

The Voluntary Associations of Wellington 1840-1850 :
'Committees, of all Manners and Descriptions'¹

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A Thesis

Submitted to the Victoria University of Wellington
In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Master of New Zealand Studies

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Victoria University of Wellington

2008

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Professor Richard Hill for his guidance, Carolynne Stormer for her assistance and my family for their support.

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Community Co-operation in Colonial Wellington

The anniversary fete celebrating the tenth year of European settlement in Wellington took place on the 22nd and 23rd of January 1850. The summer weather was described as magnificent as people flocked to the harbours edge to enjoy the sailing races, whale boat races, a cart horse race, hack race, Maori horse race, a foot race and an evening fireworks display.² Planning for the 1850 anniversary fete had begun on the 27th of December 1849 at a public meeting held in the Britannia Saloon. A general committee of over 100 men were unanimously elected and at a following meeting, sub-committees responsible for organizing the individual activities were formed. This example of community co-operation contrasts sharply with the celebration of the first anniversary. In January 1841, two anniversary committees were established, the Select Committee and the Popular Committee. Divided along class lines, each group organized separate events. The Select Committee held a shipboard dinner, a ball and various sporting events that were hampered by inclement weather. The fete organized by the Popular Committee took place in fine weather and was well attended. There were sailing and whale boat races, horse races and a variety of contests. The celebrations of the day ended with a ball held in one of the local warehouses.³ Lessons must have been learnt from the experience because, for the remainder of the decade, only one committee organized the annual anniversary celebrations.

The anniversary fete committee was just one of many voluntary associations that were established in early Wellington. From cricket clubs to friendly societies and lobby groups the voluntary association was a way of drawing on community skills to get things done, to progress an idea or seek a consensus. In the colonial environment, where conditions were at first primitive and the population small, this self-reliant attitude was particularly important and the voluntary association was a vehicle for progress. Unlike some colonies, in Wellington, there was no specific bond between the early European settlers in terms of religious faith or social class. The decision to board a ship bound for a very distant location was based upon a range of personal circumstances. The early nineteenth century was a time of powerful ideas and ideas about a new form of colonization and the type of society that might result undoubtedly had an influence on intending emigrants. Many of these ideas emanated from Edward Gibbon Wakefield who devised and promoted a theory of systematic colonization that was 'designed to create a civilized society in a new land, a civilized society predicated upon the capacity of Britons to co-operate and to govern themselves'.⁴ From the colonization options open to

them people were attracted to New Zealand based on the information disseminated by Wakefield and the New Zealand Company. For the immigrant, the bonds with the familiar structures of family, church, neighbourhood, or social set would be broken. Co-operation would be necessary if the community was to develop and flourish for the mutual benefit of all citizens. To that end, the voluntary association was the cornerstone organizational form of many nineteenth century colonial and frontier communities.

The apparently large number of voluntary associations established at the very beginning of the planned European settlement of New Zealand was noted by Erik Olssen when he drew attention to:

the plethora of voluntary organizations formed by the colonists to New Zealand, many of them, like the first friendly society, on board an emigrant ship. These included horticultural societies, libraries and mechanics institutes, orchestras, schools, and churches If voluntarism, mutualism and localism best expressed the aspirations of the colonists ... then Wakefield and those he inspired had a deeper and more enduring influence than previously suspected.⁵

In his study of early South Australia that was established following Wakefield's colonization principles, J.M. Main noted the formation of a large number of associations. A natural history society, race meetings and mechanics' institute were amongst the first and there were many public meetings.

Between 1837 and 1856 nearly one hundred meetings in Adelaide were reported or advertised in the *Register* on a wide variety of topics ... And although these gatherings varied according to the purpose for which they were called, on matters of most significance those who spoke, moved and seconded, were those same men whom we have already noticed in connection with other interests and institutions.⁶

The question of whether a new colonial environment stimulates an increased number of voluntary associations or whether these activities were occurring with equal vigour in Britain is a difficult one to establish. Possibly, new associations are seen more acutely in the colonial environment than within an older society both in terms of their establishment or demise. That is not to deny an underlying premise of colonization is one of change. In his analysis of early Jacksonville, Illinois, Doyle states, 'the study of new communities as arenas of social change offers special opportunities to examine the freshest expression of the values and institutions that gave shape to nineteenth century community life.'⁷ Into these new communities came people who had, in the main, made a choice to change their life prospects. For those motivated individuals the colonial

experience offered improved prospects both financially and socially. Membership or holding office in a voluntary association could be one of those ways.

The purpose of this research is to identify the voluntary associations established in colonial Wellington between 1840 and 1850 against the background of events of the time. Questions that will be considered are, how many were established, what conclusions can be drawn from the pattern of establishment and can the voluntary associations be categorized in some thematic way? An attempt will also be made to identify those men most actively involved in voluntary associations and determine if these organizers shared any common characteristics. Voluntary associations have been identified from an examination of early Wellington newspapers the *New Zealand Gazette and Wellington Spectator*, *New Zealand Colonist and Port Nicholson Advertiser* and *New Zealand Spectator and Cook's Strait Guardian* along with other sources. There is a focus on their establishment as opposed to an analysis of their continuing success although a number will be highlighted by way of example. The most active men have been identified through the development of a database of over 2500 entries tracking the membership of voluntary associations over the decade. Biographical information introducing the most prominent organizers is presented throughout.

Voluntary Association Research in New Zealand

In colonial Wellington there was a well defined process for establishing a voluntary association that usually began with an advertisement placed in the local newspaper calling a public meeting. The proceedings of the meeting were then reported in the newspaper along with the names of the committee elected at the meeting and given the task of carrying out the intentions of the larger group. The annual report, the election of the committee and officers, the publication of the proceedings, resolutions or memorials were often the life blood of the local press. A close examination of these reports will alert the reader to the same individuals appearing on committee after committee. This process is just as familiar today as it was 150 years ago. Most New Zealanders have, at some time in their lives, belonged to a social grouping whose title includes one of the following words, society, association, organization or club. Voluntary associations are so much a part of the social fabric that it would be difficult to imagine our communities without them. For such an important aspect of social history there appears to be little research on the subject of the voluntary association in the New Zealand context and even less from an historical viewpoint. The bulk of what is available are histories of individual

organisations often written by a long serving member in response to a significant anniversary. Library shelves are replete with these types of publications many of which have little interest beyond the membership of that particular association. There have been some thematic approaches; either to a specific subject area or geographical region. For example, Margaret Tennant has studied voluntary associations that have contributed to the development of the New Zealand welfare system.⁸ Fairburn drew attention to low participation rates and multiple failures of voluntary associations when examining the idea of community cohesiveness.⁹ Librarian Glenda Northey undertook research on the early libraries established in the Auckland province.¹⁰ The historical development of New Zealand libraries in general has been studied by researcher J.E Traue.¹¹ Public libraries, before they received state support, were a form of voluntary association. From a research perspective, there is some benefit to be gained from seeing these organizations within the spectrum of voluntary associations in particular and social history in general. In his study of the early social history of Auckland, J.R. Phillips identified a number of voluntary associations. He noted the formation of mechanics' institutes, total abstinence societies, musical societies and cricket clubs. He also examined the leisure interests of the gentry of Auckland, activities such as home entertaining, visits, balls and dinners. Forwarding that:

A survey of the entertainment of a community can provide a considerable insight into both its social structure and aspirations. The 'gentry' of Auckland disassociated themselves as far as possible in their pleasures from the lower classes. Occasionally they mingled with the respectable section of the latter group, and even, if absolutely necessary attended amusements where the non-respectable masses were present.¹²

But the class system of home could prove difficult to sustain in a new environment and Phillips concluded, 'the major feature distinguishing Auckland society from that of England was the lack of a hereditary aristocracy. The gentry attempting to set themselves up as an aristocracy, were not accorded the same degree of respect.'¹³

An example of an attempt to sustain the class structure in early Wellington can be seen in B.R. Patterson's study of the first anniversary day celebrations where two separate committees were formed.¹⁴ Other Wellington historical analysis has focused on the political aspirations of the early colonists. Watson and Patterson undertook a detailed analysis of the people and events around the first Municipal Election in 1842.¹⁵ Diana Beaglehole examined the local political institutions established between 1839 and 1853 and the political careers of the people associated with them.¹⁶ A more contemporary

study of the suburb of Johnsonville by David G. Pearson considered the relationship between participation in voluntary associations and political leadership. He emphasized the distinction between being a mere member of a voluntary association and serving on the committee. This group were likely to hold office in a number of organizations and also aspire to positions in local government.¹⁷ Pitt examined the idea of New Zealanders being a nation of joiners but concluded there was a need for more research in the area.¹⁸ But, as pointed out by Pearson, of those people who are joiners only a sub-set of individuals will be willing office holders. In his historical analysis of American voluntary associations Schlesinger uses the terms ‘organizer and joiner’.¹⁹ Although he does not develop this distinction there appears to be a difference between the two. The factors that motivate the organizers of voluntary associations and the social contract around this group are complex and have been rarely studied in the New Zealand context.

Definitions of Voluntary Associations

Research on voluntary associations has been undertaken within the disciplines of psychology, sociology, anthropology and history each taking a particular focus. However there is no overarching theory on the topic and a variety of definitions of what constitutes a voluntary association have been promulgated.²⁰ Those definitions vary from the open and encompassing to a narrower interpretation. Morris, when describing the voluntary associations established in Britain following the mid-eighteenth century states, ‘their defining characteristics were minimal, a set of rules, a declared purpose and a membership defined by some formal act of joining’.²¹ In their review of the literature on voluntary associations a fairly broad definition was also adopted by Smith and Freeman, ‘a voluntary organization ... is a non-profit, non-government, private group which an individual joins by choice’.²² A useful and widely quoted definition has been forwarded by sociologist David L. Sills. He states that, in modern societies, they generally contain three key elements.

A voluntary association is an organized group of persons (1) that is formed in order to further some common interest of the members ; (2) in which membership is voluntary in the sense that it is neither mandatory nor acquired through birth ; and (3) that exists independently of the state.²³

When applied, this definition includes organizations such as churches, businesses, unions, and political parties. Most research on voluntary associations does not usually include them recognizing a narrower interpretation that introduces two additional

criteria. 'First, the major activity of the organization is not related to the business of making a living ... Second, the volunteer (i.e nonsalaried) members constitute a majority of the participants.'²⁴

The question has been raised as to whether the New Zealand Company, the organization that was responsible for the early establishment of Wellington, can be considered a voluntary association.²⁵ While it exhibits most of the features of a voluntary association, in terms of the definition of Sills, it is not one because of the profit element associated with being a joint stock company. Had it continued as originally established, as the New Zealand Association in 1837, the definition of a voluntary association would have applied. This is not to say that within the New Zealand Company and amongst the early influential settlers there was not a strong voluntary and philanthropic tradition. In summary, the voluntary association is a form of social grouping where there is a common interest among the members and relative freedom to join or not. Other features being they are independent of the state, non-profit and part-time. For the purpose of this research the definition of Sills is generally accepted. This means, the main group of organizations excluded from this discussion are those that have a commercial or profit focus. Committees formed for a one-off purpose such as the organization of a celebratory dinner are not included. Membership of a congregation is not recognized but a committee formed for a specific religious purpose is.

Historical Background of Voluntary Associations

In his study of the history of voluntary associations in Britain, R.J. Morris divides their development into three periods; before 1780, from 1780 to 1890 and 1890 to 1950.²⁶ His choice of 1780 as an important point of definition is related to the great 'increase in their number, variety and public importance which took place'²⁷ after this time. The pre-1780 associations developed out of informal groupings of the public and coffee houses that brought people together into relationships that were different from the family, neighbourhood or congregation. There was a personal benefit to be gained by people associating together and sharing knowledge, skills or funds based on agreed rules. The basic principle could be applied to a tavern club, book club, friendly society or an initiative to establish a library or hospital. It is this flexibility that made the voluntary association so successful. After 1780 literally dozens of associations were formed for all types of purposes. For example, following are just a selection of associations operating in Leeds in the decade 1830-1840; Leeds Public Dispensary, Infant School Society,

Mechanics' Institute, Temperance Society, Leeds Guardian Society, Leeds Horticultural Society, Leeds Zoological and Botanical Society, Law Society, Leeds Friendly Loan Society, Smoke Consumption Committee and the Footpath Association.²⁸

By the 1840s the voluntary association had evolved to a point where Morris is able to identify two distinct forms, 'the subscriber democracies of the middle classes and the network of neighbourhood societies favoured by the working classes and some of their middle-class allies.'²⁹ The growth of the subscriber democracy form of voluntary associations was driven by a specific group in the population, the 'adult male urban middle classes'.³⁰ The establishment and management of these voluntary associations had a standard format that usually began with a public meeting. At the meeting speeches and resolutions preceded the election of a committee and officers from among those present. The president was usually a respected local leader, the secretary a solicitor, the treasurer a local merchant and the committee were recognized hard working individuals of the community. The committee would report to an annual general meeting and the proceedings noted in the local press. The separately printed annual report became a unique form of institutional documentation duly recording the membership, objectives, activities and financial status of the association.³¹ The format described above was not exclusive to Britain. Schlesinger discusses the organizational practices used by what he calls crusading groups.

The first step was to choose an "imposing" designation for the organization; next "a list of respectable names must be obtained, as members and patrons"; then "a secretary and an adequate corps of assistants must be appointed and provided for from the first fruits of collections; a band of popular lectures must be commissioned, and sent forth as agents on the wide public; the press with its many-winged messengers, is put into operation"; finally, "subsidiary societies are multiplied over the length and breadth of the land."³²

In Britain, an important feature of the voluntary association was that it offered a way to transcend the multiple divisions that existed in society and provided a practical uniting force. This was specifically relevant to the middle-classes. In her study of early nineteenth century Liverpool, Arline Wilson identified a group of men who promoted the establishment of a number of cultural institutions; the Athenaeum in 1797, the Botanic Garden in 1802, Lyceum in 1803, Academy of Art in 1810 and the Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society in 1812. Their success was mainly due to the support of the business community, a disparate group who were able to put aside their differences for

the purpose. In relation to the establishment of the Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society she notes:

Although the initial impetus for the Society stemmed mainly from socially marginal men (of the sixteen founder members, half can be identified as non-Anglican, while five had been ‘Jacobins’ or members of the Anti-Slavery Society), it attracted and elected to membership West Indian merchants, Anglican priests and a wide variety of men from established sections of the middle classes. By establishing a forum, where literary and scientific topics could be discussed in a relatively informal, congenial and non-controversial atmosphere, it served to integrate the town’s middle classes (whether Dissenting or established church, anti-or pro-slavery, radical or conservative) at a time when feelings were running high in town.³³

This feature of the middle-class voluntary association is reflected in the stated objectives of the first voluntary association established in connection with Wellington. Formed in London in 1839 the intention of the Committee of the Literary, Scientific, and Philanthropic Institutions for the Benefit of the British Settlers and Native Inhabitants of the Islands of New Zealand, was to establish a public library, museum and scientific institution and a dispensary or hospital in the new settlement. These institutions, state the Committee, are one’s ‘in which all sects and denominations can perfectly agree ; and which may, therefore, with propriety and advantage, be undertaken by the Colonists as a Society’.³⁴

Morris’s neighbourhood network form of the voluntary association was more concerned with the support of the individual rather than plans to establish public amenities. They were popular with the working-class and are often described in the literature as working-class self-help organizations. However, because of their popularity with some in the middle-class the term neighbourhood network suggests a wider interpretation. They ranged from friendly societies, burial and collecting societies, building societies, co-operative societies and savings banks. Of these, the friendly societies were the most prevalent. Dating from the end of the seventeenth century, the friendly society was described by Daniel Defoe as, ‘a number of people entering into a mutual compact to help one another, in case any disaster or distress fall upon them’.³⁵ By the early nineteenth century it is estimated over 8% of the British population belonged to a local society, the forerunner to the affiliated friendly societies.³⁶ They offered meetings, often in a public house, conviviality in the form of club nights and feasts, and for a regular subscription, sickness and funeral benefits. Each local society acted independently and had its own funds and set of rules. The membership usually came

from a variety of occupations and the officers served for a period of time in rotation. The contributions of members were often held in a locked box in the public house where the society met. With multiple keys, one usually in the possession of the publican, these associations were sometimes called box clubs. Unfortunately many failed. The funds were sometimes used inappropriately and achieving a balance between a reasonable level of contribution and the promised benefit was difficult to regulate without actuarial knowledge.

Of a more ephemeral nature were the dividing societies that offered the same sickness and funeral benefits but the remaining contributions of the members were divided between them at the end of a set period of time. These ran into difficulties when times of sickness in the community reduced the fund leaving nothing to divide. There was also potential for financial disparities to occur between the old and new members, who had contributed different amounts, but would benefit equally. Other forms of working-class self-help associations were the burial clubs and building societies. Savings banks, although generally established and managed by the middle-classes, were aimed at working-class depositors.

By the 1830s the friendly society, in its various manifestations, had spread to all parts of Britain. The growth of nationally affiliated orders such as the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and Manchester Unity would be a feature of the remainder of the nineteenth century. The small local societies would lose in popularity to these large centrally organized orders where the adage 'safety in numbers' would attract members. Another benefit was that membership was transferable to another lodge. A card would be issued to travelling members that:

entitled them to an allowance from the local lodge or court, afterwards repayable from headquarters Furthermore, once a member had moved permanently to a new district, he could either be transferred to a new branch, or he could continue as a member of his old branch but pay his subscription locally.³⁷

Along with the associations of a serious nature were those to organize fetes and festivals, various musical groups, sporting clubs and special interest groups. Some researchers such as Golby and Purdue have focused on the study of popular culture where the voluntary association also played a part. They state:

From the 1830s onwards; in some towns at least, there was an increasing number of organised recreations available to some sections of the working class. The mid-1830s in Banbury witnessed the setting up of the Brass Band, the

Mechanics' Institute, the Temperance Society, the Cricket Club and the Amateur Musical Society.³⁸

The gathering of a community in celebration harks back to village life of an earlier rural generation. The importance of public gatherings and celebrations as a unifying force should not be discounted. Even after the unfortunate divisive beginnings of the Wellington anniversary celebrations the event quickly became a highly organized feature of the annual calendar and continues to be celebrated today.

The great increase in voluntary associations in the nineteenth century was not confined to Britain. It has been suggested there is a particular relationship between the American form of democracy and the willingness of its citizens to form civil and political associations. The main source of these observations was Alexis de Tocqueville in his book *Democracy in America* first published in 1835.³⁹ Based on visits to both Britain and America, Tocqueville made the following observation:

Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions constantly form associations. They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies, in which all take part, but associations of a thousand other kinds, religious, moral, serious, futile, general or restricted, enormous or diminutive. The Americans make associations to give entertainments, to found seminaries, to build inns, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send missionaries to the antipodes; in this manner they found hospitals, prisons, and schools. If it is proposed to inculcate some truth or to foster some feeling of encouragement of a great example, they form a society. Wherever at the head of some new undertaking you see the government in France, or a man of rank in England, in the United States you will be sure to find an association.⁴⁰

Doyle states that 'for Tocqueville, the American voluntary association was both a symbol of a democratic, egalitarian society and a substitute for European aristocracy to the extent that voluntary associations generated public policy at a local and national level.'⁴¹ Perhaps what is of importance here is not the distinction between America and Britain but the development of voluntary associations within a colonial environment. Doyle's research, in which he intensively studied voluntary associations in Jacksonville, Illinois from its founding in 1825 to 1870, is of particular interest. He mapped the participation of individuals in voluntary associations and identified that some men held office in several associations. Over represented among these active joiners were merchants, artisans and lawyers, 'not just because of their social standing, but because their occupations required participation'.⁴² Networking, developing social contacts, judging men of good character and being judged oiled the wheels of professional and

commercial life in a small community. By simply substituting the word colony for frontier many of Doyle's observations parallel the experience of colonial Wellington.

The Wakefield factor

Underpinning this investigation is the importance of acknowledging the settlement of Wellington was initially established by the New Zealand Company, a commercial joint stock company. In early nineteenth century Britain the subject of colonization enjoyed little public interest. But when the topic was reworked by the colonial reformer Edward Gibbon Wakefield, it began to appeal to a wider audience. His own interest in colonization was a product of accident rather than design and one can only speculate on the direction his life might have taken under different circumstances. But, from 1830 on, the words colonization and Wakefield would be inexorably intertwined. The impact of that connection set Edward Gibbon Wakefield, his family, friends, associates, and countless immigrants on an alternative life trajectory and changed the course of the development of New Zealand. Whether that impact was a positive or negative one has been, and will continue to be, vigorously debated.⁴³

Edward Gibbon Wakefield (1796-1862) was the eldest son of a family of nine children. His mother suffered ill health and he and his siblings spent a considerable time with their grandmother who was a remarkable woman for her time. Pricilla Wakefield was a Quaker, she founded a benefit society that is acknowledged as one of the earliest savings banks and she also wrote a series of best selling children's books based on an imaginary family's foreign adventures. His father Edward was responsible for researching and writing a substantial two volume work, *An Account of Ireland, Statistical and Political* and was friends with the reformers James Mill and Francis Place. The young Wakefield was removed from several schools for disobedience and spent a year studying law before he obtained the first of a number of minor diplomatic posts on the continent. He married in 1820, but his young wife died four years later following the birth of their second child, Edward Jerningham. By 1826 Edward Gibbon Wakefield was working as an attaché to the Paris Embassy. In what is thought to be a scheme to enter political life in Britain, Edward Gibbon, assisted by his brother William and others, abducted a 15 year old heiress under false pretences and married her at Gretna Green. The ensuing trial was reported in a sensational fashion, the marriage annulled by an act of Parliament, and both brothers sentenced to three years in prison, Edward Gibbon in Newgate Prison and William in Lancaster Castle.

At this time of personal crisis, Edward Gibbon turned to a Wakefield family tradition and drew on the literary experiences of his father and grandmother. In prison he read widely, with an emphasis on economic theory, and wrote two books, *Facts Relating to the Punishment of Death in the Metropolis* and *A Letter from Sydney* published in 1829. *A Letter from Sydney* marks the beginning of Wakefield's colonial legacy. On the topic of colonization he contended:

That subject presented before 1830 [had] one very remarkable feature ; namely, an immense amount of practice without any theory. The practice of colonization has in a great measure peopled the earth : it has founded nations : it has re-acted with momentous consequences on old countries, by creating and supplying new objects of desire, by stimulating industry and skill, by promoting manufactures and commerce, by greatly augmenting the wealth and population of the world : it has occasioned directly a peculiar form of government – the really democratic – and has been, indirectly, a main cause of the political changes and tendencies which now agitate Europe. Yet so lately as twenty years ago, no theory of colonization had set forth what should be the objects of the process, still less what are the best means of accomplishing them. There were long experience without a system, immense results without a plan, vast doings but no principles.⁴⁴

He went on to apply current economic, social and political thinking and develop his theory of systematic colonization. From a distance of nearly two hundred years hence Wakefield has proved an easy target for debunkers. But there can be no denying that at the time Wakefield's ideas, and the man himself, were extremely persuasive. Systematic colonization was promoted as a new approach to dealing with the rapidly increasing population of Britain. The topic took on a new imperative attracting a number of influential men to the cause and as an avalanche of publications infiltrated the general population it also influenced the emigration decisions of many thousands of people.

Following his release from prison Wakefield and his supporters formed the National Colonization Society. The mode of its formation was described by Wakefield in the following way:

When Englishmen and Americans have a public object, they meet, appoint a chairman and secretary, pass resolutions, and subscribe money ; in other words, they set to work for themselves, instead of waiting to see what their government may do for them. This self-relying course was adopted by a few people in London in 1830, who formed an association which they called the Colonization Society. The object they had in view was, in general terms, to substitute systematic colonization for mere emigration, and on a scale sufficient to produce important effects on the mother-country.⁴⁵

To promote systematic colonization, specifically to New Zealand, the New Zealand Association was established in 1837. The directors could be described as the archetypal lobby group. They promoted their ideas at every opportunity; through government representations, a mass of publication, public meetings and direct approaches to those in authority and power. But continuing opposition from the Colonial Office and missionaries, with existing interests in New Zealand, frustrated all attempts to gain official support to establish a colony. In 1839 the Association was reconstituted as the New Zealand Land Company and floated as a joint stock company. For £101 an investor could purchase a land order that entitled the holder to one town acre and 100 country acres in the new settlement. There was a group of investors who intended to travel to New Zealand and worked closely with the New Zealand Company planners. However, there were also many speculating in just another investment opportunity. The impact of these absentee owners would prove to be one of the many flaws in the practical application of Wakefield's theory.

By May 1839 the Company's plans were well advanced and the decision was made to send the Company's ship *Tory* to New Zealand under the charge of Colonel William Wakefield. The aims of the expedition were, '1st, the purchase of lands for the Company; 2dly, the acquisition of general information as to the country; - and, 3dly, preparations for the formation of settlements under the auspices of the Company.'⁴⁶ When he reached New Zealand, William Wakefield focused his attention on the Cook Strait area and purchased large tracts of land on both sides of the Strait from the local Maori inhabitants. Port Nicholson was judged to be the most suitable site for the Company's first settlement. In accordance with the theory of systematic colonization many aspects of the settlement were planned in advance. From the selection of the settlers to the layout of the town and the distribution of the land orders, this was intended to be a very different type of colony from those resulting from transportation or the random groupings of men working for distant entrepreneurs. Their first settlement, would therefore, be an experiment in the Company's master plan to develop a number in the colony. To fulfil the self sustaining nature of the theory the rapid and well publicized development of Wellington was imperative. It would be necessary for the settlers to draw upon the self-reliance favoured by Edward Gibbon Wakefield and as a mechanism for promoting co-operation the voluntary association had the potential to play a significant role.

In early 1840 the immigrant ships *Aurora*, *Oriental*, *Duke of Roxburgh*, *Bengal Merchant*, *Adelaide* and *Glenberive* sailed into Wellington's harbour, Port Nicholson just

as Governor William Hobson was negotiating the Treaty of Waitangi with the northern Maori chiefs. In May 1840 Hobson proclaimed British Sovereignty over the entire country. The settlers who had left Britain under the auspices of a private company arrived as immigrants to Britain's newest colonial acquisition. The variant plans of the Company in Wellington and the government administration in Auckland would be a constant and ongoing source of tension. In early 1841 Colonel William Wakefield reported to the Secretary of the New Zealand Company:

Neither is it unreasonable to expect a favourable change in the disposition of the Government ; but at the same time it is on their own efforts, which founded the colony in the face of official hostility, that the settlers depend. This spirit of manly self-reliance daily gains force as we proceed ; and I am mistaken if the British public, which has watched our progress with so much interest, will not discern in it the chief reason for anticipating continued success.⁴⁷

Slow Beginnings 1840-1841

Despite the New Zealand Company purporting their first settlement would be planned, the European settlers who arrived on Petone beach in early 1840 would not have been impressed at the state of affairs. The preferred location for the survey of the land was proving to be a matter of dispute between the Principal Agent William Wakefield and his Surveyor-General William Mein Smith. If the original design was to be followed the only area of the harbour suitably flat for the development of the town was the Hutt Valley. Mein Smith began to lay out the sections while the settlers huddled in make-shift accommodation around the Petone foreshore and Hutt River. But as the natural features of Port Nicholson became more familiar it was clear the area was prone to flooding and the inner harbour, with less flat land and a deep harbour, was more suitable for establishing the town. Mein Smith and his surveyors were eventually forced to concede and the survey began anew on the opposite side of the harbour. The settlers followed the surveyors eager to establish themselves on the land they had purchased from the Company. Plans proceeded, land ballots were held and colonists attempted to locate their land amongst the steep bush clad hills. Set against this activity was the reality that William Wakefield's purchase from the local Maori inhabitants had been effectively scuttled by the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi and the proclamation of British Sovereignty.

One of the first voluntary associations established in Wellington was a friendly society, the Union Benefit Sick Society that met at Mr Allen's Port Nicholson Hotel and Tavern. A newspaper advertisement informing the working-classes the first monthly

meeting had taken place and ‘passed rules that would be of great benefit to any who would become members of the same’.⁴⁸ The early establishment of a friendly society seems unsurprising but convivial societies and gentleman’s clubs were also a priority. The Pickwick Club, Commercial and Agricultural Club and Wakefield Club were all established or proposed by October 1840. The Pickwick Club having the distinction of being the first voluntary association established in Wellington.

The Pickwick Club of New Zealand first met in May 1840 at Elsdon’s Commercial Inn and Tavern in Petone. It had been three years since Charles Dickens published *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* and Pickwick Clubs were formed all over Britain with the members often taking on the name of a Pickwick character.⁴⁹ Inspired by the prospect the following appeared in the local newspaper:

To our friends in England, this cannot fail to awaken the most pleasing sensations ; as it tends to prove, that in this remote region of the globe --- this land of savages --- Englishmen relish the inimitable works of “Boz,” and that they desire to spread the fame of the author in this their adopted land.⁵⁰

When criticized for being a convivial society the Club announced that a portion of the funds were being set aside for the purchase of periodicals, that a library was being established and a medal was to be awarded for the best prose or verse. The Pickwick Club’s first quarter report was written in highly exaggerated language extending over a full column of the newspaper and extolling the character of the Club and its role in bringing together men from differing backgrounds for a common purpose.⁵¹ But all enthusiasm was curtailed when four members drowned in one of the many boating accidents off the Petone beach. The loss of the publican and club treasurer William Elsdon and the members; Pierce, Lancaster and Hight was a setback. It survived this tragedy and was re-established in 1841 across the harbour with plans to build a hall called the Athenaeum. Although a large building called the Exchange was built at Te Aro the involvement of the Pickwick Club in this initiative is not clear. A final reference to the Pickwick Club can be found in the *New Zealand Journal*, ‘the Pickwick Club had been fixed in a convenient house, where, in a large room, with turkey carpets, the colonist could take his chop and pint of wine with comfort, almost amounting to luxury’.⁵² Only ten members of the Pickwick Club have been identified although there was sufficient membership to form a cricket team in May 1840. Whether the Pickwick Club continued on, changed its name or simply ceased to exist is unknown but its President William Lyon was involved in many early voluntary associations.

William Lyon (1805-1879) ran a bookselling and printing business in Hamilton, near Glasgow and was a fellow of the Geological Society of England. He came to Wellington onboard the *Duke of Roxburgh* arriving in February 1840. His motivation for emigrating is not known although he was a staunch supporter of the Free Church of Scotland. In Wellington, Lyon was a general merchant selling all types of goods including hard liquor. By October 1841 he had a shop at the corner of Willis Street and Lambton Quay, an enviable position even in those days. He was an astute businessman with Edward Jerningham Wakefield noting that Lyon printed an advertisement in Maori that was ‘exciting their lively delight at this time in Wellington, and all along the neighbouring coast, although it only enumerated the various articles which he had for sale.’⁵³ Lyon had a wide involvement in voluntary associations particularly those formed to provide a public service. In 1842 he founded the New Zealand Pacific Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, the first lodge of freemasons in New Zealand. Lyon would later specialize in the bookselling and printing trade and it is obvious from his interest in the Pickwick Club and other voluntary associations in Wellington that literature was of great importance to him. A strong theme during his first years in Wellington was his efforts to establish a literary institute. Despite the failure of two attempts to establish a viable public library this was finally achieved with the opening of the Wellington Athenaeum in 1850. Lyon was active in all these attempts even purchasing, at his own expense, the building of one failed institution to start a Mechanics’ Institute in 1842. His biography states that ‘in business he was strictly honourable, in public life straightforward and generous. He was an acute observer and a great reader, and possessed one of the best libraries in the Colony.’⁵⁴

Of the other clubs established in 1840 the fate of the Commercial and Agricultural Club of Britannia is unknown beyond the report of the first meeting held in Barrett’s Hotel where an entrance fee of ten guineas was agreed to by the ‘agricultural and commercial gentlemen of Port Nicholson.’⁵⁵ The Wakefield Club, named in honour of Colonel Wakefield, were fortunate to secure a club house purchased from a settler. The membership was small and exclusive and a house dinner was held each Saturday evening. The *Rules and Regulations for the Government of the Wakefield Club* included 27 carefully drafted rules and a list of the original members and honorary members.⁵⁶ The members were mostly local merchants or men close to William Wakefield and the New Zealand Company. Its presence extolled by Edward Jerningham Wakefield in his

book *Adventure in New Zealand* that was aimed at portraying the new colony in a favourable light.

Although very quiet and hidden in its operation, it has tended very much to preserve a high British tone in the society of Wellington, and even of the other settlement's of Cook's Strait, whose best inhabitants become honorary members of the Club during their visits to Wellington. Although the club was at first assailed with much derision and loud abuse of its aristocratic character as unsuited to the tastes and feelings of the majority, it has steadily maintained its station ; and processes by this time an undoubted power of determining the claim of a new man to the respect and confidence of society.⁵⁷

The Supreme Court Judge, Henry Samuel Chapman, had an alternative view on the Wakefield Club:

Members of the Club were more or less disreputable, and exclusive as this club was, a considerable number of very excellent persons never did join it. The gambling of the club ruined many of its members, and at this moment it has dwindled to nothing at all.⁵⁸

By late 1840 the site of town was now established with buildings and houses under construction in the commercial area of Te Aro, with its close proximity to the harbour, and the more administrative area of Thorndon where Colonel William Wakefield built his house on an area called the Government Reserve. The close of 1840 saw the population of Wellington consisting of; the indigenous Maori population, estimated to be 800 people living in a number of tribal communities around the harbour, European men often with Maori wives that had settled before 1840, 1200 New Zealand Company settlers under the leadership of William Wakefield and a group of settlers and merchants from Australia. Veterans of the Australian colonial experience they had seen opportunities for entrepreneurial advancement in New Zealand. With no particular loyalty to the Company or the colonial government this group were among the most active in the community.

In December 1840 the establishment of a library and reading room was proposed at a public meeting. Affronted at the high entrance fee of £5 to join the library, whose books had been donated for all the people in the settlement, another public meeting called the working men of Port Nicholson to form an association 'for the purpose of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge, by the means of a library, discussions, lectures, &c'.⁵⁹ The newspaper report suggesting that in some colonies social disruption had occurred where the poor man was denied the opportunity to improve himself:

The working man away from his native land, kindred, and friends, planting a more favourable home for himself and offspring in this distant region, with no

other interest in the land of his adoption than the investment of his only capital, his labour, makes union the more necessary, to advance his position in society through the purchase and establishment of a library of useful works on arts, sciences, history, and agriculture, daily and weekly papers, periodicals, magazines, &c, &c., to furnish him with knowledge, the real source of power.⁶⁰

The argument over the use of the books donated for Wellington paralleled the divisions around the celebrations of the first anniversary. In such a small population the replication of resources to appease class distinctions was not proving to be a successful strategy.⁶¹ In comparison, the second anniversary celebrations of 1842 were organized by a single committee consisting of 34 men. According to newspaper reports the day was beautiful and the people of Wellington and Petone enjoyed the various races and especially the rural diversions such as jumping in sacks, climbing a greasy pole and catching a soaped pig's tail where the prize was the pig. However, the evening activities offered the choice of two separately organized balls, one at the Exchange in Te Aro and the other at Barrett's Hotel.⁶²

A stalwart of the anniversary committee was Captain William Barnard Rhodes (1807-1878) who was a member on at least seven occasions and possibly more because there is no list for 1845. Rhodes was born in Yorkshire and ran off to sea at an early age becoming involved in trading and business ventures around Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific in the 1830s. He settled in Wellington in 1841 establishing himself as a merchant in Te Aro and he also owned large areas of land in both islands. Apparently his major motivation in life was, 'to get rich and stay rich'⁶³ but he still had sufficient time to be involved with a number of voluntary associations in early Wellington and was later a Member of the House of Representatives, Provincial Council and Legislative Council.⁶⁴

The year 1841 saw the formation of two associations with the purpose of assisting the working men of the settlement acquire land. The Wellington Land Association was established in March and the purpose was, 'by a combination of acquired capital to purchase land, and to let or re-sell it with advantage, for the funds of the association.'⁶⁵ Town acres were to be purchased from the accumulated contributions, then sub-divided into eight and balloted amongst the membership who contributed five shillings a week. The Port Nicholson Association for the Purchase of Country Land operated on a similar principle where the Association 'will purchase sections, or choices for sections of land, which when selected will be sub-divided into portions and balloted in accordance with the rules of the Association. The payments are weekly, and of an amount which every

man has in his power to contribute.⁶⁶ Because there was no savings bank in Wellington investment in the Association was promoted as a method of capital gain.

Prominent on the committee of the Wellington Men's Association and the Wellington Land Association was Rowland Davis (1807?-1879) who came to Wellington in 1840 onboard the *Aurora*. Born in Ireland, he was a tradesman and was the President of the Engineers, Smiths and Machinists of the western districts in London. He was involved with a number of social issues; the promotion of the Reform Bill, anti-slavery and Catholic emancipation. In Wellington he initially worked as an engineer before building the Aurora Tavern in Willis Street and becoming its publican. He was a member of a number of lobby groups and was regularly on the anniversary committee. In the 1850s Davis moved to Canterbury where he was involved with the formation of the first Odd Fellows lodge and a mechanics' institute. He was also elected a member of the Canterbury Provincial Council.⁶⁷

Another initiative proposed during this early period was the establishment of a hospital. A prospectus for the Wellington Hospital was published in the newspaper asking for donations of £300 for its operation.⁶⁸ The prospectus did not follow the usual mechanisms of calling a public meeting and selecting a committee. This point was noted in a letter to the editor by the Presbyterian minister, Rev. McFarlane, suggesting a general meeting of the community rather than a private initiative would be preferable. McFarlane's unease proved to be well founded when the gentleman responsible, a Rev. Mr Davy, was found to have performed illegal marriages, had embezzled the funds for the hospital and was making a shipboard escape to Sydney.⁶⁹ By comparison, voluntary associations have a number of checks and balances that promote public confidence. In particular, appending a list of names to a proposal provides the public with a guide to the reliability and good character of those people involved and the likelihood it would be a successful venture.

In November 1841 one of the more successful of the early voluntary associations was established. The Horticultural Society survived the decade where many others fell by the wayside. Established at a meeting at Barrett's Hotel, originally under the title of the Wellington Horticultural and Botanical Society, it was 'formed for the promotion of horticulture in all its branches'.⁷⁰ With a President and four Vice-Presidents the Horticultural Society was run by the default leaders of the community and can be regarded as an important organization in the social structure of the settlement. Although, according to the rules, the President was appointed on an annual basis, only one person

held that office until his death in 1848, Colonel William Wakefield. Afterwards it was held by William Fox his New Zealand Company successor. The main activity of the Horticultural Society was regular exhibitions where fruit, flowers and vegetables would be judged and awarded prizes. The Society was open to all for a 5s subscription and the exhibition entries came from all the gardeners of the area. There were often entries from the local Maori although they were judged in a separate category. The Horticultural Society also sent consignments of New Zealand native plants to Britain and received seeds in return. Beyond a hall or large room to hold an exhibition the Horticultural Society needed little infrastructure. When compared to an organization such as a mechanics' institute and its requirement for premises, books, teachers and staff, the Horticultural Society was well suited to the colonial environment.

In Wellington today, Colonel William Wakefield (1801-1848)⁷¹ is remembered as the Principal Agent of the New Zealand Company, brother of Edward Gibbon and Arthur Wakefield and the man who took advantage of Maori by claiming to have bought vast tracts of land to suit the colonization ambitions of a few wealthy men in Britain. He is not remembered as being the President of the Horticultural Society and the Mechanics' Institute or as a man of immense loyalty to his family and employers. A younger brother of Edward Gibbon he followed in his footsteps working for the British Embassy in Turin and, because of his involvement with Edward Gibbon's abduction attempt, he too served three years in prison. But unlike Edward Gibbon's publications there is no equivalent legacy of his time spent there and he was dealt a further blow with the death of his wife. In 1832 he entered the service of the British Legion and served in Portugal where he was made a Knight of the Order of Tower and Sword. He then went to Spain and rose to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and was created Knight in the Order of San Fernando for his distinguished services. It was at this time he formed relationships with other officers who would be life long friends and also travel to Wellington; Major Richard Baker, Dr John Dorset, Major David Stark Durie and Major Alfred Hornbrook.

Another brother, Arthur Wakefield had been the preferred choice as the New Zealand Company's Principal Agent but, when he declined the position, William took on the role in spite of his unfortunate experience with Edward Gibbon's failed abduction scheme. As the New Zealand Company's representative in Wellington his responsibility was to the Company, colonists and settlers. Initially looked upon as the leader of the settlement his authority was undermined by forces in the government administration and the inability of the Company to fulfil many of the promises it had made. For some of the

colonists William Wakefield became the object of their dissatisfaction with the New Zealand Company and just as an agreement was finally reached with the government on their land claims he died of a stroke aged 48 years. His funeral brought the town to a halt with all businesses closed and flags at half-mast. Over 1000 people followed the casket to the grave with many Maori dressed in European clothes draped with black crêpe paper as they paid their condolences to the man they called Wideawake. He was a man noted for presenting a different demeanour in public life and on private occasions. He lacked the intellectual powers of Edward Gibbon and the charismatic qualities of Arthur and although the role of Principal Agent may have ultimately been beyond his abilities he accepted the practical task and to that end he was unswervingly loyal.⁷²

Confidence 1842-1843

The years 1842 and 1843 saw a greatly increased number and range in voluntary associations. Over the two years it is estimated nearly 30 voluntary associations were established. Lobby groups, sporting clubs, special interest groups and the self-help associations of home all made an appearance. One of the most notable events of this period was the election of a Municipal Council in October 1842 and its discontinuation a little over a year later. The first arrangements for a form of local authority were made by the New Zealand Company when it appointed a Council of Colonists from among the colonists before leaving Britain. Once in New Zealand the Council began meeting regularly. Although these arrangements had been made and agreed to by the settlers before the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi it was interpreted by Governor Hobson as an illegal association verging on treason. He sent the Colonial Secretary, Willoughby Shortland with mounted police and 30 soldiers to Wellington and ordered the dissolution of the Council. Following this action Governor Hobson's reputation reached a new low when he selected Auckland as the capital ahead of Wellington.

Local administration of some form was strongly favoured by some and a draft Municipal Corporation Bill and accompanying memorial was prepared to submit to the Governor and Legislative Council. The process around the acceptance of the bill and memorial followed a familiar pattern beginning with a public meeting in May 1841.⁷³ Apart from the internal regulation of the town in terms of police, lighting and pavements there were specific concerns about the regulation of the harbour, the erection of lighthouses and the administration of justice. Work on the bill and memorial took place over several months of 1841 and as if to emphasize that the initiative was supported by

all sectors of the community it was approved by two joint committees, one made up of working men and the other by the town elite. By August 1841 the united committees had agreed on the wording of the bill and the accompanying memorial was discussed at a meeting at Barrett's Hotel attended by 400 people. Those attending were asked to vote on an alternative final paragraph that strongly criticized their treatment by the colonial government.⁷⁴ While the vote went in favour of the original, milder version the entire proceedings of the meeting, including the rejected paragraph, were published in the newspaper. With the Government brig at anchor in the harbour it was unlikely the Governor would not be aware of the antagonistic feelings of some in the community towards him. The bill was passed and an election for a Mayor and Municipal Council held in October 1842.

In response to the forthcoming election a meeting, of what was reported to be mechanics and labourers, took place 'for the purpose of appointing a Committee to watch over the interests of the [mechanics and labourers] in the proposed Municipal Corporation Bill'.⁷⁵ But, as Beaglehole points out when the make up of this group is examined the term working men does not equate to working-class.⁷⁶ Maybe, in this new and tight knit community where, under the early difficult beginnings of settlement an individual's abilities could be closely observed, those qualities had an influence on people's choices. The ill-fated election caused uproar in the town prompting Looker-on, in a letter to the editor, to comment on the resultant disruption.

Being in the third year of its colonial existence, now made a borough, the public spirit of its inhabitants is about to be developed, and all parties are on the *qui vive*, washed and unwashed, great and small to see the interests of their particular party represented ; committees, of all manners and descriptions, are formed Walk the Beach, we meet with groups, consisting of three or four individuals, with countenances as solemn and as ominous as members of the inquisition, and the whole theme or topic so often reiterated is - He is not on our committee. Where is the meeting? Who is on your list? - and party spirit shewing itself with all the by-gone rancor and animosity peculiar to electioneering .⁷⁷

During this time two more gentlemen's clubs were established the Wellington Club and the Wellington Rooms. The Wellington Club was formed in December 1841 with 25 original members and the aim was to 'promote a spirit of social intercourse among the Colonists, and afford a means of shewing hospitality to strangers.'⁷⁸ The main activity of the Wellington Club was weekly dinners held on Thursday evenings at six. Although the early records have been lost it is thought this represents the early beginning of the

Wellington Club that is still in existence today.⁷⁹ In late 1843 the proprietor of Barrett's Hotel added an extension to the hotel that included a ground floor billiard room and an upstairs room for the use of the masonic lodges and as a reading room where papers and periodicals would be available. The life subscription to the billiard room was £1 and an annual subscription of £1 to the reading room.⁸⁰ The name of only one member of the Wellington Rooms has been identified, the Honorary Secretary, John Dorset that appears at the foot of the newspaper advertisements.

Dr John Dorset (1807-1856) was a close personal friend of William Wakefield and came to New Zealand with him onboard the *Tory* in 1839. Born in London he trained as a surgeon and in the early 1830s enlisted as a captain in the British Legion in Portugal and also served with the Legion in Spain. He was awarded the first and second Class Order of Tower and Sword for his actions at Algaves, in Portugal. It was during this time he probably met William Wakefield and several other army men who came to Wellington. Dr Dorset was one of the most active men in the community and he was involved with a wide range of voluntary associations although, apart from the anniversary committee, he didn't seem to sustain an ongoing interest. At various times he belonged to the Jockey Club, a cricket club and because of his close association with the Wakefield's he was on both the Wairau and Wakefield memorial committees. His military experience was utilized on the Committee of Public Safety in 1843. One of three Dorset brothers that came to New Zealand he died suddenly in Nelson in 1856.⁸¹ His obituary ran over three columns in the *Wellington Independent*. He was described as having a strong interest in 'the cause of the people' and 'he was never wanting when either personal exertion, public countenance, or friendly influence, could aid the cause in which he had spent so many years of his life.'⁸² On a personal level, he was highly regarded by all sectors of the community but especially among the working people that he treated 'with a genuine and transparent simplicity of manner'.⁸³

The year 1842 saw the establishment of three recreational clubs in Wellington; the Jockey Club, Wellington Cricket Club and the Albion Cricket Club. The Jockey Club was established in October 1842 at a meeting held at Barrett's Hotel. Its purpose was to encourage racing as a means of promoting the breeding of horses in the colony.⁸⁴ The Wellington Cricket Club began in November 1842 and was initially faced with the lack of an opposing team, played a match amongst the members as part of the 1842 Christmas celebrations. The Blues prevailed over Reds and following the game all adjourned to the

Ship Hotel for roast beef and plum pudding.⁸⁵ The formation of the Albion Cricket Club shortly after ensured a real contest.⁸⁶

One of the original members of the Jockey Club and the Secretary and Treasurer of the Burnham Water Races, established later in the decade, was Kenneth Bethune (1825?-1855). He was one of a group of merchants who were particularly active in the community that included, William Lyon, Robert Waitt, George Moore, Rowland Davis and William Rhodes. Originally from Ross-shire in Scotland he came to Wellington onboard the *Cuba* and went into business with George Hunter who was elected Wellington's first mayor in the municipal election. Bethune's date of birth is widely recorded as 1825 but his level of involvement in the community suggests that of a man in his mid-twenties rather than a teenager. Bethune was a stalwart of the anniversary committee, the Scotch Church and the Pacific Lodge. He returned to Britain and married in 1855 tragically dying four months later.⁸⁷

There was a brief appearance of a group called the Benevolent Society of Carpenters and Joiners. In May 1842 they were advertising the New Zealander hotel as a House of Call for gentlemen and builders looking for good workmen. By December of the same year they were again placing advertisements in the newspaper, apparently disillusioned with their prospects, and offering to contract with a ships' captain to take a group of no less than 20 to Valparaiso, Sydney or Hobart Town.⁸⁸

The period 1842 to 1843 saw the establishment of several affiliated friendly societies. The first was the New Zealand Pacific Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in November 1842. In 1843 the Britannia Lodge of the Manchester Unity of Independent Odd Fellows, the Ancient Order of Druids and the Independent Order of Rechabites were founded. The activities of these voluntary associations are difficult to follow as they tend to announce their establishment by way of advertisement in the local newspaper followed by silence. However, the beginning of a Tent of the Independent Order of Rechabites is interesting because it actively promoted itself through a letter to the editor stating its objectives and that it was superior to benefit societies because they would support any Rechabite member 'as if he resided in the same town and belonged to our Tent'.⁸⁹ They also published the charges for membership. For those aged 16 to 25 years the subscription was 5s, 25 to 30 years was 7s.6d, 30 to 35 years was 10s. At 40 years old members would be paying £1.⁹⁰ It is not clear what time period this subscription covers or what benefits might be available for members but, as the fourth friendly society established in Wellington within a short period of time, publicizing the

subscription may have been a way of attracting members away from more expensive societies.

Along with the friendly societies of Britain the temperance societies also made an appearance. The Port Nicholson Total Abstinence Society was established in May 1842 and the New Zealand Temperance Society several months later. In 1844 a deputation from the Total Abstinence Society presented a memorial to Governor FitzRoy asking for a plot of land to build a Temperance Hall. The memorial was signed by 60 members of the society although the names were not published in the newspaper report. After meeting with the deputation the Governor granted the Society a piece of land at Te Aro near one also granted to the Odd Fellows.⁹¹

A Mechanics' Institute was established in 1842 but went into abeyance in 1844 when the organization had to vacate the building it occupied because it was partially constructed with raupo and deemed a fire hazard under the Raupo House Ordinance. Its predecessor had been the Port Nicholson Exchange and Public Library. When its establishment was proposed in late 1840 the high subscription fee was opposed by the Working Men's Association because the books had been donated for the whole community. The Port Nicholson Exchange and Public Library was established in a large building near the Thorndon foreshore. It was intended to operate in two parts; an exchange room for commercial business and a public library. The idea for an exchange was superseded by a superior edifice built near the harbour at Te Aro. The library and museum were forced to close because most of the original subscribers failed to pay. Bookseller William Lyon and others stepped in and purchased the building for the Mechanics' Institute.

The Mechanics' Institute was formally established at a public meeting at the South Seas Hotel attended by 200 people.⁹² In a familiar process a committee was appointed to formulate the rules. They were adopted at a subsequent meeting where a committee and officers were elected by those present. The administrative structure of the Mechanics' Institute provides an example of the subscriber democracy model of voluntary associations. For two years the Mechanics' Institute ran a public school, a library and offered lectures and discussion classes. In early 1844 a memorial sent to Governor FitzRoy asking for a grant of a reserve of land for the erection of a new building was granted. The ceremony to lay the foundation stone was conducted with full Masonic honours including an impressive procession that included the dignitaries, officials of the Institute, children of the school, the Independent Order of Rechabites, Independent Order

of Odd Fellows and the Pacific Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons.⁹³ Unfortunately, the plans to erect a new building were affected by the crisis of confidence the settlement would experience over the next few years. The books of the library were put into storage until 1848 when it was revived with William Lyon again in the forefront of promoting the provision of a public library in Wellington.

A long serving Vice-President and Trustee of the Mechanics' Institute was George Moore (1805-1877) who came to Wellington on the *Martha Ridgway* in 1840. He was a general merchant with a shop on Lambton Quay. Along with the Mechanics' Institute, he was involved in the annual anniversary committees, the Horticultural Society and was a Senior Warden in the Pacific Lodge. Moore was also a member of several of the early lobby groups and the Wellington Savings Bank. His obituary notes his association with Dr Featherston, Sir William Fitzherbert, and merchants George Hunter and William Hickson as a group of men that had contributed to the founding of Wellington. Stating that, George Moore was a 'most generous and liberal contributor to all charitable objects, and a highly valued and respected friend in private life'.⁹⁴

The optimism and community activity of 1842 was dealt a severe blow in November when a fire broke out at a baker's in Lambton Quay. Fanned by a strong northerly wind and flammable building materials it spread quickly along the beach from property to property south towards Te Aro. No lives were lost but a total of 57 properties were destroyed with estimated losses of over £15,000.⁹⁵ A public subscription was immediately opened and cash donations and gifts of building materials, food and clothing were received. At a public meeting called by the Mayor George Hunter a Fire Relief Committee was appointed to administer the funds and goods. The committee was made up of clergymen, professional men and local merchants. One of the merchants was John Wade a man who, in the 1840s, was probably the most active person involved in the voluntary associations of Wellington.

The contribution of most of the well known men of Wellington referred to here is acknowledged by an entry in the 1940 edition of *A Dictionary of National Biography*. But there is no entry for Johnny Wade who was involved in all aspects of community life and described by Edward Jerningham Wakefield as a 'man of the people'.⁹⁶ John Wade (1814-1885) was one of a group of merchants that came to Wellington in 1840 from the Australian colonies. There is little recorded about his background although he may have previously been in Canada and he left Wellington for the California gold fields in early 1850. He worked as an auctioneer and merchant and had many business enterprises

including whaling and land speculation and after whom the suburb of Wadestown is named. He was involved with the anniversary committees, several gentlemen's clubs, the Mechanics' Institute, Country Land Association, Horticultural Society, Jockey and cricket clubs. He seems to have been a natural choice for many of the lobby groups. From the Committee to Report on Bills before the Legislative Council to the Committee to Prevent Misappropriation of the Cemetery, Wade was involved in at least seven of these types of associations. He probably possessed skills that were well suited. The newspaper report of his death stating that, when he went to America, he studied law 'and in a short time became one of the most successful pleaders in the San Francisco courts of law.'⁹⁷

The disastrous fire of late 1842 heralded the beginning of a difficult time for settler and Maori. The good will that had existed between the races in the early days gave way to minor skirmishes over land that threatened to deteriorate into violence. This sense of vulnerability escalated into fear in June 1843 when news of the violent deaths of Captain Arthur Wakefield and twenty other men in the Wairau Valley, near Nelson was received.⁹⁸ Arthur Wakefield (1799-1843) was the brother of Edward Gibbon and William and the New Zealand Company's agent for Nelson its second settlement in New Zealand. A dispute over the ownership of the valuable land between the Maori chief Te Raupraha and the New Zealand Company lead to the unfortunate events. The violent death of the charismatic Arthur Wakefield dealt a severe psychological blow to the small European communities on both sides of Cook's Strait. A public meeting was quickly called in Wellington and a Committee for Public Safety formed. Concerns over the events in Nelson lead those present to agree to prepare a memorial 'for instant and effectual protection to be afforded, to preserve the lives, liberty, and property of her Majesty's subjects at Port Nicholson.'⁹⁹ The memorial was sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies through the government administration in Auckland and another copy to the Governor of New South Wales. At the same meeting there was also a resolution for the formation of a volunteer corps called the Military Sub-Committee. For defensive purposes, Wellington was divided into three districts with places of assembly in the case of alarm. Captain Sharp commanded the Te Aro District, Major Durie the Lambton Quay District, Captain Daniell and Major Baker the Thorndon Flat.¹⁰⁰ The Rifle Club, that had been established in May 1843 changed its name to the Rifle Corps and came under the control of the Military Sub-Committee. A general muster saw over 200 men being drilled by the former military officers of the settlement. Defensive fortifications were

constructed at strategic points around the town. In August the settlers received a response to their memorial from the Colonial Secretary's Office. The Company of the 96th Regiment consisting of 58 men were under orders to proceed to Port Nicholson in the Government Brig. Upon their arrival Major Durie was instructed that it would no longer be necessary for the inhabitants to muster and drill. After being criticized by the colonial administration for establishing an illegal form of self government and now for an unlawful militia the news of this instruction sent a public meeting into an uproar with numerous resolutions in opposition being put to those assembled.¹⁰¹

One of the former military men involved with the Military Sub-Committee was Major Richard Baker (1810-1854). Originally from Middlesex, he served in Portugal and Spain with William Wakefield and Dr Dorset, being awarded the Order of St Ferdinand of the first class in Spain. He came to Wellington in 1840 onboard the *Aurora* and initially worked as a wine merchant in Farish Street before being appointed a magistrate in 1846.¹⁰² Along with John Wade, William Lyon, and Dr Dorset he was one of the men involved in voluntary associations. Apart from the anniversary fete and the defence initiatives, he was also involved with the Britannia Cricket Club and Burnham Water Races. In 1849 alone he was on the committees of five associations and throughout the decade was a regular member of the Horticultural Society Committee.

The arrival of the men of the 96th Regiment heralded the beginning of a military presence in Wellington that would reach a peak in 1846. In that year the new Governor, George Grey sent a large contingent of military to Wellington. This policy had the effect of escalating tensions between the settlers and Maori, especially in the Hutt Valley, where, following a series of unfortunate incidents, the dissenting Maori were effectively driven from the area.¹⁰³

Stagnation 1844-1847

The year 1844 draws a sharp delineation in the number of voluntary associations established in early Wellington. Between 1840 and 1843 over 40 were established but in the years 1844 to 1847 only 17 were formed including the annual anniversary fete committees. It might be supposed there would be a surge in the numbers established in the early days of the settlement, which accounts for the activity of 1842 to 1843. However, the decline is so extreme in the years immediately following that it suggests a sudden loss of confidence in the future prospects of the settlement. Along with the reduction in the establishment of new associations the European population between

1843 and 1846 stagnated and hovered around the 4000 mark. The unresolved claims over the ownership of land and the concerns over potential violence from Maori placed Wellington in a state of paralysis. Following the death of Governor Hobson, Robert FitzRoy was announced as his successor in April 1843. The settlers of Wellington looked to the new Governor to offer assistance but they were to be disappointed by his response.

In preparation for Governor FitzRoy's first visit to Wellington a committee had been formed to write an address and memorial outlining various grievances of the settlers. A public meeting was held to consider and approve the address and memorial in early January however a dispute over whether the report was a reflection of the whole committee arose during the meeting and a new committee was appointed.¹⁰⁴ The addition of merchants Wade, Davis, Bethune, Waitt and also Dr Featherston, ensured the address and memorial were completed and agreed to within days. Published in full in the newspaper the memorial to Governor FitzRoy asked for assistance in the resolution of the impasse on the land purchased from the New Zealand Company and protection from the threat of violence from Maori.¹⁰⁵ FitzRoy's response gave an assurance that the land question would be addressed, 'upon strictly just principles; not by aggression or compulsory measures.'¹⁰⁶ On the question of the Wairau incident he advised:

events have shown me most painfully the necessity of restraining the spirit of aggression, and injustice, on the part of my own countrymen, and the danger of trusting executive authority in the hands of men whose judgement and better feelings may be neutralised by unrestrained impulse. Difficult indeed it would be to induce the intelligent, active, and daring Chiefs of New Zealand, supported as they are by their thousands of armed warriors, to submit tamely to laws administered with such evident injustice as that which, to the disgrace of our nation indelibly characterised the fatal proceedings at Wairau painful as it is to my feelings, ... our countrymen were the aggressors.¹⁰⁷

Governor FitzRoy attended a levee where he was introduced to the prominent men of the town. From those assembled he singled out Edward Jerningham Wakefield criticizing comments that he published about local affairs. This perceived attack and the content of the reply to the memorial was a prelude to what escalated into a concerted campaign by the New Zealand Company to have FitzRoy removed from office.

One of the men rushed onto the committee to prepare the memorial to FitzRoy was Robert Waitt (1816-1866). Originally from Scotland he received business training in London and was one of the merchants that came to Wellington from the Australian colonies in 1841. He worked as an auctioneer and merchant establishing a wharf and warehouse on the Te Aro foreshore. He also had commercial and farming interests in

Canterbury and in 1854 sold his Wellington business and moved there. During his years in Wellington he was involved in a range of voluntary associations. He was a regular member of the anniversary fete committee, the Horticultural Society, Savings Bank and several lobby groups. He is reported to have ‘a friendly manner with all kinds of people, and a good sense of humour, and enjoyed speaking the broadest Scots dialect.’¹⁰⁸

In late 1844 a public meeting was chaired by Henry St Hill to consider the establishment of a hospital for the destitute sick and a committee was formed for the purpose of collecting subscriptions.¹⁰⁹ It appears that nothing came of this initiative and two years later the government advertised for tenders to erect a native hospital in Wellington. Opened in September 1847 the native hospital was built on Thorndon Flat and within a short period of time its favoured name became the Colonial Hospital.¹¹⁰ While the Colonial Hospital was not established by a voluntary association it is an interesting example of a public service funded by the government rather than through voluntary measures. Illustrating a trend that, ‘hospitals run by voluntary organisations, on the English model, were never significant in New Zealand.’¹¹¹ Chairman at the 1844 hospital meeting was Henry St Hill (1807-1866) a close friend of William Wakefield and staunch supporter of the Church of England. He came to Wellington onboard the *Adelaide* in 1840 and held the position of magistrate and later sheriff. He was a regular member of the anniversary committee in the latter part of the decade and he was a long serving member of the Horticultural Society Committee, the Mechanics’ Institute and Savings Bank. He returned to England in 1864 dying two years later.

A public meeting was held in January 1844 with Colonel Wakefield in the chair to establish a Seamen’s Friend Society ‘to promote the spiritual and temporal advantage of the seamen frequenting this port.’¹¹² A number of interdenominational church services were advertised under the name of this Society during 1844 before it disappeared from view. Another short lived association was the Agricultural Association. Established in June 1843 it was similar in organizational structure to the Horticultural Society and its President was also William Wakefield. But its establishment coincided with the deaths at Wairau and the Association went into abeyance until the following year and does not appear to have survived beyond this point.¹¹³

Single issue lobby groups were the most numerous voluntary associations during this time period. In late 1844 an issue developed over the use of the public cemetery. It was an area of reserve land set aside by the New Zealand Company for the use of all denominations. However, a fence with a locked gate was erected around a portion for the

use of the Church of England congregation and enclosing the graves of people already been buried there, but not of that faith. The division of the cemetery had apparently been authorized by Governor FitzRoy at the request of Bishop Selwyn and was objected to by the clergy and congregations of the other religions in the settlement. The inevitable public meeting was called and a committee formed to draw up a petition to be sent to the Governor and the House of Commons.¹¹⁴ This issue struck at the heart of the reason why many people, of what were called the dissenting religions in Britain, were attracted to colonization.¹¹⁵ In the establishment of both South Australia and Wellington the promoters were deliberately neutral towards supporting any religion. The dispute over the cemetery was raised by the Committee to Prevent the Misappropriation of the Cemetery in all possible arenas and was eventually resolved where, upon special application, family members of those people already buried there could be buried alongside.¹¹⁶

In July 1845 a public meeting was held on the subject of the debentures issued by the colonial government. A committee was established to write a memorial to the government expressing the opinion that the amount Governor FitzRoy had issued exceeded what he had been authorized to by the Debenture Ordinance.¹¹⁷ In another initiative, a large meeting was held at the Aurora Tavern to consider the draft of a petition to be sent to Parliament outlining the grievances of the settlers of the Cook's Strait.¹¹⁸ Putting the vote that the resolutions of the meeting be agreed was the merchant William Hickson (1810-1885) who was appointed to the committee to review the draft petition. He came to Wellington in 1844 at the age of 35 onboard the *Theresa*. As a representative of Ridgway and Co. his original task was to wind up the affairs of the Wellington branch of the firm. He decided to stay in the colony and go into business on his own behalf. He had a strong interest in breeding and racing horses and also imported stud sheep and cattle from Australia. He served in a number of political roles, both through appointment and election. Although he didn't arrive in the settlement until four years after its establishment Hickson was among one of the most active members of voluntary associations. In old age he was blind and never fully recovered from a fall into the harbour but, 'in his prime, he was a man of first-rate business ability, a politician of some note, a sportsman of the rare old English type, and a prominent and useful citizen.'¹¹⁹

Probably the most positive development at this time was the establishment of Wellington Savings Bank in 1846. This was a form of self-help association that was

common in Britain and usually established by the middle-class for the benefit of the working-classes. The management structure for savings banks was different from friendly societies where a member might expect to be elected to a committee for a period of time. In a nineteenth century savings bank, ‘the user members of the banks, the depositors, had no legal right whatever to any say in the management of the institutions to which they might entrust their savings ... the management function was discharged by trustees and managers.’¹²⁰ There was a real sense of progress in the words of William Wakefield, chairman at the meeting to establish the Bank, when he stated, ‘he had never experienced more pleasure in taking the chair at any meeting, than on the present occasion, for he trusted that they would that evening form an Institution, the want of which had most grievously felt in this settlement.’¹²¹ The establishment of a savings bank was now possible because the government debentures issued under Governor Grey were considered secure and paying 8% interest. The Bank would have no less than 30 managers and each year they would elect a superintending committee of 12 men. At specified times of the week three managers and one member of the superintending committee would be available to receive deposits and notices of withdrawals. Interest on deposits was 4% per annum.¹²² By the end of 1847 there were 91 accounts with the Bank, 42 belonging to individuals, including eight Maori, 41 in trust for other people and eight from friendly societies.¹²³ No doubt the establishment of the Wellington Savings Bank was, in every sense of the word, an investment in the future of the community.

Taking a prominent role in the establishment of the Wellington Savings Bank, and increasingly in the public affairs of the colony was Dr Isaac Featherston (1813-1876) a man who would embrace the opportunities available in the colonial environment by carving out a long political career at provincial and national level. Dr Featherston and his family came to Wellington for the sake of his health in 1841 onboard the *Olympus*. He practiced medicine but in the mid-1840s he became increasingly involved in public affairs. He apparently held a strong antagonism towards the Wakefield family and even though he served with William Wakefield on a number of associations and was his physician, the two men fought a duel in 1847.¹²⁴ Interestingly, it was around the time of William Wakefield’s death that Featherston began to become more prominent in public life. His achievements following 1850 are well documented but in early Wellington he was Secretary of the Horticultural Society, President of the Wellington Savings Bank and involved in a number of lobby groups including the Committee of Owners of Land Orders. Superintendent of the Wellington Provincial Council and a Member of

Parliament for many years, at the news of his death, the House of Representatives was adjourned in respect. Featherston's personality was acknowledged to be complex. His obituary stating that he was:

Endowed with a remarkable amount of personal and physical courage, strangely associated with a highly sensitive nature, possessed of an indomitable will, which, strong in its own belief, could never brook interference or opposition, and withal as tender of heart and sensitive as a woman, the Doctor's character was a singular combination, in which the better qualities always made themselves felt.¹²⁵

One of the positive benefits of the military presence in Wellington was the weekly performance of the band of the 65th Regiment and the cricket players among the officers boosted the numbers in the Britannia Cricket Club. On New Year's Day 1847 the club fielded two teams for a game on Te Aro Flat.¹²⁶ A newspaper report stating, 'it is with great pleasure we perceive that this noble and healthy game is progressing in the southern settlements, and that it is likely to become a permanent pastime in our adopted country.'¹²⁷

Rebuilding 1848-1850

After 1847 the direct threat on the European population of Wellington posed by disaffected Maori gradually receded. However, the confidence of earlier years would be slow to return and this is reflected in the number of voluntary associations established. In 1848 there were seven, this number includes the anniversary committee, three associations formed in response to local events and one was a revival of an earlier initiative. In that year confidence in the settlement was literally shaken by severe earthquakes and when combined with the sudden death of William Wakefield it is not surprising the numbers formed drop away to two in 1849. For those early settlers who had experienced the events of the past decade the 1850 anniversary celebrations must have been a significant milestone.

One successful initiative was the establishment of a racecourse on the Miramar Peninsular where a large area of land was reclaimed by artificially draining a lake. The Burnham Water Races were an important event for those gentlemen of the settlement who imported, bred and raced horses. Races were usually held around the time of the annual anniversary fete and the new racecourse provided a better venue than Te Aro Flat that was increasingly developed with buildings, houses and gardens. The organization behind the Burnham Water Races consisted of a committee, clerk of the course, judge

and stewards. Members of the original committee included several officers of the 65th Regiment, Kenneth Bethune, Hon. Henry Petre, Dr Dorset and Colonel Wakefield.

Hon. Henry William Petre (1820-1889) was a son of the 11th Baron Petre who was a director of the New Zealand Company. He came to Wellington onboard the *Oriental* in 1840 and went into business with two friends both of whom died as the result of accidents.¹²⁸ Although he was only 20 years old when he came to Wellington, because of his status, he was accepted by the elite social group where most of the men were ten years older. He owned land in the Wairarapa and was particularly interested in importing and breeding horses and sheep. He had large stables at Woburn and was a strong competitor at the Burnham Water Races. A Roman Catholic in faith he generously supported that church in early Wellington. Apart from his horse racing interests he was involved with the anniversary committees, the Wairau and Wakefield memorials and the Wellington Savings Bank. He returned to Britain in 1860.¹²⁹

In February 1848 a meeting of a group calling themselves the Land Purchasers from the New Zealand Company met to consider the report of Mr Cowell, the Queen's Commissioner, about their claim for compensation from the Company. Unhappy at the contents of the report that favoured the position of the New Zealand Company, a committee was appointed to draft resolutions and a petition to Parliament.¹³⁰ Several months later there was a change of attitude from the New Zealand Company. A letter from Governor Grey was published in the newspaper stating that following exchanges of correspondence the Colonial Department understood the New Zealand Company had a sincere desire 'to exist in cordial harmony with all its settlers ; and to recognize all claims against them on the part of their Land Purchasers (even those resting on moral obligations) in a spirit of justice and liberality.'¹³¹ Those land purchasers seeking redress were instructed to approach the Governor directly regarding compensation for their losses. Published alongside was a letter from William Wakefield in which he endorsed the proposed solution hoping it would bring matters to a satisfactory conclusion. Within a few days, William Wakefield suffered a fatal stroke and died.

One man who purchased a large number of land orders from the New Zealand Company was William Fitzherbert (1810-1891). Highly educated, he studied medicine in Paris but only practiced for a short time and apparently regretted not going into the law. Deciding on a radical change of lifestyle he invested heavily in the New Zealand Company scheme and then purchased a schooner called the *Lady Leigh*, loaded her with goods and sailed to Wellington. He went into business as a general merchant and also

traded in whale products. Fitzherbert became involved in politics and had a long and respected career in Parliament and was knighted in 1877. In early Wellington he was not involved with associations that might require an ongoing commitment such as the Horticultural Society. He seems to have been more a 'committee man' and because of his obvious intellectual skills, was involved with a number of the lobby groups. Descriptions of his character refer to his outstanding intellectual abilities but he was not regarded as a leader of men and often damaged relationships when he indulged in a sarcastic form of humour.¹³²

In the latter part of 1848 two committees were established in response to local events. One was a committee to give relief to those who had been affected by the earthquakes of October and the other was a committee to erect a memorial to Colonel Wakefield. Between the 16th and the 30th of October 1848 four large earthquakes and many smaller quakes were experienced in Wellington. Damage was sustained to many brick buildings and three lives were lost. A despatch, written by Lieutenant-Governor Eyre resident in Wellington, to Governor Grey raised alarm and concern in Auckland.

It is my most painful duty to inform your Excellency that a terrible calamity has overtaken this Province : an earthquake has occurred and the town of Wellington is in ruins A blow has been struck at the prosperity, almost at the very existence of the settlement, from which it will not readily recover. Terror and dismay reign everywhere.¹³³

The Lieutenant-Governor's 'overwrought and gloomy'¹³⁴ despatch was published in full in the Auckland newspapers. The citizens of Auckland donated over £500 for relief in Wellington. The difficulty being, once the earthquakes had subsided, the resilient population of Wellington resumed their lives and businesses. A public meeting was held to receive the sympathetic address from the people of Auckland and consider what to do with the generous subscription of money. The committee that had been appointed to assist people who had suffered loss from the earthquakes reported there were so few cases of actual need the meeting should consider sending the money back. As it had been donated under the misapprehension that Wellington was in ruins it was agreed to return the money and open a public subscription in Wellington for anyone in need as a result of the earthquakes.¹³⁵

The sudden death of Colonel William Wakefield led to plans to honour him with a monument to his memory and a committee consisting of the leading colonists was appointed to collect subscriptions for the purpose.¹³⁶ In December 1849 the committee

agreed that an appropriate memorial was ‘a permanent object of public utility, ... a Clock Tower, with a Turret Clock ... to be designed by Mr Roberts ... the cost not exceeding 200 guineas.’¹³⁷ Fourteen years later a newspaper report drew attention to a large iron structure that had been lying in a local yard for a number of years and claiming it was the intended monument to Colonel Wakefield that was ordered, but never erected.¹³⁸ The structure was a temple or folly popular in the grand British gardens of the nineteenth century. Eventually, what has become known as the William Wakefield Memorial was erected at Wellington’s cricket ground the Basin Reserve.

Alfred Ludlum (1810-1877) was a member of the Wakefield Memorial Committee and a man described as ‘honest, somewhat impractical, but outspoken and enterprising’.¹³⁹ He was born in Ireland and came to Wellington in 1840 onboard the *London*. He had a farm in the Hutt Valley and was particularly interested in horticulture, donating many plants to the botanical gardens. He held a number of political positions, but most seemed to terminate with Ludlum’s resignation, possibly a reflection of his outspoken nature. Ludlum was a long serving member of the Horticultural Society, involved with several anniversary committees, the Jockey Club, a cricket club and Savings Bank. For a man who was later involved in political life it seems surprising that he was associated with only one lobby group a Committee to Draft Regulations for the Management of the Harbour in 1842.

The year 1849 again saw a small number of voluntary associations established. With the settlement still recovering from the effects of the earthquake and with no major issues necessitating community action the repair of the main road of the town was the focus of attention. Originally established in 1848, the Committee for Repair of the Beach Road collected £100 in subscriptions to which the government added £134. The improvements included footpaths and curbing along Lambton Quay and Willis St.¹⁴⁰

As the decade drew to a close there was a concerted effort to revive the Mechanics’ Institute and put it onto a firm footing. In a letter to the editor the Committee were reminded of the grand ceremony to lay the foundation stone for the new building in 1844 that had come to nothing - along with many other initiatives.

The public of Wellington may be compared to a bottle of soda-water, for when its equilibrium is once disturbed, it issues forth with a great splash and splutter, and for a moment – while the effervescence lands – the public is boiling over with an enthusiastic desire of going ahead ; nothing appears too great to be accomplished, and grand schemes are devised. Under such circumstances, it is no wonder that such schemes (ill considered as they are) should be of short

duration. The thing being set a going, the tumult suddenly subsides, and the bubble – being deprived of the only ingredient which kept it together – bursts.¹⁴¹

With a new President and a change of name to the Wellington Athenaeum the institution was finally able to secure the funds to have a building constructed on Lambton Quay. Ten eventful years after the first public meeting to establish a library in Wellington, the hall of the Wellington Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute was officially opened. Following the completion of the formalities the seats were removed for dancing that continued on until the early hours of the morning.¹⁴²

The Organizers

Writing in 1984 Joan Ecklein suggested community organizers have the following characteristics:

Community organizers are concerned with advancing the interests of disadvantaged groups, with improving social conditions, with the delivery of needed services, with redistribution of power and influence, with the enhancement of the coping mechanisms of target populations, and with strengthening community participation and integration.¹⁴³

These worthy aims cannot occur in a vacuum. Not only must the organizer have the altruistic desire to make a difference but those around him or her must have confidence in their abilities. 'Social status presupposes at least two people, one to claim status and one to accept the claim.'¹⁴⁴ This social contract forms part of what is described by Pearson, drawing on the work of Plowman, as a total status situation where 'there is a tendency for individuals to have similar status in different spheres of activity'.¹⁴⁵ There is a strong correlation between holding multiple offices in voluntary associations and being a recognised community leader. In the voluntary association this transaction in trust takes place in the absence of personal financial reward. In this environment, the natural leader is found, or equally, found out.

In his study of Jacksonville, Illinois, Doyle found the association leaders were male, middle-class, older than the general membership, and predominately merchants, businessmen, professionals or skilled labourers. Most owned property and were likely to hold office in local government. Stating that, 'in a young, fast-growing town like Jacksonville, voluntary associations performed an indispensable role in helping to identify the structure of leadership and social status within the community.'¹⁴⁶

It is difficult to confidently identify all the individuals who were organizers of voluntary associations in early Wellington. Information is dependent upon the associations publishing or publicizing their activities and where fathers and sons share a first name, such as the Hort family, reliably distinguishing between them can be problematic.¹⁴⁷ The organizers have been identified by recording each time (either annually or on a single occasion) where an individual appears on a committee. From the top Wellington organizers that have been identified 16 have been highlighted above and some general conclusions can be made (see also Table 1). Apart from Henry William Petre and assuming Kenneth Bethune was older than 15 when he came to Wellington, most of the organizers were aged between 25 and 35 years old on arrival. They all came to Wellington early in the life of the colony and a majority died in New Zealand. Their religious persuasions covered the spectrum as did their place of birth. By profession, the majority were merchants with Wade, Waitt and Rhodes coming to Wellington via the Australian colonies. There were four professional men, including the Doctors Dorset and Featherston and two agriculturalists Ludlum and Petre. The pre-existing friendship of the former military men Wakefield, Dorset and Baker suggests they would comfortably work together. Possibly the most interesting aspect is the commonality in ages. These men were at a similar stage of life having developed a set of skills or professional expertise and were either denied advancement in Britain or they believed emigration would offer them new opportunities.

Patterns of membership differed (see Graph II and III). Some belonged to a number of associations for a short time while others joined a lesser number but had a continuing membership. The factors that motivated them to devote considerable time and energy to voluntary associations were probably mixed. Some, because of their status such as Wakefield, St Hill and Petre would have a sense of obligation as community leaders. The ex-army men also enjoyed status because of their rank, organizational and people management skills. The doctors were also high status individuals and voluntary associations gave them the opportunity to increase their profile with a view to political life. For merchants, the contacts offered by voluntary associations would be an advantage where social relationships are the life blood of business. With the notable exception of Major Baker, all these men were either appointed or elected to some form of political office. Some served for a short time while others had long and respected political careers. For a man with ability and ambition, colonial life offered life changing opportunities.

The Voluntary Associations of Wellington 1840-1850

The terminology used in the titles of the voluntary associations of early Wellington is interesting. Club is used for a social grouping such as a gentleman's club, tavern club or a sporting activity. The word society is most commonly used by groups that have a long term approach to advancing their particular interests. The focus of committees is on a single issue or event with the expectation it would disband at the resolution or completion of a task. Many associations established in Wellington replicated those of Britain while others were formed in response to a local issue. They have been categorized into the following; clubs, defence initiatives, lobby groups, public memorials, public service, religious, self-help and community support, special interest, sport and recreation, and the annual anniversary celebrations (see Appendix II). A broader approach could be associations that focus on benefiting the public for example, the anniversary fetes, defence, lobby groups, memorials, public service, and religious initiatives and those which benefit the individual, clubs, self-help associations and sporting clubs. Somewhere between lie special interest groups that benefit the individual but could also a public focus.

This survey has shown that the voluntary association as a social form transferred with ease with the European settlers from Britain to New Zealand. The question of whether there were more or less in Wellington, when compared with other colonial settlements, has not been resolved here. Neither has the question of whether the type and number of associations established in Wakefield settlements differed from other settlements. Those questions could be an avenue for further research. An examination of the pattern of their formation in Wellington is however significant. In the first ten years of planned European settlement approximately 70 voluntary associations were established or proposed but did not progress. Their formation occurred in one large wave in 1840-1843 followed by a small ripple in 1848 (see Graph I). The initial optimistic phase reflected the building of the community support networks and organizations to address specific community issues. The dramatic decline from 1844 to 1847 parallels a time of difficulty in the settlement and this is evident again in 1849 following the earthquake of the previous year. By their very nature, voluntary associations are formed on the premise of a continuing relationship between the members. Their establishment, or non-establishment, is therefore a useful barometer in the confidence of a community in its future.

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- ¹ *New Zealand Colonist and Port Nicholson Advertiser* (NZC), 26 August 1842. This phrase is used in a letter to the editor from Looker-on when commenting on the activities around the election of the first Municipal Council.
- ² *New Zealand Spectator and Cook's Strait Guardian* (NZS), 23 January 1850.
- ³ B.R. Patterson, *Early Colonial Society through a Prism: Reflections on Wellington's First Anniversary Day*, Wellington, 1994, pp.16-22. For a discussion of the failure of an earlier anniversary initiative the Public Ball and Fete Committee, see pp.13-15. A reduction in the popularity of the anniversary day activities after 1850 is referred to in Miles Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society 1850-1900*, Auckland, 1989, pp.161-2.
- ⁴ Erik Olssen, 'Mr Wakefield and New Zealand as an Experiment in Post-Enlightenment Experimental Practice', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 31, 2 (1997), p.211.
- ⁵ *ibid.*, pp.211-2.
- ⁶ J. M. Main, 'Social Foundations of South Australia, 1 Men of Capital', in Eric Richards, ed., *The Flinders History of South Australia: Social History*, South Australia, 1986, p.101.
- ⁷ Don Harrison Doyle, *The Social Order of a Frontier Community: Jacksonville, Illinois 1825-70*, Urbana, 1978, p.4.
- ⁸ Margaret Tennant, *Paupers and Providers: Charitable Aid in New Zealand*, Wellington, 1989. Margaret Tennant, *The Fabric of Welfare: Voluntary Organisations, Government and Welfare in New Zealand, 1840-2005*, Wellington, 2007.
- ⁹ Fairburn, pp.177-87.
- ¹⁰ Glenda Northey, 'Accessible to all? Libraries in the Auckland Provincial Area, 1842-1919', MA thesis, University of Auckland, 1998. <http://www.ak.planet.gen.nz/~gregu/Thesis/Thesis.htm> Glenda Northey, 'Merely Boxes of Books? The Management and Administration of Auckland's Nineteenth-Century Libraries', *New Zealand Libraries*, 49, 1 (1999), pp.18-23.
- ¹¹ J.E. Traue, 'Once Upon a Time in New Zealand: Library Aspirations and Colonial Reality in the Early Years of European Settlement, or, "The Tone and Character to Civilization"', *Stout Centre Review*, 3, 2 (1993), pp.3-8.
- ¹² J.R. Phillips, 'A Social History of Auckland, 1840-53': A Thesis in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in History, Alexander Turnbull Library, 1966, p.269.
- ¹³ *ibid.*, p.299.
- ¹⁴ Patterson, *Early Colonial Society through a Prism*, pp.16-19.
- ¹⁵ M.K. Watson and B.R. Patterson, *A Mirror of Early Colonial Society: Reflections on the 1842 Wellington Municipal Corporation Election*, Wellington, 1984.
- ¹⁶ Diana Beaglehole, 'Political Leadership in Wellington: 1839-1853', in David Hamer and Roberta Nicholls, eds, *The Making of Wellington 1800-1914*, Wellington, 1990, pp.165-93.
- ¹⁷ David G. Pearson, *Johnsonville: Continuity and Change in a New Zealand Township*, Sydney, 1980, pp.46, 77-99.
- ¹⁸ D.C.Pitt, 'The Joiners: Associations and Leisure in New Zealand', in Stephen D. Webb and John Collette, eds, *New Zealand Society: Contemporary Perspectives*, Sydney, 1973, pp.157-62. Internationally, recent comparative research by James E. Curtis and others examined 33 democratic countries and concluded that joining voluntary associations tends to be high in nations that have: (1) multid denominational Christian or predominately Protestant religious compositions, (2) prolonged and continuous experience with democratic institutions, (3) social democratic or liberal democratic political systems, and (4) high levels of economic development. James E. Curtis, Douglas E. Baer and Edward G. Grabb, 'Nations of Joiners: Explaining Voluntary Association Membership in Democratic Societies', *American Sociologist*, 66, 6 (2001), p.783.
- ¹⁹ Arthur M. Schlesinger, 'Biography of a Nation of Joiners', *American Historical Review*, 50, 1 (1944), p.3.
- ²⁰ Constance Smith and Anne Freeman, *Voluntary Associations: Perspectives on the Literature*, Massachusetts, 1972, p.1.
- ²¹ R.J. Morris, 'Clubs, Societies and Associations', in F.M.L. Thompson, ed., *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950, Vol. 3, Social Agencies and Institutions*, Cambridge, 1990, p.395.
- ²² Smith, p.viii.
- ²³ David L. Sills, 'Voluntary Associations : Sociological Aspects', in David L. Sills, ed., *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 16, New York, 1968, pp.362-3.
- ²⁴ *ibid.*, p.363.
- ²⁵ Olssen, p.212.
- ²⁶ Morris, 'Clubs, Societies and Associations', pp.395-475.
- ²⁷ *ibid.*, p.395.

- ²⁸ *ibid.*, p.412.
- ²⁹ *ibid.*, p.406.
- ³⁰ *ibid.*, p.395.
- ³¹ R.J. Morris, *Class, Sect and Party: The Making of the British Middle Class, Leeds 1820-1850*, Manchester, 1990, pp.184-7, R.J. Morris, 'Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites, 1780-1850: An Analysis' *The Historical Journal*, 26, 1 (1983), p.101-2.
- ³² Schlesinger, p.11.
- ³³ Arline Wilson, "'The Florence of the North'?: The Civic Culture of Liverpool in the Early Nineteenth Century', in Alan Kidd and David Nicholls, eds, *Gender, Civic Culture and Consumerism: Middle-Class Identity in Britain, 1800-1940*, Manchester, 1999, p.39.
- ³⁴ *New Zealand Gazette* (NZG), 21 August 1839. This was the first edition of a newspaper that continued publication in New Zealand under a number of titles including *New Zealand Gazette and Britannia Spectator* and *New Zealand Gazette and Wellington Spectator*.
- ³⁵ P.H.J.H. Gosden, *Self-Help: Voluntary Associations in the 19th Century*, London, 1973, p.4.
- ³⁶ Morris, 'Clubs, Societies and Associations', p.417. Although the actual number of societies and members is probably impossible to determine.
- ³⁷ Eric Hopkins, *Working-Class Self-Help in Nineteenth-Century England: Responses to Industrialization*, London, 1995, p.29.
- ³⁸ J.M. Golby and A.W. Purdue, *The Civilisation of the Crowd: Popular Culture in England 1750-1900*, London, 1984, p.108.
- ³⁹ Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-59) was a French politician and writer. In 1831 he and a companion went to the United States on a government mission to study the penal system. His observations of the American people and political institutions were published in the two-volume *Democracy in America*.
- ⁴⁰ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, New York, 1953, II, p.106.
- ⁴¹ Don H. Doyle, 'The Social Functions of Voluntary Associations in a Nineteenth-Century American Town', *Social Science History*, 1, 3 (1977), p.335.
- ⁴² Doyle, *The Social Order of a Frontier Community*, p.184.
- ⁴³ A recent example of the continuing debate was the 1996 conference to mark the bicentenary of Wakefield's birth and published in *Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the Colonial Dream: A Reconsideration*, Wellington, 1997.
- ⁴⁴ Edward Gibbon Wakefield, 'A View of the Art of Colonization with Present References to the British Empire in Letters Between a Statesman and a Colonist', in M.F. Lloyd Pritchard, ed., *The Collected Works of Edward Gibbon Wakefield*, Glasgow, 1968, p.779.
- ⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p.778.
- ⁴⁶ *Documents Appended to the Twelfth Report of the Directors of the New Zealand Company, April 26, 1844*, London, 1844, p.4F.
- ⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p.12K.
- ⁴⁸ NZG, 11 July 1840.
- ⁴⁹ Percy Fitzgerald, *The Pickwickian Dictionary and Cyclopaedia*, London, 1975, pp.56-7. Peter Ackroyd, *Dickens*, London, 1990, p.259.
- ⁵⁰ NZG, 16 May 1840.
- ⁵¹ NZG, 22 August 1840.
- ⁵² *New Zealand Journal*, 7 August 1841.
- ⁵³ Edward Jerningham Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand from 1839 to 1844*, London, 1845, II, p.214.
- ⁵⁴ 'William Lyon', in *A Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* (DNZB), G. H. Scholefield ed., Vol.1, Wellington, 1940, p.511.
- ⁵⁵ NZG, 10 October 1840.
- ⁵⁶ *Rules and Regulations for the Government of the Wakefield Club*, Wellington, 1840.
- ⁵⁷ Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand*, II, p.301.
- ⁵⁸ Henry Samuel Chapman Letters Vol 2, 1847-1848, qMS-0419, p.617, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.
- ⁵⁹ NZG, 26 December 1840.
- ⁶⁰ *ibid.*
- ⁶¹ Although in the case of lobbying for the adoption of the Municipal Corporation Bill having two committees one representing the working class and one representing the elite joining together to form a united committee added more weight to the memorial reflecting the views of the whole community.
- ⁶² NZG, 29 December 1841, NZG 22 January 1842, NZG 26 January 1842.
- ⁶³ *Press* (Christchurch), 22 July 1978.

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- ⁶⁴ Brad Patterson. 'Rhodes, William Barnard', in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007 URL: <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/> 'William Barnard Rhodes', in DNZB, Vol II, 1940, pp.230-31.
- ⁶⁵ NZG, 6 March 1841.
- ⁶⁶ NZG, 10 July 1841.
- ⁶⁷ Rachel Barrowman, 'Davis, Rowland Robert Teape', in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007 URL: <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/> 'Rowland Davis', in DNZB, Vol I, 1940, p.196. H.W.Gourlay, *Odd Fellowship in New Zealand: A Century of Progress*, Christchurch, [1942], p.64.
- ⁶⁸ NZG, 3 July 1841.
- ⁶⁹ NZG, 26 June 1841, NZG, 7 August 1841.
- ⁷⁰ NZG, 10 November 1841.
- ⁷¹ William Wakefield's date of birth is often incorrectly given as 1803. The date of 1801 is taken from Philip Temple, *A Sort of a Conscience: The Wakefields*, Auckland, 2002, p.6.
- ⁷² William Wakefield does not appear in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* however entries can be found in the following, 'William Wakefield', in DNZB, Vol. II, 1940, pp.449-51. 'Wakefield, Lieutenant-Colonel William Hayward', in *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, A. H. McLintock ed., originally published in 1966. Te Ara - The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated 18-Sep-2007 URL: <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/1966/W/WakefieldLieutenant-colonelWilliamHayward/en>
- ⁷³ NZG, 1 May 1841.
- ⁷⁴ NZG, 21 August 1841.
- ⁷⁵ NZG, 12 February 1842.
- ⁷⁶ Beaglehole, p.170. For a detailed analysis of the 1842 Municipal Corporation election see Watson and Patterson.
- ⁷⁷ NZC, 26 August 1842.
- ⁷⁸ NZG, 18 December 1841.
- ⁷⁹ A.W. Beasley, *The Club on the Terrace: The Wellington Club 1841-1996*, Wellington, 1996.
- ⁸⁰ NZG, 21 October 1843.
- ⁸¹ 'John Dorset', in DNZB, Vol.1, 1940, p.218. Louis E. Ward, *Early Wellington*, Papakura, 1991, p.344. *Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*, 4 October 1856.
- ⁸² *Wellington Independent* (WI), 22 October 1856.
- ⁸³ *ibid.*
- ⁸⁴ NZG, 26 October 1842.
- ⁸⁵ NZG, 28 December 1842.
- ⁸⁶ NZG, 17 December 1842.
- ⁸⁷ 'Kenneth Bethune', in DNZB, Vol I, 1940, p.67.
- ⁸⁸ NZG, 25 May 1842, NZG, 17 December 1842.
- ⁸⁹ NZG, 7 October 1843.
- ⁹⁰ NZG, 10 February 1844.
- ⁹¹ NZG, 7 February 1844.
- ⁹² NZG, 13 April 1842.
- ⁹³ NZG, 8 May 1844.
- ⁹⁴ *Evening Post* (EP), 8 October 1877.
- ⁹⁵ NZC, 11 November 1842.
- ⁹⁶ Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand*, Vol II, p.270.
- ⁹⁷ EP, 12 August 1885.
- ⁹⁸ For a description of the events in Wairau and FitzRoy's response see, Ruth M. Allen, *Nelson: A History of Early Settlement*, Wellington, 1965, pp.241-63, Ian Wards, *The Shadow of the Land: A Study of British Policy and Racial Conflict in New Zealand 1832-1852*, Wellington, 1968, pp.74-94.
- ⁹⁹ NZG, 21 June 1843.
- ¹⁰⁰ NZC, 4 July 1843.
- ¹⁰¹ NZG, 12 August 1843. By 1845 the men of Wellington were again meeting to discuss forming a Volunteer Corps. They appointed a committee to carry out the objects of the meeting and identified legislation that would enable them to do so. NZS, 8 February 1845.
- ¹⁰² 'Richard Baker', in DNZB, Vol. I, 1940, p.30.
- ¹⁰³ Gavin McLean, *Wellington the First Years of European Settlement 1840-1850*, Auckland, 2000, p.79. For a detailed account of events in Wellington see, Wards, pp.214-65.
- ¹⁰⁴ NZG, 6 January 1844. Those people who were replaced from the first committee were Hon. H. W. Petre, Dr Evans, S. Revans, C. M. Penny, John Smith, W. Fitzherbert, F.A. Molesworth and William Lyon.
- ¹⁰⁵ NZG, 13 January 1844.
- ¹⁰⁶ NZG, 31 January 1844.

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- ¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁸ ‘Robert Waitt’, in DNZB, Vol. II, 1940, pp.438-9.
- ¹⁰⁹ NZS, 7 December 1844.
- ¹¹⁰ NZS, 5 February 1848.
- ¹¹¹ Tennant, *The Fabric of Welfare*, p.29.
- ¹¹² NZG, 17 January 1844.
- ¹¹³ NZG, 7 June 1843, NZG, 20 January 1844.
- ¹¹⁴ NZS, 30 November 1844.
- ¹¹⁵ Although the terms dissenting or non-conformist were commonly used ‘strictly speaking, they did not apply in New Zealand where there was no “established” church.’ Margaret Alington, ‘Life after Death: An Old Cemetery becomes a Memorial Park’, in David Hamer and Roberta Nicholls, eds, *The Making of Wellington 1800-1914*, Wellington, 1990, p.132.
- ¹¹⁶ *ibid.*, pp.132-3.
- ¹¹⁷ NZS, 5 July 1845.
- ¹¹⁸ NZS, 23 August 1845.
- ¹¹⁹ EP, 6 July 1885. ‘William Hickson’, in DNZB, Vol. I, 1940, pp.387-8.
- ¹²⁰ Gosden, p.207.
- ¹²¹ NZS, 16 May 1846. William Wakefield’s grandmother was one of the first to establish a savings bank in Britain.
- ¹²² *ibid.*
- ¹²³ NZS, 15 January 1848.
- ¹²⁴ Wakefield took exception to the content of an editorial published by Featherston in the *Wellington Independent* of 24 March 1847. The duel was held at Te Aro Flat. Featherston fired first and missed Wakefield fired in the air. Temple, pp.404-5.
- ¹²⁵ EP, 14 July 1876. See also, ‘Isaac Earl Featherston’ in DNZB, Vol I, 1940, pp.242-3. David Hamer, ‘Isaac Earl Featherston’ in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007, <http://www.dnz.govt.nz>
- ¹²⁶ NZS, 6 January 1847.
- ¹²⁷ NZS, 31 October 1846.
- ¹²⁸ Edward Betts Hopper drowned in the Hutt River in September 1840. Frances Molesworth received a head injury from which he never fully recovered and he died in London in 1846. Although only 22 years old when he came to Wellington Molesworth was very active in community affairs being associated with a voluntary association 13 times in five years. Before his accident he was engaged to Emily the daughter of Colonel Wakefield.
- ¹²⁹ ‘Henry William Petre’ in DNZB, Vol II, 1940, p.163. EP, 19 December 1889.
- ¹³⁰ NZS, 12 February 1848.
- ¹³¹ NZS, 6 September 1848.
- ¹³² David Hamer, ‘Fitzherbert, William’ in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007. URL: <http://www.dnz.govt.nz/> ‘Sir William Fitzherbert’ in DNZB, Vol. I, 1940, pp.260-61.
- ¹³³ NZS, 29 November 1848.
- ¹³⁴ *ibid.*
- ¹³⁵ NZS, 2 December 1848. The committee was made up of all the colony’s clergy, prominent merchants and professional men including Dr Featherston, Henry St Hill and William Fox, William Wakefield’s successor.
- ¹³⁶ NZS, 7 October 1848.
- ¹³⁷ WI, 4 December 1849.
- ¹³⁸ WI, 22 January 1863.
- ¹³⁹ ‘Alfred Ludlum’ in DNZB, Vol I, 1940, pp.505-6.
- ¹⁴⁰ NZS, 3 October 1849.
- ¹⁴¹ NZS, 26 July 1848.
- ¹⁴² NZS, 13 April 1850.
- ¹⁴³ Joan Ecklein, *Community Organizers*, 2nd ed. New York, 1984, p.4.
- ¹⁴⁴ D.E.G. Plowman, W.E. Minchinton and Margaret Stacey, ‘Local Social Status in England and Wales’, *Sociological Review*, 10, 2 (1966), p.164.
- ¹⁴⁵ Pearson, p.82. Plowman, p.167.
- ¹⁴⁶ Doyle, ‘The Social Functions of Voluntary Associations in a Nineteenth-Century American Town’, pp.336-8.

¹⁴⁷ Abraham Hort arrived in Wellington in 1840 onboard the *Oriental*. Three years later his father, also Abraham, arrived in Wellington. Both father and son were active in the community but from the newspaper reports it is impossible with to distinguish between them.

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Appendix I

Voluntary Associations 1840-1850 : Dates of Establishment*

1840

May	Pickwick Club of New Zealand
Jun	Public Ball and Fete Committee
Jul	Union Benefit Sick Society
Oct	Wakefield Club Commercial and Agricultural Club
Dec	Port Nicholson Exchange and Public Library Working Men's Association

1841

Jan	Anniversary Committee – Select Anniversary Committee – Popular
Mar	Wellington Land Association
May	Committee to Prepare Charter of Incorporation for Port Nicholson
July	Port Nicholson Association for the Purchase of Country Land
Nov	Horticultural and Botanical Society
Dec	Wellington Club

1842

Jan	Anniversary Committee
Feb	Committee to Watch over the interests of Mechanics' and Labourers
Mar	Committee to Procure a Subscription for Erection of Church of a Scotch Church
Apr	Committee to Report on Bills before the Legislative Council Committee to Frame a Set of Regulations for the Management of the Harbour
May	Mechanics' Institute Benevolent Society of Carpenters' and Joiners Port Nicholson Total Abstinence Society
July	New Zealand Temperance Society
Oct	Jockey Club
Nov	Wellington Cricket Club Fire Relief Committee

	New Zealand Pacific Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons
Dec	Albion Cricket Club
1843	
Jan	Anniversary Committee
Feb	Friends of Harmony
	Britannia Lodge of the Manchester Unity of Independent Odd Fellows
Mar	Committee to Reduce Court Costs
May	Rifle Club
Jun	Agricultural Association
	Ancient Order of Druids
July	Committee of Public Safety
	Military Sub-Committee
Sep	Wellington Rooms
Oct	Independent Order of Rechabites
	Wairau Memorial Committee
1844	
Jan	Committee to Consider the Address and Memorial to Governor FitzRoy
	Anniversary Committee
	Seaman's Friend Society
Nov	Committee to Prevent Misappropriation of the Cemetery
Dec	Committee for the Establishment of a Hospital
1845	
Jan	Anniversary Committee
Feb	Committee for the Formation of Volunteer Corps
Jul	Committee to Draw up a Memorial Regarding Debentures
Aug	Committee to Draft a Petition to Parliament about Grievances
1846	
Jan	Anniversary Committee
May	Wellington Savings Bank
Aug	Wesleyan Day School
Sep	Committee of Owners of Land Orders
Oct	Britannia Cricket Club
1847	

Jan	Anniversary Committee
Feb	Evangelical Alliance
Nov	Loyal Antipodean Lodge
1848	
Jan	Anniversary Committee
	Burnham Water Races
Feb	Land Purchasers from the New Zealand Company
Jul	Committee for Repair of the Beach Road
Aug	Mechanics' Institute (revived)
Oct	Wakefield Memorial
Dec	Committee to ascertain Cases of Distress – Earthquake
1849	
Jan	Anniversary Committee
Feb	Philharmonic Society
1850	
Jan	Anniversary Committee
Oct	United Committee to Collect and Transmit Articles for the Great Exhibition of Industrial Art

* Although the Anniversary Committees were usually formed late December they are listed in January.

Appendix II

Voluntary Associations 1840-1850 : Types of Associations

Anniversary

1840	Public Ball and Fete Committee
1841	Anniversary Committee – Select Anniversary Committee – Popular
1842	Anniversary Committee
1843	Anniversary Committee
1844	Anniversary Committee
1845	Anniversary Committee
1846	Anniversary Committee
1847	Anniversary Committee
1848	Anniversary Committee
1849	Anniversary Committee
1850	Anniversary Committee

Clubs

1840	Pickwick Club Wakefield Club Commercial and Agricultural Club
1841	Wellington Club
1843	Wellington Rooms

Defence Initiatives

1843	Rifle Club Committee of Public Safety Military Sub-Committee
1845	Committee for the Formation of Volunteer Corps

Lobby Groups

1841	Committee to Prepare Charter of Incorporation for Port Nicholson
1842	Committee to Watch over the Interests of Mechanics' and Labourers

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- Committee to Report on Bills before the Legislative Council
Committee to Frame a Set of Regulations for the Management of the Harbour
- 1843 Committee to Reduce Court Costs
- 1844 Committee to Consider the Address and Memorial to Governor FitzRoy
Committee to Prevent Misappropriation of the Cemetery
- 1845 Committee to Draw up a Memorial Regarding Debentures
Committee to Draft a Petition to Parliament about Grievances
- 1846 Committee of Owners of Land Orders
- 1848 Land Purchasers from the New Zealand Company

Public Memorials

- 1843 Wairau Memorial Committee
- 1848 Wakefield Memorial

Public Services

- 1840 Port Nicholson Exchange and Public Library
Working Men's Association
- 1842 Mechanics' Institute
- 1844 Committee for the Establishment of a Hospital
- 1846 Wellington Savings Bank
Wesleyan Day School
- 1848 Mechanics' Institute (revived)
Committee for Repair of the Beach Road

Religious

- 1842 Committee to Procure a Subscription for Erection of Church of a Scotch Church
- 1844 Seaman's Friend Society
- 1847 Evangelical Alliance

Self-Help and Community Support

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- 1840 Union Benefit Sick Society
- 1841 Wellington Land Association
Port Nicholson Association for the Purchase of Country Land
- 1842 Benevolent Society of Carpenters' and Joiners
New Zealand Temperance Society
Port Nicholson Total Abstinence Society
Fire Relief Committee
New Zealand Pacific Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons
- 1843 Britannia Lodge of the Manchester Unity of Independent Odd Fellows
Ancient Order of Druids
Independent Order of Rechabites
- 1847 Loyal Antipodean Lodge
- 1848 Committee to Ascertain Cases of Distress - Earthquake

Special Interest

- 1841 Horticultural and Botanical Society
- 1843 Friends of Harmony
Agricultural Association
- 1849 Philharmonic Society
- 1850 United Committee to Collect and Transmit Articles for the Great Exhibition
of Industrial Art

Sport and Recreation

- 1842 Wellington Cricket Club
Jockey Club
Albion Cricket Club
- 1846 Britannia Cricket Club
- 1848 Burnham Water Races

