



Nelson Orienteering Club

NOC Newsletter

Friday 23 May
Issue 3, 2025



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Congratulations to all those who braved the challenging maps (and weather conditions!) at the National Orienteering Championships in north Canterbury over the Easter weekend. Yet again the regional club was well represented on the podium.

Congratulations also to the members who have been selected to represent NZ in a number of events over the coming months in Europe. Zefa Fa'avae will compete in the Middle and Long at the World Orienteering Championships (WOC) in Finland. Oliver Egan, Zefa Fa'avae and Scott Smith will compete in the World Cup round 1 in Sweden. Riley Croxford, Eddie Swain and Tide Fa'avae will compete at the Junior World Orienteering Championships (JWOC) in Italy with Nika Rayward named as a reserve. Lani Murray and Leo Croxford will compete at the European Youth Orienteering Championships (EYOC) in Czechia.

Recently I attended the Orienteering NZ AGM via Zoom. National membership is up significantly to more than 3300 members, correspondingly event participation was also up 31%.

With winter nearly here and the short days upon us, the annual NOCturnal Rogaine Series is not far away. This is a great reason to get out of the house for an evening and go and explore some other parts of the city by torchlight!

Richard Dunn

2025 so far	2
NOCturnals.....	3
Use of MapRun.....	3
Controls Clinic.....	4
Upcoming events.....	4
MTBO Sunday 4 may.....	5
NZOC2025 Review	6
Training Focus: Basic Skills	11

- Why thumbing or using the tip of your compass is useful, see page 11
- What is the difference between a Middle event or a Long - see pages 7 & 9
- What is MapRun and how do I install it on my phone, see page 3
- NOC shirts available - where can I get them? Page 4!
- Orienteering is really for all ages - see page 9

2025 SO FAR...

We have had a great first half of the year with many, many club members stepping up to plan, control and help at an impressive number of events. With the help of many helping hands NOC delivered one MTBO, one Club event, two OY's, three training sessions, four (upcoming) NOcturnals and five Summer Sprint Series.

Or, in pictures:



SECOND HALF OF 2025

Volunteers needed

For the second half of the year for the following events we currently still need a number of volunteers. The event dates and locations are tentative, and if you are keen to be involved, you are more than welcome to suggest alternative dates or locations that suit you.

The roles we need are generally:

Planner - plans the courses, sets up the maps for the event, puts controls out for the event, is there on the day.

Controller - works with the planner prior to the event, often more experienced at event organisation, checks the courses and maps for compliance with rules, responsible for health and safety at the event, helps put out controls, is there on the day.

Coordinator - organises landowner permissions for the event if required, arranges helpers for on the day and allocates tasks, is there on the day to lead the team of helpers to run the event.

For the following events, a planner, controller and coordinator are still needed:

Type of event:	Location:	Date:
OY	Teetotal, St. Arnaud	10/08/2025
Halloween event (Vampire O)	Location tbc	31/10/2025
Club event	Location of your choice (Rabbit Island, St Arnaud, somewhere else)	09/11/2025
Christmas & AGM	Location of your choice	14/12/2025

If you able to help with the above events, then please contact NOC's event coordinator Georgia Whitla at nelsonorienteering.events@gmail.com. If you are interested but not sure if you have the right skills or experience, please still reach out as well and we will try and pair you up with an appropriate helper.

2025: ONLINE PRE-REGISTRATION ONLY

Participants at events run by Nelson Orienteering Club **need to pre-register online for each event.**

From April onwards, there will only a very limited number of additional maps printed.

This helps the event organisers to run all events smoothly:

- No long queues at Registration during the event: participants only need to pick up their hired SportIdent, in case they do not have their own;
- Minimal crew needed at Registration during the event;
- There are enough maps printed for all participants, and no maps go to waste.
- Financial report is easier, with cash eliminated.

Use of MapRun7

Beforehand:

- Make sure your phone is charged - GPS can be power hungry!
- Make sure your phone sleep settings will not close the app or GPS while you're on the course
- It helps to have the sound on your phone turned up, so you know when you've got to a control

At Event:

- Start MapRun7
- Tap "Events Near Me" to display a list of courses near your current location
- Select the correct Event
- Tap "Go to Start"
- Walk / run through the Start to start the course timer (mobile phone beeps)

MapRun7 tracks your location & continually compares that location with the control locations. If your distance to a control is less than five metres, the app automatically records a punch for that control.

When you approach the Finish, the app stops the



timer and records that the Finish has been visited. Your result is merged with other results for this event and displayed on your phone.

If you were at the right location for a control, but the app failed to register, there are options in MapRun to claim that particular punch after Finishing.

NOCTURNAL SERIES 2025

The next series of events, planned for June and July are the NOcturnals, a series of four night rogaine events in more-or-less urban environments on bi-weekly Wednesday nights. Night orienteering is more difficult than day orienteering because of (lack of) visibility. You have to be more precise in distance estimation and using terrain features at night, but it is definitely doable and loads of fun!



Tips on Lighting

Bring a headlamp which is good for both running *and* holding the map. Remember to make sure to arrive at the event with a fully charged battery, and bringing a spare battery is always a good idea! A hand-held electric torch is good for scanning around the surrounding for target objects.

"Most orienteering mistakes are made when you stop concentrating or when you get tired. At night when the navigation is harder you need to be particularly careful."

MapRun

Instead of using SportIdent software and -controls, the app MapRun7 will be used for all four events to record controls visited - a paper map will be provided. Please install the app before coming to the event, by searching "MapRun" on the App Store or Google Play.

Katoa Po

There is a famous (all) night event on the Orienteering New Zealand calendar. Katoa Po is a Maori translation for "all night" and the event is the annual interclub night relay hosted by the Taupo Orienteering Club.

The first relay was held at the end of January 1981 but nowadays is usually in March when dusk is earlier but the weather still generally good. Teams are made up of seven members, of mixed ages and abilities who contest for the Owl trophy or five members who compete for the Po Kerukeru trophy.

CONTROLLERS' CLINIC IN NELSON

Understand course setting and event organisation? Discover how controllers work alongside event organisers and course planners, but also operate independently?

There are twelve people in Nelson keen to do a Controllers Clinic, and the weekend that works best for the majority is 23 & 24 August 2025. More are welcome!

if you would like to join us in the Richmond area. You will need to bring your orienteering gear as the standard format includes both indoor workshops and outdoor field trips.



Please contact Richard Dunn at president.noc@gmail.com if you are interested in joining.

NOC CLUB SHIRTS

As announced in the previous newsletter, new club shirts have recently arrived.

Anybody who ordered a shirt will be contacted or might already have received their shirt.

A limited number of additional shirts are available and can now be ordered, using the email address below.

Fleur Murray
(fleurandneil@gmail.com)



JUNE - AUGUST 2025 ORIENTEERING EVENTS' CALENDAR

The most up-to-date calendar can be found on the [NOC website](#), including links needed for the required online registration.

Date	Event	Location	Start Window	Course Closure
31/05 - 2/06/2025	King's Birthday	Hastings / Havelock North	-	-
8/06/2025	OY3	Bastion (tbc), MOC	10.00 - 12.00	14.00
11/06/2025	NOcturnal 1	Maitai & Botanic Gardens	18.00	19.30
25/06/2025	NOcturnal 2 (+ kids' rogaine)	Stoke	18.00	19.30
11/07- 13/07/2025	NZ Secondary School Orienteering Champs	Auckland, Woodhill	-	-
16/07/2025	NOcturnal 3	Easby Park & Richmond	18.00	19.30
30/07/2025	NOcturnal 4	Grampians, Nelson	18.00	19.30
10/08/2025	OY4	Teetotal / Sidewinder, Nelson Lakes	10.30 - 12.30	14.30
31/08/2025	Wily Weka	Cable Bay Adventure Park		



Intro to MBTO

Mountain Bike Orienteering (MTBO) is simply orienteering on a mountain bike. Some of the differences between foot orienteering and orienteering on a mountain bike are the symbols and colours of the map and the rules around cross country travel.

Strategy

MTBO combines the fun and excitement of biking with navigation skills. As checkpoints are always on roads, trails, or open land, the navigation is easier than foot orienteering, but as the speed is higher and 'reading' a map while riding is harder, making good route choice decisions is essential.

MTBO SUNDAY 4 MAY

We were lucky with the weather window for the MTBO: most of the tracks were perfect, just dry enough. I did the Long I had been led to believe included 600 metres of vertical. Luckily, I chickened out on the day and used my e-bike. Boy, am I glad I did!

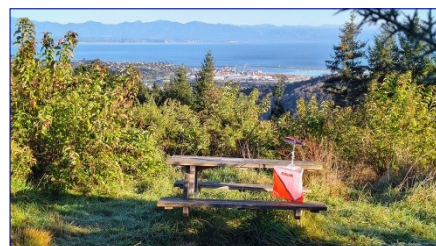
The first Control set the tone in a masochistic position on the steep part of **Jack's Track**. Control 2 to 3 had a huge diverse number of route choices, all the way back down to the Maitai. My choice was not the best, but I couldn't resist **'Flight Path'**. I realized at the bottom that we would return the same way, up the **'Muddy Gully'** and then **'Refurbished TMTYL'**.



All MTB photos by Daniel Penney

I battled to find Control 8 for some reason, maybe an aversion to **'Hotbox'**. Down **'Hotbox'** where Patrick Higgins blurred past me and then back up to the skid with a control set in a very tempting position above a rock drop. Yahoo down **'Hulkin Hogan'** and **'Crazy Horse'** to control 11. Local knowledge was very useful in this area, as it was very difficult to make out the different tracks on the map.

Down to the **Coppermine** and then back up to a nasty control set on the low corner of **'Star'**. Back up to the trig? I did **'Jack's Track'** again and climbed up the ridge which was easier, or shorter, than expected. Then **'P51'** to finish. For some reason I couldn't find the Finish control on the map and wasted some time. I'm amused to see on Winsplits that I wasn't the only one.



I did 1100 m of vertical. Some of my route choices were not optimal but I don't think I did any unnecessary climbing. It was interesting in that I know the tracks like the back of my hand, but am less familiar with the roads and potential shortcuts. I was certainly pleased to finish. It's not that it was too long, more that it was quite a bit longer than expected.

Steve Salmon



Would you like more, or did you miss out first time? We're trying to add another MTBO event to the 2025 NOC calendar - watch this space!



NZOC 2025 - IN REVIEW...



Overall male winner in the elite Sprint class - Zefa Fa'avae

SPRINT 19/4 - CHRISTCHURCH CBD

The Scots might have aptly described the weather as being "dreich", but nevertheless there was a carnival atmosphere in Cathedral Square where the Event Centre for the Sprint was located. It's always great fun keeping track of the elites competition in particular with the lead swapping around as the event proceeded. Perhaps unknown to some, the Sprint courses had to be revised to cope with a last minute withdrawal of access permission for critical parts of the courses. The taped mazes that PAPO instituted to cope with that unexpected major problem resulted in some fun route choices and twisting and turning on, at times, quite muddy and slippery ground.

Richard English



Meghan Carter during Sprint



Nia Ianyard, also during the Sprint

NOC-ers Sprint podium places:

- M21E Zefa Fa'avae (1st)
- W21A Anya Murray (1st)
- W35 Georgia Whitla (1st)
- M35 Patrick Higgins (1st),
- M35 Daniel Penney (3rd, shared)
- W45 Rebecca Smith (2nd)
- W75 Valerie Rogers (3rd)

NZOC2025

Every year around Easter, a New Zealand orienteering club organises the National Orienteering Championships, on a rotational schedule: twice on the North Island, followed by one on the South Island. Each National Championship (NZOC) consists of a Sprint event, a Middle Event (emphasis on technical difficulty), a Long Event (emphasis on physicality) and a Club Relay.

This year it was the turn for Canterbury's Orienteering Club PAPO (Peninsula and Plains Orienteering Club).



CANTERBURY
18-21 APR 2025

A big difference between a local orienteering event and a National Event is the amount of information available about the event and the courses beforehand, usually on a dedicated website and two documents, imaginatively called Bulletin 1 (available 4 months before the event) and Bulletin 2 (available a week before the event starts). You can check this out on the NZOC website (<https://ochamps.nz/>)

On the left and on the next pages, several participants from the forty men/women strong NOC delegation give their impression on this major event.

Middle distance

The Middle distance profile is technical. It takes place in a non-urban, mostly forested environment with an emphasis on detailed navigation and where finding the controls constitute a challenge. It requires *constant concentration* on map reading with occasional shifts in running direction out from controls.

The element of *route choice* is essential but should not be at the expense of technically demanding orienteering. The route in itself must involve *demanding navigation*. The course must also require *speed-shifts* e.g. with legs through different types of vegetation.



Matt Ogden (r), winning the Middle

The course should be set to allow competitors to be seen by spectators during the race as well as when finishing. The start should be at the Arena and the course should preferably make runners pass the Arena during the competition.

The demand on the selection of Arena is subsequently high, providing both suitable terrain and good possibilities to make runners visible to spectators.

Copied (abridged) from ONZ Foot Orienteering Rules, version June 2024

NZOC2025

NZOC2025 Christchurch was awesome. An iconic sprint in the heart of the CBD, an intricate middle, a challenging long on new and varied terrain, and a relay with more action than a Mission Impossible movie. Organising a large orienteering event is no trivial feat and requires a huge amount of volunteer time and energy—so first, a massive thanks to PAPO for delivering another top-notch Nationals.

“Looking back on the many Nationals I’ve taken part in, I’m always impressed by the variety of terrain and the quality of the events—a testament to the beautiful country we call home and the passionate, highly capable orienteering community we’re part of.”

Matt Ogden



Georgia Whitla, winning W35A Middle

MIDDLE, SATURDAY 20/4

For the Middle distance at NZOC2025, I definitely didn’t have the underwhelming experience I had earlier this year at the Oceania Middle.



Micah Dunn,
NZOC2025
Middle

First and foremost, the terrain choice was spot-on. The organisers found a new pocket of intricate sand dunes on the Canterbury coast, not dissimilar to Woodend or parts of Bottle Lake Forest. The key was the technical complexity in the contour detail, which gave the course planners plenty of scope to create engaging and challenging courses.

I had full confidence going in that the duo of Briana Steven and Jason Brown would deliver—and they did.



Course extract 1 – wrong route choice to 2, very poor execution, losing 2 minutes.

With 35 controls over 6.3 km in the M21E course, there wasn't a single moment to lose focus. I've included three extracts from the course to highlight key characteristics and the evolution of my race (green line is my actual route taken).

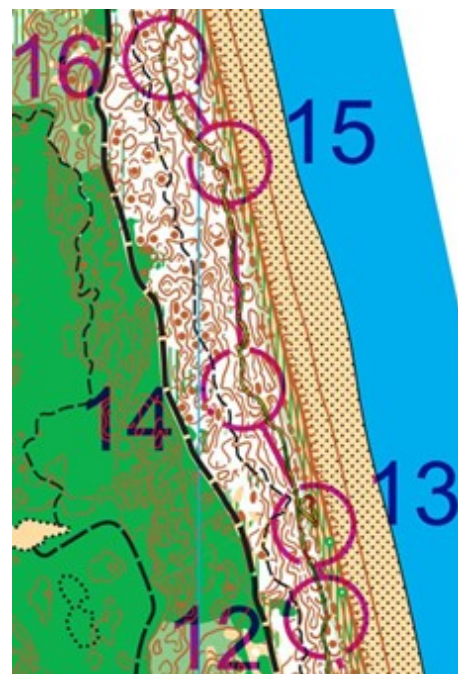
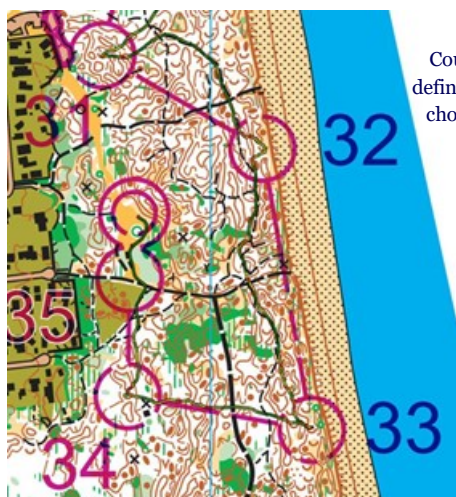
Right from the start, we faced a decisive route choice to the second control. In my usual style, I attacked aggressively from the start line, but I probably should have taken more time to assess the challenge.

I chose to go right, where going left would have been much better—safer, with a strong attack point and better flow through the control. Heading right, I lost contact in the rough open and didn't take the time to pinpoint

my re-entry into the forest. I lost more than two minutes, only relocating once I saw the road. For the fourth control, I decided to completely avoid the area that had caused me trouble and went around via the road. Halfway along, I turned around and saw Felix Hunt—who had started two minutes after me—gaining ground. That was a clear sign my hopes for a seventh national middle title were in serious jeopardy.

We ended up running together for most of the course, something I haven't done much in my racing career. I was definitely at my physical limit trying to keep up with the talented junior, but he would occasionally make small mistakes, allowing me to get back ahead. That was the pattern until the very end, where I managed to make a small break and finish a few seconds ahead.

Course extract 3 – a fun final loop, I was definitely not game to risk the beach route choice to the 33rd, but was impressed by those that did and nailed it!



Course extract 2 – linear control picking orienteering, very easy to under- or over-shoot as I did to the 13th but satisfying when the control appeared exactly where you expected it to, as to the 15th.

Fortunately, the rest of the field didn't have clean runs — especially Zefa Fa'avae, Joseph Lynch and, to my relief, Felix, who was running in the M20E grade. That meant I could claim my seventh National Middle title. I wouldn't be surprised if it's my last, given the quality of orienteers now coming through, but it was fun to show I still have a few tricks up my sleeve.

I was particularly impressed by Oliver Egan's performance — only 13 seconds off the podium and probably the best technical race of the day in the M21E field.

Matt Ogden



Oliver Egan during the Middle

NOC-ers Middle podium places:

- M21E Matt Ogden (1st),
- Zefa Fa'avea (2nd)
- W14A Mia Ashmore (3rd)
- W35A Georgia Whitla (1st)
- M40A Dene Gavin (3rd)
- W45A Rebecca Smith (2nd)
- M55A Neil Murray (3rd)
- W70A Valerie Rogers (2nd)

Long distance

The Long-distance profile during the NZOC is *physical endurance*. It takes place in a non-urban (mostly forested) environment and aims at testing the athletes' ability to make efficient route choices, to read and interpret the map and plan the race for endurance during a long and physical exercise.

For elite classes the format emphasises route choices and navigation in demanding, rough terrain, preferably hilly.

Long legs

A special element of the Long distance is the long legs, considerably longer than the average leg length.

Two or more such long legs should form part of the course, while still requiring full concentration on map reading along the route chosen.

Copied (abridged) from ONZ Foot Orienteering Rules, version June 2024



View from the main Start Area, back down to the Finish and Event Centre.

LONG 21/4 - MT CASS

The Long day started dry with great views over parts of North Canterbury, but the heavy rain set in just as I set off on my "run". And then it became obvious why the Long event was so named. Not only were courses rather lengthy, but they were very steep and slippery in places - not the best for one with dodgy knees. However the enjoyment level increased markedly for me once on the flatter forested ground towards the Finish.

I was very grateful to my PAPO friends waiting at the Finish to help me out of my drenched clothing and ply me with hot coffee and camaraderie.

That's one of the attractions of the Champs, catching up with orienteering acquaintances from near and far. It might be only once a year but our mutual love of the sport always keeps the connections strong.



Andrew Upsall near the Finish

Val Rogers



NOC-ers Long podium places:

M21E: Zefa Fa'avae (2nd)

Matt Ogden (3rd)

W20E: Tide Fa'avae (2nd)

W18A: Lani Murray (3rd)

M16A: Micah Dunn (2nd)

W35A: Georgia Whitla (3rd)

M35A: Patrick Higgins (1st)

W40AS: Fleur Murray (2nd)

W45A: Rebecca Smith (2nd)

M90A: Ian Holden (1st)



Mia Ashmore (above, youngest NOC competitor) &

Ian Holden (above, oldest NOC/NZOC competitor pictured with one of his daughters)



NZOC2025 - RELAY

The relay terrain had highly detailed sand dunes with recurring, intricate depressions and small knolls. The planner had prepared a technical and challenging course, but it was the map flip that tested the reading of the Bulletin and who had listened to the briefing. The event centre was tucked in the trees offering shelter and good visibility of the spectator run-through creating an exciting relay atmosphere. Underfoot the pine needles and sand stayed very dry despite all the recent rain.



The Nelson Mixed Open Relay team consisted of Zefa Fa'avae, Tide Fa'avae and Matt Ogden (J. Moore)

The Mixed Open Relay got off to a tight start, with PAPO 1, Nelson, and PAPO 2 closely matched after the first leg, with Wellington right on their heels. By the end of the second leg, Nelson and PAPO 1 were running neck and neck. However, a mistake by PAPO 1 on the final leg gave Nelson the edge.

In addition, although not an official medal class, the team of (from left to right) Jamal and Anya Murray and Micah Dunn won the Open Short Relay!

Text partially copied from the ONZ website

Right: the Open Short Relay winners (photo by Dale McDonald)



Additional photos of the Relay, all by Joolz Moore:

- Top: Riley Croxford
- Middle: Leo Croxford
- above: Michael Croxford leading the pack
- Below: Podium Open Relay

Thank you PAPO!

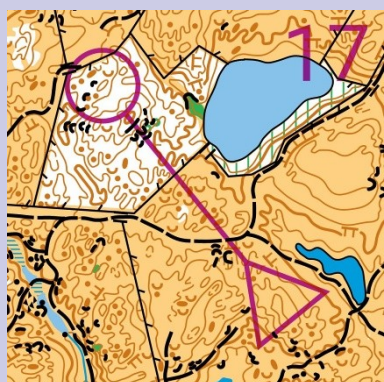
It's a wrap! Peninsula and Plains Orienteers organised marvellous National Orienteering Champs over a very wet Easter Weekend. The courses were challenging, there was a buzzing atmosphere despite the regular downpours and finish chutes which turned into mud baths, and an awful lot of work was done (and done well!) behind the scenes.



Choosing the right course for you!

When you enter an orienteering event, you will need to select a course to complete. Events will offer courses of different lengths and different navigational difficulty. Orienteering NZ has written a guide to help you choose a course with the right navigational difficulty for you.

Through a series of map snippets of increasing difficulty level, you are guided to find out the level you are currently at.



For example, picture 17 (above) is an example of a 'orange' control, with the clear catching feature of the track and the fence if you've gone too far.

Would you like to know more and work through the whole test, visit

<https://www.orienteering.org.nz/choose-the-right-course/>

TRAINING FOCUS - BASIC SKILLS

Orienting the map

The most important skill in orienteering is orienting the map - sounds simple, but it is often difficult to keep up this habit when you are getting tired and/or confused...

Maps are not supposed to be held with the top up the top, but instead in the same orientation as the terrain around you. Look for a prominent feature around you like a fence or a road, and rotate the map to match.

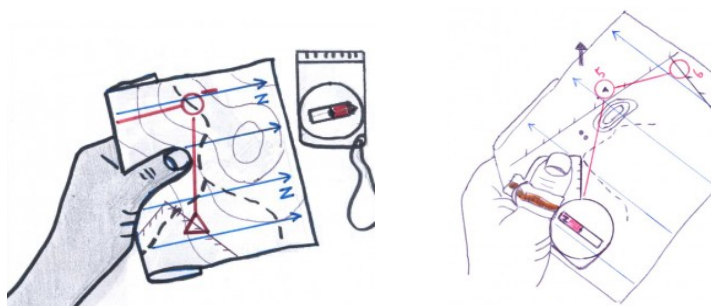
You can use your compass to assist, but it is equally important to learn how to orient your map using the terrain. A compass can come in handy when you're on more difficult courses and the terrain is complicated.



On the photo on the left, the map is oriented as the terrain around / as the terrain ahead - the correct way. On the photo on the right, the map is not oriented correctly (to check, look to the road on the left-hand side).

Thumbing the map

Knowing where you are on the map is critical. Once you've figured that out, place your thumb or the tip of the compass where you are and track your position as you move along.



The picture on the left shows 'thumbing' the map, while the picture on the right shows the use of the tip of the compass

Now, whenever you glance at your map you know where you are and can easily figure out where to go. If you get confused, you will at least know you're somewhere near your thumb, and it'll be easier to re-locate. Thumbing the map is an important core skill and the foundation for more advanced compass skills.



Aren't we lucky, at Nelson Orienteering Club, with so many amazing orienteering terrains on our doorstep. Sunday 18 May, OY2 took place at Canaan Downs, despite starting off in the pouring rain - it was stunning!

Nelson Orienteering Club
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This NOC newsletter appears bi-monthly,
on the last Friday of each second month
If you'd like to contribute, have photos to
share, or would like to respond to an earlier
edition, please get in contact with the editor
via noc.promotion@gmail.com
Photos by Annemarie Hogenbirk,
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