

## A Message from the Editor

As I wrote last month the Mt Somers and District Citizens Association is going to close its operations in the next few months.

As a result I am in the position of either taking on the publication of the Nor'Wester myself or closing it down. I have been doing the magazine for eleven and a half years every month except January and one issue during Covid. It has been an interesting time, sometimes fun and sometimes a real headache. I have tried to entice someone to take it over as I am not getting any younger and it appears that there is no one interested in stepping into the breach. I have been involved in the printing industry since I joined the Christchurch Press way back in 1962. I have worked for Readers Digest in Melbourne and owned my own printing business for a number of years. It therefore was easy for me to take on the Nor'Wester in my retirement although it was supposedly only for a short time.

During my time doing the paper I have had the amazing support of a number of good folks who have religiously every month sat down and provided articles and stories about what has happened in the district, book reviews, what has happened in the schools, and efforts that people have made to make things better for everyone. I cannot thank them enough, as without their input there would be no Nor'Wester.

I now have to make decision on its future.

I have decided to take over the publication from the February 2026 issue to see how it works out and if it becomes not viable financially then I will stop publication.

As with the economy in general things have been a bit slow and the Nor'Wester has lost a number of advertisers over the last couple of years and all the costs of producing the paper, printing, distributing and postage etc have continued to climb.

I have in the last few years not wished to increase the advertising costs but now it is inevitable. The costs have remained the same since July 2021 (four and half years ago) but I now have to make a increase in the rates to be able to continue the publication.

I have put below the cost increases for the various size adverts that would take effect in February.

<b>Full Page 270 x 190</b>	<b>\$175.00</b>
<b>Half Page Vertical 270H x 92W</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>Half Page Horizontal 132H x 190W</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>Half Column (Quarter Page) 132H x 92W</b>	<b>\$ 60.00</b>
<b>Third Column 87H x 92W</b>	<b>\$ 40.00</b>
<b>Quarter Column 65H x 92W or smaller</b>	<b>\$ 30.00</b>

The future of this paper is in your hands.

Finally I would like to thank everyone, the readers, the advertisers and the people who go out of their way to provide stories and photos for the paper. Your input has been vital to make the paper what it has always been - a tool to inform people from Carew to Alford Forest and all places between about what is going on in this beautiful Mid Canterbury area.

Finally I would like to wish everyone a very Happy and Festive Christmas and New Year. Take care of yourselves, stay safe on the roads and enjoy the summer break.

My Kind Regards to you all.

Jeremy Hunter Editor



**PALMER**  
RESOURCES

**We're proud to be involved in our  
local community at a grass roots level.**

0800 303 980 • [www.palmerresources.co.nz](http://www.palmerresources.co.nz)



# Outdoor Education at Its Best



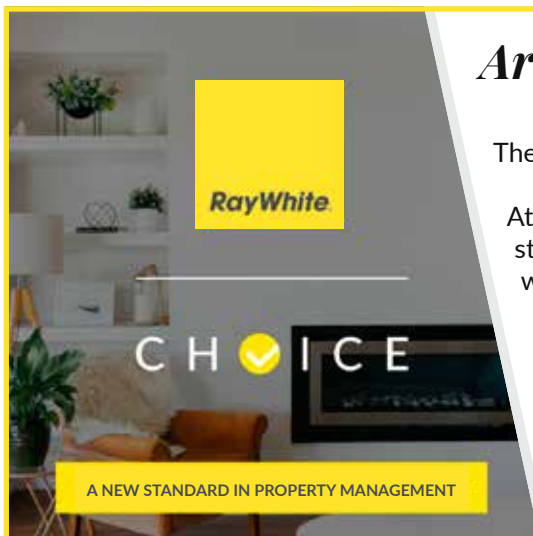
Even in the midst of curriculum change here at MtSS, we continue to prioritise our Outdoor Education programme — giving our tamariki the chance to put real-life experiences into practice and grow in ways the classroom simply can't offer.

For our Year 5 and 6 students, this meant an exciting trip to the beach to learn valuable life-saving skills. A huge shout-out to Spencer Park Surf Life Saving Club for hosting a full day of hands-on learning, tips, and practical demonstrations. Our students even got the chance to put their skills to the test in the big surf, riding a set of powerful waves and gaining confidence in the ocean environment.

The adventure continued with a two-night camp filled with exploration, a very late night (shhh... don't tell the parents!), and of course the legendary talent show — a favourite that never fails to bring plenty of "awws" and laughs.

What stood out the most were the strong friendships and deep bonds formed across the group. Watching our students live out our school values — supporting one another, taking on challenges, and giving everything a go — reminds us exactly why we do this.

This is what Outdoor Education is all about.



## Are you a DIY landlord?

Then this is for you.....

At Ray White we are reshaping property management standards, we are changing the perception of who we are and what we do with the introduction of **'Ray White Choice'**.

Property Management is not a 'one size fits all' service BUT with **'Ray White Choice'** we are empowering self-managing landlords through professional support, convenience and flexibility to pick and choose the products and services they need, to provide better outcomes.

So, if you are looking to retain control of your property and tenancy, have the confidence and tools at your fingertips then we know our suite of self managing products will be just what you are looking for.

RayWhite

**Ray White**  
**Property Management**

**Contact our Property Management Team**  
**for more information.**

REINZ  
REINZ ACCREDITED RESIDENTIAL  
PROPERTY MANAGER MEMBER

03 307 8317 | 96 Tancred Street, Ashburton 7700

Real Estate Mid Canterbury Property Management Limited Licensed (REAA 2008)



Carey Von Lubke  
027 697 6948  
rentals.ashburton@raywhite.com



Janene McDowell  
027 287 3388  
rentals2.ashburton@raywhite.com





# Mt Somers Christmas Market Day

It was another successful Christmas Market, weather was fantastic and there was a great turn out. Sounds like Rowena and Kristin have plenty of plans for next year, sure to be even bigger and better!

Also just under \$1300 raised for playcentre.

Gemma





# The Old Post Office Library



## The latest Book Purchases:

... no excuse for having 'nothing to read' over the Christmas break, we are well stocked with twenty plus new reads , all waiting to find readers over Christmas and New Year. What could be better than sitting in some shade somewhere quiet and peaceful , sipping a cool drink and opening up an adventure to goodness knows where..... all without leaving your back yard or living room couch. A wander around our shelves to find your ideal holiday read is an experience in itself. Here are some of our latest books:

### 'Secrets of the Bees' by Jane Johnson

This novel is set in the stunning Cornish countryside, a gloriously rich and layered portrayal of life in Cornwall today. And if you are into book covers, this one is really pretty!

### 'Murder at Gulls Nest' by Jess Kidd.

This author is a crime writer and we have several of her books. This novel is about a nun who has given up her convent life to try and find her missing sister who was last seen at the Gulls Nest boarding house. She travels down to Gore-on-Sea , takes a room in a boarding house, and settles in to watch and listen. A plus for her is that she is nosy!

And then a fellow lodger is found dead.

This is a seaside mystery full of intrigue and secrets that will keep readers guessing until the end.

### Jane Harper had a new book out for Christmas.....

#### 'Last One Out'

... bestselling author of 'The Dry', 'Exiles', 'The Lost Man.' Reviews say it is a captivating novel set in a modern ghost town with only a handful of residents staying on in what was once a vibrant mining town in rural New South Wales.

Five years ago Ro's son Sam visited the town and then vanished. On the anniversary of his death Ro returns to the town and

begins to suspect there are secrets well hidden as she tries to uncover the truth about Sam's disappearance.

### 'Nobody's Girl' by Virginia Roberts Giuffre .

Memoir of surviving abuse and fighting for justice from none other than Andrew Mountbatten Windsor ( formerly Prince Andrew, 3rd son of the late Queen Elizabeth 2nd) and the late Jeffrey Epstein and associate Ghislaine Maxwell. This is Virginia's story, written before she committed suicide.

We are forever reading and hearing different versions of this shocking scandal but this is from the victim herself. It is a book about power, corruption, industrial-scale sex abuse and the way in which institutions sided with perpetrators.

### 'A Great Act of Love' by Heather Rose.

.... who also wrote 'The Butterfly Man', about Lord Lucan another of our recent buys.

A historical novel inspired by the author's family history. Set in Tasmania, the story follows a young woman of means, who leases a property next to an abandoned vineyard. Here is a story of a family with champagne in their blood and an enterprising woman determined to rewrite their legacy. Her life and the life of her father and the residents of the island will collide in devastating and profound ways.

I really look forward to this read.....her other book was very popular and based on fact.

### 'The Bell and the Blade' by Pauline Simons

Another well known author of books such as 'The Bronze Horseman', 'Tully'

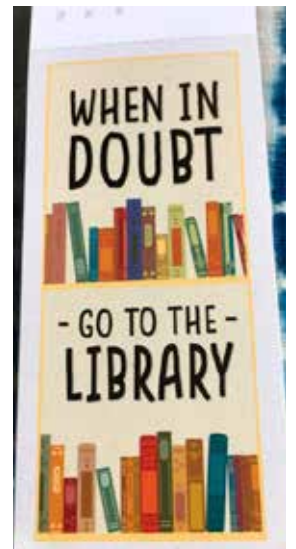
A thriller and an epic love story, perfect for a holiday read.

### 'Hostage' by Eli Sherabi

An unflinching memoir by an Israeli hostage. In October 2023, Hamas terrorists stormed a Kibbutz and shattered the peaceful life of Eri Sherabi and his British born wife and two daughters. While his family watched in horror Eri was dragged away through the tunnels of Gaza to an exile of 491 days in captivity. This is his story.....one of strength, resilience, and of a human's refusal to surrender.

### 'Black Woods Blue Sky' by Eowyn Ivey. (the Snow Child)

An unforgettable story of the beauty and savagery of the Alaskan



## Steady As You Go (SAYGO)

You could save yourself from a fall by attending SAYGO classes.

**SAYGO improves:**

- Balance & leg strength • Flexibility • General fitness & well-being
- Falls are the most common cause of injury in older people
- One third of people over 65 fall each year
- Half of people over 80 fall each year
- Designed for men and women
- Falls are not a natural part of ageing and are almost always associated with weakened leg muscles and poor balance

**So come and join us for an hour.** Classes every Wednesday, Staveley Hall 1.30pm. For enquiries, Rhonda Reveley 021 0423 839



wilderness and of a love story, entwined..... of course!  
Plenty of great reads to choose from, as well as another 10 new purchases not mentioned here. So make a visit to the Library and allow some time just to browse the shelves, there are surprises everywhere.

We have purchased a sturdy ladder for library use. Some of the shelves are quite high for us shorties, so now a safe ascent can be made if a must-read is spotted on the top shelf.

We opened early on the Market Day in Mt Somers and had a constant flow of visitors through, all comments were complimentary and photographs taken. I'm sure if we opened up more often during the week, we would get more people through. So if anyone would like to do that please let me know..... just put the sign out and then sit and read in the sun (or on the couch) and enjoy some quiet time.

A big thank you to Pam who provides fresh flowers for the library. They are often commented on. And as well as looking beautiful, they keep the room smelling sweet. Thanks Pam, and for all the little 'extras' you do.

Have you noticed we have cleaned out the tiny room off the fiction space where the toll booth was originally?? It has been shelved and now holds our high country books and history information. It is worth a look.

It's that time of the year to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and New Year. And a safe one. Our next newsletter will be in 2026!!

Till then, good reading and if you come across any books you think the library would benefit from, please let me know.AC.



## Mt Somers Christmas Community Morning Tea

**Thursday 03 Dec 10.30am**

**At 62 Ashburton Gorge Road**

**Everyone Welcome**

**Please bring a small gift  
and a small plate to share.**

**Any queries Contact Ro Findlay**

**0212953640**

**COMPUTERS  
FIXED  
FAST  
FIRST TIME**


**Rural  
Computing  
Solutions**


**03 308 3400**  
**www.mypc.nz**  
144 Moore Street, Ashburton



**Computing  
Solutions**


**COWCARE**  
Hoofcare for Dairy Cows







**Quality Hoof Trimming for Dairy Cows**  
**Top of the line Hoof Care Products:**

- Cattle Crushes
- Glue & Blocks
- Knives
- Knife Sharpeners







Operating through the Canterbury and North Otago regions  
0800 4 26922 office@cowcare.co.nz Cowcare NZ Limited





## Wolffie's Painting Service

Interiors, Exteriors & Roofs  
Excellent Local References

Providing friendly, professional service in  
South Canterbury for over 10 years

ph 0279 624 841



## Foothills News

As much as I am trying to avoid too much discussion around Christmas it seems there is no avoiding it when it comes to staying safe over the Christmas period. Statistics show a 33% increase in crimes relating to burglaries and theft at this time of year. Some tips for keeping safe:

- If you order items online, have them placed in a spot that cannot be seen from the street or ask for delivery around the back of the property. Leaving parcels in plain view makes it easy for opportunists to walk off with them. Keeping deliveries hidden reduces the risk of theft.
- This time of year, please be extra vigilant. If you notice strangers showing unusual interest in a property, report it promptly. Last year, observant neighbours contacted me after seeing a man scrutinising two properties across the street. I was able to check with both households—one had been away, and the other had multiple parcels left on their doorstep—potentially preventing theft. Your awareness can make a real difference.
- A reputable security company will give honest advice and recommend only what you need. You do not have to spend thousands on equipment that adds no real value. Pay attention to where cameras point as well. One neighbour shared that she now keeps her toilet and bedroom blinds closed all the time because the camera next door faces directly into her home. A good setup should protect you without intruding on anyone's privacy.
- Close blinds and curtains at night to obstruct a burglars view. A pile of parcels next to the tree can be tempting in plain sight.

Factors that lead to burglary – financial need, opportunity, thrill seeking, familiarity with an area. Yes sadly your burglar could live just around the corner. Common characteristics of burglars/theft - behaviour, lack of empathy, familiarity with tools, prior criminal history, substance abuse issues.

Factors that make your home a target – accessibility, perceived wealth, lack of security, hidden entry points and signs of absence.

Some good strategies – set up a “What’s App Group” in your Neighbourhood, set up a Neighbourhood Support group, keep an eye on your neighbours and their properties, talk to Neighbourhood Support about developing these and most of all keep safe!

Sue Abel

Neighbourhood Support

**Your farm, first.**

VetEnt Mayfield is now Farmfirst Mayfield.

But, while the name has changed, Chantel and the team are still here at Farmfirst Mayfield to look after all of your farm and animal health product needs.

**Farmfirst Mayfield**  
1984 Arundel Rakaia Gorge Rd  
Mayfield 7778  
Ph 03 303 6042  
mayfield@myfarmfirst.co.nz

# LPG DELIVERIES

**from the Rangitata to the Rakaia  
and from the foothills to the sea**

**Local and reliable LPG  
for home and business use**

Phone the team at Arthur Cates for further details  
on LPG deliveries in your area

## ARTHUR CATES LTD

**26 McNally Street Ashburton  
Phone 308 5397**

**CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS AT  
PANTHERS ROCK**



**20TH  
DEC**

**SATURDAY**

**PARTY STARTS 4PM  
LIVE BAND FROM 8PM**

**FREE ENTRY  
BOUNCY CASTLE ALL DAY  
VISIT FROM SANTA AT 5PM  
LIVE BAND BLACK VINYL**

**AT PANTHERS ROCK!**

**[WWW.PANTHERSROCK.COM](http://WWW.PANTHERSROCK.COM)**



## ANAMA RURAL WOMEN

Our meeting this month was a trip to Woodbury Cafe where we were entertained by Liz Ball. She spoke of her time supporting daughter Neve on her skiing journey from playing in the snow as a four year old to competitive skiing around the world.

Neve, still only a teenager and doing extremely well on the world stage, is trying to fit school work into her busy schedule of skiing and missing summers as it involves going to the Northern Hemisphere.

Lunch followed with shopping in Geraldine for some and garden visits for others .

New Members are always welcome. We are a friendly group meeting monthly for a social catchup and to support Rural Women .

I would like to wish you all a Happy and relaxed Festive Season as you get ready for what 2026 will bring.

Kay King 027 3339 513

## D Forbes Fencing

All Rural Fencing

Stock Yards

Post and Rail

35 years experience

Phone Dougal on

027 2601 040

Email [dforbesfencing@gmail.com](mailto:dforbesfencing@gmail.com)

## HEYBROOK BUILDING LTD



**New builds**

**Farm Buildings**

**Roofing**

**Renovations**

**Concrete**

**Decks**

**Servicing the Mid Canterbury foothills for over 10 years, phone Thamis for all your building needs**

**022 354 6524**

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



### JPs in the Foothills Area

#### Mayfield

Pauline Hewson.03 3036 397.

Grant Early.0215 141 56

Alistair Morrison. 0276 024 927

#### Mt Somers

Robert Schikker.0211 866 107.

Anne Marie Allan.0272 843 013.

Anne Parnham. 0277 676 056.

Wendy Millichamp.027 459 1277.

#### Springburn

Robert Withers.0273 030 138.

## Ashburton Crane Hire Ltd.

*24hr Service*

**0274 192 554**

**[ashburtoncranes2015@gmail.com](mailto:ashburtoncranes2015@gmail.com)**

*"Reaching  
New Heights"*



A huge THANKYOU to our editor of the Nor'Wester. Jeremy does a great job every year with rounding up the regular contributors monthly by e-mail then making our photos, news items and advertising into a community newsletter to be proud of. He relies on everyone to report back the happenings from around our large area. Next year make it easier for him and send in articles as the more he has the more interesting the newsletter will be to read. Thankyou to our rural mail delivery people for bringing us the news to our gates or local stores. Merry Christmas to everyone and we hope Jeremy has a nice relaxing time off. From an appreciative reader.



# That's a wrap for 2025

## Hospice Mid Canterbury reflects on the year

Every year is different at Hospice Mid Canterbury (HMC) and as the year draws to a close, HMC can reflect with quiet pride on another year of locals supporting locals.

The Ashburton District has been extraordinarily generous in its support of HMC this year. Five new sponsors have come on board, making a valuable contribution to our sustainability. Many community organisations and events have also made donations, too many to itemise, but a special thank you goes to the Shear for Life committee for the huge amount raised for HMC. Community generosity, through donations of goods and shop purchases, has also ensured that the Hospice shop continues to be an important source of funding.

At the heart of what HMC does are the clients and their families, many of whom receive long term support over a number of years. With around fifty new clients this year, HMC must constantly assess and respond to the changing needs of each one. New initiatives include the Good Grief café for those managing grief and an additional exercise class with Neuro Tuesday added to Wheels Wednesday and Mens' Friday. Volunteers are fundamental to HMC and direct client support by volunteers, including visiting, transport and shopping, has steadily increased over the last five years, from 105 hours in

2020 to well over 300 hours this year. This year, our pet service support team have been particularly busy!

Community education is also an important aspect of HMC's role, and this year five education sessions were well attended. These included workshops on Advance Care planning, funerals, understanding grief and learning more about how children deal with grief. A mini-expo on HMC included a session on palliative care in Ashburton and the various organisations, both clinical and non-clinical, which can support those needing help.

The Hospice team wishes everyone a peaceful and relaxing Christmas and all the very best for 2026.

**Hospice's Kowhai House in Havelock Street will be closed**

**from midday Tuesday 23 December 2025 through to Monday 12 January 2026.**

If you or someone you care about has a life-limiting illness and would like our support, contact us on 307 8387, or 027 227 8387 or email [manager@hospicemc.nz](mailto:manager@hospicemc.nz). We welcome new referrals.



### MAYFIELD MT. SOMERS ANGLICAN PARISH

It's that time of year when people start decorating for Christmas (if you haven't already), Christmas shops are opening up around the country so people can stock up on decorations. Over the last few years there seems to have been a change, instead of stars reminiscent of those over Bethlehem the night Jesus was born, angels who carried the news of Jesus' birth, Christmas bells that have rung out tidings of good news for centuries, doves that are symbols of Jesus the Prince of Peace, there are trees, elves, reindeer, gingerbread houses, glittery baubles, even fake snow. All fun, but maybe missing the point? Because there is a point to Christmas; a big one. The starting point for Christmas is Christ, and God's unfathomably deep love for the world.

Jesus' birth is understood to have been in a stable, because the Bible says Mary laid her baby Jesus "in the animals' food trough [manger] because there was no room for them in the inn". It's a story of vulnerability, mystery and wonder. A story of God coming to be with us.

To quote my boss "This story is the heart, of Christmas. If we lose the 2000 year history of Christmas, we are left with little more than pretty things, partying, frenzy and consumerism. A birthday party without the birthday boy."

Christmas takes on a lot more meaning when you peel back the added glamour.

Everyone is welcome to join us for the Mayfield-Mt. Somers Parish Christmas Service at St. Aidan's on 21<sup>st</sup> December at 11am.

#### CHURCH SERVICES

##### St Aidan's, Mt Somers

December 7<sup>th</sup> 6pm Traditional 9 Lessons and Carols at All Saints' Methven

December 11<sup>th</sup> 4pm Pint with a Priest at Mt. Somers Tavern.

December 21<sup>st</sup> 11am Mayfield-Mt. Somers Christmas Service – carols and communion at St. Aidan's Mt. Somers (followed by shared lunch)

#### PARISH CONTACTS

Phone: 302 8254

Email: [midcanterburyanglican@gmail.com](mailto:midcanterburyanglican@gmail.com)

Web: [www.midcanterbury.org](http://www.midcanterbury.org)

Social: [facebook.com/MidCanterburyAnglican](https://facebook.com/MidCanterburyAnglican)

#### DEADLINE DATE FOR FEBRUARY ISSUE 2025

ISSUE	DEADLINE	DELIVERY
February 2026	25 January	31 January

Nor'Wester Newsletter is published by the Mt Somers District Citizens Association.

Editor: Jeremy Hunter  
8 Bruces Road,  
Mt Somers, RD1,  
Ashburton 7771  
Telephone: 03 3039 722  
Email: [graphic@netaccess.co.nz](mailto:graphic@netaccess.co.nz)



0800 432 583  
0800 GDC LTD

**Proud to be Locally Owned and Operated and  
Proud to Support our Local Community**

*"Do it Once, Do it Right"*

From a driveway to a full farm development – no job is too big or too small  
RURAL, COMMERCIAL or RESIDENTIAL we do it all!

- Bulk Shingle Supplies
  - Lime – Dairy Lanes
  - Underpasses
  - Siteworks
  - Ponds
  - Services Location (GPR)  
*Before U Dig Certified*
  - Hot mix / Chip seal
  - Drainage / Water Systems
  - Hydrovac Excavation
  - Hiab
  - Long Reach Digger
  - Dairy Shed Sitework
  - Stump / Hedge Removal
  - Mulching
  - Irrigation Installs
  - Power Design and Install
  - Rut Busting
  - Mole Plough –  
Power / Water / Fibre  
(20 mm to 125 mm)
  - All Farm Maintenance  
Requirements
- And Much More!***

GDC can manage your Project from concept to completion.  
Call one of our experienced team for an obligation free quote or to  
ask about our many other services – **0800 GDC LTD.**



Email [office@gdcgroup.nz](mailto:office@gdcgroup.nz)  
Web [www.gdc.net.nz](http://www.gdc.net.nz)





## Mt Somers & Staveley Playcentre



Christmas is just around the corner and the kids are loving playing in the summer sun!

We had a great Outdoor Play Week this month with a lot of water splashing and sand building.

Our highlight of the month was the fantastic Christmas Market. What a day!



We are so grateful to the event organisers, stallholders and all the market goers. We're already excited for next year!

We would also like to thank the very kind Santa Claus Workshop Charitable Trust who dropped of some fantastic toys for the kids.

Our last session of the year is Tuesday 16th December but we will be back on the 27th January for a new year of Playcentre fun!



# agstaff®

*Good Buggers You Can Trust*

## Job Vacancies Available Now:

- Field Staff
- Factory Workers (days, nights, w/e or weekday shifts)
- Labourers
- Truck Drivers
- Farm Assistants
- and more...

**Full-time | Part-time | Contract**

**Apply Online: [agstaff.co.nz](https://agstaff.co.nz) | Phone: 0800 247 8233**



24 HOUR ON CALL  
EMERGENCY SERVICES  
Phone: 03 693 9060

**Servicing Mayfield, Mt Somers, Hinds  
and South Canterbury**

Independent and locally owned.  
Large and small animals.  
Delivery service for all farm supplies.

Cnr Woodbury / Main North Rds, GERALDINE  
Phone: 03 693 9060  
Email: [clinic@gatewayvets.co.nz](mailto:clinic@gatewayvets.co.nz)

## STOP BIRDS Leaves, Snow & Hail from blocking up your spouting

Gum Leaf gutter guard has been proven on 1000's of homes across Australia & New Zealand for the last 12 years. **Quality** materials: BHP Colorbond steel mesh with unique patented louvre which will even keep out pine needles. Will not rust or sag with age or load. **Colour** matched to your existing roof colour. **10 Year warranty** for total peace of mind.

Call Rohan Rudd for a no-obligation  
assessment and quote today  
**03 982 8850 or 0800 486 532**

Any time, any day except Sunday  
(we all need a day off)

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



**Safer Mid Canterbury  
Hakatere Haumaru**

Together we're safer • Me uru kahikatea

The year is winding down and the silly season is ramping up with Christmas parties taking place and holiday plans coming together.

As always, take care on the roads and be aware of what other drivers are doing. Holiday time can see all sorts of driving behaviours so be careful out there.

We have had another very busy year with two road code courses completed as well as lots of driving lessons and tests passed. It's been wonderful to see so many people achieve their goals by passing different stages of the graduated license system.

We have another 21 learners, and 36 restricted / full license tests completed with great results. It's been fun catching up with past and present students over the year too.

We are very grateful to have been given Lottery Grants Board funding this year which enables us to continue offering our programme to those who need it. Thank you very much to the Lottery Grants board.

Another exciting milestone is the formation of the Mid Canterbury Rural Driver Licensing Trust which has been operating for just over a year now. We had been under the umbrella of the Mid Canterbury Rural Support Trust but the time came for us to become our own entity. We have a new logo, and a new board who have been overseeing the programme since June last year. It's great to have their support and we look forward to what the new year brings for us and our driving programme.

Have a wonderful Christmas and New Year and we'll see you in 2026.

If you would like to be part of this amazing programme, as a student, driving mentor or to volunteer in other ways please contact Wendy Hewitt on 027 611 3301 or [wendy.hewitt@safer.org.nz](mailto:wendy.hewitt@safer.org.nz)

We are also on Facebook, just search for the Mid Canterbury Rural Driver Licensing Scheme.

The Mid Canterbury Rural Driver Licensing Scheme is a partnership with the Mid Canterbury Rural Support Trust and is proudly sponsored by NZTA Waka Kotahi, Lottery Grants Board, Advance Ashburton Community Foundation, Ashburton District Council, The Lion Foundation, COGs and Community Trust Mid & South Canterbury.

Wendy Hewitt

Rural Licensing Co-Ordinator

Safer Mid Canterbury

255 Moore Street, Ashburton 7700

Ph: 027 611 3301

[wendy.hewitt@safer.org.nz](mailto:wendy.hewitt@safer.org.nz)

Office hours - Monday to Friday

8.30 am to 4.30 pm



*Bob & Lesi ready to go driving.*



**Rifleman Contracting Ltd  
Farms Wanted! !**

**Providing a Free Service  
from Mayfield to Methven**

**Operations carried out by an  
experience operator and farmer**

Referances available

I shoot and collect all game species

**Hares  
Rabbits  
Possum  
Deer  
Pigs**

**Text or Call Laurie Aitken  
027 314 3491  
[riflemannz@gmail.com](mailto:riflemannz@gmail.com)**



## Walk Waihi Gorge



Photos supplied by Sanae Hydes



**Joseph Builders Ltd**  
*Canterbury*

new builds - renovations  
restorations - design  
rural - residential  
commercial - compliance



03 303 9830 0800 500 564  
josephbuilders@xtra.co.nz



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

## Fert Solutions

Fertiliser  
Spreading  
Specialists

- Liquid
- Granule
- Lime




**RICKY TAYLOR**  
027 648 6856  
[ricky@fertsolutions.co.nz](mailto:ricky@fertsolutions.co.nz)  
[www.fertsolutions.co.nz](http://www.fertsolutions.co.nz)

## PEA STRAW & MUSHROOM COMPOST

### Pea Straw

Conventional squares - \$7.50 per bale  
Available in 21 bale bundles only

Medium squares - \$50.00 per bale

*Pick up or delivery available - please enquire*

### Mushroom Compost

\$75.00 per m<sup>3</sup> (1 bucket)

Bag your own \$7.50 per 25kg bag

Truck load \$750 (13T/ 24m<sup>3</sup>)

All prices exclude GST

**Contact James Carr to order:**

Phone: 027 202 6110

Email: [james.carr@stradbrookfarms.co.nz](mailto:james.carr@stradbrookfarms.co.nz)



# Love Agricultural Contracting



## CULTIVATION

- Cultivation
- Reversible ploughing
- Sumo trio
- Heva discs & rollers
- 8.5m Sunflower cultivator
- 6m leveller
- 6m Allen Drill, direct & conventional, seed & fert
- 6m Vaderstad Tempo fodder beet & Maize drill, fert
- 6m Horsch Pronto DC drill - seed & insecticide boxes for cultivated ground.

## FORAGE HARVESTING

Complete forage harvesting service. Mow, rake, chop, cart, stack & weighbridge

## MAIZE

Talk to us about buying/selling maize

## WINDROWING

MacDon tractor units  
Variety of Mower, Auger & Draper fronts

## BALING

- 4x3, 3x3 square bales
- Round bales
- Mow, mow-condition
- Tedder, rake, bale, tube & individually wrap & cart

## STRAW & BALEAGE SUPPLY

Contact us for Customised Deals for straw delivered at harvest time so you can get the best quality straw at very competitive prices

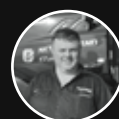


email [office@loveag.nz](mailto:office@loveag.nz)



**Dan Collins**

Baling & Silage  
Ph **021 069 9926**



**Robert Love**

Cultivation, Windrowing & Feed Trading  
Ph **027 304 8837**



## Walk Awa Awa Rata Reserve and Scott's Saddle



Photos supplied by Sanae Hydes



📍 445 WEST ST, ASHBURTON ☎ 03 307 4846  
rebecca@ecpashburton.co.nz

Now  
Locally  
owned

- Full service Workshop
- On-Farm Servicing
- Free on-farm Demos



**can-am**

**CFMOTO**

**UBCO**  
ELECTRIC UTILITY VEHICLES

**SHERCO**

# JACKO

CONTRACTING & CONSULTING LTD



- Tracks & Lanes
- Dairy Lane Capping
- Tree Removal
- Logging/Forestry Work
- Farm Conversions
- Water Storage
- Dairy Shed Foundations
- Underpasses
- Irrigation Mainline Installation
- Project Management
- Commercial/Domestic Building Foundations
- Driveways

**Free Quotes and Great Advice. Call Today!**  
**0275 099 710**

info@jackocontracting.co.nz

Find us on Facebook



## Book of the Month – Mt Somers Library

Title: 'The Brilliance of Birds – A New Zealand Birdventure'

Author: Skye Wishart and Edin Whitehead

Publication year: 2019

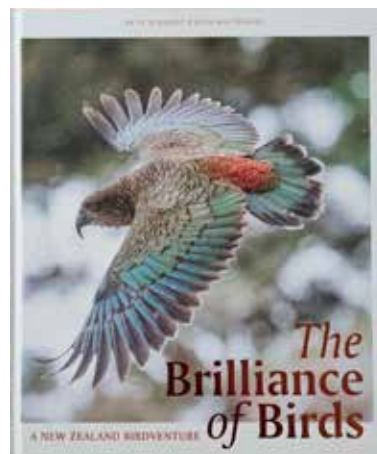
A review by Elles Smallegoor

A few years ago journalist and science writer Skye Wishart and seabird scientist and photographer Edin Whitehead joined forces to compile a 384-page reference work of New Zealand birds that would be informed by academic research but speak to a wide audience. Organised alphabetically, starting with the Australasian crested grebe and finishing with the wrybill, the book discusses native, endemic and introduced species in short, (mostly) 6-page chapters, and is meant to inform as well as celebrate. And it surely does – what a treasure of knowledge it contains and what a joy to read. Whitehead's superb photographs really bring home the title of the work: 'The Brilliance of Birds'. With their book, the authors make clear that New Zealand and birds go together and must continue to do so: "The absence of these creatures, perfectly evolved in their weird and wonderful ways to occupy various roles in the ecosystem, would make New Zealand less charming, captivating and complete, and certainly less melodious" (p. 6).

Each chapter begins with a page offering the popular, te reo and Latin name, its conservation status and its status as a species (endemic, native or introduced). At the top of the page, the reader can spot a coloured block with the word Freshwater, Coastal & Oceanic, Forest, Alpine & High Country, Open Country, Garden, or Scrubland, offering more guidance on where the bird can be found. Most enjoyable are Wishart and Whitehead's personal descriptions underneath the popular name, that offer an insight into the characteristics of each bird. The Australian magpie, for instance, has as its subtitle: "Quardle-oodle-ardling dive bomber with an overblown reputation" (p. 28); the forest-dwelling stitchbird is "at home in the swinging sixties" (referring to their

"promiscuity and infidelity") (p. 313); the grey warbler is a "tiny, long-suffering foster parent with the sweetest song" (referring to the fact that the cuckoo fools the warbler into raising its chicks) (p. 115). The actual writing within the chapters contain multitudes of well-researched, little-known facts, drawing on nineteenth-century explorer literature, traditional Maori culture and modern-day scientific publications, ensuring readers learn new things about birds they likely think they know fully.

While the book makes clear that humans are the most destructive to bird life, both in the past and the present, it also emphasises that the natural environment of the birds can at times be damaging as well. In a chapter on the black swan, for example, they write: "There used to be more black swans in New Zealand – about 100,000, with 70,000 on Lake Ellesmere alone – until the Wahine storm of 1968 dampened the population to less than 10,000 by annihilating the beds of aquatic plants" (p. 41). While acknowledging and lamenting damages done, the authors are just as keen to discuss the success of conservation projects and the enormous potential that lies ahead. Wishart and Whitehead's passion for New Zealand birdlife oozes off every page and is certainly contagious. After reading this book, I looked more lovingly at our invader-tribe of pukekos and examined more closely the size of their red headshields. I felt a bit safer around our local gang of magpies. And I listened with joy while awake in bed, recognising that that "quee" (p. 182) was indeed the morepork we saw around our house a year ago. It's still here!



## New Zealand Dairy Careers

### Need Staff For Your Farm?

Talk to Kathryn today!

We have a pool of candidates including career changers, trainees, experienced dairy assistants, herd managers etc. from New Zealand and overseas

Call: 021 502 646

Visit: [www.nzdairycareers.co.nz](http://www.nzdairycareers.co.nz)

Email: [kathryn.haddow@nzdairycareers.co.nz](mailto:kathryn.haddow@nzdairycareers.co.nz)





**MAYFIELD  
SPRAYING LTD**

**FAMILY OWNED & OPERATED**



For all your agricultural spraying and liquid fertiliser needs with competitive rates phone Tony today.

027 248 7045 mayfieldspraying@gmail.com

## Walk Mt Sunday and Mt Potts



Photos supplied by Sanae Hydes



Celebrate Christmas with the  
Mid Canterbury Choir  
Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December  
at 12 noon and 6.00pm  
(note new evening time)

Baring Square Church, Ashburton  
Entry \$5 plus a Christmas treat gift of non-  
perishable food for the Salvation Army  
Foodbank

*Carol Gunn*  
027 287 2468

## Mt Somers Excavation Ltd



- GENERAL FARM MAINTENANCE
- ALKATHENE PIPE LAYING
- IRRIGATION MAINLINE TRENCHING
- 8, 14 & 20 TONNE DIGGERS
- TIP TRUCK & TRAILER
- GRADER
- SCREEN SHINGLE SUPPLIES
- TREE REMOVAL

Alistair Parris Owner / Operator - 20 Hinds Gorge Rd RD 8 Ashburton 7778  
Ph: 027 434 7278 | E: mtsomersexcavation@xtra.co.nz | www.mtsomersexcavation.co.nz



# Cross Contracting Ltd

Experienced operators with over  
30 years of local knowledge



**For all your digging requirements**

Operating 3 x 14 tonne wheeled diggers in the local area

- Tip trucks for hire
- Stock water race cleaning
- Irrigation race cleaning
- Disposal pits
- Soak holes
- Irrigation mainline trenching
- Stock yard cleaning
- Shingle screening bucket
- General yard tidy up
- Treeline & stump removal
- Root raking
- Pipeline installation & repairs
- Cow lane cleaning
- Vibrating roller & plate compactor for hire
- 5 & 20 tonne diggers & grader available on request
- Shingle supplies – AP20 – AP40 – screened pit run – rocks
- On farm shingling for laneways, stockyards, water troughs

Phone Ron 021 347 958

Email: [cross.contracting@xtra.co.nz](mailto:cross.contracting@xtra.co.nz)

## Looking Back on a Year of Growth and Community at Mayfield School

As the school year draws to a close, Mayfield school are celebrating the achievements, milestones, and memorable moments that have marked 2025. I am filled with pride and gratitude for all that our students, staff, and community have achieved together at Mayfield School.

Our tamariki have engaged enthusiastically in literacy, numeracy, and inquiry based learning, showing curiosity, creativity, and resilience. Many students have participated in sports, cultural activities, and environmental projects, building skills both inside and outside the classroom.

Community support has been another highlight. Parents, caregivers, and local organisations have continued to play a vital role in school life, volunteering, attending events, and contributing to projects that enrich the experiences of students.

Our school farm has just drilled some kale and would like to acknowledge the following businesses for their sponsorship - James & Anna McCormick - Manaton Farms, McLeod Cultivation, Matt & Miranda Sinton Dairy – discing, Ricky & Rebecca Taylor - Fert Solutions – rolling, Balance – fertiliser, Ravensdown – fertiliser, B R Jones – lime, Barenbrug NZ – seed, Carrfields - Seed and agronomy, Mayfield Spraying, Quigley Contracting, Mayfield Transport and Victory Lime.

A special highlight this term has been our EOTC (Education Outside the Classroom) experiences. Our Year 5's recently experienced a Noho Marae overnight stay and while our year 6-8 students travel to Stewart Island next week our Junior Team of Years 0-4 will be going to Timaru for their inquiry celebration of learning.

Ngā mihi,

Emma Hewett

Tumuaki/Principal, Mayfield School

**We will be in the area soon and are taking bookings now.**

**Contact Rob Palmer**  
**Telephone 027 217 5577**





## A COMMENT:

Just last week I visited my old neighbour Barry Kerr. Barry now resides in a recently built block of units at Rose Bank home on Walnut Avenue, Ashburton. The unit he occupies is what I would describe as a superior unit. There is a separate bedroom which Barry describes as large, a large lounge with a kitchen area at one end, a large tv screen and a large window with a garden view. The staff deliver morning and afternoon tea to his unit, and he has two meals a day supplied, Barry prefers to go to the dining room rather than delivered to his room, as he needs to use his legs occasionally. From his rooms he turns left for the Dining area or right to a common lounge which looks out onto Walnut Avenue. The rooms are kept at 22° summer and winter Barry tells me the temperature always stays the same. As he sat in his laza-boy chair with bare feet he looked very comfortable.

He reminisces on the past mentioning one of the great advantages of this new home is that he has no need of fire-wood, Last winter it cost him \$3000 for wood, he had bought a load of logs and was unable to use the chainsaw himself so paid for the logs to be cut up, it was a big bill for his winter requirements. Although he hadn't farmed for several years, the land had been leased out to Lockie and used as a runoff to his dairy farm. But Barry continued to live in the family home at Mt Somers on the Inland Route, the house was cold in winter, and Barry is happy not to be spending another winter there and looks forward to the comfort of his new home, He proudly said "I own this I've paid over three hundred thousand dollars for it and it is mine" he tells me in a proud manner.

I assured him I thought he had made a very good choice, Barry responds "It was my sister Joy that got me here, Joy decided this would be the place for me." I thought it good to see a man called Barry settled in so comfortably after a lifetime at Mt Somers.

Now in his 80<sup>th</sup> year it was without doubt time for Barry to make a change: His education took place at the Mt Somers school followed by a time at Ashburton Technical College. His father Jim had acquired farmland up the Gorge Road which is a dairy farm today. Later he purchased more land including the land which Barry has farmed for many years. The adjoining area on Gorge Road was Kerr land also but sold some years ago. Barry is completely out of it now his house and land recently sold to Lockie Cameron the lessor of the past few years.

Barry's father Jimmy arrived in New Zealand when he was just nine years

## Annual Staveley Carol Service

Please note this service is arranged to

Acknowledge and Remember

Annette (Syme)

for her huge dedication and service to the  
Mayfield Parish of which Staveley was part.

Time and Place 7.00pm

Sunday 14th of December

At The Staveley Church

Choir Practice Monday 8th December at 7.00pm

of age, in the company of his parents. Tom Kerr and wife, they migrated from Muirk an area between Glasgow and Edenborough. They arrived in Mt Somers around or near 1929 Jim was just nine years old at the time. They lived in the township near the store, Tom, Barry's grandfather was a coal miner and arrived here to work in the Mt Somers coal mine. In time the young Jim Kerr worked at a variety of trades coal mining, farming, lime-works and I understand timber milling. That was before taking up land and becoming a farmer in his own right. Jim well and truly made his mark on Mt Somers before retiring to Ashburton.

Barry has been a true stalwart of Mt Somers having resided in or near the town for seventy-six years. Seventy-two of those years working and running the farm. Serving for fifty years as a member of the Fire brigade with twenty-five of those years as Chief Fire Officer. He also served fifty years on the Reserve Board much of the time as Secretary / Treasurer.

In retirement Barry is a free spirit, he has his car and his drivers license, the car is kept on Walnut Av he is free to come and go which is good. We can but wish Barry a long and free retirement his home is unit 19S Rose-Bank Rest Home. He welcomes visitors and enjoys company. We can but wish Barry health and happiness in his new home.

Cheers Denis

**PGG Wrightson Real Estate**

## JEFF DONALDSON

Your local rural and lifestyle sales consultant

Looking to buy, sell, or invest in real estate in 2025?

Forward planning is key to maximizing your properties value. Partner with an agent who puts your best interests front and centre.

**Jeff Donaldson - specializing in lifestyle and rural properties.**

Contact Jeff today for hands on guidance with every step of your real estate journey.

**CALL TODAY**

**JEFF DONALDSON**  
M 027 265 1290  
E jeff.donaldson@pggwrightson.co.nz

**pggwre.co.nz**

PGG Wrightson Real Estate Limited, licensed under the REAA 2008.



## Methven Playcentre

With summer finally arriving, our tamariki have been soaking up every moment - quite literally! Water play has taken centre stage, with buckets, scoops, funnels and plenty of splashy fun keeping everyone busy. It's been wonderful watching the children experiment, problem-solve and work together as they cool off in the sunshine. Summer really brings out the magic of Playcentre play.

After our recent AGM, we're delighted to welcome Sarah Cudmore as our new Playcentre President. A huge thank you to everyone who has supported the centre this year - it truly takes a village, and we're lucky to have such a dedicated and caring one. We're excited for the year ahead and the energy and ideas Sarah will bring to her new role.

Our Playcentre sessions run Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:15am to 12:15pm. We love meeting new families, so if you're curious about Playcentre or looking for a welcoming space for you and your tamariki, feel free to come along and join in the fun.

Our final session for the year will be 17 December, and we're looking forward to finishing the term with plenty more play, connection and sunshine.



## JOIN US FOR Ruralco Christmas Shopping Day

**THURSDAY 4**  
DECEMBER 2025

**Enjoy one-day-only deals & discounts.**

Every Ruralco Card purchase puts you in the draw to win a **\$500 New World voucher**.

[RURALCO.CO.NZ/CHRISTMASDAY](http://RURALCO.CO.NZ/CHRISTMASDAY)

ASHBURTON / METHVEN / RAKAIA



# MAYFIELD-MT. SOMERS CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December: 11am, St. Aidan's Church, 123 Hoods Rd.  
Carols and Communion, shared lunch to follow.

We invite everyone to join us  
for Christmas.



[midcanterbury.org](http://midcanterbury.org)