

S U M M E R 2 0 2 6

the

Bench Press

Range Community Gym & Fitness Centre (Mapleton), Inc.

January 2026



Gym Management Committee

Chaffey Backhouse -
President

Paul Moriarty - Vice
President

Jeff Tasker - Treasurer

Marisa Horton - Secretary

Members:

Andrea Campbell

Lyndall Hulme

Lisa Forest

Russel Mackenzie

Helen Church

Carolyn Hansen

Rob McArthur

The committee meets on the first Monday of every month. If you have any suggestions or an item you would like the committee to discuss, please reach out!

mapletongym@gmail.com

Welcome Back & Happy 2026!

Welcome back to the gym and to a brand-new year! We hope you had a relaxing and enjoyable Christmas and New Year break and are feeling refreshed, recharged, and ready to get moving again. January is always a great time to reset routines, refocus on wellbeing, and set some fresh fitness goals for the year ahead. Whether you're returning to build strength, improve your fitness, boost your energy, or simply get back into a consistent routine, remember that every session counts and small steps add up over time. There's no pressure to be perfect – just to start, stay steady, and keep showing up. Our gym is here to support you, motivate you, and be a welcoming space for everyone as we step into 2026 together.

Looking back, 2025 was a fantastic year for our gym community. The implementation of GymMaster was a major milestone that has made managing memberships and access smoother for everyone. Our fundraising efforts were also a highlight, with the Christmas Raffle, Light the Lights event, and the ever-popular Bunnings Sausage Sizzles raising valuable funds to support ongoing improvements and keep the gym running strong. None of this would have been possible without the incredible work of our committee members and fundraising volunteers who generously gave their time and energy throughout the year. Their dedication behind the scenes, along with the support of our members, is what makes this gym such a special part of our community. Thank you for being part of it – we're excited to see what we can achieve together in 2026!



In Memoriam – Elizabeth Rommel



We are deeply saddened to share the passing of Elizabeth Rommel, who died on 19 November 2025 at the age of 87. Liz was an integral part of our gym community and one of the original driving forces behind its establishment 25 years ago.

From the very beginning, she gave her time generously and never stopped. Over the years, she volunteered countless hours fundraising to help keep the gym open, promoting its work in the community, and even quietly taking care of the day-to-day tasks like cleaning. No job was ever too small if it meant supporting the gym.

Liz also served on the management committee for many years, where she was a passionate advocate for the gym as more than just a place to exercise. She believed deeply in its role as a hub for community health and wellbeing and worked hard to ensure it remained welcoming and accessible to all.

Those who knew Liz will remember her attention to detail, fundraising creativity, and her warm, welcoming nature. She had a truly community-spirited heart and a way of making people feel comfortable and included from the moment they walked through the door.

Our thoughts are with Lou, Andrea, Michelle and family at this difficult time.

Liz's legacy lives on in the very fabric of our gym. Her dedication, care and belief in the power of community have helped shape the place we know today, and she will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her.



In Memoriam – Ray Price

Died 24 November 2025, aged 75 years

Ray was a long-time and much-loved member of our gym community. Over the years, he generously gave his time to support fundraising efforts and was always ready to help with any plumbing job that needed attention.

With his bright spirit and cheerful nature, Ray brought warmth and kindness to everyone around him and will be deeply missed by the many friends he made here.

A true community man, Ray served on the Gym committee for several years and played an important role in the expansion of the Gym into what it is today. A likeable character who enjoyed a tinnie or two, he was great company and a pleasure to work with. Nothing was ever too much trouble for him.

Our heartfelt condolences go to Fiona and Ray's family at this difficult time.

Words from the President – Chaffey Backhouse

Our gym is flourishing. There's hardly a day that goes by without meeting new members – today I met four and just missed another! Please take a moment to introduce yourself, as our greatest strength is the friendships we build here.

Annette and Peter Maidens have now settled into their new home at Palmwoods. It was wonderful to see their gym mates' step in and make the move so much easier.

The new machines are already being very well received. It's great to see so many members making the most of them and adding fresh energy to their workouts 🏆

Well done to Paul and Tina – the way you do things is simply amazing.



Annual Access Fee Due Now!



A reminder to all members that the Annual Access Fee of \$50 is now due.

This fee covers your insurance and access to the gym for the year ahead.

Please arrange payment at your earliest convenience to ensure uninterrupted access to the facility.

Thank you for your continued support of our gym community.

Air Conditioning Use in the Gym

For everyone's comfort and to keep our systems running smoothly, please do not operate the air-conditioning controls. If the temperature feels too warm or too cool during your session, have a quick chat with one of our trainers and they'll happily adjust things as needed.

Air conditioning can help maintain a comfortable training environment, especially on very hot or humid days, but it's not always the best option to have it running constantly. Fresh airflow, gradual body warm-up, and natural ventilation can often create a better space for movement and breathing during workouts. Using the system thoughtfully also helps reduce energy use and wear on the equipment, keeping the gym environment pleasant and sustainable for everyone.



Farewell to Annette and Peter Maidens

After more than two decades of friendship, service, laughter, and unwavering support, we say a heartfelt farewell to Annette and Peter Maidens as they head off the mountain for their next chapter.

Annette and Peter joined our gym community back in 2002 and, from the very beginning, threw themselves into club life with a generosity that helped shape the welcoming culture we enjoy today.

Peter's contribution to the club has been formally recognised, most notably with his Life Membership awarded in 2022. Over the years, he served as President for a number of terms, guiding the club with steady leadership, good humour, and a genuine care for both the people and the future of the gym.

Behind the scenes (and often out front as well!), Annette and Peter have been central to so much of what brings our community together. From organising and supporting fundraising efforts, to hosting morning teas, breakfasts, and social events, they have helped create the connections and camaraderie that make our club far more than just a place to exercise.

Their contribution hasn't just been measured in hours volunteered, but in the warmth, kindness, and sense of belonging they've helped foster for so many members over the years.

While we are very sad to see them leave the mountain, we're comforted by the knowledge that this is not a goodbye. We fully expect to see Annette and Peter back for regular visits – and, no doubt, still lending a hand and sharing a cuppa when they do.

On behalf of the entire club, thank you Annette and Peter for everything you have given. You will be greatly missed!



Thank You to Our Bunnings Sausage Sizzle Legends!

A big shout-out to everyone who gave their time and energy at our Bunnings Sausage Sizzle on **Friday, 30 January**. From manning the BBQ and serving customers to handling the cash, setting up, packing down, and keeping supplies flowing — it was a true team effort from start to finish.

Thanks to your hard work (and plenty of hungry shoppers!), we cooked through more than 45kg of sausages, 15kg of onions, and served over 120 drinks across the day.

Most importantly, your teamwork and enthusiasm helped us raise over \$1,400 to support our club's projects and activities. We couldn't have done it without you. Thank you for showing up, pitching in, and bringing such fantastic community spirit!

"Volunteering builds stronger communities"



Christmas Raffle a Huge Success!

A big thank you to everyone who supported our Christmas Raffle this year. Thanks to the incredible generosity of our members and supporters, the raffle raised a fantastic amount for the club and will make a real difference to what we can achieve in the coming year.

Congratulations to **John Isles**, one of our gym members, who was the lucky winner of the main raffle prize!

A special mention also goes to Paul for running his own raffle alongside the main draw and helping boost the overall funds raised.

We truly appreciate everyone who bought tickets, donated prizes, and helped spread the word. Your support is what makes our club community so special.



Introducing GymMaster Member Portal

Our member management system has an associated Member Portal that can be accessed online or via the GymMaster App. Setting up all functions in the Portal is a work in progress but many of the functions are now available. If you are interested in this feature, use the following link:

<https://mapletongym.gymmasteronline.com/portal/login>

You will need to create an account by selecting the 'Sign Up' button. Download the App which is available for iOS and Android devices.

Some of the features of the Portal that members can use are:

1. Update/check your details (address, email, phone, etc.)
2. View your membership details
3. Pay membership fees and other outstanding charges
4. Renew your membership
5. Place a 'hold' on your membership
6. View visit history
7. Record your visits to the gym (instead of using the key fob)
8. Follow and record your trainer recommended exercise program (coming soon)
9. Book into 'SSS Classes'

We encourage use of the Portal which will help reduce administration workload currently done by Paul and Tina. If you have any questions regarding the App, please email mapletongym@gmail.com.

Staying Connected with GymMaster

As you are all aware, our gym now uses GymMaster as its management system. In the past, we've sent newsletters and updates through Gmail, but GymMaster also has the ability to email members directly.

The management committee would love to make better use of this feature so we can keep everyone informed more efficiently.

To help us do this, please take a moment to check that the **email address we have on file for you is correct**.

You can check your details by:

- Logging into the **Member Portal**
- Checking via the **GymMaster App**
- Or asking Tina or Paul to confirm your details for you



Thank you for helping us stay in touch!

Fitness: Getting Started

Starting (or restarting) your fitness journey doesn't need to be complicated. The key is to keep it simple, consistent, and achievable. Whether you're brand new to exercise or returning after a break, the best results come from building small habits you can stick with. Three of the most effective foundations for improving your health and fitness are walking regularly, incorporating weight training, and paying attention to your protein intake.

Walking is one of the easiest and most underrated forms of exercise. It requires no equipment, can be done almost anywhere, and is gentle on the joints while still delivering great cardiovascular benefits. A brisk 30-minute walk most days of the week can improve heart health, boost mood, and increase overall energy levels. It's also a great way to build a routine without feeling overwhelmed. Start with a comfortable pace and distance and gradually increase as your fitness improves.

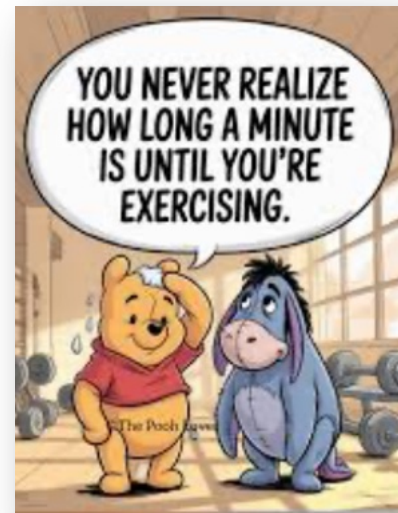
Weight training is important for everyone, not just those looking to "bulk up." Strength training helps build and maintain muscle, supports bone density, improves posture, and boosts metabolism. It can be as simple as using bodyweight exercises like squats, lunges, and push-ups, or using the equipment available in the gym. Aim for two to three sessions per week, focusing on all major muscle groups. Remember, good technique is more important than heavy weights, especially when you're starting out.

Protein plays a vital role in helping your body recover and build muscle after exercise. Including a good source of protein in each meal – such as lean meats, eggs, dairy, legumes, nuts, or protein shakes – can support your training and keep you feeling fuller for longer. Staying hydrated and eating balanced meals alongside your exercise routine will help you feel your best and see steady progress.

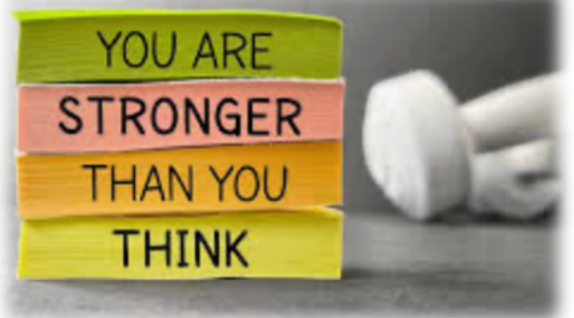
Getting started is often the hardest part, but by focusing on these simple elements, you'll create a strong foundation for long-term health and fitness.

Lost Property at the Gym

Just a friendly reminder to check the lost property box next time you're at the gym! Items like glasses, umbrellas, clothing, towels, and water bottles accumulate. If you think you may have left something behind, please take a moment to look. Any unclaimed items will be donated or discarded at the end of the month.



*"Start small, grow strong
– slow and steady wins
the fitness journey!"*



Proud to Be Part of Mapleton’s Christmas Magic

The festive spirit was well and truly alive in Mapleton at this year’s *Light the Lights Christmas Concert* – and our gym community was proud to be right in the middle of the action.

With families gathering on picnic rugs, kids racing between face painting and the Miss Donna Magic Show, and the sounds of the Mapleton Choir and Girl Friday filling the air, the night was a true celebration of community, joy, and togetherness.

Our gym ran the ever-popular ‘Festive Frank’ fundraising stall, serving up delicious hot dogs to concert-goers keen to grab a bite while supporting a local club. Thanks to the incredible support from members, volunteers, and the wider Mapleton community, the stall was a huge success.

By the end of the evening, the gym had raised **over \$700 in profit** – a fantastic result that will go straight back into supporting our members and club activities.

A highlight of the night was seeing so many familiar faces stop by for a chat, a laugh, and of course, a Festive Frank. From the Children’s Fancy Dress Parade to Santa’s grand arrival on the Rural Fire Brigade truck and the beautiful lighting of the Tree of Lights, it was a night to remember.

A big thank you to everyone who volunteered their time, helped set up and pack down, cooked, served, and supported the stall. Events like this remind us that our gym is more than just a place to train – it’s a proud part of the Mapleton community.



Photo: Smiles, teamwork, and plenty of ‘Festive Franks’ – our amazing gym members bringing the Christmas cheer while raising funds for the club! 🎄 🌭



“A successful team is a group of many hands, but one mind.”



Mapleton Post Office Relocation & Community Thank You

With our local Post Office relocating to the Mapleton IGA, the community is coming together to thank the Buckley family for their 18 years of dedicated service.

Community response has been wonderful, with over 100 messages of support and generous donations already received.

Short term – Community Gift

A gift box of vouchers from local businesses will be presented to the Buckleys as an immediate thank you. If you'd like to contribute:

- Donate to the box at **La Botiga**
- Leave a cash or card donation at the **Mapleton Bowls Club**
- Give directly to **Peter Gamgee** or **Nita Lester**

All contributions will be transparently recorded. Any excess funds will go towards longer-term projects.

Longer term – Honouring Our Post Office History

Based on community feedback, plans are being explored (subject to Council approval) for:

- A historical plaque marking the original Post Office site
- A plaque on a bench recognising the Buckley family's service

You're also warmly invited to leave a personal note of thanks at the Post Office.

Thank you to everyone who has supported this community effort.

Christmas Party Cheer at Montville Bar & Grill

On Friday 21 November, around 80 of our wonderful members came together at Montville Bar & Grill to celebrate the festive season in style. It was a fantastic evening filled with laughter, great conversation, delicious food, and music that kept the good vibes flowing.

Most importantly, the night was a true reflection of the amazing community spirit that makes our gym so special. Seeing members connect, relax, and celebrate together outside the gym walls was a reminder that we're more than just a place to work out – we're a community.

Here's to plenty of Christmas cheer, shared memories, and hopefully doing it all again later this year!



Japanese Walking: A Smarter Way to Walk for Fitness

You don't need to run to get serious fitness benefits. A simple technique known as *Japanese Walking* is gaining attention for delivering impressive results using nothing more than brisk and easy walking intervals.

What is Japanese Walking?

Developed by Japanese exercise scientists, this method alternates between:

- **3 minutes of fast walking** (you should be slightly breathless but still able to talk), and
- **3 minutes of slow, relaxed walking** (a recovery pace)

Repeat this cycle for **30 minutes**, 4–5 times per week.

That's it. No equipment, no complicated training plan.

Why it works

The alternating pace gently challenges your heart and lungs, similar to interval training, but without the joint stress of running. This style of walking has been shown to improve:

- Cardiovascular fitness
- Blood pressure control
- Leg strength and endurance
- Aerobic capacity
- Overall mobility as we age

In studies, participants following this method saw greater fitness improvements than those who walked at a steady pace for the same amount of time.

How to try it

1. Warm up with an easy walk for a few minutes.
2. Walk fast for 3 minutes — purposeful arm swing, longer stride.
3. Slow right down for 3 minutes.
4. Repeat five times.

Japanese Walking is ideal for people of all ages and fitness levels, especially those wanting a low-impact, time-efficient way to improve their health.

Sometimes, the smartest exercise isn't harder — it's simply done differently.



Gym Working Bee a Wonderful Community Effort

What an incredible show of community spirit at our recent Gym Working Bee! With more than 15 volunteers rolling up their sleeves and getting stuck in, the gym was buzzing with energy, teamwork, and plenty of elbow grease.

From the moment the doors opened, volunteers spread out across every corner of the space, each taking on jobs big and small that together made a remarkable difference. Windows were polished until they sparkled, equipment was thoroughly cleaned and refreshed, and well-used mats, balls, and dumbbells were scrubbed, sorted, and set back in place. Outside areas received some much-needed attention, signage cleaned, and general maintenance tasks that often get pushed aside were tackled with enthusiasm.

There was a wonderful sense of camaraderie throughout the morning, with members chatting, laughing, and working side by side with a shared goal – to keep our gym looking its best for everyone who walks through the doors. The pride people took in their tasks was clear to see, and the transformation by the end of the working bee was truly impressive.

These kinds of efforts don't just improve our facilities; they strengthen the bonds within our gym community. It's a reminder that this is more than just a place to workout – it's a place where people come together, support one another, and contribute to something they value.

A heartfelt thank you goes to every volunteer who gave their time and energy. Your contribution has not gone unnoticed, and the results of your hard work will be appreciated by all members for weeks to come.

