

# Omarama Gazette

July 2021



## Taking on an 'oarsome' challenge

New Zealand rowing representative Ben Mason heads out on his marathon row for breast cancer this month. Photo: Steve McArthur (Rowing Celebration)  
Excitement is building as plans for a unique fundraising challenge which also promises to be one hellava 'boys own' adventure come together for the 'launch' at the end of the month.

Although, one of the team will be working much harder than the others and they're not very sure yet what they're eating on their month-long sojourn.

University of Otago commerce student and New Zealand rowing representative Ben Mason will head out of the Viaduct Harbour, Auckland on Wednesday, July 28 with the goal making a 1,000km sponsored row to raise funds for the New Zealand Breast Cancer Foundation.

He will be followed closely by his support crew – Brian Walker (skipper), father Ted Mason and good family friend Nayland (Bean) Smith - on board Brian's 1999 Teknicraft Powercat, Picking Daisies.

"I'm pretty excited it's all coming together ...there's waves of excitement and waves of nerves, usually the excitement wins out," Ben said.

"We have a very experienced team, with a large skill set across a few people."

The venture has been in the planning stages for a while as various issues have been addressed and fine-tuned.

Ben wants to take on the challenge in remembrance of his mother Sonia, who died of breast cancer in 2007 when she was 36. Ben was six years old. He hopes to raise about \$20,000 for research, education and support services.

Initially, Ben had planned to row around the South Island and made two attempts to head out in late summer with plans to camp each night on shore.

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## *Taking on an 'oarsome' challenge - continued*

This was postponed because of weather and because more safety measures need to be built into the task. With the catamaran “really accessible” it meant he could “get on board for a break, a stretch and a feed. It will be weather dependent as well.”

But it would allow him to stop each night for a shower and sleep in a bed.

“It’ll be far less stressful, safer and more achievable.”

Brian, who is a former policeman, also has a close connection to the cause – his wife died recently of breast cancer and his daughter has been undergoing her own battle with the disease. When he heard about Ben’s goals he offered the use of the catamaran and his services, despite not having met Ben or the team.

“[And] it’s great having Bean along,” Ben said.

He is in charge of the meals – “probably just meat and chips, maybe some fish. We probably should have asked Ange along as well.”

The Masons and Smiths met when the Masons bought a holiday home in Omarama about 10 years ago. “Things have got out of hand ever since,” Ben said.

Ted, who is a Fisheries New Zealand Honorary Fisheries Officer, said the support crew were there for “steering, morale, support and keeping him safe”.

Ben’s new itinerary is to head from Auckland to Cape Reinga, down to Tauranga and back to Auckland, 1000kms in all. He will be aiming to row between 60k to 80km a day and to complete the trip in a month.

Ted said Ben, who had made it onto the University World rowing team was looking to advance in the sport and this was a great way to keep him motivated and fit while the Covid-19 situation was affecting overseas competition.

“ - A way to keep motivated and put something back into the community.”

And while Ben is doing all the hard work the ‘boys’ are planning a spot of fishing.

“Yeah, it’ll be a bit of a lad’s adventure”, Bean said.

The area sported different species of fish, and there was a possibility of landing a Blue Fin Tuna plus Ted’s employers have expressed an interest and have been very supportive.

“It will be warm and with having to travel three or four kilometres behind Ben there’ll be plenty of opportunities to fish,” Bean said.

If they do manage to a hook a tuna, it will become part of the fundraising bid, he said.

The group is investigating a way to “live track” the adventure. Regardless Ben said he would be making posts when possible to his Facebook Page.

TO DONATE go to this link:

<https://takeaction.org.nz/page/worldsfirstrowforbreastcancer>



*New Zealand rowing representative Ben Mason heads out on his marathon row for breast cancer this month.  
Photo: Steve McArthur  
(Rowing Celebration)*

# Postcard from Gough Island

There's a familiar face 'onboard' one of the world's most ambitious environmental projects being rolled out right now on a remote island in the south Atlantic. Omarama high country farmer and Central South Island Helicopters pilot Bryan Patterson

has swapped the battle against wilding conifers here to take his place on the international team pitting themselves against the odds to make Gough Island predator free.

Gough Island is in the Tristan da Cunha archipelago, described as the most remote inhabited archipelago in the world, 2,787 km from Cape Town, South Africa.

Its few human inhabitants, about six, man a weather station there.

Most importantly the island is home to 22 seabird and two landbird species, a third of which are threatened with extinction and including the Tristan albatross and MacGillivray's prion. Its importance earned Gough World Heritage Site status in 1995.

Because birdlife evolved without land-based predators it is unique in that it has both the greatest concentrations of biodiversity and risk of species extinctions.

About eight million seabirds – many burrow nesting - raise their chicks on the island annually and many breed nowhere else.

Their principal enemy - house mice - were inadvertently introduced to the idyllic nesting spot sometime in the 19th Century.

It is estimated they now kill more than two million chicks every year, and more recently it was discovered the mice were also attacking adult birds.

*Pilot Bryan Patterson of Omarama, photo by: Michelle Risi/RSPB.*

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# Postcard from Gough Island - continued

In response, the British Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Tristan da Cunha have committed to eradicate the mice so the populations can recover. Although, such programmes have been successful elsewhere this is on a larger scale than previously attempted.

Towards the end of last month the project reached its first significant milestone, the completion of the first bait drop which began a week and half earlier. Gough Island Restoration Programme assistant manager Sophie Thomas said Bryan “certainly impressed the team”.

He undertook some of the “very fine scale baiting” required.

Those watching the careful manoeuvring said, “it was beautiful to watch him fly”. “It was so smooth and controlled. It was like watching music.”

Delayed for a year and still hampered by rigorous Covid-19 precautions – Gough Island and Tristan da Cunha are both Covid-free - the multinational team gathered in Cape Town through May some spending the best part of a month in quarantine. There is no airstrip on the islands; the only way of travelling in and out is by boat, a six-day trip from Cape Town.

South Africa’s Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment research vessel S.A. Agulhas II carrying the team and four helicopters finally set out for Gough on May 30.

Once unloaded on the north of the island a small camp was set up ready to take advantage of every “decent weather window”.

The operation has been planned meticulously.

The helicopter pilots spread cereal bait pellets containing a rodenticide across the island.

The four helicopters operate simultaneously with ground crews coordinating the loading of bait into buckets at each ‘pit stop’ to make sure no time is lost.

With the first bait drop complete the team has “fingers firmly crossed” for good weather windows for the second application.

The team hopes to have totally eradicated mice on Gough Island by the end of the programme in late August.

<https://www.goughisland.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/GoughIsland>

Photos: (left) Richard Hall/RSPB and (right) Michelle Risi/RSPB



© Richard Hall



© Michelle Risi

# Rally affords 20 years plus of adventures

Every year for more than 20 years there has never been any question what Lindsay Purvis will be doing at Queen's Birthday Weekend.

Although there may be plenty of questions asked about where he has been and what he's been up to.

Each year Lindsay teams up with long-time friend Neil (Wattie) Watt, they crank up their 1924 Dodge truck and head out on whatever adventures and wherever the annual Irishman Rally takes them

He and Wattie met 50 years ago.

"We've had a lot of adventures together."

"Twenty-two years ago we decided to enter the Irishman Rally run by the Canterbury Vintage Car Club"

Each Queen's Birthday Weekend the rally heads off from wherever the organisers want it to but it always ends in Fairlie on the Sunday night for the prize-giving.

The Rally's first run was at Irishman Creek station when those taking part stayed in the shearer's quarters.

Lindsay and Wattie completed their first rally in another vehicle, then came up with a better plan.

"We found that old truck in a garage in Christchurch and went 50/50 shares in it."

As luck would have it Wattie's older brother is a mechanic and they had plans for him too.

The truck, originally a Dodge tourer car, had at some stage been cut down into a farm truck.

And with a year off with ill health and a year off for Covid this year was the pair's 20th Irishman's in the vintage vehicle.

"One year we didn't make it.

"There was an almighty bang and it completely exploded." Lindsay said.

*Neville (Wattie) Watt, (left obscured) and Lindsay Purvis (right) arrive at Omaradise*



## *Rally affords 20 years plus adventures - continued*

Every year someone on the rally needs a tow.

They completed that trip in a rental 4WD

“For us it’s a bloke’s trip.

“Our lives revolve around Queen’s Birthday Weekend.

“It’s marked in the calendar. Then we work around that.”

The pair have seen some country in those years - “Fabulous”.

The rally has taken them up the Rakaia gorge, the Manuka gorge.

This year’s trip travelled the Black Forest Station line road, and the Meyer and Dansey passes.

- Parts of the country they wouldn’t otherwise get to see particularly as getting permission for access to some areas was getting more difficult.

And they’ve tackled the tracks in all kinds of weather, too -

“snow, hoar frost”.

In the hoar frost the carburettor kept freezing and the truck would seize up in the middle of a creek crossing with Lindsay praying fervently for it to start again so he didn’t have to get out and into the water.

There’s always plenty of yarns to tell at the end of the day as the vehicles come limping in or are towed to the finish line.

Canterbury Vintage Car Club Irishman Rally is named for Irishman’s Creek station where it began with six vintage car club members visiting from Christchurch some 65 years ago.

Spokesperson Ian Armstrong says it is the second oldest car rally in the world next to the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run. Irishman’s is a national event with this year “eight or nine” North Islanders along for the ride.

“It’s one car rally you don’t want to win because you get to organise next year’s,” Ian said.

This year 168 vehicles took part and visited Murray and Sharon Stuart’s property Omaradise for lunch and a few drifts on the track before heading back to Fairlie for the prize giving.



# Play 'wish list' for all ages put forward

Play prospects look good into the future for Omarama residents big and small as plans and wish lists for the Omarama Playground and recreation space were passed to the council last week.

In May, Meridian Energy granted the Omarama Residents Association \$10,374 from its Power Up community fund to go towards its outdoor fitness circuit project.

The grant will be put with other funds to buy two pieces of equipment as a starting point for the long term undertaking.

Last week Omarama Residents' Association members met with Waitaki District Council recreation manager Erik van der Spek to put forward its ideas for this and other possible future projects which could go ahead in the recreation reserve adjacent to the hall.

Association member Jemma Gloag said the intergenerational fitness circuit, irrigation needs and a storage shed were "top priority".

The Omarama Playgroup plans to upgrade and move the playhouse soon.

The other ideas were in the "dream/chip away at sphere", she said.

Mr van der Spek said the council would be asked at a meeting on August 10 to give permission for the fitness equipment to be installed in the space and to cover the costs of installation.

"We can cover installation costs from our minor playground improvement budget this year," Mr van der Spek said.

He has also agreed to have a plan drawn up for the area "to drive future work".

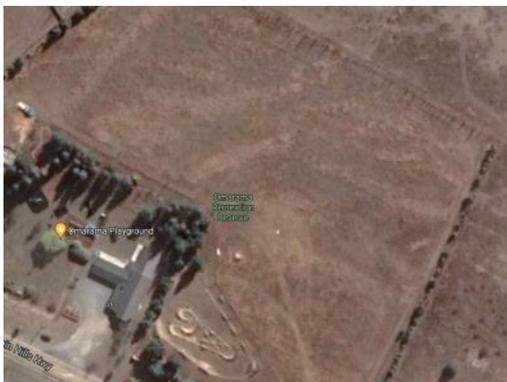
Once the "indicative aerial photo" plan had been drawn up, hopefully by the end of September, and after receiving feedback about the plan from the community, the council could consider allocating funds through its annual plan review.

"When we review Council Reserve Management Plan, we would get the concept included into this," he said.

The association's wish list is; the fitness circuit, irrigation for the playground and cricket area, a skate pad, basketball hoop, community gardens, artificial cricket wicket, a barbeque, a pavilion/ shelter for watching action on the courts, picnic tables, a shed for storing tennis and hockey gear, rugby posts, balance play equipment, a flying fox, and to relocate the play house. It has also asked that the clay cliffs climbing rock be moved to a safer site.

"If anyone in the community has a shed lying around in good condition they could donate, or 40mm black irrigation pipe, digger time, or if there was anything else on the list someone might like to help with or push along, let us know," Jemma said.

**The next meeting of the  
Omarama Residents' Association  
is 7.30pm Thursday, July 15,  
at the Omarama  
Community Centre.**





# Open for applications now

Do you know of a young person or group  
who could use a boost  
toward a goal or special project ?



The Waitaki Recreational and Boating Club is a charitable trust.  
The club regularly gives away grants of \$500 to help others achieve their goals.  
Applications are welcome from groups or individuals from Duntroon to Omarama  
Applications will go through a selection process and will be selected on merit  
Assistance can be given with the application process if required

\*\*\*This is your chance to let us help you \*\*\*



## Waitaki Recreational & Boating Club

President: Neil Smith 027 804 9140  
Secretary: Brent Cowles 027 525 5505

E: [waitakiclub@gmail.com](mailto:waitakiclub@gmail.com)  
W: [www.waitakiclub.org](http://www.waitakiclub.org)  
F: [www.facebook.com/waitakirbc](http://www.facebook.com/waitakirbc)

# We've been thinking...

Last month's lunch time 'thinking' session to put together ideas for winter activities run by the community for the community gathered up many and various schemes – some of which are already being put in place.

Six people attended with others contributing via email and one-on-one, plus Omarama School has expressed its support and want to be included.

The plan was to generate ideas for low cost or free activities using the Omarama Memorial Hall and Community Centre as a base. The whiteboard filled up fast.

We decided to give priority to holding a family movie session, most probably on a Saturday afternoon.

However, after further investigation this has been put on hold because the necessary licensing fees are prohibitive and copyright legislation a web of red tape. But volunteers for the charitable trust Bigger Picture Oamaru are looking into the possibility of hosting, at minimal cost, something for us in Omarama at a later date – watch this space.

Two other well-supported ideas were setting up a community garden and a 'men's shed'. Murray Stuart has kindly offered to help set up the men's shed, so the next step is to gauge interest.

We are looking for someone with the skills to help set up the community gardens and then we can take it from there. The Omarama Residents' Association has approached the Waitaki District Council recreation department to ask that a plot of land be set aside to develop the this allotment type garden.

Many of the ideas – ideas for speakers, tutorials presentations etc - were dependent on the use of audio-visual equipment which the Community Centre does not own at present. So the next step will be to apply for funding for this, hopefully the ducks will be in a row and quacking to make the application possible next month.

Once this is in place there is the possibility for 'tutorials' to be run on topics like how to use your camera and the best software programmes to use for that, and workshops on Xero and accounting software.

Best news of all – Ann Patterson working with Age Concern has arranged for weekly community housie sessions to be run 1pm Wednesday afternoons for 10 to 12 weeks – starting date to be advised. She would also appreciate any offers from those willing to help.

In tandem with these activities the Omarama Library has extended its hours – it will now open 9.30am to 11am Wednesdays and Saturdays – and on Saturday July 17 will run a children's activity celebrating Matariki.

There has been a request for someone to teach Mahjong - a tile-based game – with the possibility of that, or card or board games being run on a regular basis also.

So, here's how you can help.

If there is any idea here that is of interest to you, please, please get in touch.

We need to gauge interest before we go to the next step as our volunteers' time and efforts are precious gifts which we do not take for granted.

You can phone 03 4389 766 or 021 294 8002 or email: [omaramgazette@gmail.com](mailto:omaramgazette@gmail.com), or contact a member of the Omarama Residents' Association, or come along to the next meeting – 7.30pm, Thursday, July 15, at the Omarama Community Centre.

# Labour Weekend at Loch Laird - July

If someone is harmed at the Loch Laird event at Labour weekend when agencies know the risks there will not only be legal questions asked but moral ones too, the district's safety watchdog says.

Speaking at last month's meeting of the working group formed to address concerns about the alcohol-fuelled unruly behaviour of young people – many under the legal drinking age –celebrating the end of the school year at the Loch Safer Waitaki community development manager Helen Algar posed the question; who was liable if someone was hurt?

"It's still a legal question that needs to be considered.

"The law says that people under 18 can drink with parental consent and oversight.

"So, if somebody at Loch Laird dies, is raped or seriously injured that is under 18, that is drinking and we know, and it doesn't matter who 'we' are, we know that they're doing that, and we know before they even go they going to be [doing that], who is legally responsible?

"That to me is the biggest risk of all to us collectively."

It was also a message for parents, she said.

"I think in the court of public opinion we will be responsible. I think in the court of law parents will be responsible, so that puts us and the parents in the firing line."

It was the third meeting in Otematata of the group made up of police, emergency services volunteers, council staff, councillors and board members which is being guided by the Evidenced-Based Policing Centre, Wellington, to come up with workable strategies to stop the risk of serious harm at the event.

Last year about 250 young people attended with more arriving after dark.

The working group has so far agreed on several strategies to put in place ahead of this Labour Weekend and at the June meeting argued for and against a liquor and/or glass ban.

This is the first of the three meetings Waitaki Mayor Gary Kircher has been able to attend. After much debate he reluctantly agreed with the group that a recommendation should go to the council to trial a liquor ban to see if this would curb the risky behaviour.

"I think the support overall is for an alcohol ban. I don't agree with it but that's the usual thing around our table, even though I might be right, I have to go with democracy," Mr Kircher said.

Since the meeting and after the council had issued a media release and there had been other publicity about the plan, he has voiced his opposition to the idea of a ban on Oamaru and Otematata social media sites.

At its first meeting the group considered whether the site should be closed at the weekend to put a stop to the myriad issues which arise for council staff, emergency services and the Otematata community.

This option was set to one side and instead other harm prevention strategies were considered, including installing lighting, clearly defining the parking area, asking for volunteers to supervise, and providing food.

The Omarama Gazette has been told that so far the call for volunteers has been unsuccessful.

While the group feared a liquor ban might simply push the problems elsewhere – to the Otematata village or other campsites – it had not been tried before and discussion indicated there it was not certain this would happen, particularly if the ban was

well-publicised ahead of time.

There has been a promise there will be a significantly increased police presence in the village to counter any “displacement”.

“Unless we do something that’s totally different and measure it afterwards, we will be totally back to square one,” Waitaki District councillor Ross McRobie said.

“If it doesn’t work, then we’ve tried it.”

Looking back over past events “nothing’s worked”.

“All we’re really saying is, we’ve got to do something different.

“If there is displacement, if it comes into town...there will be more police which will be a deterrent anyway,” he said.

The proposal is for the temporary ban to extend along Loch Laird Rd and take in the top paddock where the young people congregate.

That allowed policing of parents who took them to the campground with alcohol and dropped them off, and vehicles could be stopped along that road and searched as well, Cr McRobie said.

Ahuriri Community Board chairperson and long-time Otematata resident Vicky Munro said she was against the event going ahead at all – the issues had been “going on too long”.

The young people concerned seemed to think it was their right to come to Otematata and “wreck everything, throw glass everywhere, throw chilly bins at staff”.

“No responsible organisation would let that happen.”

In saying that, if parents were there to take responsibility then that would be one answer. “[But] I don’t know how that would be policed,” she said.

Senior sergeant Jason McCoy, of Oamaru Police, said the potential for any “displacement” had likely been overstated.

“We won’t know what displacement is until we see it. We all suspect there will be some displacement somewhere but what is that going to be?”

“And does that then say that that strategy doesn’t work,” he said.

The one time in recent years when the young people moved into the town there were some issues and “minimal complaints” but no more than would normally occur in Oamaru on a Friday night.



## *Labour Weekend at Loch Laird - continued*

Importantly, while police could enforce a liquor ban they were not there to supervise or provide security for an event, he said.

“What it comes down to then is, is the council letting them have an event there?

“What are you [the council] prepared to wear if something goes wrong?

“Our whole focus is crime and preventing crime.

“If you take away the liquor ban then how are you as the council going to control it, because we are not going to be there 24/7?

“When we’re called to something we will deal with the incident, so we don’t control it [the event] ... If they breach the rules then we deal with it,” he said.

Senior Constable Nayland Smith, of Upper Waitaki Police, said, although there had been displacement in the past, that was likely to be because people had not been forewarned that they might be stopped from camping.

“People rocked up here without any warning messages at all, so they’re expecting to stay at the Loch then they’re told they can’t stay there so they’ve just gone somewhere else.

“But if we get the message out to those people before they come up here, they’ll know what to expect.

“The whole idea of the liquor ban itself is that without it, if we have got 18-year-olds who are legally allowed to have alcohol and we’ve got 16-year-olds, the 18-year-olds will just hold on to the booze and give it to the younger ones,” he said.

Mr Kircher said he struggled to see how a liquor ban would not just move the problem elsewhere.

“That’s my concern.

“The reality is, if they know there’s a search going on they’ll just go somewhere else.

“That’s the challenge of the whole strategy in my opinion.

“I just don’t think it’s going to be effective,” he said.

“We are told continually it [the weekend] is about young people going away drinking. We have the opportunity to do some education around that.”

If they got the message that they needed to be responsible - “you can drink but if you do it in moderation and don’t put other people at risk, you can actually have a good time, with music and food available” then you were setting up an environment which taught about responsible drinking rather than young people feeling “ripped off” when alcohol is confiscated, he said.

“I just think that’s an integral part of what these kids are going there to do and it’s about them doing it responsibly.

“It’s not encouraging it. It’s actually discouraging excessive drinking and it’s encouraging more responsibility, primarily encouraging safety and caring for each other,” Mr Kircher said.

The question was who was going to give that message “because the parents aren’t doing it,” Snr Const Smith said.

“They’re dropping off their kids and expecting the police to baby sit them

“We also need some tools in our basket to be able to deal with that.

“So, the problem is we’ve got this big field of kids, 18-year-olds down to 15-year-olds all sharing booze. As soon as they see the police coming, they give their booze to the 18-year-old.

“At least if we have an area where they’re not allowed to have alcohol we can actually act on it.”

“We talk about responsible drinking? Responsible drinking should be done at home,

not in a public area where there's no parental supervision, [and] not with your peers that are all drinking," he said.

Waitaki District Council recreation officer Lucianne White said, although she understood both sides of the argument, she supported the idea of the liquor ban trial and that it sent the right message.

"It's a tool police can use.

"If you have the right messaging they'll quite possibly turn up with alcohol but they'll already know they're not allowed it, so they'll hide it but their behaviour will be moderated. We've said come and camp in the way we expect you to camp but don't bring alcohol.

"My sneaking suspicion is they will still come because its tradition.

"They'll get the message come and be with your mates but don't bring alcohol."

"It might drive them underground but it still moderates them," she said.

"Last year young people were turning up from 10am in the morning and they'd already been drinking but where the issue escalated was that they kept drinking...

When they kept going and it got dark the issues happened.

"A lot of the kids that turn up are really good kids they've turned up to have a cool experience with their friends by themselves ...I think that some of those kids who were coming just to hang out with their mates in the sun and have a camping experience will still come because that's the appeal.

"I think they'll just come later, they'll spend the day boozing up, come at the end of the day, pitch their tent, hang out with their friends but they would just have to limit how much alcohol they had after that point.

"We'd just be sending a really strong message. Do that, but these are the conditions and the liquor ban is a tool the police can use.

"My other concern is, who would supervise?"

"We've tried getting schools onside and we haven't been that successful.

"Who would do that? Who would resource that?" Mrs White said.

Snr Const Smith said a liquor ban gave police the power of search and seizure which meant they could also act if they found drugs but they also had discretion in how it was used.

"It's not about locking people up. It's about taking the alcohol away."

Mr Kircher said regardless of the strategy parents needed "to step up".

"We need them to be there over Labour weekend...not to stand over their kids' camp sites but just to do things like looking after the boundary fence."

Although a glass ban was also proposed the group agreed if a liquor ban was in place, then a glass ban was not necessary.

A glass ban would mean council staff would need to screen the entry but there were no policing powers with that.

Mr Kircher said a glass ban would be a "camp rule" which would send a message. Those who broke the rule could be evicted and trespassed, he said.

Mrs White said, while staff were not screening "so much this year", there were extra staff on duty.

"So, we would just be giving them [staff] clearer direction on what they would be doing at the entry point.

"If there's a glass ban then they'll be screening for glass. If there's a alcohol ban then we'll be screening for alcohol.

"If we have an issue these guys [the police] have the ability to come in on top of that."

Deputy mayor Melanie Tavendale said she was concerned if there was a liquor ban the youths would decamp to the family areas nearby.

## *Labour Weekend at Loch Laird - continued*

“You’re better off having them in one place.

“I think we’ve got a duty as well to make sure it’s a really safe place for our families.” She said she was concerned if a group of young people was moved on, they might move into the family areas, their parents might not know where they were, they might not have somewhere else to stay, or they might decide to drive.

Snr Const Smith said the camp supervisor already controlled who camped where and moved them on accordingly, and police would be monitoring the roads.

“If they play up they’re moved on, and we have extra policing in place for that.”

The other camping grounds were effectively “self-policing” because adults were present, Mrs White said.

Mrs Algar agreed to coordinate efforts to get messages out to young people and parents.

At Mr Kircher’s suggestion a media release was to be sent out by the council detailing the working group’s decisions.

“I think the whole story is we’ve had far too many incidents every year, all the way through.

“There are real problems, real concerns around safety.

“We want young people to have a good time but make sure they stay safe ...leading us to the point where we’re at. We want to make sure they have a good environment to enjoy themselves, and ... talk about parental responsibility ... because the issue is dropping kids off with a heap of alcohol...and no food. This is why we’ve got to where we have. I don’t see it as being a school problem.

While they might talk about things at school it still comes down to the parents letting them be there, and sometimes knowingly, with alcohol,” Mr Kircher said.

### **LOCH LAIRD AT LABOUR WEEKEND WORKING GROUP MEETING, JUNE 3**

#### **WHO WAS THERE:**

The June Loch Laird workshop in Otematata was attended by:

Waitaki mayor Gary Kircher, deputy mayor Melanie Tavendale, Ahuriri Ward councillor Ross McRobie, Otematata fire chief Jason Walker, Omarama fire Chief Greg Harper, Safer Waitaki community development manager Helen Algar; Waitaki District Council recreation officer Lucianne White; Senior Sergeant Jason McCoy, of Oamaru police, Snr Const. Nayland Smith, Omarama Police, Ahuriri Community Board chairperson Vicky Munro, Waimate parks and reserves manager Alison Banks. And myself as reporter.

#### **AGREED STRATEGIES**

The council plan to install light to encompass the top paddock.

They will clearly mark out the parking area.

They will have staff to screen entry and provide security.

Police have six extra staff coming to Otematata for the weekend.

The team policing unit will be in town each night from 5pm to 3am or 4am in the morning to work alongside local police depending on requirements.

There will be a minimum of two police on patrol through the day.

The mobile police bus will be stationed at the site.

There will also be an increased police presence on the Waimate side of the lake.

# Right of reply

Since the working group meeting on June 3, the Omarama Gazette has become aware of several social media post and notices made by Mayor Gary Kircher which call for a right of reply. (*Screen shots of the comments posted to the Oamaru Today Facebook page with 16,000 followers and the correction posted in the Otago Daily Times are below.* )

This morning, Wednesday, July 7, Omarama Gazette put Mr Kircher's comments to Senior Sergeant Jason McCoy, of Oamaru Police, also a member of the Loch Laird Labour Weekend working group, and asked for his comment.

Here is the comment which has been endorsed for publication on behalf of police representatives on the group.

*"Police attended three community meetings where councillors, community board members and interested stakeholders attended.*

*"No recommendations were made until the third meeting and at this meeting a number of options were discussed.*

*"The collective group recommended that a liquor ban be put in place for this weekend.*

*"This recommendation was forwarded to the council for their approval.*

*"Police are working closely with the community group to ensure the safety of everyone.*

*"The chosen strategy to be implemented is up to the community board and council, to decide upon.*

*"Whatever strategy is adopted the police will do their best to ensure that everyone can be and feel safe.*

- continued over



## Gary Kircher

FYI - The police led the call for a ban. Despite me letting them know I intended to lead a solution to the issues and risks caused during the weekend, they proceeded to call two meetings at times when I was out of the district and so I could not attend. After I insisted that I be included, I finally got to go to the third meeting, by which time the decision to have a liquor ban had been made. I still argued the case against that, because I seriously believe it won't solve the problem and will only move it elsewhere. However the only way the police will allocate sufficient resources to the area is if there is a ban.

The last thing I want are more assaults and the possibility off another young person dying. But a ban is not the answer - better supervision, food and parental responsibility is required.

25 June at 19:01

Edits to comments are visible to everyone who can see this comment.

*“The next step from police perspective is to lock in the strategy that is to be used and work around what that strategy may require.”*

Snr Sgt McCoy cc-d his reply to Mr Kircher who emailed the Omarama Gazette.

“As Mayor for Waitaki, I can maintain my own position on issues, but can also support other positions when there has been agreement on them.

“If your belief is that the alcohol ban being proposed won’t happen because of me or what I have said, then you would be incorrect. Again, if you want to know what I will do, please ask,” Mr Kircher said in the email.

While, like any individual in a democracy, the mayor is entitled to his opinions and to voice them publicly, making statements which could be misconstrued as facts to back up his opinions is disingenuous.

Several members of the working group who did not want to be named contacted the Gazette to voice their disappointment that by discussing his views in this manner he served to undermine the many hours of work the group has put in, to date, to come up with workable solutions.

## FACT CHECK

Mr Kircher has been Mayor of this district since 2013.

The problems at Loch Laird at Labour weekend, which date back much earlier than that, have made it into council reports each Labour Weekend since then.

The matter was again brought to the attention of the council assets committee in November 2020 and to the Ahuriri Community Board meeting in December which was when the mayor first spoke about wanting to lead a solution.

Mr Kircher has not visited the site during the Labour Weekend events. Emergency services staff and volunteers are called to the Loch, often more than once, each Labour weekend and police spend the weekend patrolling the area.

The first police-led working group was in March

Mr Kircher has been included in all the invitations to the working group meetings and his apologies read out and his position understood, and group members got on with

## Corrections

in the *Otago Daily Times* on June 24 incorrectly stated Waitaki Mayor Gary Kircher led the call for the liquor ban. It was the police who called for the ban, not Mr Kircher.

■ A report regarding a temporary liquor ban at Loch Laird



# Upper Waitaki Police News



It was only a few weeks ago that I was moaning to a co-worker that I had very little to do and was a little bored. You would've thought that after almost 20 years in the job I would've learnt to keep my big mouth shut!

The last few weeks have seen a rapid increase in crashes, mainly due to the hard frosts we've had. In all Senior Constable Scott and I have attended six car crashes within the area in the last week or so.

All but one of these were avoidable if people had slowed down and actually driven to the conditions.

They would not have lost control or if they did, not lost control as bad as they did therefore mitigating the risk of damage or injury.

Driving to the conditions means that you should be constantly evaluating the conditions. If you're on a nice straight stretch of road in the sunshine but can see that you're approaching a shaded area slow down before you hit that shaded patch. Remember the warning signs. The first thing you should be thinking is, its winter, the roads may be icy, the roads have grit, traction is not as good. I know I'm preaching to the choir but just a wee reminder. Please take it easy.

We have also had three crashes which were completely avoidable if the clowns behind the wheel had of walked or gotten a ride home instead of drink driving. One of these was a crash on SH83, the driver had a big night on the booze after celebrating in Kurow following the rugby. He then decided to drive and fell asleep, crossing the centre line and going down the bank leading to Lake Waitaki. Luckily for him his foot must've slipped off the accelerator, so he was going very slow and just slipped over the bank. If it had of been high speed, he may very well have ended up feeding the fish. Not to mention the fact he was on the wrong side of the road for some time and could very well have met oncoming traffic.

The other two were attended by Snr Const Scott. One of these was on the Otematata saddle and the other on the Omarama-Lindis Pass Rd.

This second crash the vehicle literally flew over the farmers fence without touching it. That's after driving up a very steep bank travelling, at a guess, about 30 metres before becoming airborne, rolling and flipping all the way into the paddock and going down the other side of the terrace before coming to rest. How this person is still alive is beyond me.

In other news, I also processed a 21-year-old male for drink driving on Saturday night. He blew 501mgms. Remember the legal limit is now 150mgm per litre of breath. For an adult between 150-400mgms you receive a ticket and 50 demerits, over 400mgms you go to Court.

Drink 'n' Drive you're an idiot but also a statistic waiting to happen. Don't be a statistic!

There has been some commentary about the Otematata working group surrounding the Labour Weekend issues. Mainly discussion surrounding the idea of having a Liquor ban for the Loch Laird area where the youths congregate. I have been monitoring the social media posts about this. I'm amazed at the amount of negativity from some

people, mainly from people who don't have to live in the area and put up with the behaviour. Not to mention some public figures who should know better Wow!! just wow. Wish I could just say whatever I wanted. Boy would this be an interesting article then! There has been some suggestions of alternative solutions. Believe me when I say that all alternative solutions have been discussed. This includes music and food etc. The issue is that the naysayers are wanting the authorities to allow unsupervised underage teenagers to drink. This is against the law and not an option. For too long it's been allowed to happen, the argument being that it's easier to control the group in one place. That's all well and good but we as guardians of our children are letting them down by potentially putting them in harm's way. The idea of supplying food and music is a good one, but is not economically viable, this has been tried in the past and was a complete failure. Quite simply, no booze and the kids don't want to come.

Yes, there may be some displacement of youths due to them staying at their parents' crib or trying to move to nearby camping grounds. There will be extra police staff and security supplied by Council at the camps to ensure this is kept under control, should it happen.

Prior to Labour weekend the police will also be sending out a small questionnaire to the Ote locals to gauge their feelings of safety in regard to the weekend. The idea is we will get the feelings then (before the weekend) and then another after to gauge how successful our strategies have been.

While I'm at it I'd like to publicly thank all those that attended these workshops, that's all the Waitaki and Waimate council staff and police staff but especially the members of the community who weren't being paid to attend. I know your time is valuable and very few people will even know you sacrificed your free time for the community, so thank you!

At this stage we are waiting to see if Council are going to pass the Liquor Ban for the area, if they don't, the working group will have to come up with another strategy.

There will be a lot more about this closer to the date, so I won't bore you with all the details now.

Last thing. I've had a couple of phone calls recently from people who are sick and tired of the gossip mongers who are spreading what are vicious rumours about them around town. We are a small town, we all need to get along. Spreading rumours about someone's personal matters is not something you should be doing. Keep your gossip to yourself, you are doing nothing but harm, and letting yourself down as well. If you don't, and I hear you're spreading rumours I may call you out. Do it online and I'm likely to be charging you with a criminal offence. Ooh just thought, I could start a Mrs Bouquet (Keeping Up Appearances TV show) award, and give the worst gossip monger for the month the award in my monthly news haha!

MRS BUCKET (Bouquet) AWARD

This month it goes to.....

Haha that's it from me, hope you're all staying warm, be safe.

- Bean

**Senior Constable Nayland Smith**

**Sole charge Constable / Omarama / PO Box 101, Omarama 9448.**

**Phone: (03) 4389559 / Ext: 34580 / <mailto:nayland.smith@police.govt.nz>**

# The Noticeboard



To have your community notice included here email: [omaramagazette@gmail.com](mailto:omaramagazette@gmail.com)

## **Kurow Medical Centre**

### **Omarama Clinic Announcement**

**Due to staff shortages we are unfortunately having to reduce the Omarama clinic to Thursday mornings only. We understand that this may be a disappointment for some of you but would like to assure you this will only be temporary measure until further notice.**

**Many thanks for your kind understanding  
Yours in Health  
Tim and Juliet Gardner**

**The Omarama Clinic at the Omarama Community Centre, is open Thursdays mornings from 8.30am.** To make appointments for all clinics, order repeat scripts or make enquiries please contact Kurow Medical Centre 03 436 0760 (Monday to Thursdays). [www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz](http://www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz)

**St Thomas' Omarama Church Community:** chairperson: Jan Thomas; committee secretary (Presbyterian) : Lee Kearon, phone: 021 250 1060 or email: [lee.kearon@gmail.com](mailto:lee.kearon@gmail.com); Anglican representative: Ven Dr Michael Godfrey, phone 022 342 9977 or email [Dylanfreak@gmail.com](mailto:Dylanfreak@gmail.com)

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

**The Omarama Golf Club** Saturdays, cards in 12 midday, tee-off 12.30pm. Club captain James Moynihan phone: 027 215 8266; email [jwmoynihhan2@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:jwmoynihhan2@yahoo.co.nz). [www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz](http://www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz)

**Omarama Playgroup** meets at 9.30am each Wednesday during the primary school term at the Omarama Community Centre. For more information phone president Tarryn Benton 027 201 7065 or secretary Aimee Snelgrove 022 350 5536 [aimeesnelgrove@hotmail.com](mailto:aimeesnelgrove@hotmail.com)

**The Upper Waitaki Young Farmers Club** meets at 7.30pm on the first Monday of each month at the 'Top Pub' - the Blue and Gold pub, in Kurow. All welcome. Join the Facebook group.

**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 Omarama Model Aircraft Club** meets on Saturdays from 9.00 am to 12.00 noon at its flying ground at the Omarama airfield. All welcome - Contact Don Selbie on 027 435 5516.

**FENZ 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.

**Plunket Line:** 0800 933 922

**Omarama Plunket Committee:** Aimee Snelgrove 022 350 5536

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

**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. [www.facebook.com/omaramagazette/omaramagazette.nz](http://www.facebook.com/omaramagazette/omaramagazette.nz)**

**To receive email alerts between monthly editions of the Omarama Gazette sign up to our 'Local List'. Email [omaramagazette@gmail.com](mailto:omaramagazette@gmail.com) and put 'Local List' in the subject line.**

**Thank you to all who share your stories and contribute in other way to the Gazette. We all really appreciate what you do.**

**The August issue of the  
Omarama Gazette  
is Wednesday, August 4, 2021.**

Please submit copy  
by Friday, July 30, 2021

**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](mailto:omaramagazette@gmail.com)

# The Community Reports

## Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade



*Hello to you all,*

*- Stay Safe, Chief Fire Officer Greg Harper*

Another month has passed and we have had some real winter mornings.

If you watched the staged house fire on Seven Sharp I'm sure it made you realise how fast a fire can take hold. That is why you should have an escape plan and a meeting place that you can all get to quickly. Remember the quote "Get Down Get Low Get Out". Which means you avoid the toxic fumes that will be in the smoke.

It is also very important to make sure your smoke alarms are in good working order and remember you can never have too many.

If you are unsure of where you think they should be placed in your house please give me a call. We are only too happy to come and help you out.

**FENZ Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade meets 7pm each Wednesday and has its meeting at 7.30pm on the third Wednesday of the month.**

### ***Emergency Services midwinter dinner***

*Members of Omarama Search and Rescue, the Fire Brigade, First Response and Police, with some people wearing several hats, gathered at the fire station last month for Omarama's Emergency Services annual mid-Winter Christmas party.*

*The guest list included Omarama's youngest volunteer, baby Sophie McCormack.*

*As usual the table was laden with the very best of high country mid-winter fare thanks to the hard work of brigade supporters – who happen to also be just some of Omarama's legendary cooks.*

*The spit roasts were managed by Georgie and Tim Robertson with more dedicated volunteers on bar and clean-up duties so others could relax and enjoy.*

*Of course, there was a slight hiccup to proceedings while volunteers attended a short call out – had to happen.*



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

# Coming soon to a Community Centre near you

Age Concern Otago/Waitaki (see poster below) are bringing their popular morning tea sessions to Omarama.

The first session is scheduled to begin Wednesday, July 28, at the Omarama Community Centre. *More information to come*

## **JOIN OUR WINTER MORNING TEA AND CATCH UP MEETINGS.**

Age Concern Otago/Waitaki are going to host a morning tea over the winter months on the last Thursday of every month, at 10.00am, at the St Johns Rooms on 47 Gordon Street, Kurow.

The first of these morning teas will begin on the 27<sup>th</sup> of May.

We will have a morning tea and some entertainment, a game of indoor bowls, cards, music etc.

All locals and visitors will be warmly welcomed!  
Add to your calendar's now.

(A gold coin donation is appreciated to go towards costs)

If you require a ride to the St Johns Rooms then please call and ask.

If you have any questions please get in contact with me, Jody, on 0273532874 or email [jodyandmichael@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jodyandmichael@xtra.co.nz)



*Celebrating Otago's older people since 1948*

# Omarama Community Library



OMARAMA COMMUNITY  
LIBRARY

**We are Open**

**Longer opening hours and more...**

From Wednesday, July 7,  
the Omarama Community Library will be  
open

Wednesdays and Saturdays  
from 9.30am until 11am.

**AND DON'T MISS THIS ...**

A school holiday fun session  
9.30am Wednesday, July 17  
Making Matariki stars.

**The Omarama Community Library  
is open 9.30am to 11am,  
Wednesdays and Saturdays,  
at the Omarama Community Centre.  
[omaramalibrary@gmail.com](mailto:omaramalibrary@gmail.com)**

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## The Waitaki Newcomers Network

Contact: Christine Dorsey  
027 242 8643.

[waitaki@newcomers.co.nz](mailto:waitaki@newcomers.co.nz)

Abacus House,  
102 Thames Street,  
Oamaru

03 434 7544.

[www.newcomers.co.nz](http://www.newcomers.co.nz)

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LOOKING FOR  
FUNDING FOR  
A COMMUNITY  
PROJECT?



Working Together with Our Communities

The Otago Community Trust provides grants to not-for-profit community groups  
and projects that make a positive contribution to Otago communities.

0800 10 12 40 [www.oct.org.nz](http://www.oct.org.nz)

# Omarama Rodeo Club

OMARAMA  
RODEO CLUB

## Hill Billy Hunt



Friday July 16-18

Registrations from 6.30pm Friday

Wrinkly Ram Omarama

\$50 Teams of 2-4 , Weigh in Sunday 3.30pm

Awesome Prizes - New hunting Categories - All ages Welcome

## QUIZ NIGHT

TEAMS OF 4 \$50 ENTRY FEE

The Wrinkly Rams Omarama

7.30pm July 16

# Omarama Golf Club

*By Christine Bowman*

Winter golf is here, colder weather, sometimes snow and icy conditions. This can create unique situations, here's a picture of Colin Thornley's golf ball sitting on top of the frozen creek water, unfortunately as he is left handed he couldn't hit it off the ice so had to take a penalty drop.



Bears hibernate in winter, but our golf club volunteers have been busy at work. The club was fortunate to receive a grant from Waitaki District Council's Community Group for our Tree Replacement Programme. Our aim is to complete a planting program to replace some of our older trees that have died and to continue to develop and beautify the course for future generations.

Some trees were removed and the first batch of plants were collected, although they took up a lot more room in the car than we anticipated!! . A big thanks to Adrian Tuffley who used his digger to create the holes, as funny enough no one was keen to manually dig the hard stony ground. Ant Ford followed behind putting in potting mix and completed the planting. Our next batch of trees arrive in September so still more work to do.

When the tree program has been finished we will have introduced another 14 species of plants on the golf course, which will add colour to the grounds for all to enjoy over the years. Also they create more obstacle's for golfers to navigate around, should they not be on the fairway where we are meant to be!!

Our next exciting project is giving our clubrooms a bit of a makeover it's good bye to the peach colour walls!! ..... More on this next month.

**Omarama Golf Club**

**Saturdays; cards in 12 midday, tee-off 12.30pm.**

**Club captain; James Moynihan phone: 027 215 8266**

**email [jwmoynihan2yahoo.co.nz](mailto:jwmoynihan2yahoo.co.nz) [www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz](http://www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz)**

# Ōhau Conservation Trust

- from the Facebook page

Fantastic work - 476 native plants planted by 178 volunteers at our four autumn planting sessions! We are so grateful to everyone who gave their time and effort to get these plants in, to replace and augment those lost or damaged in the Oct 2020 wildfire.

So good to have these plants growing, six to eight months after the fire...what a great start to restoring nature at Lake Ōhau!

Many of our volunteers had never done planting before - and they got hooked...a very positive and social activity. Something you can see over time, as the plants grow - very satisfying.

The Ohau Trust would like to thank Katy and Chris Gray for their beautiful idea of 'gifting' their family and friends for planting. We could have not had better weather with endless sunshine for planting just over 70 plants, a mixture of beech and tussocks. It was a wonderful turnout and Katy and Chris' family and friends also generosity donated funds to the Trust. Thank you all so much and we wish Katy and Chris a long and happy marriage.

Facebook

<https://ohauconservationtrust.nz/>



 **LJ Hooker**  
Mackenzie Country Real Estate Ltd Licensed REA (2008)

20 Ruataniwha Road, Twizel 7901  
03 435 0170

As part of our Support a Local Campaign we have now donated over \$3000 to charities and organisations in the Waitaki/Mackenzie Region. We were honoured to be able to donate \$250 to LandSAR recently thanks to the nomination from one of our lovely vendors who had a personal connection to the organisation. To be able to help groups that help our community is such a pleasure!

# Omarama School

Dear families and community,

What an active, vibrant school we have! The trip to the Benmore Dam was a highlight for the children and parents this term - a great job by Kim McKenzie especially. A lot of extra time went into organisation when we had the Covid alert arise in Wellington.

On that topic please remain vigilant around hygiene and err on the side of caution if your child seems to be coming down with something. It will keep us all healthier this winter.

It has been very constructive to meet with parents one on one over the last few weeks- you are always welcome to try dropping in or even better to make a time to chat when I am not teaching in Clay Cliffs. This is what I mean by an open-door policy.

Involving our families and community is one of the Omarama School Strategic Aims and the assemblies are a good example of this. Thanks to all the parents who made it to our last one! There was hot competition amongst the muffins/cupcakes, a beautiful demonstration of singing and waiata, a great learning culture reflected in the awards and diverse entertainment.

Thanks for your support - I hope you have the sunshine now, snowmen have been made, biscuits baked, and children are snuggled up with a good book by the fire!

*With thanks*

*Michelle Green.*

## **Can you help us and get involved??**

Sign up for next term:

Volunteers to cook with groups of four students at a time, volunteers who could run an activity in our break times 10.30am -11am or 1pm -1.30pm or just cover staff to do this. We are a small staff, our grounds are huge and we would love to offer more activities at this time. Planning for success by engaging our children beats sorting out disagreements later!

After great success with our plea for an oven we are putting out the following list of items if anyone can help: Kitchen equipment - anything you have, and if there is extra we will donate it to charity/recycle centre; Old children's bikes that could be done up by Vaughan and our senior students; Heaters - safe and not oil-filled column style please.

## **COMING EVENTS**

26th July First day of Term 3

If you are planning family holidays, these dates might help you:

27th August Teacher only day

30th August Mid Term break *(This break is in sync with the schools down the Valley and High schools in Oamaru and Timaru)*

This makes a 4-day break for families in Omarama

Last day of year confirmed - December 15th.

## **SITUATIONS VACANT:**

We are looking for a permanent school caretaker. Seasonal flexibility, living locally, handyperson and gardening skills preferred. If you are interested or know of someone who would be suitable please contact Ange or Michelle at school.

## **SUPPORT our Community Supporters:**

Trail Adventures  
Malcolm Wright Electrician  
Four Square Omarama

## **Featuring our juniors this newsletter: AHURIRI NEWS.**

Over the past two weeks the children from Ahuriri have been creating turbines. Last week we had fun trialling their water turbines, which they have been building with support. We had some great successes and some not so effective turbines. We learnt that the position of the bottle and straws affect the flow of the water and that some of the spoons we had glued in were not straight. We also learnt that sometimes things don't work the first time we try them but if we alter things and show perseverance sometimes things will work.

We have been continuing to develop our ability to skip count in our individual groups. We have groups learning to count forward in 2's, backward in 2's, forwards and back in 5's and in 10's from any number up to and into the 100's.

On Thursday Rooms Ahuriri and Huxley had the opportunity to visit the Benmore Dam as part of our electricity unit. There were a lot of interesting things seen and information obtained and questions asked and answered. Many thanks to Mel from Meridian for organising this opportunity for us and to all those parents who transported our classes and supported us on our visit. Without your support this visit wouldn't have been possible.

### **Here are some recounts from Ahuriri about their visit to the Dam.**

*"I learnt about hydroelectricity and the electricity was made from the turbine. The electricity flowed through the powerlines".* By Toby

*"Ashlee, Wyatt and I went to the Benmore dam. I helped to open the big doors too see the penstocks. You are not allowed to fish at the dam."* By Arlo L

*"I went to the dam and it was lots of fun. We got to see the penstocks and how it makes power and electricity."* By James H.

The children from Ahuriri and Huxley had a chance to explore the difference between powering a LED light bulb and an incandescent bulb, through using the "Human Energy Generator" which is a machine we borrowed from SchoolGen.

The Human Energy Generator is driven by human power. We found that the LED bulb was much easier and took less energy to light than the incandescent light bulb that requires heat to light the filament.



# Rolling them out for a good cause

Winter will be so much cheerier now homes throughout the south have a dozen or so of these Omarama-made yummys to pop in the oven.

Friends of Omarama School volunteers spent their weekend in the Omarama Memorial Hall kitchen making cheese rolls, to raise funds for the school.

Volunteers worked for a day and a half in shifts of 12 on a assembly line to fill, roll, wrap and pack 507 dozen rolls for orders which came in from flatties and families throughout the South Island.

In all 17 5kg bags of grated tasty cheese, the essential onion soup mix and 217 loaves of white sandwich bread and 79 loaves of wholemeal were manufactured into the time-honoured southern sushii.

With thanks to:

Four Square Omarama for donating the bread.

Wrinkly Rams supplying the necessary sustenance for the workers.



OMARAMA FRIENDS OF THE SCHOOL  
PRESENTS

*Glitz & Glamour  
Ball.*

AN OMARAMA SCHOOL FUNDRAISER

SATURDAY 7TH AUGUST, 2021

6 PM - LATE

VENUE: THE WRINKLY RAMS

\$75 PP

TICKETS INCLUDE:

WINTER BUFFET FEAST

& COMPLIMENTARY WINE ON ARRIVAL

AUCTION, SPOT PRIZES

& LIVE MUSIC BY

*OPB R1*

Tickets Available at

The Wrinkly Rams

or Email Carla: [smithyc66@gmail.com](mailto:smithyc66@gmail.com)

LOCAL COURTESY COACH TO GET YOU SAFELY HOME

# Omarama Residents' Association

The next meeting of the  
Omarama Residents' Association

**7.30pm Thursday, July 15, 2021**

at the Omarama Community Centre

An invitation is extended to all

**Contacts: Tony Chapman, chairperson, 027 242 8605.  
Yvonne Jones, secretary, 027 476 7473.**

---

## **THE ASSOCIATION HAS ITS OWN POST OFFICE BOX**

Could all those who want to contact the association by mail,  
send accounts to be paid,  
or have correspondence considered at the monthly meetings  
ensure it is addressed to:

**The Secretary, P O Box 93, Omarama 9448.**

**The association's email address is [omarama.committee@gmail.com](mailto:omarama.committee@gmail.com)**

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## OMARAMA COMMUNITY CENTRE HALL HIRE

To make a booking for an upcoming event or for more  
information about hall hire and availability  
please contact Michelle Kitchen 027 280 5446  
or email [hallhire.omarama@xtra.co.nz](mailto:hallhire.omarama@xtra.co.nz)



# Omarama Playgroup

## FUNDRAISER

Sustainable and Reusable Beeswax food wraps in a variety of sizes  
Lovingly handmade by the Twizel and Omarama playgroup mums. We will be using funky bright material kindly donated by Total Interiors and local beeswax, resin and jojoba oil donated kindly by MacKenzie Country Honey!  
These will be delivered in early August and will make wonderful gifts!

So this is what you need to do...

Orders to be made by July 30th please - sizes below

Email [tarrynbenton@hotmail.com](mailto:tarrynbenton@hotmail.com) with your order details and postal address.

Payments can be made online to: 06-0927-0031275-00

Please use your name as reference

OMARAMA PLAYGROUP FUNDRAISER

## BEESWAX FOOD WRAPS

Helping support activities and education  
for our playgroup children.

PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY  
MACKENZIE COUNTRY HONEY  
&  
TOTAL INTERIORS

Contact  
[Tarrynbenton@hotmail.com](mailto:Tarrynbenton@hotmail.com) or phone 027 201 7065  
To place your order now

Small 17cm x 20cm  
\$5.00

Medium 27cm x 31 cm  
\$9.00

Large 33cm x 35cm  
\$12.00

X-Large 45cm x 40cm  
\$15.00

Combo Deals

S, M and L \$22

Full set \$35

Two X-Large \$25



# Kurow Medical Centre

8 Wynyard St, Kurow  
P: 03 4360760 F: 03 4360780

E: [info@kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz](mailto:info@kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz)

W: [www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz](http://www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz)

[www.facebook.com/kurowmedicalcentre](https://www.facebook.com/kurowmedicalcentre)

**Providing 24/7 health care and support to  
the people of the Upper Waitaki and Mackenzie**

**Kurow Medical Centre and its satellite clinic  
in Twizel Mackenzie Health Centre and  
Outreach Clinic at Omarama Community Hall**

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

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

**And much more!**

**GP consult fees: Under 14yrs Free; Adult \$41.00  
Care Plus – Free to eligible patients only**

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

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

## **Open**

Kurow: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm. Omarama: Thursday 8.30am to 5pm.

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

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

**If you require further information or an appointment, please contact us on:**

**For Kurow 03 436 0760 or for Twizel 03 976 0503 - Dr Tim and Juliet Gardner**

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

Canterbury, we need to talk about our changing climate. We know this isn't an easy topic. Or a small one. But we have to start somewhere, so we're starting here - with our region. Learn more at [itstimecanterbury.co.nz](http://itstimecanterbury.co.nz)

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# TWIZEL MEDICAL CENTRE

Community Owned, Community Focussed,  
Community Operated

Twizel Medical Centre is your local Ministry of Health funded, enrolling practice. Contracted by SCDHB for General Practice, District Nursing and 24/7 Urgent Care, contracted by St John for PRIME (Primary Emergency Response) Services across the greater MacKenzie area.

**Hours:** Monday to Friday 08:30 - 5:00 pm with extended hours over the summer months  
**Urgent and emergency care 24/7**

**Our Team:** NP Gemma, GPs Drs Peter and George, Admin/Receptionists Donna, Jacqui, Annie and Sue, Nurses Paula, Ann, Zoe, Holly and District Nurses Libby and Jess are passionate about our community accessing a high quality service.

**Twizel Medical Centre has charitable status so any surpluses are reinvested to ensure our community has access to sustainable general and urgent care services.**

**15 MacKenzie Drive, Phone: (03) 4350777**

# Justices of the Peace

JPs are available by appointment to:

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

The service is free of charge

To make your visit quick and easy:

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



**Georgie Robertson**  
Omarama  
03 438 9554 027 4861525



**Vicky Munro**  
Otematata  
03 438 7855 021 438745



**Alona Shaw**  
Omarama  
027 773 4214



## Notary Public Services Affidavits and Declarations

David Stone, Lake Ohau

03 438 9653, 027 490 9118, david@stone.org.nz



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

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The next meeting of the  
**Ahuriri Catchment Community Group**  
is a combined meeting with the  
**Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee**  
at the  
**Wrinkly Rams auditorium**  
**10.30am Friday, July 23, 2021**

An invitation is extended to all  
Come along and hear about the work of this group



## **Responsible Freedom Camping Bylaw review**

Council is currently reviewing the Responsible Freedom Camping 2016 Bylaw for the Waitaki district. Your feedback will help us make the best possible decision on how effective the current bylaw is in managing freedom camping issues.

**Consultation opens on Friday 2 July 2021 and closes on Monday 2 August 2021.**

More information is available on the public consultation page of our website and from Council offices.

[www.waitaki.govt.nz](http://www.waitaki.govt.nz)

t. 03 433 0300 e. [service@waitaki.govt.nz](mailto:service@waitaki.govt.nz)  
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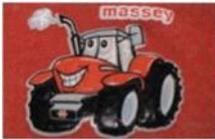
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**The café is now closed for the season  
Re-opening Labour weekend**

**Tanya and Dannie would like to thank all for their patronage**



# Back my the Day - Winters past

*We're running a series to share a little of the whakapapa of our place.*

*Various snippets by different contributors will recount stories of 'back in the day'.*

*Let's indulge in a little reminiscing. This month let's indulge in a little reminiscing about icy winter's past*

## Winters past, by Ruth Grundy

How we love to talk about the weather and how we weathered the weather.

As it happens our home was Omarama when we lived through this country's coldest day in Pakeha memory, 26 years ago.

On July 3, 1995, temperatures hit -21.6 degrees in Central Otago, around Ophir, Tara Hills and Lauder. At the time, it was acknowledged as the coldest temperature ever recorded in New Zealand.

Memory gets hazy and please do correct me.

I remember a heavy snowfall – but not the heaviest ever - and then freezing temperatures which each dawn grew steadily colder.

Each night we'd watch the news – that's what you did back then – as Omarama and Ophir vied for the lowest temperature and its name in the record books.

Officially, Ophir came out on top – or at the bottom depending on how you look at it - beating Omarama's Tara Hills reading by a whisker.

Even now that record is 'hotly' disputed by locals on both sides of the Hawkduns. And our outdoor gauge read -24C.

Those phoning (landlines) to check on us in Omarama invariably asked what it felt like to be that cold. Our house was insulated and warm, built for local conditions.

Truly, it didn't feel that much colder at minus 20 than it did at minus 10.



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

### June 2021

**Highest temperature: June 5, 17C**

**Lowest temperature: June 18, -3.2C**

**Most rainfall: June 5, 10.1mm**

**Total rainfall for June: 32 mm**

And although the man of the house headed to work in Twizel each day, townies that we are, we didn't have to face the epic challenge of caring for stock. I don't know how you guys managed.

There was a real threat of hyperthermia for those whose heating and or insulation was inadequate, and inevitably a battle with freezing pipes.

The trickiest thing for us was our youngest was barely a year old, our oldest almost four years old. So getting through the washing had its issues, although, as those who live here know, washing still dries on the line in a good frost, you just have to handle it with care lest the more fragile items shatter.

Eventually – and I think it lasted about 10 days (corrections are welcome) – a warming nor' wester and collective sigh of relief arrived and with it, heavy rain which washed the snow and that unblinking white light from the landscape.

As that day warmed a sense of great weariness came over me as if the body realised it could at last relax and no longer had to battle to stay warm..

According to Sir Arnold Nordmeyer, in his book *The Waitaki*, 1895 was the year of the worst snow in the European history of this country. Not only in the Waitaki but throughout the South Island, with the heaviest fall in the high country.

"Snow had begun to fall that year as early as April followed by further falls in May and June. But it was in July that the main storms came again and again. 12ft [3.6576m] of snow fell in parts of the Mackenzie Country consolidating in some cases to just under seven feet [just over 2m]. The snow was bad enough but the heavy frosts which followed it made matters worse. To add to the troubles of the runholders a dense fog hung over most of the area for days ...It was not until September that the thaw set in." Stock losses in Otago were heaviest in the 1903 snow with Benmore station losing more than 31,000 sheep out of a flock of 86,000.

There was at least one good snowfall here my first winter, newly arrived from Dunedin, in 1986. Now, if it snows in the city the whole world comes to a standstill.

Schools and businesses close – a snow day, a day off. It's just another day at the office here. I remember piling on the layers until I passed for a short but substantial Yeti, and wobbling off to work as receptionist at the Stagecoach Inn, now the Countrytime Hotel.

There were several quite hilarious but rather desperate moments when I sank up to the tops of my lil' short legs after inadvertently walking into the deep snow drifts filling the borrow pits alongside the main road. I struggled to extricate myself so I could take the next step either forward or back to haul myself back up onto the road. A cast yeti in the ditch.

There were new wonders to discover and lessons to learn that first winter, like windows can freeze on the inside, and it's best not to go outdoors first thing with wet hair. It was drummed into me by 'locals' the first thing to do after a snow storm was to clear paths and driveway before they freeze to glass.

One winter when Omarama was cut off from the world by snow and after I'd proudly cleared the paths and drive two days in a row, the grader arrived to plough clear blocked streets leaving in its wake snow in stubborn mounds across the driveway. Although snowstorms do skiff through here in winter I've noticed in recent years the overall snow cover on our surrounding mountains has generally become less each winter. And this past season is the first time I remember seeing the alps almost bare of snow for long stretches through summer. The time was back then when the start on the coldest mornings was -15C or thereabouts. The Wairepo Arm would freeze as would the Ahuriri arm of Lake Benmore. And at least once former Omarama policeman Dave Garlick was called to usher tourists off the ice at Glenburn for fear someone would fall through.

# Classifieds

## ANNUAL MEETING

Mackenzie Basin Wilding Tree Trust

Notice of annual meeting of the Trust to be held on

Thursday, July 29, 2021 at 11am

at the Twizel Events Centre Theatre, Market Place, Twizel

### Business

1. Receive and consider the annual report and activities for the year ended March 31, 2021.
2. Receive, consider and adopt the financial report for the year ended March 31, 2021.
3. Report on the business plan for the current year.
4. Consider any resolution which may properly be submitted to the Annual Meeting. Such notice of resolution must be given in writing to the secretary of the board no later than Wednesday, July 14, 2021.

B R Cowan

Secretary

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## **MILK TRANSFER STATION OPERATOR**

A vacancy exists for an Operator at our Milk Transfer Station in Omarama for 3 months from approximately mid-September onwards.

We are a diverse workforce and actively support applicants from anyone that has the qualities for this role. We would also consider a job share situation for the right applicants.

- This is a fixed term contract
- You will need to be physically fit and have your own transport
- There is one shift a day of approximately 4 hours from 7.00a.m. to 11.00a.m., 7 days a week
- Rostered days off will be discussed at the interview
- This is a sole charge position so you will need to be reliable
- You will need to be able to operate under and follow MPI compliance regulations

What we offer?

- Full training will be given
- A competitive wage
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If you think this might be for you, please email your CV to [chris.brough@dynes.co.nz](mailto:chris.brough@dynes.co.nz)

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## SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, November 20, 2021

St John Twizel is turning 50!

So, if you or anyone you know has ever been part of the St John Twizel team, please get in touch with us so we can make sure no one misses the party.

We warmly welcome any stories, photos, or memorabilia associated with St John Twizel.

Please contact Katrina on 027 902 9281 or email [stjohntwizel@gmail.com](mailto:stjohntwizel@gmail.com) or check out our facebook page

# The Last Page is Classifieds

## BREEN CONSTRUCTION

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

Trespassing Stock on Department of Conservation Administered Land

Pursuant to Section 36 of the Conservation Act 1987, Section 36(5) (6), the Department of Conservation gives notice of its intention to remove trespassing stock on the following Department of Conservation administered land: Spring Creek Conservation Area.

From July 30, 2021 any stock animals of any kind whatsoever which are branded or unbranded, and have, or have no reputed owner, and are found trespassing on the abovementioned land, may be seized and/or destroyed.

Any enquiries about this notice can be made to the Te Manahuna/Twizel District Office, Department of Conservation, phone (03 435 0802).

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## The Omarama Gazette

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

To subscribe email:

**[omaramagazette@gmail.com](mailto:omaramagazette@gmail.com)**

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