 M: +64 27 229 8673 T: +64 3 4340031 Extn: 3930

Notice from Fire and Emergency New Zealand - Rural Fire

The whole Ohau area, including the Village, is now under a Total Fire Ban under the Prohibited Season rules, until further notice. A Prohibited Fire Season requires a total fire ban and/or the suspension of certain operations that pose a fire risk. During a Prohibited Fire Season gas barbeques are authorised however the lighting of fires in the open air or use of fireworks or pyrotechnics is prohibited.

Waitaki District Council Permanent Boil Water notice: Water samples taken on December 14 measured EColi levels at 330 MPN (Most Probable Units)/100mls which is very high. A sample taken by Environment Canterbury at Lake Middleton on the November 29 recorded an E Coli reading of 435 MPN/100mls.

Omarama Residents' Association

From the minutes of the last meeting...

Several building maintenance issues were raised with actions put in place to remedy. It was agreed, once materials arrived, a working bee will be held before winter to do some painting and a general tidy up.

The committee agreed to install a toilet at the north side of the Community Centre, as a priority. Craig advised the Waitaki District Council would be putting its toilet strategy out for public consultation shortly and recommended the group make submissions to this.

The results of the Town Visioning Session will be reported back to the council and the Ahuriri Community Board within three weeks.

The council's draft Waste Management and Minimisation Plan has been released for public consultation. If adopted, the main effect of the plan for Omarama will be the rise in costs to dispose of solid waste from \$65/m³ to \$120/m³ and for green waste disposal from \$20/m³ to \$50/m³. Recycling is to remain free. The report is on the council website and the committee agreed to discuss it at its next meeting.

Charlotte advised a sign is to be placed at the campervan dump station to warn people against dumping domestic rubbish there. A sign prohibiting camping will also be installed.

The cost to hire the Community Centre have been reviewed and will go up from April 20, 2018. The local residents/ratepayers charge will increase from \$2 per person to \$3 per person; out of town hirers/non-ratepayers from \$3 per person to \$5 per person; a kitchen charge of \$100 per day is to be introduced for full functions, but not small meetings where just cups of tea etc are served. The Playgroup fee is to go up to \$1000 a year. In exceptional circumstances, the committee can consider and agree to any changes.

Concern was raised about the issues surrounding freedom camping, particularly at the Ahuriri Bridge site. It was agreed the association would organise a public meeting with agencies concerned to talk about what could be done. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Topics for discussion at the next meeting:

- Progress towards the building of the sports courts.
- The ceiling of the playgroup room.
- The working bee for centre maintenance.
- Submission topics for the Waitaki District Council's draft long-term plan.
- Planning for the meeting with agencies re camping issues at the Ahuriri Bridge.

Next meeting: 7.30 pm, Thursday, April 19, at the Omarama Community Centre.

Contacts:

Ann Patterson, chairperson, 03 438 9493, Craig Dawson, secretary, 0274389132



Let's talk rubbish



We all create it.

We all care about it.

Now it's time to talk about it.

We want your feedback on our
Draft Waste Management and
Minimisation Plan 2018-24

We review our Waste Management and Minimisation Plan every six years.

The plan describes how we will ensure there are convenient and cost-effective waste management services and facilities provided throughout the district. It includes our vision, goals and objectives for waste management, our intended role, and specific proposals and actions for the coming six years.

How does this affect Kurow, Otematata and Omarama?

The biggest issue we've addressed in the plan for these areas is:

Operating costs for the rural recovery parks (transfer stations) in Kurow, Otematata and Omarama

At the moment, the cost of managing rubbish and green waste at these facilities is far greater than what users are charged. This means all ratepayers in the district heavily subsidise the cost of running these facilities - to the tune of around \$220,000 every year (or 88% of the running costs).

We plan to increase the charge for disposing of rubbish at the parks in Kurow, Otematata and Omarama to \$120 per cubic metre, from 1 July 2018. This is consistent with charges for rubbish disposal at other facilities (such as the Twizel Transfer Station) and will lift the level of cost recovery at the parks, meaning district-wide ratepayers will contribute less to the operation of these facilities - as discussed above. It will also mean we can afford to keep them open for the community over the long term.

We'll ensure the recovery parks continue to offer a range

of opportunities for recycling at no charge, and that private contractors are providing kerbside collection in the area at competitive rates. We will also continue to closely monitor illegal dumping and take action to address this wherever possible.

We also plan to increase the charge for disposing of green waste at the rural recovery parks to \$50 per cubic metre, from 1 July 2018. This is more consistent with charges at other facilities elsewhere and closer to the actual cost of handling the green waste. This will also help lift the level of cost recovery at the parks.

The green waste will be mulched and made available to local residents to take away free of charge. This will help keep costs down by reducing the need to transport the green waste elsewhere to meet the parks' consent conditions.

Where to find more information

To view the Draft Waste Management and Minimisation Plan, and a summary of the plan, go to our website: www.waitaki.govt.nz You can make your submission on the website.

Copies of the plan and summary are also available to view at public libraries (copies of the summary can be taken away). If you would like a copy posted to you, email service@waitaki.govt.nz or call 03 433 0300.

Submissions to the plan close **5pm, Monday 30 April**



Waitaki
DISTRICT COUNCIL
TE KAUNIHERA A ROHE O WAITAKI

Waitaki District Council - news in brief

Consultation on the council's draft Long Term Plan has opened. You can find out more about the plan, read more about the process, look at the supporting documents and find out how to make a submission on the website below.

See more about proposed changes to Waste Management in the public notice (left).

Waitaki district ratepayers can now pay rates and other payments like invoices, water charges, parking tickets and other fines - through the council's website Information Services group manager Bill Chou says the new online service will provide greater flexibility and ease for those who do business with the council. The system has been set up so people can make several payments at a time, using a 'shopping cart' facility, and in a secure and confidential environment. It is also possible to make enquiries and requests using the system and additional services such as paying dog registration fees will be offered in the future. An introductory special to waive the 2% credit card online transaction fee is being offered until May 31, 2018. The credit card fee for over-the-counter transactions will remain the same.

The council has created a new position - Economic Development Manager - whose focus will be to pursue economic growth opportunities for the district. The person appointed will report to chief executive Fergus Power and will be responsible for the strategic leadership, planning and execution of economic and business development work. The Waitaki district was home to unique features in its built heritage, geography and geology and there was potential to develop commercial opportunities in aeronautics, horticulture, agriculture, viticulture, and tourism which could bring significant economic benefits, Mr Power said. As well, central government had established the Provincial Growth Fund of \$1 billion for regional development each year for the next three years and the council would be working hard to procure its share of that, he said.

In an initiative designed to help prevent road crashes in the Waitaki District an online form has been created on the council's website. People can use the form to report a road crash - the name of the road, weather conditions and if more than one vehicle was involved. The council want to collect this information to help build a picture of high-risk roads and what improvements can be made to make them safer. The information supplied through this online tool will not be used for enforcement purposes.

Phone: 03 433 0300 Freephone: 0800 108 081 - Automated options after hours

Email: service@waitaki.govt.nz

www.waitaki.govt.nz

**The next Ahuriri Community Board meeting is
3.15pm to 5.15pm Monday, April 16, at the
Community Centre, Omarama**

Minutes and agendas can be found here

[http://www.waitaki.govt.nz/our-council/council-meetings/agendas-and-minutes/
Pages/default.aspx](http://www.waitaki.govt.nz/our-council/council-meetings/agendas-and-minutes/Pages/default.aspx)

Environment Canterbury news in brief

Environment Canterbury is in the final stages of revising its Canterbury Regional Pest Management Plan. The plan is the rulebook for biosecurity in Canterbury. It will maintain efforts to prevent existing pests such as broom, gorse, rabbits, Bennett's wallaby and nassella tussock from proliferating, while also trying to stop new pests entering the region and becoming established. The review has also aligned the plan with that of neighbouring regions. In this last phase the new proposals have been put to a hearings panel which made recommendations to the council which it has accepted. Key recommendations are: wild Russell lupin has been included as a pest and there are now rules requiring its control; an new rule has been added for wilding conifer control to address the impact of planted conifers and support the National Wilding Conifer Control Programme funded by MPI, DOC, LINZ, Environment Canterbury and landowners as well as other publicly funded control programmes; changes were also made to the nassella tussock and Chilean needle grass provisions. Until the new plan becomes operative, pest management in Canterbury must continue to comply with the current plan: <https://www.ecan.govt.nz/your-region/plans-strategies-and-bylaws/canterbury-regional-pest-management-plan/> The new plan is subject to an appeal period of 15 working days. Appeals can be filed by application to the Environment Court (submitters on the proposal only). Once any appeals have been resolved the new Canterbury Regional Pest Management Plan will be made operative.

Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee

Ian Little, Environment Canterbury Land Management Advisor, collects freshwater mussels at Willow Burn stream

Freshwater mussels found in Mackenzie stream

Native freshwater mussels (kākahi) have been found in Willow Burn stream – a spring-fed waterway that runs for 60 km in the land between Lake Ohau and Omarama.

The presence of kākahi – once a traditional mahinga kai resource for local rūnanga – shows progress is being made to restore the stream, which has received more than \$170,000 of biodiversity funding.

Many of the landowners involved in the project have started installing fences to exclude stock from the waterway. Work to remove crack willow infestations and plant natives is also underway.

Further fencing of high risk areas will continue this year along with work to improve the nohoanga food gathering site.

Willow Burn stream is a tributary of the Ahuriri River and a priority waterway for the Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee.

If you have a project that could benefit from Immediate Steps biodiversity funding visit www.ecan.govt.nz/biodiversity.

 [fb.com/canterburywater](https://www.facebook.com/canterburywater)



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



ECan has begun the release of the new rabbit haemorrhagic virus disease strain, RHDV1 K5. The regional council received the approvals required for the importation and release in February. Of the 350 release sites nationwide, 100 are in Canterbury. <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/consultations/application-for-approval-of-use-of-rabbit-haemorrhagic-virus-disease-rhdv1-k5/>

ECan wants 92% of rivers and 81% of lakes in its region to 'swimmable' by 2030. At present, 86% of Canterbury rivers are swimmable. It has set what it calls "draft targets" to help it reach the national goal of 90 percent of rivers and lakes being swimmable by 2040 set by the Ministry for the Environment and required under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management. Ecan hopes to achieve these through its stock exclusion rules, ecological restoration under its Immediate Steps programme and nutrient management improvements through the use of Farm Environment Plans. It will be consulting with communities what rivers and lakes it should focus on and within what timeframes. People should check Land Air Water Aotearoa website for information on whether it's safe to swim at popular swimming

The next meeting of ECan's Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee is scheduled for 9.30am, Friday, April 20, at the Mackenzie Country Inn, Twizel.

Minutes and agendas are posted at:

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

www.ecan.govt.nz

Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee

Fork Stream barrier to help fish thrive

A new fish barrier in the Mackenzie Basin will help native fish – like the tiny bignose and longjawed galaxiids – by protecting them from introduced trout.

The Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee has allocated \$12,000 to the fish barrier project under the Immediate Steps Programme. The Department of Conservation will fund the new barrier and Environment Canterbury will pay for its installation at Fork Stream.

The new fish barrier is one of several which has been established in the Waitaki catchment in the past five years to protect the rare species from competition and predation from trout, who are then relocated.

It provides an opportunity to protect waterways on the unique braid plain, which has diverse habitat which supports other native species, such as freshwater mussels.

 [fb.com/canterburywater](https://www.facebook.com/canterburywater)

Surveying native species
in the Mackenzie Basin

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



Waitaki
Environment Canterbury
Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee





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Upper Waitaki Services

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

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

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

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

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

Wreaths will be laid at all services.

Medals and hats may be worn at all services.

Medals of deceased Service Personnel may be worn by family members on their right-hand lapel.



Meridian Power Up Community Fund

Meridian recognises the importance of local communities to our hydro and wind operations.

Meridian's Power Up gives your community a say on what local initiatives are supported by Meridian. The Fund, managed by a panel of community members and Meridian staff, is about working together to build strong communities.

Power Up is for the communities around the Waitaki Hydro Scheme from Aoraki Mount Cook to Waitaki Bridge, including Twizel, Omarama, Otematata, Kurow, Hakataramea, Duntroon, Ikawai, Papakaio, and Glenavy.

TO APPLY FOR FUNDING

The next closing date for applications is 26 April, 2018.

For more information on Power Up or for an application form, please visit meridian.co.nz/powerup or email community.fund@meridianenergy.co.nz

You can also call us on 03 435 9393.



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Kurow Medical Centre

would like to announce the following fee increase
from April 1, 2018

**For a doctor's appointment all 18 to 24 year-olds
will be charged the adult fee of \$39.50**

No other fee increases will take place this year.

There are still many overdue accounts outstanding with the Medical Centre.

We would urge anyone having difficulty paying off their bill to contact the Practice Manager Juliet to see if a resolution can be found. Many thanks, Dr Tim and Juliet



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Information on the course including prices: Workplace Course - <http://wpfirstaid.co.nz/workplace-first-aid-training-courses/> Re-certification Course - <http://wpfirstaid.co.nz/recertification-courses/>

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from Monday 9th April:

Monday – Sunday:
8.00am – 7.00pm

Thanks to our *year round locals* ...for your continued patience over the 'crazy seasons'.

To our Summer locals..., thanks also - it's always good to see you all, keep well over the coming Winter and we'll see you next year.

Our biggest thanks goes to our own fantastic Four Square team (including our students who have returned to 'normal life') – all who, even after some massive days on the '*Hampster wheel*' found an extra gear and just kept giving & going!.

I'm sure you'll all agree - they rock!!! 😊

Alona & Blair

Aka: Harriet & Gordon (the Four Square Hampsters)

The weather that was @ 44°29'29.4"S 169°58'19.7"E March, 2018

Highest temperature: March 3, 30.3C

Lowest temperature: March 23, 2.8C

Most rainfall: March 6, 15mm

Total rainfall for March: 61mm

(Total rainfall March 2017: 27mm)

Total rainfall March 2016: 41.6mm)



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The FAQs - Those Five Awkward Questions with...



Dan McCormack and Sabrina Schels

Dan is Glide Omarama's deputy chief flying instructor.

Sabrina, who trained as an environmental engineer, is also a flying instructor for Glide Omarama.

Sabrina, of Bavaria, Germany, and Dan, of Yorkshire, England, attained their New Zealand - Omarama - residency in November last year.

Dan first came to New Zealand in 2014 and Sabrina in 2015 which was when the couple met at a flying school in Omarama.

It was "Love at first flight", they say.

Dan and Sabrina oversee Glide Omarama's winter flying programme.

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

From Jordan Peterson - Do what is meaningful not what is expedient – Dan

Happiness is more important than money – Sabrina

Tell us something about Omarama we might not know?

Fruit trees grow 'wild' all over the place, there's so much fruit it just falls on the ground, no-one seems to notice it and you are allowed to collect it. - Dan and Sabrina

Who would you invite to your dream dinner party?

Glide Omarama instructor Bo Nilsson.

Swedish-born Bo has been teaching soaring at Omarama since 2000, first with Alpine Soaring and then with GlideOmarama. He is good fun, tells irreverent jokes and brings wine.

Best day outside the office?

Is there anything better than gliding? – Maybe tramping?

The couple recently enjoyed a trip to Brewster Hut in the Mt Aspiring National Park.

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

If people communicated more clearly and were more accepting of other's points of view - Dan
If people, instead of always rushing, took more time out to reflect - Sabrina

The View from the Chook House



I guess this means we're
no longer
spring chickens?

The Garden Diary - #neveragain

Even if I believed in playing favorites I'd be really hard pressed to name the garden plant I liked the most. That's worse than being asked to name my favourite child. Tho', come to think of it, the criteria is probably similar – whichever it is that is behaving!

But, if we are talking about the plants I admire most, then that's a completely different story. For me those will always be the 'the-emperor-has-new-clothes, speaking-truth-to-power plants. You know the ones. They're the daisies that have pushed through that immaculate green lawn to shine brightly as the summer sun, the random clematis that's poked its rumpled seed head out and over the sharp, succinct edges of an officious box hedge in quite an unruly way. Or maybe its that generally overlooked 'amenity' plant that's been compelled to do its bit on the barest minimum - shoved into a tired and neglected and bony bit of dirt, duty-bound to be seen and not heard, but it's blooming it's head off. Then there's those plants that live their lives on the edge, who push their roots down into tiny fissures and grasp tightly to mountainsides, twisted and sculpted by razor winds, one minute given the cold shoulder, the next,

enduring a withering from a scorching sun. These plants never seem to overthink anything. Despite how we see it, I'm not sure the tall poppy ever asks itself; "Will people still like me if I lift my head up just a little here?" Nor do they waste time on self pity. They just knuckle down, get on with the job and seem all the more striking because of it.

I remember when, after hours of coaxing a reluctant son to pleeze apply the lawnmower to the job, as quality controller I looked out to finally find the job done. But, outstanding in the centre, a neatly-crafted circular bed of scruffy turf with a distinctly deep blue tone.

"There was this flower, Mum, I just couldn't mow it."

A stray match-head, flung out of the safety of a garden bed in a late summer fit of weeding had worked its way down through the lawn, set roots and decided now was the time for its spring fling. Now that was speaking truth to power.

Of course, it doesn't pay to take such schmaltzy metaphors too far. It is all very dogwood eat dogwood in the plant world. They are, after all, single-mindedly competing for resources and always ambitious, evolving to achieve genetic superiority. But, what-the-hey, let's take the sentimental symbolism for now.

Plants are entwined in our history, weave their way through and touch our lives.

It is inevitable they become symbols in our daily and national rituals.

Every farmer knows the plants that are first to appear when their soil has been disturbed or cleared. Our glorious, shimmering, metallic blue viper's bugloss is one that does that in the high country.

Poppies do the same.

The red, or Flanders poppy, was the first to grow and bloom in the soil of the battlefields of Flanders, Belgium, where hundreds lost their lives in the muddy trenches in the Great War (1914–18).

It was to have been the war to end all wars.

For those who saw those fields in flower it spoke a simple truth to power - pain, healing, beauty, and never again.

#anynumberistoomany#Neveragain

Ruth Grundy

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



The Classifieds

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Annual Meeting

Friends of Omarama School will hold
its annual meeting at the school.

2pm Wednesday, April 4, 2018

All welcome.

Kia Ora everyone,

Omarama School is looking for someone who might have a line marker
as we would like to remark the lines on our tennis court.

If you know of anyone who might be willing to help us please
call the office on 03 438 9815 and talk to Ange or Kim.

Annual Meeting

Te Whare Mahana

Ohau Road, Twizel

12 noon, April 22, 2018

Elections to be followed by a shared kai.

All welcome.

Nicola Bartlett 0272943045

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