Ophir Info

May 2024

The Tatler

Val Butcher (Motor Mouth)

I'm back! and thank you Christine, I didn't really go away. My computer has a grudge against me and waited till I had finished my write up before throwing a wobbly and making it all go away. I got my revenge this month and wrote everything by hand first just to show it that nobody or thing is indispensable, and it had better not do it again. Then I drank a gin.

I would like to know why Ken had two bathtubs to give away and then mentioned they were surplus to his needs. How many bathtubs does he need and what's he need them for. The mind boggles Ken but I will try not to let my imagination run wild. Then I had another gin while I thought about it.

The sewing classes in the hall this month appeared to be very popular. I counted 12 cars. There was a big show of enthusiasm from those exiting afterwards. I hope they carry on as making and altering our own clothes is a satisfying way towards helping our planet and acquiring a worthwhile skill as well.

I missed the sushi night at Blacks Hotel and I could kick myself for doing so, I love Japanese food. Just a little something you may not know but the word Jandal is a fusion of Japanese and sandal, but I suggest you wear them not eat them.

Keep Warm.

Editor's Note

I love how an article in the Ophir Info gets people sending in more information. In regard to it being the 30 year anniversary of our potato dig and auction, Irene Leask sent me this:

"Hi Christine,
I found a note yesterday in my envelope of "stuff" that needs sorting about our 30 year anniversary of the potato dig. In 1994 the spud auction raised $165.30 and the raffle $180.00. They then sold seed spuds to more people, and it has grown from there."

Given that $1 in 1994 had the buying power in today's dollar of $2.03 those figures would be $335.56 and $365.40 respectively. A pretty good effort.

Applying the same math, the cost of buying your seed potatoes has not increased over the years.

Ophir Welfare Committee AGM

OWC

3 pm on Sunday 19th May, 2024

Ophir Peace Memorial Hall

If you have items that you would like to add to the agenda, wish to register your apology, or you are unable to attend the meeting and would like to make any nominations please email the secretary:

Heather McFadgen
heather.mcfadgen@pggwrightson.co.nz.

Note: Nominations must be received at least 3 days prior to the meeting. If the nominee is not going to be present at the AGM there must be an indication on the emailed nomination that they have agreed to be nominated.

Pitches Store

Colleen and David Hurd

PITCHES STORE
OPHIR, CENTRAL OTAGO NZ
ACCOMMODATION | FOOD

Mother's Day:

Mother's Day Lunch

12 May from 12 noon.

2 courses $55.00pp

Glass of Bubbles for Mum

A Sirloin of Roast Beef, Sweet onion puree, Fondant Potatoes, Torched Broccoli and a Whisky and Peppercorn Sauce

Or

House-made Gnocchi with High Country Salmon with Tomato and Vodka Velouté

Followed by a Marble Chocolate Cheesecake

Bookings essential

End of Season Dinner:

2nd June 6pm

3 Courses $80pp

Chef's Choice

Bookings Essential

Final Day: Monday 3rd June closing at 3pm.

Winter is Coming

A heads up to our "cribbies". Winter is on its way. Time to ensure that your property is ready, water turned off and drained, anything that is in your yard that could be damaged by strong winds is secured or in the shed, you have some rodent traps set or bait laid (those little buggers can do a lot of damage and are extremely cunning at finding their way into the house) and maybe check your down pipes and gutters now that a lot of the leaves are down to ensure they have not become blocked with risk of overflowing into the roof space/wall.

Always good to have a key with a neighbour if you are not going to be in Ophir over the winter for the (hopefully) unlikely event where emergency entry is required.

And watch out for sunstrike if you are driving into Ophir in the evening.

May Gig: Ophir Peace Memorial Hall

7pm Friday 17 May
Tickets $25
from undertheradar.co.nz
or Ophir Post Office

Tess Liautaud and her band will embark on a massive 12-date nationwide tour in celebration of new single 'Gold Digger'

The recipe for any country hit worth its weight is a catchy hook and a healthy measure of wry wit, served up with swagger and aplomb.

Liautaud wrote Gold Digger in Otago while imagining a song that John Prine might sing, and though the result is uniquely her own, there is a throughline; honest truths cloaked in humorous word play and a simple melody. After releasing her debut album in 2022, Gold Digger is

bursting with crunchy guitars and that Americana feel-good delivery, a taste of things to come.
The song is paired with a playful, old-timey music video filmed in the wilds of Arthur's Pass and Otira. Tess and her band will celebrate its release with a tour of Aotearoa

Tess Liautaud

The music of Franco-American singer-songwriter Tess Liautaud cannot be easily defined. It hangs in the balance of her voice, warm like honey; it carries a depth of raw emotion, delivered with melodic grace and country soul.

Her songs are easy listening, in that Jackson Browne, dreaming of Laurel Canyon, Americana sort of way, so it would make some kind of sense that she's found a home on the east side of Ōtautahi, among the folk singers and the rock'n'rollers.

Together with her band (**Adam Hattaway**, **Frankie Daly**, **Elmore Jones** and **Michael Kime**) Liautaud creates a sound steeped in classic Wilco 'esque' guitar twang, good old honky tonk piano and big organ washes. This is music that will grow roots in your heart and lift you up, the way it is supposed to.

Tess cut her teeth in the Paris music scene for the better part of a decade, honing her live performances and endearing herself to the hearts of audiences and fellow musicians alike. She has toured in Ireland and places beyond and eventually curiosity led her to Aotearoa in 2019.

Burgeoning friendships and collaborations swayed her to stay and now two albums and five years deep she has become an endeared part of our musical landscape. As well as leading her own band Tess sings and plays with **Adam Hattaway and The Haunters** and **The Eastern**.

"It is warm and giving, open and true, devoid of pretension, gentle and full of heart, It sounds beautiful and everything is in its right place . A special balm for jolting times."- Adam McGrath

And now Tess has new music in the pipeline, these recordings mark an expansion in her songwriting and a move toward a bigger band sound.

Exercise Classes: Ophir Peace Memorial Hall

The Weather

Sam Leask

100 Years of Ophir Weather Recording

This month marks a big milestone in the Ophir weather observation station as it is exactly 100 years since the Reverend Alexander Don started recording rainfall records for the Met service. (73.7 mls)

Mr Don was always very interested in the climate and of course the weather was very important to him as he trekked on foot across the goldfields visiting the Chinese miners in his job as missionary for the Presbyterian Church.

He went on in 1930 to persuade the Met service to set up a regulation weather screen in Ophir where he took the daily weather readings. This

was set up in a special plot of land behind his home "the Bungalow".

He took the daily readings there until his sudden death on the train to Dunedin in 1934.

Mr and Mrs Bill and Margaret Drake took over the job of observing the weather in a plot set up behind "Kintail House". The Drakes continued taking the recordings for nearly forty years a magnificent effort.

The screen was shifted to the Blacks Hotel in 1972. Publicans Brida and Kevin Dowling took over the weather station operations until they retired into the Ophir township. The "job "now passed into the hands of the new publicans Ralph and Jill Henderson in1977. Ralph and Jill continued with the observations until the death of Jill in 1985. Unfortunately Ralph found the job too much for him as he was now managing the hotel on his own.

The recordings stopped and the Met Service made no attempt to find another recorder and thought the observations at the Auroral Station in Lauder would be sufficient.

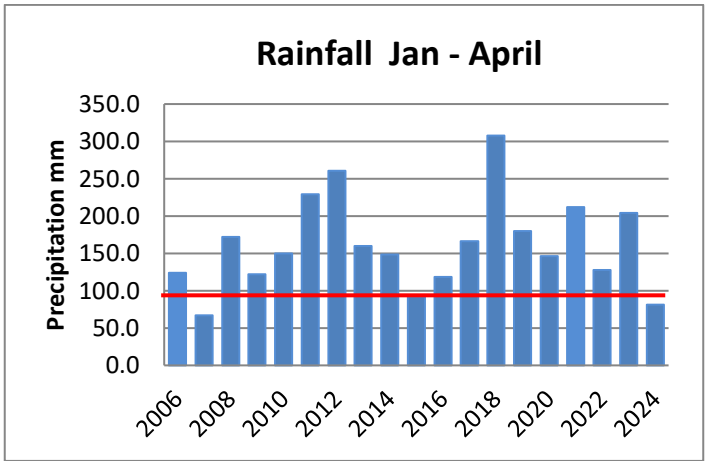
William Cockerill came to Ophir in the early 1990's, when he and Suzanne bought the Blacks Homestead. William was a keen weather observer and he set up with the help of Niwa a Met Service screen on his property in Ophir. He was of course unable to man it daily and readings were taken and recorded on each of his visits. In 1995 the Blacks Homestead weather screen recorded the **-21.6°C** temperature**,** **a New Zealand record!!**

This renewed interest in the Ophir recording station and William contacted Niwa and suggested that the daily Ophir weather observations should be reinstated. He was told if he could find an observer, they would set up a screen and rain gauge. The year was 1996 and the job was offered to me (Sam Leask) and of course I jumped at the chance as I was already recording the rainfall figures to help us with our job as farmers.

So here we are 100 years down the track still recording what the weather has produced. Our climate here has certainly produced some big extremes of temperatures and rainfall and having a weather station has certainly kept Ophir on the map.

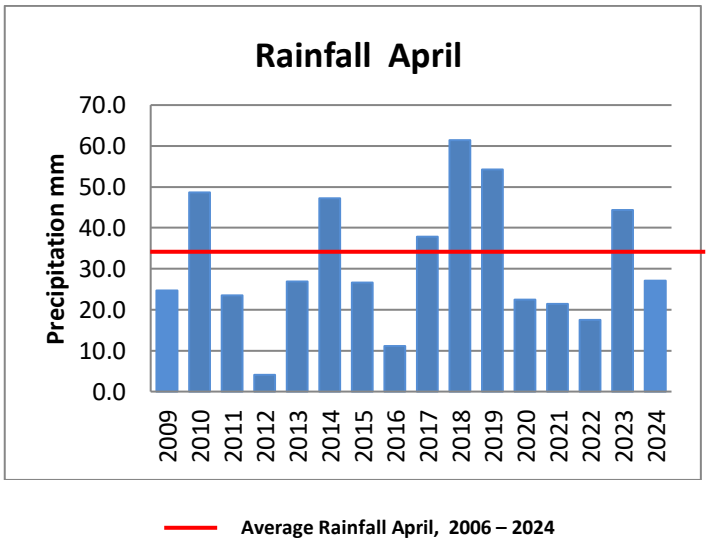
And now the weather for April.

This has been the driest four month start to the year for 17 years.



Rainfall has been below average every month so far this year. While the established lucerne with deep roots is growing the more recent plantings are still lagging behind and there will not be much more pasture growth until spring.

The average daytime temperature was the same as for this time last year, average nighttime temperature was 1°C colder.

Data for April 2024:

Maximum Temp:	24.6°C	Wednesday 10th
Minimum Temp:	-4.8°C	Tuesday 23rd
Rain/Precipitation:	27.1mm