

# Historic Heritage Inventory



## Waihi Rifle Range

**Location:** Mataura Road, Waihi

### Heritage Status

**Historic Places Trust Registration Number:**

**Historic Places Trust Category:**

**HDC Heritage Category:** **C** - Heritage Item. Local or Neighbourhood Significance

**Other:**

**Physical Description:** Not visible on the ground. Can be partly seen on cadastral map.

**Other known names:**

**Notable features:**

**Style:**

**Materials:**

**Date of Construction:** 1901-20

**History:** This is one of several in Waihi, but may have been the first. It extends from the end of Mataura Road in a north easterly direction, crossing the Ohinemuri River. Shown on a map dated 1900.

The target end of the range was reached by a foot bridge over the river. On the Waihi side of the stream (true right bank) are two large railway irons, set in the ground, about a metre apart. These may have been anchoring points for this bridge. No similar anchors are visible on the opposite bank.

The target trench and small building (visible in 1942 aerial photographs, and apparently still in use) are now gone, their position marked by a red hay barn. Spent bullets can be easily picked up from the small cutting off the farm track behind the barn. Most appear to be .303 dumb dumbs.

The 1942 photographs clearly show the shooting positions, ranged back from the target trench. Measurements taken from the map suggest the shooting ranges were approximately: 200 yards, 300 yards, 500 yards, 600 yards, and 700 yards.

*Extract from Diamond Jubilee Booklet, November 27 - December 2, 1962:*

**ATHLETIC SPORTS** The first club was formed by the Miners' Union and a great gathering was held in Worth's paddock on Labour Day 1893. It catered for athletics of all kinds — foot racing, jumping, wrestling, boxing, shot putting, shooting, dancing, etc. Athletes came from all over New Zealand and even from Australia. The prizes were good and there was plenty of betting. (Bookies in those days). Such meetings were frequently held in Worth's paddock

**District Plan Schedule**

**Number:** **HAU075**

**Heritage Category:** **C**

**Heritage Type:**

- Wahi Tapu
- Cultural Landscape
- Building
- Group of Buildings
- Structure
- Monument
- Historic Place
- Archaeological Site
- Other

**Date Period:**

**1881-1910**

**Significance:**

- Archaeological
- Architectural
- Cultural
- Historic
- Scientific
- Technological

**Thematic Context**

- Maori
- Early Settlement
- Industry
- Extraction
- Forestry
- Agriculture
- Transport
- Communication
- Commerce
- Residential
- Social/Cultural
- Civic
- Health
- Educational
- Church/yard
- Other

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subsequently. From its very beginning Waihi was always sports-minded and its athletic club is still turning out young men and women any town could be proud of, as we are of our Valerie Morgan who qualified to go to the Olympic Games, but of course we now have a well equipped Recreation Ground.

*SHOOTING* – The Waihi Gun Club held its first live shoot in 1902. (Committee, J. Dobson, Andrew, J. Alien). E. King won the New Zealand (Sparrow) championship in 1912 and the single rise in 1912 and 1915. He and A. Sparke represented Waihi in most New Zealand shoots, both defending the Ballistete Cup on five occasions. The cup was then handed to the late Mr J. Gilmour (president). Mr J. A. Gordon, one time manager of the Consolidated Mine won the Carbine Champ. Belt in 1879, 1881, 1882 making it his own property. Other famous shots were the late James Noble and Harry Marks.

*THE WAIHI ROOSTER* - In 1902 a large number of Riflemen attended the opening of the newly formed Waihi Rifle Club. It so happened that there was no trophy for the champion team, Victoria Rifles. The next morning there was some fuss and bother because the Rooster from the Weather Cock on the Fire Station had disappeared—with the aid of a hack-saw. No one seems to know exactly how the matter was resolved but a notice, according to legend, appeared in the Waihi paper some time later that the missing Rooster would be returned when the Waihi Club could win it back.

Today the "Waihi Rooster" is the best known and most valued trophy in the North Island, in spite of the fact that it has no cash value whatsoever. It has been the official trophy for the Auckland Provincial Teams' Match since 1902 and most of New Zealand's leading riflemen will have set their sights on it at some time. It has spent time in Taranaki, Wanganui and North Auckland, and Ohinemuri in 1903. It will be on display at the Waihi Museum during Jubilee week. A.D.

**Architect:**  
**Designer:**  
**Builder:**  
**Engineer:**

**History of changes:**

**Condition:** Ruin

**Integrity:** Substantially altered

**Current Uses:** Farming

**Former Uses:** Rifle Range

**Registered owner:**

**Legal Description:**

# *Historic Heritage Inventory*



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Reference Source: E Lens

Associated Pictures: