



# Omarama Gazette

November 2021



## New subdivision ready for take-off

A planned new subdivision for Omarama will give a whole new meaning to the phrase 'taxi to your door'.

Scott and Dee-Ann Fitzgerald have recently been granted the consent needed to develop the subdivision of the land bounded by Chain Hills Hwy, Prohibition Rd and the Omarama Airfield.

The new subdivision will be made up of 13 one hectare-plus sections and includes the Fitzgerald's lot on which they plan to build and are in the process of developing.

Scott said there had already been keen interest shown and "a couple of sites" have been held for buyers.

"Now it is consented we can look to sell off the plan."

"Titles won't be issued for several months yet, but it allows people to lock something in."

Eight of the sites will have an option to access the airfield giving buyers potential to build a small hangar and a home, fly in and taxi to the door.

"They wouldn't be taxi-ing out directly onto the runway... rather onto the runway extension, also owned by the Omarama Airfield Company.

Part of the terms and conditions for that arrangement would be that each lot owner would get a licence to access the airfield for their own aircraft and would pay landing and the appropriate annual licencing fees, Scott said.

"It's quite unique."

It would be interesting to see if aircraft owners took up the opportunity, he said.

Regardless, the blocks opened up to uninterrupted north-west views which were unlikely to be built out.

*-continued over*

# New subdivision ready for take-off , continued

The airfield company, which is planning its own subdivision off Nimbus Dr, had been very supportive, Scott said.

The Fitzgerald's plan to "gently advertise" the lots, and gauge interest levels. "We will be erecting some advertising signs, just so that people can see the lay of the land, and how the sites will shape up."

The main access to the subdivision will be from Chain Hills Hwy, similar to the Hardacre Pl entry. Four sites will have their entry via a right of way off Prohibition Rd. Tenders for the construction works – roading, servicing, close on Friday. "Then we can make a start," Scott said.

The Fitzgeralds, who lived in Oamaru, bought the block known as the Lory block in 2017 to set up a base for their cycle trail business Trail Adventures. In November 2019, the couple sold the business and moved to West Melton, near Christchurch.



*Left: Views to the northwest from the site of the planned subdivision. Photo: Supplied.*

*Below: Draft plans give an outline of the new subdivision to be developed by Scott and Dee-Ann Fitzgerald adjacent to the Oamaru Airfield. Graphic supplied.*



# Farewell to be held at airfield

**Bo Lennart Nilsson.** On Labour Day, October 25, 2021, died in Omarama doing what he loved, aged 75 years.

Loved partner of the late Rebecca Loncraine. Loved father of Bo Jnr, Lars, and Birgitta, and father-in-law of Sarah, and Christina and Fiona. Loved Grandfather (Poppa Planes) of Torr, Noah, Freja and Anastasia.

*“An adventurer who lived life to the fullest”*

Messages to the Nilsson family, C/- P O Box 10345, Christchurch 8145.

A celebration of Bo's life will be held at the Omarama Airfield Terminal, 30 Airport Rd, Omarama, on Monday, November 8, 2021 at 2 pm. Private cremation thereafter.

In lieu of flowers, in Bo's memory donations may be made to further the work teaching local young people gliding. These can be made at the service.

A special thanks is extended to police and emergency services personnel who attended the accident.

*Photo: supplied*



# Labour Weekend at Loch Laird

For the first time for many years Labour Weekend in Otematata was as it is meant to be – relaxing and enjoyable for all - visitors and residents alike.

This year measures were put in place to try to prevent a repeat of previous years when the alcohol-fuelled behaviour of young people – many under the legal drinking age - who come to the Loch Laird campground to celebrate the end of the school year, has been cause for concern.

After a year of discussions and work by a community group set up to address those concerns new measures were put in place which included a liquor ban for the weekend, and an increased police and security presence at the top terrace and in the Otematata township.

A poster was distributed which emphasised the message that young people were welcome to come and "have fun in the Otematata Sun" but the emphasis of authorities would be on reducing harm.

The council also publicised its approach through the Oamaru Mail and Otago Daily Times.

The measures appeared to have paid off.

Senior Constable Nayland Smith, of Upper Waitaki Police said it was a great success with few "unsupervised youth" turning up and those who had were well-behaved.

"Overall, it has worked with a small bit of displacement."

About 20 to 30 young people set up camp at the Boat Harbour campground and two separate groups of about 10 camped at Parsons Rock.

This is in contrast to previous years when it was estimated at least 250 and likely at times up to 300 young people would converge on the top terrace for the weekend-long party.

One 18-year-old male from Dunedin was arrested and charged with disorderly behaviour and breach of the liquor ban. He was released with a warning, Snr Const Smith said.

On Saturday night two alcohol infringement notices – fines of \$200 - were issued to two 17-year-olds for being under 18 and in possession of alcohol in a public place without adult supervision.

They said their parents, who were in Oamaru, had supplied the alcohol, Snr Const Smith said.

The message has gone out there was "zero tolerance" for rule breakers, he said. He would definitely be recommending the same alcohol ban be put in place for next year.

"This is the new norm for Labour Weekend, and we will be doing exactly the same next year and in fact every year until this tradition is no more."

Ahuriri Community Board chairperson and long-time Otematata resident Vicky Munro said it had been a Labour Weekend as it was meant to be, "with people showing social responsibility".

"The message went out the young people were welcome but there would be rules and they would be enforced.

"Matters were getting out of control and as leaders of the community we had to take a stand."

The change was the result of a “good team effort all round” – police, the council and community, Mrs Munro said.

She agreed with Snr Const Smith that efforts would need to continue for a few years yet in order to break the cycle and turn “the culture” around.

The Omarama Gazette contacted the Oamaru high schools’ counsellors to ask how pupils viewed the new measures.

Only Colin Pine, of Waitaki Boys’ High School, replied.

“I suppose the biggest changes here were that there was no fallout from the weekend.

“Firstly, the students weren’t discussing what happened in some excitement.

“They were definitely calmer as a senior group.

“And it seems from what they’re saying that the weekend passed uneventfully, which is very nice ... no drama, wonderful, no follow-ups needed.”

Mr Pine said he believed if asked individually the boys would give their support to the new measures. However, when in a group they “may give less support”.

Because the weekend proved quiet the costs of the additional council measures are expected to come in at about \$6,200.

It was Waitaki District Council recreation manager Erik van Der Spek who raised concerns with the council, and not for the first time, after Labour Weekend 2020.

“This site has become a default party scene for some high schools at Labour Weekend. [Council staff] do not encourage this behaviour and the Otematata community, other campers and council are having to handle this and attempt to manage a community/ societal issue

“In the future the [Recreation] unit will look at options such as banning glass and other operational management practices that might help,” his report at the time said.

Later in an email to the Omarama Gazette he added; “As a community we need to find a way to get parents and kids to take responsibility.

“Council, our camps and our camp manager aren’t babysitters or social workers.

“As with the police, we have limited ability to act until someone does something illegal.

“While we can implement measures such as closing areas, alcohol bans, glass bans or, this also impacts other legitimate users and is likely to just move the issue to other camps, into Otematata or elsewhere... We need parents and participants to realise that by their action or inaction in condoning this behaviour and by supplying the alcohol that fuels it, they are putting their children’s safety at risk,” he stated.

The working group held its Labour Weekend at Loch Laird 2021 debrief at a closed workshop last week.

The Omarama Gazette gives Mr van der Spek the last word.

“The consensus is that it was a great success.

“The number of issues police had to respond to were significantly less than in previous years and the local residents report this is the first Labour Weekend that they have not had mailboxes and other assets damaged.

“While planning will take place closer to next Labour Weekend, the current thinking is that we will respond very similarly to this year with a alcohol ban and an increased police presence.”

# In memory of Abby

This was for you, Abby

Much of the Omarama Gazette's year-long campaign for change at the annual gathering of young people celebrating the end of school year at Loch Laird was motivated by memories of Abby.

Abby Maree Cox, a Year 12 (form 6) pupil at Waitaki Girls High School was a passenger in a car when the teenage driver lost control and slammed into a tree. They had decided to go for a drive about 11pm when the accident happened. Abby, 17, died at the scene.

This year marked 18 years since that tragedy.

It was one tragic moment but the effects that moment have rippled out through the community and through time.

Abby would have turned 35 this year.

I did not know Abby but the memory of the heartbreak of family and friends, and the recollection of a community in grief is still tangible.

This is Abby's legacy - she loved having fun, that is why she was there.

But, more than anything, she wanted her friends to be safe.

And now, her friends want their children and their children's children to have fun.

And our community wants them to be safe.

Abby is often talked about among friends who were all deeply affected by that night. Michelle Harper is one of those friends.

For many years Michelle was invited to speak to the Year 12 students of all three Oamaru high schools, speaking to pupils about the crash as a guest speaker during the "Drive to Survive" campaign.

The reason for this was to let the local young people know that this can and did happen to one in their community.

This year, on the eve of Labour Weekend Michelle wrote these thoughts on her social media pages and I asked her if I could share them. - Ruth Grundy, editor

*" - driving up to Mum and Dad's today with Sharon behind the wheel, as we approached Otematata we were chatting away about the shinadigins that would be going down at the campsites, about the carefree teenagers enjoying their Labour Weekend.*

*Eighteen years ago, tomorrow (18 years ago!!!!) when myself and my friends were also carefree teenagers enjoying the first day of our Labour Weekend we were quickly smacked in the face with the gut wrenching reality that our bullet proof, it won't happen to us, classic carefree teenage outlook on life was about to be shattered by the news that our friend/sister/daughter/niece/granddaughter/cousin/ local young girl no longer had the chance to be a carefree teenager.*

*I will always reflect on the 24th of October, as that was the day that changed my life forever and so, so many other lives too.*

*I want to shake the generations that are now those carefree teenagers, who now seem to have no care in the world about their reckless behaviour and how quickly things change.*

*Not only did it affect the people who loved the person who we lost physically but it*

*affected everyone else involved.*

*The first people that came across the horror, the emergency responders, the police having to tell a mother and father their child was not coming home; parents of grieving children trying to navigate their way through their own grief and empathy for the parents of the young, bubbly, infectious girl that was a little bit of each of their own family; the regulars that were greeted at the checkout with a beaming smile, as was anyone that was lucky enough to cross her path.*

*Everything changed in that moment and there is nothing we can do about that, but we who are left in the ripple can ensure that we have learned that we are not bullet-proof and spare a second to ponder the possibilities of our own actions.*

*I have not been one to post about this each year, but it pains me to think that the way teenagers behave now on their "Labour Weekend trip" has any relation to this night. Not one person set out that night to be an asshole, fight, trash the camp-grounds, taunt the local police for entertainment like the current lot and certainly not to be in a car crash. Everyone was just out to have fun with friends and the cost for many that night was irreparable.*

*I am the daughter of a first responder that volunteers his time to keep your kids safe from harm, and now a Mum of a teenager.*

*It is my responsibility to educate my child on how to behave and I will be damned if the memory of my friend is tainted by the actions of everyone else's kids who are left to behave like assholes under a "cloud" of what happened 18 years ago. What a load of crap! Parents need to teach their children that it can happen to them, and will, if they continue to behave in such reckless manner.*

*If one person remembers that their mum, dad, uncle, aunty, neighbour or dog walker knew that 17-year-old Oamaru girl who tragically lost her life, if one person stops to think about the repercussions of their actions and decides not to get behind the wheel or in the car, then this is a win.*

*I miss my friend, I often wonder what she would be doing now with a smile on my face and a lump in my throat.*

*Taiohi tonu my friend x*



# Change of faces at the helm

There were fond farewells and warm welcomes as a changing of the guard took place at last month's Residents' Association of Omarama annual meeting. Long-standing advocate for Omarama, Tony Chapman, stood down as chairperson because of a move to Russell, Northland.

Former Omarama businessman Lindsay Purvis was elected to the role.

The association formally thanked Tony for the part he has played.

He joined the committee in November 2016 after election to the Ahuriri Community Board. At the time Tony was new to Omarama – he and Amanda having purchased the Top 10 Holiday Park at the start of the year – but neither were new to the valley. His family farmed near Kurow for 155 years until the farm was sold in 2013.

Tony had been a committed supporter of Omarama and the association, RAOI treasurer Stephen Grundy told the meeting.

“As he promised at the time he went onto the board – he has been a voice for Omarama, taking on community concerns and advocating for the town and its residents locally and further afield.

“During his tenure he and the team have worked to see the sports courts through to completion and their worth to the town proven time and again.

“The library shifted to a larger brighter space, and it also has seen greater patronage.

“He is always encouraging of activities and fundraising which has seen the centre become an important hub of the community.”

He had also overseen numerous petitions and submissions to the council, most notably the long-time push to get the traffic concerns at the town centre addressed.

“Behind the scenes he has tackled the hard questions and dealt to the practicalities of small-town management – like overflowing and smelly bins. All the while juggling a very busy accommodation business,” Stephen said.

In his chairperson's report, Tony thanked the committee for their work in the past year.

Lindsay and wife Bev owned Merino Country Café and Gifts for 24 years until their retirement in September 2017.

A year later Lindsay, a former farmer, was appointed Rural Support Trust Otago co-ordinator, helping those who live and work rurally navigate whatever comes their way. Trust coordinators have defined roles in civil defence emergencies and co-ordinate government relief packages when severe weather events or other crises strike.

A decision was made at the meeting that each office bearer should have a 2IC, not only to share the load but also to help with ‘succession planning’.

To this end, Ann Patterson will continue as vice-chairman; Gary Sutherland will support Stephen Grundy, who continues as treasurer, Michelle Kitchen who is also hall curator, will support secretary Yvonne Jones.

Maurice Cowie has been elected to the committee. The remaining members were confirmed: Jemma Gloag, Hank Verheul, Trevor Mollard, Michelle Kitchen and Gary Sutherland.

The association's aims are to manage the community hall and amenities, to promote good will and a sense of community, and to provide a means by which concerns can be raised and, if necessary, addressed.

Meetings take place for “one hour once a month” at 7.30pm on the third Thursday of each month at the Omarama Community Centre.

# \$1.46m water treatment plant for Omarama

The Waitaki District Council has plans to build a new \$1.46million water treatment plant for Omarama, although the planned location is being kept under wraps for now. The matter was discussed in a public-excluded session of the additional council meeting October 26, 2021. Discussion was held behind closed doors so as not to prejudice or disadvantage negotiations.

In reply to questions from the Omarama Gazette, council assets operations manager Joshua Rendell said the work was planned after receiving funding from tranche one of the Government's Three Waters reform process, last year.

From that government infrastructure stimulus package \$1.46million has been allocated to the project and this could be increased "dependant on budget performance of other projects", Mr Rendell said.

"Any additional costs associated with the projects over the available grant funding will be funded through depreciation, development contributions or a loan funded through rates."

Mr Rendell said there would not be consultation on the location of the new plant.

"The site needed to be nearby existing infrastructure (water intakes - bores) and the council worked with adjacent landowners to try to find a suitable location for the plant. "There were limited options available, and council negotiated to get the best possible outcome for the Ōmārama community. The location is an operational and logistical consideration for Council. Several sites were considered nearby the water intakes (bores). For various reasons site selection was very limited," he said.

The activity was 'permitted' under the district plan.

"The site will be well screened from view and we will engage with the [Ahuriri] Community Board on building/site aesthetics."

The email referred people to the "publicly available" Long Term Plan 2021 to 2031 to learn what other projects maybe in the pipeline for Omarama.

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## Plans to address footpath concerns

It appears there may be plans afoot to address at least some of the concerns over the perennial problem of the state of Omarama's footpaths.

In 2020, the Waitaki District Council's asset management team engaged WSP to complete a footpath survey of the full network of the district's footpaths using a scooter which was fitted out with smart recording including a camera.

In a report to yesterday's Assets Committee, assets operations manager Joshua Rendell said the survey revealed that the footpath network was 92% defect free, and 4% was below the 96% level of service set by Council.

As a result remedial work is to be carried out over a seven-year period but it is planned to repair any significant issues before the end of 2021, the report said.

In an email in response to questions from the Ōmārama Gazette, Mr Rendell said the survey revealed that in Ōmārama 97.4% of the length of the footpaths did not show faults.

"[However] there were faults observed in 2.6% of the length of Ōmārama footpaths, of these faults 32% were rated very poor, 26% Poor and 42% Fair.

"Of the repairs being programmed [through the district], 19 are in Ōmārama.

"The most significant faults were potholes which are programmed for an early response as soon as practical," Mr Rendell said.

# Very elegant won the day

## Melbourne Cup Omarama 2021

VERY ELEGANT, INDEED!

Kiwi horse Verry Elleegant won the Melbourne Cup and very elegant was the theme of the day for Melbourne Cup, Omarama 2021.

A suitably-sized crowd for the times, of mostly locals, gathered yesterday at Boots and Jandals Hotel Omarama to enjoy bubbly and nibbles and watch the race that stops two nations and our town.

Many were appropriately glammed up for the occasion and even the tiniest tots got in on the act.

### PRIZE WINNERS

Sweepstake winner: Lynley Pryde

Best dressed woman: Ann Patterson

Best dressed man: everybody's favourite barman Ronak Wadhwa (Ron)

Best dressed couple: Murray and Sharon Stuart

Hostess of the day wearing mask of the day: Julie Dyson

*Photos of the children by Julie Dyson*





# Open day marks start of the season

Even the weather played ball when about 20 to 30 adults and children including some newcomers to the sport took to the courts for a tennis open day in Omarama, last month.

The open day marks the start of the summer season and was run by Omarama coach Becky Martin.

It was run under the umbrella of the Tennis Hot Shots programme - a national starter tennis programme especially designed for children, but it also caters to people of all ages and abilities.

The open day included challenges to test and teach ball and racquet handling, hand-eye coordination and techniques such as serving the ball, with spot prizes awarded.

Two 'rising stars' from North Otago Tennis - Ryan Chalmers and Kate Mortimer - played an exhibition match.

Weekly tennis coaching for children based on the Hot Shots programme begins on Thursdays (tomorrow) after school, and each Friday at about 5pm there is casual tennis for adults and all are welcome, Becky said.

Thanks go to Ann Patterson for providing muffins and juice, Real Fruit Ice Cream Co and Twizel's Dragonfly Kitchen.

*Tennis was the winner on the day at the Omarama Tennis open day last month  
Photo: Jemma Gloag*



# Winning streak comes to an end

Wintry Wednesday afternoons have never been so much fun! Covid restrictions may have put a bit of a dampener on things but we've still had a blast with our sometimes weekly community housie sessions. It's been great to meet new faces, make new friends, share some laughs and the winnings!

Here are the official 'thankyous' from Ann Patterson, Residents' Association of Omarama.

"A big thank you to all the folk who turned up to play housie over the 10 weeks. Despite Covid restrictions you still came along for your weekly session. Well done. Special thanks to the ladies who did the calling, running, and helped with the setting up and cleaning up, and the yummy afternoon tea treats.

Without your help it would have been a big ask!

Thanks to Jody from Age Concern Otago, who supplied the equipment to make it happen. A wonderful anonymous donor made sure housie finished on a high with a beautiful lunch provided by team Oasis followed by our surprise caller extraordinaire!! A happy day for all.

**There is a possibility of a Christmas session, details will be in Gazette December issue.**

**We anticipate starting housie next year on June 1.**



# Omarama water race to be refreshed

The water race which runs through Omarama is to be refreshed with a little more flow.

The aim is to get more of a current going through the race which runs from Omarama Stream through Omarama Station and Ladybird Hill to the far eastern end of the township, spokesperson Richard Subtil, of Omarama Station said.

The race loosely follows the blue line - see map from Google maps, below.

If anyone would like further information please contact:

Richard: 027 208 9096 or email: [subtil@omaramastation.co.nz](mailto:subtil@omaramastation.co.nz)

## Right at our backdoor

Last week, the Omarama Gazette took a little stroll along the race which has quite a history - something we might delve into sometime.

It's a pretty trail beginning in the picturesque Park Lane Reserve and ambling right through town to the yards on the far side and beyond. Much of it is on private land but walkways follow some of its length.

The race originally provided the town its water supply and was also used for irrigation of the market garden which was once sited on the flat to the east of Ladybird Hill.

At one time one branch of it headed north and under the Omarama Hotel and its garden bar.

*The aerial photo (bottom right) taken in 1979, shows the race wending its way through an obviously dirt dry landscape. Photo courtesy of Retrolens.co.nz*





# The Noticeboard

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



**The Kurow Medical Centre 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: Ven Dr Michael Godfrey, phone 022 342 9977 or email [Dylanfreak@gmail.com](mailto:Dylanfreak@gmail.com); committee secretary (Presbyterian) : Lee Kearon,

phone: 021 250 1060 or email: [lee.kearon@gmail.com](mailto:lee.kearon@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 12.30pm, tee-off 1pm. Club captain James Moynihan phone: 027 215 8266; email [jwmoynihn@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:jwmoynihn@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/](http://www.facebook.com/omaramagazette/)  
[omaramagazette.nz](http://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 December issue of the  
Omarama Gazette  
is Wednesday, December 1, 2021.**

**Please submit copy  
by Friday, November 26 , 2021**

**Advertising pays for  
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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

## Upper Waitaki Police News



*Hi everyone,*

Well that's another Labour weekend done 'n' dusted.

As most of you are likely aware, a working group was formed prior to this. That group consisted of council, local community members as well as Police. This resulted in the implementation of a temporary liquor ban, better security and lighting at Loch Laird camp site and key messaging ensuring the message got out to the target audience prior to Labour weekend.

As a result, hardly any unsupervised youth turned up, those that did were mainly well behaved. In all, I arrested one 18 year old for Breaching the Liquor ban and Disorderly behaviour on the Friday night, and issued two \$200 Alcohol infringement notices to two 17-year-olds on the Saturday for being under 18 and possessing alcohol in a public place without a parent or guardian. These two youngies informed me that their parents, who were still in Oamaru, had brought them the alcohol which, if true, is a little disappointing.

It was great to hear from Ote locals that there was a different feel (better) about the town. This is the new norm for Labour weekend and we will be doing exactly the same next year and in fact every year until this tradition is no more.

I must reiterate we don't want the youngies not to come and enjoy the lakes, we just don't want them to come and behave in an antisocial manner.

Apart from that I have very little else to report. I did attend the fatal plane crash in which Bo Nilsson passed away. The CAA are the lead agency in this and will be investigating the cause of the crash. Hopefully, they can get to the bottom of it. Once again, I was impressed with the professionalism of our volunteers from both FENZ and St John Ambulance.

We are lucky to have such a great service for such a small community.

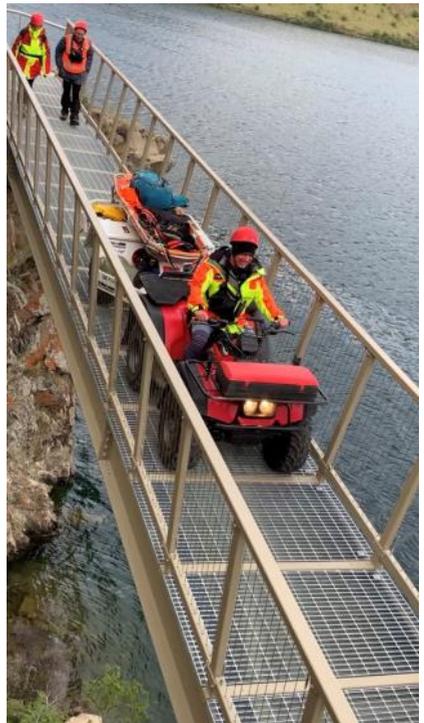
COVID 19 – It's all wearing a bit thin isn't it? Unfortunately, this pandemic isn't going away any time soon. This is not helped when we get people blatantly breaching the lock down rules and spreading it around the country. The scary thing was the couple of cases in Christchurch. That's not that far away from here. So, despite it being a pain, we need to keep abiding by the rules as best we can, please. And if you haven't been vaccinated yet I urge you to go get it done, despite all the conspiracy theories, we know vaccination against COVID-19 is one of the best tools to keep ourselves, each other and our communities safe.

Search and Rescue were out last night (Tuesday) honing their skills with the new stretcher system recently purchased for the recovery of any injured cyclists who may slip down the bank on the A2O track. Part of the kit includes a trailer specifically designed and made by local Maurice Cowie. This means that any injured patient can quickly and relatively comfortably be transported out a lot faster than if SAR had to carry them out by hand.

The photo right shows SAR squad members Mike Jackson (driver), Maurice Cowie and Sabrina McCormack negotiating one of the bridges on the Omarama to Otematata section.

*That's it from me.  
Stay safe,  
Bean*

Senior Constable Nayland Smith  
Sole charge Constable / Omarama / Po Box 101,  
Omarama 9448.  
Phone: (03) 438 9559 / Ext: 34580 /  
mailto:nayland.smith@police.govt.nz



## Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade



*Hello everybody,*

As we are moving into the warmer months and the smell of barbecues is in the air, let's make sure the connections on our gas barbecues are safe i.e. not perished, no leaking fittings or connections.

The simple way to check is to spray or brush some soapy water onto couplings. Happy barbecuing!

There are also a lot of cyclists about now so please take care and share the road with

them, particularly around the Ahuriri bridge where there is no track for them. I have noticed the flashing cyclist signs are not always flashing when they are on the bridge.

*Stay safe  
Greg Harper*

Chief Fire Officer  
021 293 1171

greg.harper@fireandemergency.nz

# Ōmārama Golf Club

By Christine Bowman

The Omarama Golf Club again hosted the fundraising event for our local Volunteer Fire Brigade at Labour Weekend.

There were 54 entries and we were delighted to see new players on the course, including family teams.

Our members worked hard mowing the fairways throughout the week and the greens were in excellent condition.

There was one very challenging pin placement on No 2 and 11, with the flag on top of the mound with limited landing space.

The green was played 108 times, with only 3 people scoring a three (Par), 38 got a four, 38 got a five, 16 got a six and 13 got seven or above. This was certainly a talking point in the clubrooms at the end of the day.

The winner on the day by lot was Craig Booth (Waimate) with 38 stablefords, from Colin Brown (Waimate), 3rd was Chris Galwey (Gleniti) 37 stablefords.

We will now start our planning for our New Year tournament which will be held on Saturday 8th January 2022, so put the date in your diaries.

*Keep safe everyone.*

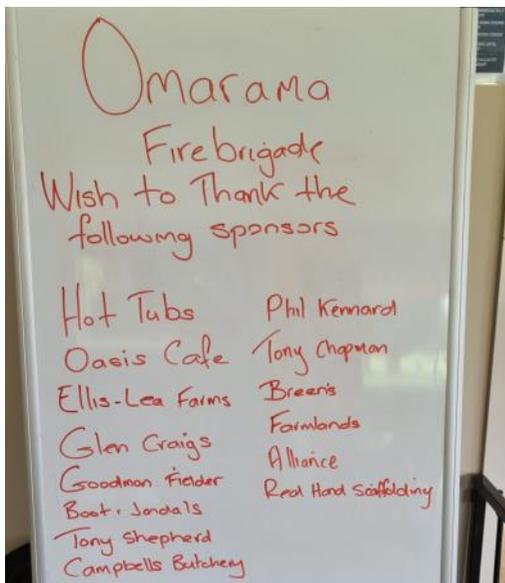
## Ōmārama Golf Club

**Saturdays; cards in 12.30 midday, tee-off 1pm.**

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

**Email: [jwmoynihan@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:jwmoynihan@yahoo.co.nz)**

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





# Ōmārama Men's Shed

The past few weeks the newly formed Men's Shed group have been working to create a replacement announcer's box - The Bird Box - for the Ōmārama Rodeo Club grounds.

Steve and Rudi (pictured) allow the rest of the group to put their supervisory skills to the test.

The newly-formed Ōmārama Shed group would appreciate offers or donations of any second-hand tools or machinery for its workshop.

The Ōmārama Shed group meets at 10am each Saturday

For further information contact: Murray Stuart 027 432 7537

*Men at Work. Photos: Hank Verheul*

*Below: Murray Stuart receives the first donation of workshop equipment for the Omarama Shed from a very generous Ken Newton of Otematata. Thank you Ken.*



# Ōmārama Collie Dog Club

## ANNUAL MEETING

The Omarama Collie Dog Club will hold its annual meeting  
**7pm, Wednesday, November 17,**  
at the Omarama Golf Club.

Contact: Carla Hunter [smithyc66@gmail.com](mailto:smithyc66@gmail.com)

---

# Ōmārama Playgroup

## ANNUAL MEETING

The Ōmārama Playgroup will hold its annual meeting at  
**7.15pm on Thursday, November 25, 2021**  
at the Pink Glider café.  
All welcome.

President Tarryn Benton 027 201 7065  
Secretary: Aimee Snelgrove 022 350 5536  
[aimeesnelgrove@hotmail.com](mailto:aimeesnelgrove@hotmail.com)

---

# The Waitaki Newcomers Network

The Waitaki Multicultural Council has established the Waitaki Newcomers Network and Migrant Support Service which are both very successful initiatives. Within the Oamaru area there are many events where people can meet up and establish new friendships which helps them to settle happily into a new community. It can be difficult adjusting to a new place, especially if English is your second language, the culture is new and you have no family in the area. Making friends and learning about the area and what it offers is key to developing a sense of belonging and well being. In rural areas these challenges of isolation can be even greater.

For more information about this group and to subscribe to regular updates  
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)

# Ōmārama School

*Dear families and community,*

We have hit the ground running this term with a superb team effort on the part of staff, parents and outside professionals.

A big thank you to Kathy Kerr for coming in the holidays to paint such an amazing mural for our tennis courts. It looks awesome !!!!!!! Another big thank you to Richard McKerchar for building a seating area (below) for our students to sit at.

What an awesome job you both have done !!!

We have had a huge boost from the community and managed to clear all our felled trees in the holidays with an old style work party organised and hosted by "Bean" Smith.

The Friends of School have donated money to support our school wide camp at Mt Cook, new library books, extra staffing and brimmed sun hats for every student.

All this practical support has enhanced our grounds and environment and is giving us a school to be proud of. The gardens are weeded, the lawns are mown and the trees cleared.

Not quite so positive is the news that we are still working with the ministry on the final budget for the new classroom because of increases in costs and I daren't give a start date yet.

*Kind regards,*

*Michelle Green, Omarama School principal*



About "10 to a dozen" wannabe lumberjacks gathered for a day's hard graft splitting felled trees at the school last month.

A group of old and dangerous pines had been felled and the aim is to split the logs and sell as firewood to recoup some of the costs.

Bean Smith, who is managing the job, said, in all, the team cut about 90 square meters - six truck loads at about 15m<sup>3</sup> per truck which should fetch about \$10,000.

Much of it has been pre-sold.

He estimates there is about another two truckloads to cut so a further working bee will be held on a Sunday, next month - date to be advised.

**If you're able to help out please contact Bean 021 191 4808**

*Omarama artist Kathy Kerr has created this mural for the Omarama School tennis courts.  
Photo: supplied*



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

# Ōmārama Community Library

## HAVE YOU POPPED IN LATELY?

There's some new books in, as the latest travelling collection makes it onto the shelves.

And we're just awaiting the arrival of the bean bags bought with the generous donation from High Country Salmon.

Call in for a browse, a chat with our librarians - they're just like Google but with a friendly smiling face, or pull up a chair, relax in the sunshine and just read!

ICYMI - Waitaki District Libraries, including Ōmārama, are delighted to support the Zonta Club of Oamaru with their Project Uplift initiative.

This initiative is about recycling bras to woman in need.

The Ōmārama Library will be one of the community collection points for public to drop off their donations.

These will be collated at Oamaru Library and then forwarded to Zonta to then sent to Christchurch for sorting and getting ready for distribution for woman in need throughout the Pacific Islands.

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



# Ōmārama Residents' Association

The next meeting of the  
Ōmārama Residents' Association is  
**7.30 pm Thursday, November 18, 2021**

at the Ōmārama Community Centre

An invitation is extended to all

## Contacts:

Lindsay Purvis, chairperson, 027 438 9630

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, Ōmārama 9448.**

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

## ŌMĀRAMA COMMUNITY CENTRE HALL HIRE

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



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

The service is free of charge

To make your visit quick and easy:

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



Georgie Robertson  
Omarama

03 438 9554 027 4861525



Vicky Munro  
Otematata

03 438 7855 021 438745



Alona Shaw  
Omarama

027 773 4214



## Notary Public Services Affidavits and Declarations

David Stone, Lake Ohau

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



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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)

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in Twizel Mackenzie Health Centre and  
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- \* Counselling
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- \* Travel advice and vaccination
- \* Cervical smears (funded for eligible patients)
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## **Open**

Kurow: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm. Omarama: Thursday 8.30am to 12.30pm.

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.*



# 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**

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**omaramagazette@gmail.com**



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Mobile 027 489 5149

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

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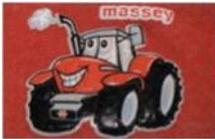
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Phone: Tanya 027 673 1381



# Freedom Camping Ambassadors



**Waitaki**

DISTRICT COUNCIL  
TE KAUNIHERA Ā ROHE O WAITAKI

Waitaki District Council currently has two four-month fixed-term positions available for Freedom Camping Ambassadors. These are part-time positions of 20 hours each per week.

One position covers the upper Waitaki area (Omarama, Lindis, Ahuriri) and the other covers coastal Waitaki (Waitaki Bridge to Palmerston, Oamaru to Kurow).

As a Responsible Freedom Camping Ambassador, you will provide information and advice to visitors and the wider community through visiting and monitoring popular freedom camping areas.

You will be an advocate for the Tiaki Promise which promotes guardianship, protection and preservation of New Zealand; educating freedom campers to adopt responsible camping practices which minimise the impact of freedom camping on the environment and communities.

You will provide information, answer public queries and collect relevant statistical data whilst telling our visitors and residents why Waitaki is such a great place to visit. The work you do will contribute to the Waitaki District Council's key community outcomes of social, cultural and environmental wellbeing, helping to make Waitaki the best place to live, work and play.

This role requires you to work autonomously and maintain a professional standard at all times. The ideal applicant will be well presented, confident and approachable with excellent communication skills. Knowledge of the Waitaki District is essential for you to provide up-to-date information.

An awareness of Local Government regulatory practice is also desirable as you will be required to interpret and apply the Waitaki District Responsible Freedom Camping Bylaw. In doing so there will be occasions when you will be required to take enforcement action and will need to confidently manage conflict situations.

Full training will be provided, and you will be supported by Council's Environmental Services Team. A casual uniform is also provided. The successful applicant will be required to work split shifts to cover evenings and mornings, including some weekends and occasional early mornings.

**What you'll need:**

- A current full NZ driver's license
- Provision and use of a compliant and presentable personal vehicle (mileage rate applies)
- Previous customer service experience
- Effective written and oral communication with excellent interpersonal skills

Successful applicants must undergo a satisfactory NZ Police record check-in line with Council's employment requirements.

**Enquiries about this vacancy can be made to Andrew Bardsley, Regulatory Manager on 03 433 0300.**

**To apply for this job and to view the position description go to:**

**[waitakidistrictcouncil.recruitmenthub.co.nz](http://waitakidistrictcouncil.recruitmenthub.co.nz)**

**Applications close 12 November 2021**



# WILDING PINE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER DAY



## ALL GEAR PROVIDED

(or bring your own leather gloves and loppers if you prefer)

Wear sturdy covered footwear (no jandals or sandals)

Bring your raincoat, sun hat and drink bottle

Kids aged 14 and under please bring your adult

Personal protective equipment and thorough briefings will be provided to mitigate the safety risks associated with these outdoor events

Come and help protect the beautiful Mackenzie landscape. Chop down some wilding pines and enjoy a sausage after

Sat 13 November  
Upper Ohau River  
10am-1pm



Vehicle access from the Glen Lyon Rd and Ohau Canal Rd intersection. Meet across the weir at the start of the Lake Ohau Track

[www.mackenziewildingtrust.org](http://www.mackenziewildingtrust.org)



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Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee

## Plan to improve Twizel River picks up pace

---

A proposal to restore native habitat and create visitor appeal at a section of Twizel River is gaining momentum.

Twizel River is home to both native and introduced fish, plants and birds, and flows through Lake Poaka and its wetlands.

Restoration of a section of the waterway close to the town is a key priority for the Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee and initial discussions are underway to explore the next steps in planning the project.

Additional native planting could boost native fish species and mahinga kai natural resource gathering. Over summer, the water quality is already monitored weekly for swimming and recreation.

Supporting projects that protect and enhance biodiversity is important to the Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee.

*The Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee is a community led committee supported by councils.*  
[ecan.govt.nz/upperwaitaki](http://ecan.govt.nz/upperwaitaki)



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

October 2021

Highest temperature: October 25, 24.3 C

Lowest temperature: October 14 -1.9C

Most rainfall: October 11, 27.4 mm

Total rainfall for October: 65 mm

Waitaki Whitestone Geopark

## ROADSHOW

*Coming near you!*

### **KUROW**

Thursday 28 October  
7pm - Kurow Memorial Hall

### **PALMERSTON**

Wednesday 10 November  
7pm - Palmerston Sports Hall

### **ŌAMARU**

Wednesday 17 November  
7pm - Scottish Hall

### **ŌMĀRAMA**

Wednesday 24 November  
7pm - Ōmārama Memorial Hall

### **VIRTUAL (Zoom)**

Wednesday 8 December  
7pm - Email us for the link:  
info@whitestonegeopark.nz



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together as kaitiaki of  
the land and its stories.*

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All gatherings will take place under  
strict Covid-19 Alert Level rules.

# Back in the day - Wireless Connections

*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 my day'.*

This month: Sounds of the 80s, 90s and those 00s - as told by Stephen Grundy

Long before we had wireless there was the wireless.

When I first moved to Omarama in the mid 80s there was one TV channel and no local radio reception.

I was surprised when visiting other houses that there was often a radio going but the sound from it was mostly static.

If you had a good old-fashioned AM radio, the ones with the pre-printed dials with station names like 3YA, 4YA, 3ZB, etc, when you looked in the back you would see glass valves with a faint glow, and the radio usually made a hum noise, that way you knew it was on as it took a minute too warm up before the sound worked.

With a good valve radio you could receive a few distant stations but only during certain times of the day.

I was always interested in radio. It was fascinating to me that speech and music could be sent long distances with no wires, just flying through the airwave unseen.

My parents bought my brothers crystal set radios that worked and didn't need batteries. I think that is when my interest began.

When I was old enough my parents bought me a one transistor kitset radio, which I put together and eventually got it working.

In 1980, after leaving school and training I began work as an engineering and radio technician for the New Zealand Electricity Department in Twizel and the opportunity arose to provide an alternative to scratchy radio reception, at low cost.

Christchurch began FM transmission in stereo with enough power that the signal could be received in a few locations near Omarama, such that the installation of a radio repeater station was viable.

So, with a few spare parts from then new Electricity Corporation, a set of batteries from the closed Dunedin NZED office's phone system, permission from landowners, permission from ZMFM, a radio licence, and a lot of time, we had something up and working - 97.3 FM, rebroadcasting CHCH ZMFM program.

Credit to Tony Atkinson, my boss at the time, who did most of the coordination, and supported the project.

So now we could listen to the dulcet tones and broadcasted jokes and pranks of "James and Ken, the Moron Men", James Daniels (Stacey's dad) and Ken Ellis ZMFM's breakfast radio hosts, beaming into Omarama homes. The music may not have been everyone's cup of tea, but we actually got 80's music in the 80's.

One of the jokes about another radio station was that you could listen to the latest hits of three months ago.

Of course, our homemade radio repeater station sitting on Quailburn Hill suffered in the wind, rain, lightning, and sometimes lack of sun on the solar panel.

Rabbits gnawed their way through anything, and cattle found the solar panels were irresistible as back scratchers. And once they fell to the ground it was difficult to avoid trampling them... not a cheap fix.

It was up to volunteers to make the 4WD trip and maintain and service the site and

equipment.

In the earlier years on Quailburn Hill the aerial pole acted as a lightning rod, and lightning strikes frequently, as still happens, cuts transmission. Once a lightning strike neatly switched radios stations from ZMFM to National Radio which the younger audience saw as a conspiracy and the older audience took as an act of God! Once the town listened to the sky preview channel for a few weeks before repairs could take place.

Eventually along came PortFM.

The privately-owned Port FM network was based in Timaru and broadcast throughout South Canterbury and the Mackenzie Country.

That posed a few issues. Competition was intense and that hasn't changed, licensing laws were strict and licences costly.

The choice was to shut down the Omarama 97.3 transmission or switch to another radio station.

Someone made the decision to transmit National Radio – now called RNZ National - and with support from Radio New Zealand, it was the best option.

RNZ provided the satellite receiver to get the radio programme to our site and the Omarama community provided a new transmitter and held the licence under the name of the Omarama Residents' Association.

More recently, a deal has been struck with Network Waitaki to use their hut on the nearby Cloud Hill. This means the equipment can be connected to 230V power doing away with the need for solar panels and batteries.

And it provides just a little more protection from high country storms.

I just wish the electronics were more reliable.

For a town with a population of less than 400, we are now spoilt with four local 'old-fashioned wireless' radio stations, no internet required.



# The Last Page is Classifieds

## BREEN CONSTRUCTION

Building since 1939 - available for your all of your construction projects in the Upper Waitaki and Mackenzie districts. Contact our Area Manager Jason Pryde on 021 340 694 or email [jason.pryde@breen.co.nz](mailto:jason.pryde@breen.co.nz)  
[www.breen.co.nz](http://www.breen.co.nz)

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## DOG-SITTER REQUIRED

Dog-sitter required for a 17-year-old miniature Dachshund from December 23 until about January 9. We will be at the camp and would take him away during the daytime sometimes.

Please contact Mike Cleverley 021 220 9575.

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## CAFÉ STAFF NEEDED

Merino Country Café Omarama

Serving customers and other general duties. Ideally you will have relevant experience in the same industry but not necessarily. Full training will be provided. Working around 30 hours per week. If this sounds like you please send your CV and cover letter to [otagoshop@gmail.com](mailto:otagoshop@gmail.com), phone us on (03) 438 9844 or call in to see Sue or Dylan.

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## The Ōmārama Gazette

Ōmārama's news delivered to your inbox

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