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# **The Development of Community Orchestras in the Waikato**

A thesis  
submitted in fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree  
of  
**Doctor of Philosophy in Music**  
**The University of Waikato**  
by  
**Olivia Fletcher**



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WAIKATO**  
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## Abstract

Orchestral music in the Waikato has a long and rich history, although to date there has been little exploration of this. Indeed, research about musical growth and development in New Zealand is sparse and fragmented in terms of both time and geography. By focusing on a particular region that has yet to receive any attention, the thesis aims to redress this gap and also make a wider contribution to understandings of the transportation to and development of western music in New Zealand. In tracing the growth of an orchestral tradition in this region the thesis places this musical evolution within the context of a developing settler society that valued community music making as both a form of community cohesion and a valuable means of local fund raising and entertainment.

In considering the development of orchestral music in the Waikato, the thesis is divided into two main parts, treating each as a case study but also drawing on the methodologies of ethnomusicology, history from below, microhistory, and oral history. Part One is devoted to the years 1864-1914 and in analysing this foundational period of musical development considers a large geographical area enclosed by Huntly, Raglan, Te Awamutu and Te Aroha. Part Two provides a detailed examination of one specific orchestra and community, the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (TAMCO) which began as an idea in 1974 and continued for thirty years. Each part of the thesis draws on a range of archival materials. Part One relies on extensive use of Papers Past<sup>1</sup>, as well as resources from local museums and Archives New Zealand. In contrast, the case study of TAMCO has myriad sources, including interviews with key figures, photographs, recordings, and minute books, and is used to test the hypotheses generated in the first half. While each part of the thesis is distinct, there are also similarities and connections, with the case study of TAMCO confirming many of the findings of Part One.

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<sup>1</sup> Papers Past is a resource from digitised newspapers and magazines published in New Zealand from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

My findings all lead to the conclusion that in order for an orchestra to develop and flourish over several years it requires a locally respected charismatic person as leader, generally but not always the conductor, supported by a team of volunteers convinced of the importance and value of the enterprise. Beyond this the orchestra needs to be relevant to its community, who then support it. This could be relevance in terms of fundraising for a specific cause, or from programming music that is accessible and relevant to that local audience. In this way the orchestra becomes an integral part of the community.

By focusing on one region through the lens of two case studies, a nuanced and layered understanding of the development of orchestral music in the Waikato is revealed, an understanding that has parallels with other community musical groups in New Zealand and other settler societies.

## Acknowledgements

My first thanks must go to Professor Martin Lodge. A key figure in New Zealand Musicology, he is the reason I chose to study at the University of Waikato. His mentorship and the interesting, fun, and challenging discussions we had, prior to his illness causing early retirement, led to the foundation of this thesis. I must also thank Dr Rachael Griffiths-Hughes whose comments on the thesis as a whole led to an excellent final edit. However, this thesis would not have happened without Associate Professor Kirstine Moffat. It is impossible to say how much her supervision of my PhD has meant. From the beginning as second supervisor, she saw me regularly and made valid comments about content, structure, MHRA referencing and punctuation! Kirstine stepped into the breach when Martin withdrew and when I was feeling totally lost and unsure if I would be able to complete my doctorate. Her unflagging interest and enthusiasm for my project has boosted my morale throughout the years of study and it is totally thanks to her that I am able to submit this thesis.

I have had much help from the University librarians, in particular Anne Ferrier-Watson who held my hand for several years as I grappled with the intricacies of Endnote. Another who helped me greatly with this was Alistair Lamb. Both Bryony Hawthorn and Ameer Munro have located and scanned several of the early photographs seen throughout the thesis. Gwenda Pennington, in the scholarships office at the University of Waikato was incredibly helpful easing me through all the intricacies of bureaucracy.

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I'd like to dedicate this thesis in memory of my grandparents, Annie and Arthur Fletcher, Oxbridge graduates, who always believed in me.

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## Introduction

This is a story of adaptation to circumstances. When I first decided to move back to New Zealand and then to Hamilton, in 1999, I thought that my playing days were well over. I had trained at the Royal College of Music, had played as a full time professional orchestral cellist for years in New Zealand and Australia, and then had played part time in London, with top conductors such as Sir Colin Davis. I was convinced there would be nothing here for me musically but wanted to be with family.

Other musicians shared my preconceptions. Patricia, a violinist, studied at Juilliard and worked as a professional orchestral violinist in Tennessee. When her husband was offered a position at Waikato Hospital, she looked up Hamilton, was aghast, and instead of bringing her Guaragnini with her, brought her second violin to practise scales on before returning to “civilization”. The same can be said for a professional bassist from Serbia, and a violist from the United Kingdom.

Imagine our surprise when we discovered how incredibly rich and of what quality was the music making and potential music making in this town. Patricia flew back to collect her violin within six weeks. I have been actively involved in music here and the greater Waikato since arrival, as has the bass player, and the viola player, who came out without any viola, collected hers from England on her first trip back to the United Kingdom.

Clearly external perception does not match local reality, and yet it is not just from an overseas’ perspective that this trope persists. It is common also in New Zealand. When I first proposed investigating orchestral music in the Waikato in my thesis, the validity of the idea was questioned. For some, negative perceptions of “The Tron” seemed to be the root of doubt, resulting in comments such as ‘But Hamilton’s not exactly a cultural centre’ and ‘Wouldn’t it be better to look at music in one of the main cultural centres?’ For others the topic had validity, but the depth of the archive was questioned, ‘Are there really enough resources to research a sustained and substantive project such as a PhD?’

Just as I was proved wrong in my initial perception of Hamilton as something of a musical desert, so too were these reservations proved to be unfounded. The persistent and stereotypical view of Hamilton as an uncultured “cow town” is hopefully becoming increasingly unsustainable given developments such as the

Summer Arts Festival and the approval of a new purpose-built theatre. Of more particular interest here is the contention about the potential paucity of the archive. Far from struggling to fill a thesis, there is such a rich archive relating to orchestral music in the region - ranging from newspaper reviews and articles, to programmes and photographs, to orchestral society records, to interviews - that my initial aim of telling a chronological story of orchestras in Hamilton and the surrounding region has radically changed.

I have divided the thesis into two parts; Part One is a history of the first 50 years of settlement in the region, bounded by the end of the New Zealand Wars in the Waikato, 1864, and the beginning of World War I, 1914. Divided into six chapters it is treated as a case study, as is Part Two, which focuses on a single orchestra, the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (hereafter TAMCO). This orchestra is both a representative example of orchestral musical in the Waikato and a unique narrative about a specific time and place.

This thesis focuses on the history and development of orchestral music in the Waikato and the narrative is thus inextricably linked to the history of European settlement in New Zealand. Māori had a rich musical culture prior to the arrival of European settlers. However, orchestral music, a western musical tradition, introduced new instruments and sounds into the sonic landscape of Aotearoa/New Zealand. To use musicologist Martin Lodge's useful metaphor of New Zealand music as a 'braided river', I am tracing a 'braid' that revolves around European orchestral music and imported settler culture.<sup>1</sup>

My story begins at the end of the New Zealand Wars when military settlements were established in 1864. Before this, some European instruments were transported to the region, particularly pianos, mainly as part of mission activities such as the Waikato mission of Benjamin and Harriet Ashwell.<sup>2</sup> It was with the arrival of the military and their families in the region that more collective European music making began. While there is no recorded involvement of Māori performing music within the parameters of this study, they were certainly audience members.

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Lodge, 'Music Historiography as a Braided River: The Case of New Zealand', in *Critical Music Historiography: Probing Canons, Ideologies and Institutions*, ed. by Vesa Kurkela and Markus Mantere (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Kirstine Moffat and Ken Arvidson, 'Introduction: The Waikato Mission of Benjamin and Harriet Ashwell', in *The Letters and Journals of Reverend Benjamin Y. Ashwell*, ed. by Ken Arvidson and Kirstine Moffat (Edinburgh: Grimsay Press, 2023).

However, in both my exploration of the early years of orchestral music in the region and in my TAMCO case study the narrative is predominantly one of settler involvement.

From the outset of my research, I was intrigued by how a remote military outpost could develop such a prolific musical output. The map below shows the positions of the garrisons planned in 1864, from the perspective of the soldiers walking south. The 4<sup>th</sup> regiment was destined for Kirikiriroa Hamilton, and other bases were positioned in either Tamahere or Hautapu (4, on the map below), Cambridge (3), Kihikihi and Te Awamutu (1), and Alexandra, now known as Pirongia (2). They were distant and isolated from each other, and the travelling would have been arduous at that time.

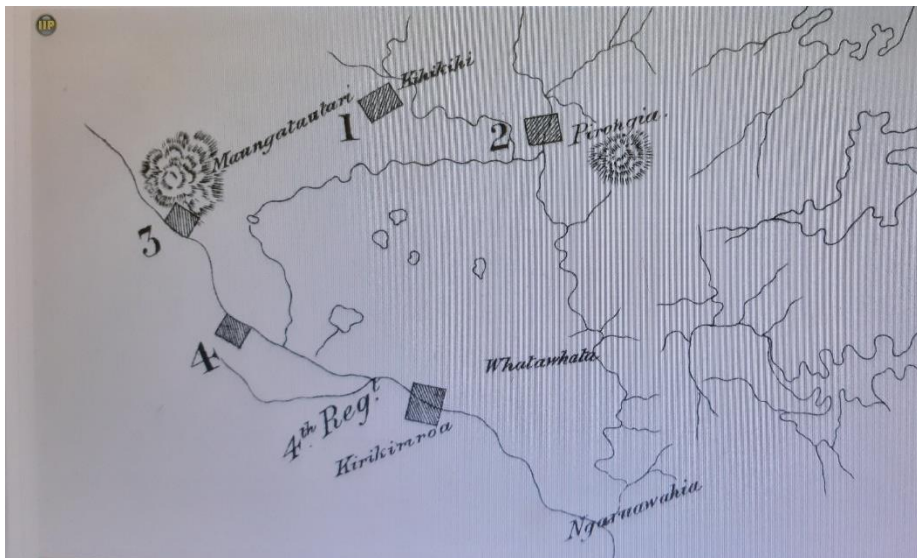


Figure 1 Map showing military settlements proposed by the Whitaker-Fox ministry, 1864<sup>3</sup>

Thus, I wanted to discover what reasons, if any, account for the transformation in artistic standards and sophistication of orchestral playing today from colonial society characterised by locally based amateurism. I decided to interview people first, before their knowledge was lost, and very soon discovered that there had been a community orchestra in the Matamata-Piako district of the Waikato, from 1974 – 2004, called the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra, (TAMCO).

<sup>3</sup> Wellington, Govt. Printer, 1864, Kohinga Matihiko 81268192800002836 Alma Collection, National Library of New Zealand, [Sketch shewing proposed portions of] militia townships as indicated by ministers in minute of 6th June 1864, Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, 1864, E-2, following p. 64.

Imagine my excitement when further investigation uncovered the treasure trove of all their minutes, reviews, programmes, photographs, and other ephemera in an old, battered, leather suitcase at the Te Aroha Museum, filed under 'Bands.'



Figure 2 Suitcase, TAMCO, Te Aroha Archives<sup>4</sup>

When I had researched that and had interviewed as many people as possible, I turned back to the beginnings, with the aim of putting TAMCO into the context of the overall development of orchestral music. However, I discovered far more music was performed in the earliest years than I had expected (and considerably more than even my first chief supervisor, Martin Lodge, imagined!) and so, due to the wealth of information, this thesis again adapted and now is in two parts.

The first part concentrates on the initial fifty years, from 1864-1914, which saw the development from music hall variety type concerts through to orchestral classical concerts. The second part of the thesis, the study of TAMCO, builds on that. Te

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<sup>4</sup> TAMCO suitcase, Te Aroha Archives, Photograph property of writer.

Aroha and Morrinsville were relatively small townships in the early 1970s, and remote from other entertainment in bigger cities. In this way, their experience in creating an orchestra from their locality mirrors much of the earlier experience and provides the opportunity of testing my hypotheses from the early years.

For the earlier period my main source of information was *Papers Past*. Here I found advertisements, occasionally concert programmes, letters to the editor, articles before a concert and reviews after a concert. In this way I was able to build up a picture of the values, concerns, and preoccupations of the populace during this period in relation to music making. Of course, these were all intended for public consumption and reflect the biases and class considerations of the literate middle-class community. I supplemented this with census records, museum records, photographs, and maps.

In contrast, my TAMCO research was based on archives of a more personal nature, such as the minute books. There were still the advertisements, reviews, programmes, letters, but I was able to interview several of the key players and see photographs from newspaper cuttings and from personal collections. I even heard a CD of the orchestra in concert in 2000.<sup>5</sup> It was an extremely lucky and extraordinary find and speaks to the vital role of local museums in preserving history.

This thesis is invested in how “ordinary” people in the Waikato created and maintained their musical life. My research makes a key contribution to this field. Apart from individual stories in local history magazines and some publications reflecting on music as an aspect of colonial life, such as Adela Stewart’s *My Simple Life in New Zealand*, and the letters and journals of missionaries Benjamin and Harriet Ashwell, I have found very little written about this.<sup>6</sup>

Specific towns/areas in New Zealand and overseas have been surveyed for their music history, but in general it is like an unfinished patchwork of snapshots of different times and places. To elucidate this, I turn now to a review of the available literature from New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and England.

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<sup>5</sup> Property of Avis Pennell.

<sup>6</sup> Moffat and Arvidson, 'Introduction: The Waikato Mission of Benjamin and Harriet Ashwell'; Adela B. Stewart, *My Simple Life in New Zealand*. (London: R. Banks, 1908).

## Literature Review

Martin Lodge's metaphor of New Zealand music as a 'braided river' is a helpful way of framing this overview of scholarship pertinent to my investigation of orchestra music in the Waikato.<sup>7</sup> I am, of course, looking at a very European musical tradition, and my thesis is a story of European settlement and the importation of cultural traditions, but it is also the story of the establishment of a distinctive local tradition with each township having its own orchestra. Lodge writes that 'braided rivers have broad shingle beds through which flow many smaller channels. These channels continually change direction, split, and recombine as the river runs towards the sea.'<sup>8</sup> Applying this analogy to music, Lodge describes musical expression in Aotearoa/New Zealand as consisting of different threads that can flow together and can diverge, all the while moving forward.

Some of the braids that are fundamental parts of musical expression in Aotearoa/New Zealand concentrate on aspects of music making that do not directly overlap with my focus on orchestral music. One of these central strands is that of Māori music, which has recently received considerable scholarly attention. Mervyn McLean's *Māori Music* provides an overview of musical evolution from the period of pre-contact to the present day, and the work of Hirini Melbourne, Richard Nunns and Brian Flintoff has attempted to recover traditional musical forms and instruments.<sup>9</sup>

Popular and choral music also lies largely outside of this focus on orchestral music, but the thesis draws, where appropriate, on these braids of New Zealand's musical heritage. While the initial concerts in the Waikato discussed in Part One of the thesis contained songs that were popular at the time, the most comprehensive study of this form of music making, Chris Bourke's *Blue Smoke: The Lost Dawn of New Zealand Popular Music 1918–1964*, only addresses this form from 1918.<sup>10</sup> Likewise, *Home, Land and Sea* and *Many Voices* focus on music as an expression

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<sup>7</sup> Lodge, 'Music Historiography as a Braided River: The Case of New Zealand'.

<sup>8</sup> Lodge, 'Music Historiography as a Braided River: The Case of New Zealand', p. 96.

<sup>9</sup> Mervyn McLean, *Maori Music* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1996).; Richard Nunns, Allan Thomas, and Richard Nunns, *Te ara puoro: A Journey into the World of Māori Music* (Nelson, New Zealand: Craig Potton Publishing, 2014). Dudley Benson, Hirini Melbourne, Nicholas Forbes and others, *Forest: Songs by Hirini Melbourne* (Auckland: Golden Retriever Records, 2010). Brian Flintoff, Hirini Melbourne, and Richard Nunns, *Taonga Pūoro: Singing Treasures: The Musical Instruments of the Māori* (Nelson, N.Z: Craig Potton Publishing, 2004).

<sup>10</sup> Chris Bourke, *Blue Smoke: The Lost Dawn of New Zealand Popular Music, 1918-1964* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2010).

of culture, looking at, for example, street music and jazz culture.<sup>11</sup> There are also other forms of classical music, separate from orchestral, which have been the focus of scholarly study. The history of opera in New Zealand has been well served by Adrienne Simpson and Peter Downes.<sup>12</sup> From differing viewpoints Phyllis Brusey and Maurice Hurst have each provided additional information about music and the stage; the former writing as, amongst other positions, the director of the New Zealand Opera Company, and the latter attempting a 'record [of] the outstanding stage and musical events in New Zealand since the arrival for the first settlers'.<sup>13</sup>

Of more direct relevance to this thesis are discussions relating to the relationship between place and identity. Stephen Cottrell in his chapter 'The Future of the Orchestra' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Orchestra* describes the symphony orchestra as 'one of Europe's most significant cultural exports'.<sup>14</sup> As communities from Europe migrated and settled elsewhere, so were transplanted 'numerous aspects of European culture'.<sup>15</sup> The early settlers attempted to reproduce the sounds from home and gradually from very small beginnings our nationwide spread of orchestras was born. While more peripherally associated with orchestras, Kirstine Moffat's story of the piano in early settlers' lives throughout New Zealand provides some useful insights into colonial entertainment and amateur performance and the transportation of British and European cultural traditions to New Zealand.<sup>16</sup> In similar vein, Phillipa Ulenberg's history of the first 60 years of the Hamilton Civic Choir references the imported choral aspect of British culture.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Glenda Keam and Tony Mitchell, *Home, Land and Sea: Situating Music in Aotearoa New Zealand* (Rosedale (NZ): Pearson, 2011); Henry Mabley Johnson, *Many Voices: Music and National Identity in Aotearoa/New Zealand* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2010).

<sup>12</sup> Adrienne Simpson, *Opera in New Zealand: Aspects of History and Performance* (Wellington: Witham Press, 1990); Adrienne Simpson, 'Opera in the Antipodes: A Forgotten Aspect of the Nineteenth-Century Trans-Tasman Entertainment Industry', *The New Zealand Journal of History*, 27.1 (1993, April), 61-74 ; Adrienne Simpson, *Opera's Farthest Frontier, A History of Professional Opera in New Zealand* (Auckland, New Zealand: Reed, 1996); Adrienne Simpson and Peter Downes, *Southern Voices: International Opera Singers of New Zealand* (Auckland: Reed, 1992); Peter Downes, *The Pollards: a family and its child and adult opera companies in New Zealand and Australia, 1880-1910* (Wellington: Steele Roberts, 2002).

<sup>13</sup> Phyllis Brusey, *Ring Down the Curtain* (Wellington: C. Rex Monigatti Publishing, 1973); Maurice Hurst, *Music and the Stage in New Zealand* (Auckland: Charles Begg and Co., Ltd., 1944); Hurst, p. 5.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen Cottrell, 'The Future of the Orchestra', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Orchestra*, ed. by Colin Lawson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

<sup>15</sup> Cottrell, 'The Future of the Orchestra', p. 251.

<sup>16</sup> Kirstine Moffat, 'The Piano as Symbolic Capital in New Zealand Fiction, 1860-1940', *Journal of New Zealand Literature*, 28 (2010), 34-60 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41245571>>

<sup>17</sup> Phillipa Ulenberg, *In Sound Voice: Hamilton Civic Choir - the First 60 Years 1946-2006* (Hamilton: Half Court Press Ltd, 2010).

Apart from online entries — the New Zealand entry in *Groves Music Online Historiography*, or *Te Ara*, for example — there is only one book providing a general history of music in New Zealand.<sup>18</sup> Not surprisingly then, John Mansfield Thomson's *The Oxford History of New Zealand Music* remains 'the central text in the field.'<sup>19</sup> It has not been without its critics — 'an unbalanced concentration on the period up to 1950,' or, 'the omissions are conspicuous' — but at least within its 300 or so pages it covers New Zealand music making from pre-European contact to 1990.<sup>20</sup> There are many possible reasons for such a lack of musicology in New Zealand and Martin Lodge, for example, as early as 1989 refers to the 'fragmented, forgotten past' which at the time he writes has 'begun to be assembled into a comprehensive history' of which, presumably, Thomson's work is the result.<sup>21</sup>

However, Thomson's work is, as he himself admits, a 'concise' history of New Zealand Music.<sup>22</sup> Divided into Part One: 'Growth of a Performing Tradition' and Part Two: 'Growth of a Composing Tradition', he condenses the former into just 200 pages and the latter the remaining 100. Therefore, there is very little in detail and a scant eighteen pages on 'Orchestral patterns: from the nineteenth century to the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.'<sup>23</sup> Fortunately there are extremely helpful notes to guide the scholar to further reading.

Lodge commented in 2009 that following Thomson's book, which vindicated writing about New Zealand music in the first place, there still was little New Zealand music history writing.<sup>24</sup> He notes that the 'unique social, political and cultural history of the nation' as well as Western tradition contribute to the 'paucity of comprehensive music history writing' and points to the fact that an essentially Western culture, in

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<sup>18</sup> 'Grove Music Online Historiography,' (n.d.),

<<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com:80/subscriber/article/grove/music/51674>>

Peter Walls, 'Orchestras – Nineteenth-century orchestras', in *Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/orchestras/page-1>>.

<sup>19</sup> John Mansfield Thomson, *The Oxford History of New Zealand Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991). Martin Lodge, private correspondence.

<sup>20</sup> Gary Brain, 'Review: The Oxford History of New Zealand Music', *Tempo, New Series*, 185 (1993, June), 42-43 (p. 42) <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/945720>>; David Butler Cannata, 'Review: The Oxford History of New Zealand Music', *Notes*, 48.3 (1992), 887-888 (p. 888) <[10.2307/941715](https://doi.org/10.2307/941715)>; Thompson responds to the latter as a 'plethora of minor criticisms of varying accuracy' and refutes this - John Mansfield Thomson, 'Communications', *Notes, Second Series*, 49.4 (1993, Jun.), 1656-1657 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/899446>>p.1656

<sup>21</sup> Martin Lodge, 'Timely Thoughts', *Music in New Zealand* (1989-90, Summer), 6-7 (p. 6)

<sup>22</sup> Thomson, p. ix.

<sup>23</sup> Thomson, pp. 115-127.

<sup>24</sup> Martin Lodge, 'Music Historiography in New Zealand', in *Music's Intellectual History*, ed. by Zdravko Blažeković and Barbara Dobbs Mackenzie, Repertoire international de littérature musicale (New York, NY, 2009), p. 627.

terms of the writing of a history of music, was a fundamentally different concept to that of the Māori. It also was 'unavoidably connected with the process of colonisation by the dominant culture'.<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, with a pervasive attitude of 'anti-intellectualism' in the national stereotype, a slow growth in a sense of New Zealand as a nation, and a possible 'defensive barrier against the outside world which became a sort of New Zealand provincial protectionism,' writing a comprehensive all-encompassing musical history has so far seemed too audacious to attempt.<sup>26</sup>

When it comes to New Zealand's cities and regions, there have been more focused studies, many of which concentrate on the history of specific professional orchestras. Not surprisingly, there has been much emphasis on the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, based in Wellington, with its earlier incarnation, the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation Orchestra, discussed by Owen Jensen and its thirtieth, fortieth, and fiftieth anniversaries marked by publications.<sup>27</sup> It is safe to say that the history of professional orchestral music in Wellington is well covered.

The same cannot be said of anywhere else in New Zealand, including the greater Wellington area. Orchestra Wellington has a nucleus of professional players which has developed from the Alex Lindsay String Orchestra, founded in 1948. This latter 'graced the New Zealand music scene for a quarter of a century, from 1948 to 1973,' and has received due attention by Adrienne Simpson and Geoffrey Newson.<sup>28</sup>

Of note for my research, there is also some work on the greater Wellington area which looks at amateur music and the interesting amateur/professional divide.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Lodge, 'Music Historiography in New Zealand', p. 625; Lodge, 'Music Historiography in New Zealand', p. 629.

<sup>26</sup> John Mansfield Thomson, 'Reflections on Writing Musical History', *Canzona*, 16.37 (1994), 2-5 (p. 4) ; Lodge, 'Music Historiography in New Zealand', p. 631.

<sup>27</sup> Owen Jensen, *NZBC Symphony Orchestra* (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1966); Joy Tonks, *Bravo: The NZSO at 50* (Auckland: Exisle, 1996); *Concord of Sweet Sounds: The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra at 30*, ed. by Keith Hambleton (Wellington: Concert Department Broadcasting Corporation of New Zealand, 1977); Joy Tonks, *The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra: The First Forty Years* (Auckland: Reed Methuen, 1986); Ashley Heenan, *The NZBC Symphony Orchestra of the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation* (Wellington: New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation, 1971).

<sup>28</sup> Adrienne Simpson and Geoffrey Newson, *Alex Lindsay: The Man and his Orchestra* (Christchurch, NZ: School of Music, University of Canterbury, 1998).

<sup>29</sup> R. J. Palmer, 'Participating in the Classical Music World: Four Amateur Organizations and the Perspectives of their Members' (unpublished master's thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 2006)

At an earlier stage the Wellington Orchestral Society, 1892-1896, was discussed by John M. Thomson.<sup>30</sup>

Outside of the capital city, Christchurch has had the greatest amount of attention. Philip Jane's doctoral thesis, 'An Historical Survey of the Establishment of an Orchestral Tradition in Christchurch to 1939,' is a well-researched, meticulous account, including appendices, of the concert calendar and orchestral personnel from 1872-1939, and the concert programmes and visiting opera companies in the period.<sup>31</sup> The Christchurch Symphony Orchestra's professional development has also been examined, both in 1988 and more fully in 2008.<sup>32</sup>

Individual events in Canterbury have also been researched. Philip Jane has profiled the music performed during the 1882 International Exhibition and the International Exhibition in 1906-07 has received even more attention.<sup>33</sup> In a book edited by himself, John Thomson contributed a chapter about the organisation and performances of the orchestra, which was conducted by Alfred Hill.<sup>34</sup> This laid some of the foundations for later music in the province - 'the impetus which has been given to music locally will no doubt be reflected in the doings of our own musicians.'<sup>35</sup>

Christchurch was also fortunate in that a School of Music was established, with humble beginnings - 'a series of music classes' - in 1891.<sup>36</sup> Divided into chapters reflecting the consecutive heads of the music department with the final decade seen as a 'period of consolidation', the *Centennial History* details the growth and the rivalry with Auckland University. In his epilogue, John Jennings finishes with the comment that, 'it must be appreciated that its most tangible asset ... is not its

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<sup>30</sup> John Mansfield Thomson, 'A Question of Authenticity: Alfred Hill, Ovide Musin, the Chevalier de Kontski', *Turnbull Library Record*, 13.2 (1980), 80-92

<sup>31</sup> Philip Jane, 'An Historical Survey of the Establishment of an Orchestral Tradition in Christchurch to 1939', in *School of Music* (Christchurch: University of Canterbury, 2009).

<sup>32</sup> Ian Dando, 'The Christchurch Symphony Orchestra', *Music in New Zealand*, 2 (1988, Spring), 17-21 ; Tom Rogers and Simon Tipping, *Classical Sparks: The Story of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra* (Wellington: Dunmore Publishing, 2008).

<sup>33</sup> Philip Jane, 'Music in Christchurch during the 1882 International Exhibition', *Journal of New Zealand Studies*, NS17 (2014), 21-38 ; *Farewell Colonialism: The New Zealand International Exhibition Christchurch, 1906-07*, ed. by John Mansfield Thomson (Palmerston North: the Dunmore Press, 1998).

<sup>34</sup> John Mansfield Thomson, "A Triumph for Instrumental Music of the Highest Type': From the Orchestra fo the Besses o' th' Barn Band', in *Farewell Colonialism: The New Zealand International Exhibition Christchurch, 1906-07*, ed. by John Mansfield Thomson (Palmerston North: The Dunmore Press, 1998).

<sup>35</sup> Thomson, "A Triumph for Instrumental Music of the Highest Type': From the Orchestra fo the Besses o' th' Barn Band', p. 92. quoted from an article in the *Star* 19 April 1907.

<sup>36</sup> Robin Stevens, 'Review: John Jennings, 'Music at Canterbury', 1991;' *International Journal of Music Education*, 21.1 (1993, May), 92 <10.1177/025576149302100115>

buildings and equipment: it is the contribution to society made by its staff and graduates'.<sup>37</sup>

An early establishment of a school of music had an enormous impact on the quality of music in both Christchurch and Auckland. However, Auckland has not had as much written about its music, despite having a music department senior to that of Canterbury.<sup>38</sup> Neither the Symphonia of Auckland (of which I was a member until its dissolution in 1980) nor the Auckland Philharmonia has been mentioned except in reviews of regional orchestras.<sup>39</sup>

Dunedin was well served by Margaret Campbell in 1945 but, unfortunately, 'the record ceases at the year 1925'.<sup>40</sup> Her chapter on 'Instrumental Music' notes that while 'the first choral society was formed in 1856, it was twenty-seven years later before the first local amateur orchestral society commenced to function'.<sup>41</sup> This is surprising given that the gold rush in the 1860s had increased Dunedin's population to the largest in New Zealand at the time, although of course it later dropped. The Christchurch Orchestral Society had formed in 1872 and visited Dunedin in 1881 many years before Dunedin had its own society in 1904.<sup>42</sup> To give a sense of history, the Wellington Philharmonic Society was established in 1848.<sup>43</sup> In more recent times, John Drummond gave a lecture about music in Dunedin from 1860-1862.<sup>44</sup>

Doctoral theses have also explored music in New Zealand's cities, with analyses of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, and one wider 'Survey of Orchestral Music in New Zealand' dating from 1967.<sup>45</sup> This is a very competent

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<sup>37</sup> John. M. Jennings, *Music at Canterbury: A Centennial History of the School of Music University of Canterbury 1891-1991* (Christchurch: School of Music University of Canterbury, 1991), pp. 67, 80.

<sup>38</sup> Charles Nalden, *A History of the Conservatorium of Music, University of Auckland, 1888-1981* (Auckland: Faculty of Music, University of Auckland, 1981).

<sup>39</sup> Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand, 'Report on Orchestral Development in New Zealand', (Wellington: Minister of Internal Affairs, 1973). This mentions only the proposals for developing the Symphonia.

<sup>40</sup> Margaret Campbell, *Music in Dunedin: An Historical Account of Dunedin's Musicians and Musical Societies from the Founding of the Province in 1848* (Dunedin: Charles Begg and Co, 1945), p. Preface.

<sup>41</sup> Campbell, pp. 48-53.

<sup>42</sup> David Murray, 'The Dunedin Philharmonic Society (1904-1933): The Activities of an Early New Zealand Orchestra', in *New Zealand Musicological Society* (School of Music, University of Auckland, 2002).

<sup>43</sup> Peter Walls, 'Orchestras - Nineteenth-century orchestras', in *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/orchestras/page-1>>[accessed

<sup>44</sup> John Drummond, *Choirs and Clogs, Mr Ballads and Mr Bones: Musical and other Entertainments in Dunedin 1860-1862* (Dunedin: The Hocken Library University of Otago, 1991).

<sup>45</sup> David Baillie Walsh, 'A Survey of Orchestral Music in New Zealand' (unpublished M. A. thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1967)

thesis where David Walsh discusses orchestral activity in those centres from the early years (1850s) through to the mid twentieth century. His final review is of the development of the orchestral concert programme which he sees as a reflection of public taste and its 'growing sophistication'.<sup>46</sup>

In the regions, Nelson, Puhoi and Hawera have fared well, albeit in a limited way, as is outlined below. Of the Waikato there is no mention, confirming that this is an area in need of research. This region has not fared well in terms of perceptions of its musical cultural identity and indeed has been largely ignored by scholars, although the Hamilton Civic Choir has received attention.<sup>47</sup> There is but one Masters thesis, 'Unearthing Talent: Culture in a Cow Town', that looks at a 10-year period from 1940-1950 and devotes one chapter to music in Hamilton.<sup>48</sup>

The history of the School of Music at Nelson has been written about, the Bohemian musicians of Puhoi have had their history told, and music in Hawera in 1946 was examined by Allan Thomas firstly in a thesis, and then later in the book based on that thesis.<sup>49</sup> Peter Walls, writing in *Te Ara*, also mentions the establishment of Philharmonic Societies in 'Nelson in 1852, New Plymouth in 1856 and Invercargill in 1864' and Whangarei Philharmonic Society in 1871. He also notes that the Napier Philharmonic Society was rehearsing in 1868, and the Coromandel Philharmonic Society was extant in 1872.<sup>50</sup>

Thomas's thesis is an inspiration to my own. This tells the story of one year of music in Hawera, 1946, covering all music forms. He uses as his starting point the recordings of the Broadcasting Mobile Unit and from this, and interviews with locals, paints a picture of the importance of music in a rural town. Using ethnography and oral history as his main methods, he underscores the need for this type of approach to the work I have done. Philip Jane profiles the life of one late nineteenth century

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<sup>46</sup> Walsh, 'A Survey of Orchestral Music in New Zealand', p. 3.

<sup>47</sup> Ulenberg.

<sup>48</sup> Peter Alan Gillies, 'Unearthing Talent: Culture in a Cow Town: The Amateur Performing Arts in Hamilton 1940-1950' (unpublished M. A. thesis, University of Waikato, 1997)

<sup>49</sup> Philip Jane, 'Survey of New Zealand Music Studies [online]', *Context: Journal of Music Research*.24 (2002, Spring), 51-62

<<http://search.informit.com.au.ezproxy.waikato.ac.nz/documentSummary;dn=211092338597313;res=1ELHSS>>; Roger Buckton, *Bohemian Journey: A Musical Heritage in Colonial New Zealand* (Wellington: Steele Roberts Publishers, 2013). Allan Thomas, 'An Historical Ethnography of Music in the Town of Hawera in 1946: From the Recordings of the Mobile Unit of the New Zealand Broadcasting Service and Oral Histories of Musicians', University of Otago, Dunedin, May 2000); Allan Thomas, *Music is where you find it: Music in the Town of Hawera, 1946: An Historical Ethnography* (Wellington: Music Books New Zealand, 2004).

<sup>50</sup> Walls, 'Orchestras - Nineteenth-century orchestras'.

musician in Hawera, Joseph Higham. As well as drawing attention to the rich musical life in provincial New Zealand, Jane's exploration of the important role played by an 'enthusiastic individual' connects to my own analysis of key charismatic personalities in the Waikato.<sup>51</sup>

A number of bibliographical surveys provide an invaluable resource for researchers writing about New Zealand music. Some relate to specific areas or time periods, while others relate to all New Zealand.<sup>52</sup> One such is the magisterial, comprehensive work of D.R. Harvey.<sup>53</sup> In the sections relating to my research there are 324 references to publications on performance venues, employment opportunities and conditions, broadcasting, the recording industry, and performing groups, including vocalists and instrumentalists, instrumental groups, and choral groups. This complements the earlier 1972 work of John M. Jennings in an article in which he surveyed student music research in New Zealand.<sup>54</sup> Here he catalogues theses under the headings of History of Music in New Zealand, Ethnomusicology, and Music Education. A more recent bibliography is that of Philip Jane who also surveyed New Zealand studies in musicology at the BA (Hons), Masters and PhD levels undertaken at New Zealand tertiary institutions. He sees research in New Zealand music history as 'fragmented, haphazard and late in starting', probably because of a mainly Eurocentric concentration of research earlier.<sup>55</sup>

Given that the history of orchestral music in New Zealand is 'fragmented', international scholarship provides some additional avenues of enquiry and possible comparison with the New Zealand context. Starting with Australia, orchestral music making has had a small amount of critical attention. Richard Toop refers to 'the geographic transferability of traditions'.<sup>56</sup> While he is referring to Australia and new

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<sup>51</sup> Philip Jane, 'The Life of a Provincial Musician in Late Nineteenth-Century New Zealand: A Case Study of Joseph Higham in Hawera', *Journal of New Zealand Studies*, NS30 (2020), 72-95 (p. 72)

<sup>52</sup> Brian W. Pritchard, *Selected Source Readings on the Musical Activity in the Canterbury Settlement, 1850-1880*, ed. by Brian W. Pritchard, The Canterbury Series of Bibliographies, Catalogues and Source Documents in Music (Christchurch: School of Music, University of Canterbury, 1984), 1; Brian W. Pritchard, 'Music Periodicals in New Zealand: Viewing a Century Of Publication and some Landmark Enterprises', *Fontes Artis Musicae* (2002), 79-93 ; Gerald R. Seaman, 'New Zealand Periodicals with Musical Content', *Fontes artis musicae* (1992, Juli-Dezember), 211-19

<sup>53</sup> D. R. Harvey, *A Bibliography of Writings About New Zealand Music Published to the End of 1983* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1985).

<sup>54</sup> John. M. Jennings, 'Report from New Zealand : New Zealand Music Research.', *Current Musicology*, 14 (1972), 70-76

<sup>55</sup> Jane, 'Survey', 2002, p. 51.

<sup>56</sup> Richard Toop, 'Elision Ensemble, Melbourne, Australia, 22 April', *Tempo, New Series*, 174 (1990, Sep.), 28-30 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/946327>>

music making there, this concept is obviously relevant in New Zealand as the new settlers brought with them the cultural traditions from their homeland. *The Australian Symphony from Federation to 1960*, although primarily concerned with symphonic writing, has a useful chapter on the Australian musical environment.<sup>57</sup> It covers tertiary institutions and looks at orchestral music in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide. Obviously, these cities are older and were considerably larger than their New Zealand counterparts. Australian state governments, even in the nineteenth century, provided financial assistance, in stark contrast to, for example, the situation for the Symphonia of Auckland in the 1970s.<sup>58</sup> Melbourne in the nineteenth century has been studied, and there is a useful book on music making in Brisbane.<sup>59</sup> An article looking at the British influence on musical taste in late nineteenth century Melbourne is also of some relevance, and possible comparison.<sup>60</sup> Lawrence Bendle and Ian Patterson have looked at amateur artist groups in Plateau Town enhancing my enquiry into the role of amateur activity.<sup>61</sup> They draw inspiration from Robert Stebbins, mentioned below, and examine the important role that volunteers play in the creative arts – such as playing as an amateur musician in an orchestra but also fulfilling the role of chairperson of its board.

David Gramit has written two useful articles on music in Canada in the nineteenth century, looking at Alberta, Edmonton and then at the rest of Canada.<sup>62</sup> Another insightful article, of some relevance to the early colonial society of the Waikato, is by William Weber who looks at the 'soirée' and the social identity formed

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<sup>57</sup> Rhoderick McNeill, *The Australian Symphony from Federation to 1960* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

<sup>58</sup> McNeill, p. 34.

<sup>59</sup> Thérèse Radic, 'Major Choral Organizations in Late Nineteenth-Century Melbourne', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, 2.02 (2005), 3-28 <[http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract\\_S1479409800002184](http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S1479409800002184)>; Kerry Murphy, 'Léon Caron: his Role in the Musical Life of 19th-Century Melbourne', *Explorations* (2010) ; Bonnie Jane Smart, 'Leon Caron and the Music Profession in Australia' (unpublished M. A. thesis, University of Melbourne, 2003) <<http://hdl.handle.net/11343/38852>> [accessed 2014/05/23] Frederick J. Ericksen, 'The Bands and Orchestras of Colonial Brisbane', University of Queensland, 1987)

<sup>60</sup> Janice B. Stockigt, 'A Study of British Influence on Musical Taste and Programming: New Choral Works Introduced to Audiences by the Melbourne Philharmonic Society, 1876-1901', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, 2.02 (2005), 29-53 <[http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract\\_S1479409800002196](http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S1479409800002196)>

<sup>61</sup> Lawrence J. Bendle and Ian Patterson, 'Mixed Serious Leisure and Grassroots Organizational Capacity: A Study of Amateur Artist Groups in a Regional Australian City', *Leisure Sciences: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 31.3 (2009), 272-286.

<sup>62</sup> David Gramit, 'What does a City Sound like? The Musical Dynamics of a Colonial Settler City', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, 11.02 (2014, Dec.), 273-290.

thereby.<sup>63</sup> There are further articles and books on this continent pertinent to my study, either to suggest an avenue to explore or to make a comparison or contrast with other settler nations. These include looking at amateur music making and community orchestras, and early symphonic organisations.<sup>64</sup> The question of amateur musicians is tackled by Stebbins who looks at the world of barbershop singing.<sup>65</sup> Throughout his book he compares this form of music to classical and jazz and relates these to serious leisure. My thesis looks at amateur music making, and his definition of amateur - 'facsimiles of professionals in a way' - and the contention that amateurs are not necessarily inferior in ability to professionals is valid in any number of fields.<sup>66</sup>

England has had a long history of orchestral music making, with several very focused histories of regions, which is of relevance to my research. Ruth Finnegan's study of her hometown of Milton Keynes in the early 1980s is particularly helpful in terms of methodology.<sup>67</sup> Like Allan Thomas's work on Hawera, she focuses on all the forms of music making that were occurring at that time – not just the world of classical music. However, the fact that in the classical music area there were four orchestras, approximately 100 choirs, and several instrumental ensembles gives her rich material. Her ethnographic study is the first to look at all musical activities within a particular geographic boundary.

David Russell examines provincial concerts in Bradford 1865-1914 looking at two concert series given in that city.<sup>68</sup> His aim is to 'shed some light on' the organisation, financing, social and cultural context, and public funding of concerts.<sup>69</sup> All of this is very relevant to my thesis. John Seed and Janet Wolff use another

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<sup>63</sup> William Weber, 'Kristina Marie Guiguet, The Ideal World of Mrs Widder's Soirée Musicale: Social Identity and Musical Life in Nineteenth-Century Ontario', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, 3.01 (2006, June), 125-127

<sup>64</sup> Bush, Jeffrey and Andrew Krikun, 'Community Music in North America: Historical Foundations', *Community Music Today* (2013), 13-24 ; Barbara D. Perry Deegan, 'Conducting Amateur Musicians: Leadership of Community Orchestras in the United States', *Missouri Journal of Research in Music Education*.44 (2007), 43-54 ; C. Ford, *Canada's Music: An Historical Survey* (Agincourt, Ontario: GLC Publishers Limited, 1982); D. E. Hall, 'Early Symphonic Music Organizations in Honolulu and their Conductors', *Hawaiian Journal of History*, 20 (1986), 172-187

<sup>65</sup> Robert A. Stebbins, *The Barbershop Singer: Inside the Social World of a Musical Hobby* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

<sup>66</sup> Stebbins, p. 9.

<sup>67</sup> Ruth Finnegan, *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

<sup>68</sup> David Russell, 'Provincial Concerts in England. 1865-1914: A Case-Study of Bradford', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 114.1 (1989), 43-55 See also David Russell, *Popular Music in England, 1840-1914: A Social History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987).

<sup>69</sup> Russell, 'Provincial Concerts' p.43.

northern city, Manchester, to look at class and culture in the nineteenth century.<sup>70</sup> Both of these articles provide ideas and social context for looking at orchestral music in the Waikato. As an example, Seed and Wolff highlight the 'role of culture in class formation.'<sup>71</sup> Is it possible to consider that the same impetus that drove the purchase of a subscription to a concert series in the north of England (thus displaying oneself to be part of a select group) is possibly mirrored in the purchase of the more expensive front seat tickets at a concert in Cambridge in 1882?

**C**AMBRIDGE MUSICAL UNION.  
**A CONCERT**  
WILL BE GIVEN IN THE  
PUBLIC HALL, CAMBRIDGE,  
ON  
**Easter Monday, April 10th.**  
To conclude with a DANCE, for holders  
of Front Seat Tickets.  
To commence at 8 o'clock.  
Tickets — Front Seats, 3s; Back  
litto. 2s.

Figure 3 Advertisement Concert Cambridge 10 April 1882<sup>72</sup>

This review of literature, from New Zealand and abroad, shows not only that there is much work to be done on our own history but that international research is likewise piecemeal and patchy. The story of the development of orchestral music in the Waikato in the first 50 years of European settlement will therefore fill an important gap in the story of New Zealand music, and the close examination of a small isolated amateur rural orchestra approximately a century later will do likewise.

## Methodology

This thesis has two main methodological strands, the historical and the musicological. Musicologist Stephen Blum highlights the interconnection between these two disciplines, writing that historians of music 'are concerned with musical interpretations of history and with historical interpretations of music and musical

<sup>70</sup> John Seed and Janet Wolff, 'Class and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Manchester', *Theory Culture and Society*, 2.2 (1984), 38-53

<sup>71</sup> Seed and Wolff, pp. 38.

<sup>72</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 8 April 1882.

life'.<sup>73</sup> Although these two approaches will be used concurrently in this study, in this introductory section they are discussed independently, beginning with musicology. The research for the historical aspect of the thesis is archival, drawing primarily on written documents, both published and unpublished, but also images and oral histories. It employs the interrelated tools of case study, microhistory and history from below. The musicological approach taken will broadly follow the principles of the so-called 'new musicology' and its insistence on inclusivity, both artistic and cultural, and for this I turn to ethnomusicology.<sup>74</sup>

Ethnomusicology is the study of music in its cultural context and is considered to embrace 'musical life in its full richness and diversity.'<sup>75</sup> Often considered to be the ethnography of music, it essentially studies 'people making music,' and as an interdisciplinary field includes ethnography, anthropology, cultural studies and, of course, both non-Western and Western music.<sup>76</sup> It is recognized by Helen Myers that 'most ethnomusicological research also involves history, and for many studies history is the focus'.<sup>77</sup> Therefore, it is an ideal methodology for my research. It is 'very much part of modern music history' and thus a good fit with research that focuses on the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries<sup>78</sup>

One key aspect of ethnomusicology is that it looks at the function of music in society.<sup>79</sup> Anthony Seeger examines the general questions asked by ethnomusicologists, and these include 'what is the relation of music to other processes in societies or groups?'<sup>80</sup> This relationship between music and society is

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<sup>73</sup> Helen Myers, 'Introduction', in *Ethnomusicology: Historical and Regional Studies*, ed. by Helen Myers, The New Grove Handbooks in Music, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1993), p. 3; Stephen Blum, 'Prologue: Ethnomusicologists and Modern Music History', in *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History*, ed. by Stephen Blum, Philip V. Bohlman, and Daniel M. Neuman (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991), p. 1.

<sup>74</sup> Joseph Kerman, *Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology* Harvard University Press, 1985).

<sup>75</sup> Byron Dueck, 'Welcome', <<https://bfe.org.uk/>>

<sup>76</sup> Jeff Todd Titon, 'Knowing People Making Music: Toward a New Epistemology for Ethnomusicology', *Etnomusikologian vuosikirja*, 6 (1994) ; *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*, The New Grove Handbooks in Music (London: Macmillan, 1992); Helen Myers, 'Introduction', in *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*, ed. by Helen Myers, 1st edn, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1992), p. 3; Bruno Nettl, 'Mozart and the Ethnomusicological Study of Western Music', in *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 1989).

<sup>77</sup> Myers, 'Introduction', p. 3.

<sup>78</sup> Daniel M. Neuman, 'Epilogue: Paradigms and Stories', in *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History*, ed. by Stephen Blum, Philip V. Bohlman, and Daniel M. Neuman (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991), p. 270.

<sup>79</sup> Myers, 'Introduction', p. 3.

<sup>80</sup> Anthony Seeger, 'Ethnography of Music', in *Ethnomusicology: an Introduction*, ed. by Helen Myers, The New Grove Handbooks in Music, 1st edn, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1992), p. 22.

one that is spelt out by Alan Merriam, 'music *is* culture and what musicians do *is* society'.<sup>81</sup>

Waikato settler society in the first 25 years covered by this study was very much involved in building a new settlement, while retaining a need to be reminded of "home". The concerts reflected that. The next 25 years involved a new generation of settlers, for whom "home" was the New Zealand they lived in. They were able to look forward and to outside events which affected them, such as the Boer War. This intergenerational interplay between local community and wider events is also evident in the orchestra considered in Part Two of the thesis. TAMCO was set up for adults in the community to play alongside advanced students. This would have benefitted both in ways other than musicianship, a chance for the youth to learn more about adult lives and equally for adults to discover children's interests and contemporary schooling.

If we assume their interrelationship, what impact does music have on the social life of society? Merriam considers that music could have a deeper function than purely aesthetic enjoyment, and it can be used consciously.<sup>82</sup> Obviously, some music is appropriate to several occasions, locations, or audience, while other types are 'rigidly differentiated'.<sup>83</sup> Therefore a performance, an audience, a ticket price, and even the performance time can be used to construct some reasonable conclusions about music and society in a particular community.

One way to study this is through the methodology of case study. Robert K. Yin provides a useful definition of the case study as a methodological tool: 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context'.<sup>84</sup> This is echoed by G. Kingsley Garbett, who argues that 'any social event ha[s] to be set in its social context,' thus echoing the concerns of ethnomusicology.<sup>85</sup> Case study can be used in historical research by using archival records, and contemporary newspaper records, as well as interviews with people involved in these events.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Myers, 'Introduction', p. 8.

<sup>82</sup> Alan P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1964); Seeger, 'Ethnography of Music', p. 101.

<sup>83</sup> Seeger, 'Ethnography of Music', p. 105.

<sup>84</sup> Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 3rd edn (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2003), p. 13.

<sup>85</sup> G. Kingsley Garbett, 'The Analysis of Social Situations', in *Case Study Research*, ed. by M. David (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2006), p. 44.

<sup>86</sup> Yin, p. 71.

There are many advantages in using a case study as the primary methodology for this thesis: it is extremely flexible, allows the exploration of 'complex issues,' and lends itself to a 'depth of analysis,' with rich detail.<sup>87</sup> Its use of 'multiple sources of evidence' makes it a robust methodology as the findings can be corroborated from different archives.<sup>88</sup>

Case study as a methodology has two functions – 'one wishes to know both what is particular to that unit *and* what is general about it'.<sup>89</sup> In placing my case study of TAMCO after the opening chapters on the evolution of orchestral music in the Waikato, I am able to both explore the unique musical contribution made by the orchestra and consider it as a representative example of the development of community orchestras in the second half of the twentieth century. Existing knowledge about the development of orchestral music in the Waikato is sparse and so, as is typical with a case study, original research is presented.<sup>90</sup> It follows a well-established tradition, for example the works of Finnegan, looking at Milton Keynes in the United Kingdom and Allan Thomas's work on Hawera, New Zealand, and has the advantage that 'case studies are generalizable to theoretical propositions'.<sup>91</sup>

It is here that I turn to another pertinent methodology, namely microhistory. As will be seen, there is an overlap with case study – it too is an intensive investigation of a 'relatively defined smaller object' in which the use of sources puts 'individuals, events or social networks under the historical equivalent of the electron microscope'.<sup>92</sup> However, the major aim of microhistory is to find the answers to bigger questions by that investigation.

The connection between microhistory and macrohistory is also followed by many historians, for example, Jill Lepore, Thomas Gallant, John Brewer, István

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<sup>87</sup> Catherine Hakim, *Research Design: Strategies and Choices in the Design of Social Research* (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd., 1987), p. 61; Z. Zainal, 'Case Study as a Research Method', *Jurnal Kemanusiaan*, 9 (2007), 1-5 (p. 1) <[http://eprints.utm.my/8221/4/48-case-study-as-a-research-method.html\\_Itemid=1328](http://eprints.utm.my/8221/4/48-case-study-as-a-research-method.html_Itemid=1328)>; J. Gerring, 'What is a Case Study and what is it good for?', *American Political Science Review*, 98.2 (2004, May), 341-354 (p. 348)

<sup>88</sup> Yin, p. 14.

<sup>89</sup> Gerring, p. 345.

<sup>90</sup> Gerring, p. 345.

<sup>91</sup> Finnegan, Thomas, 'An Historical Ethnography of Music in the Town of Hawera in 1946: From the Recordings of the Mobile Unit of the New Zealand Broadcasting Service and Oral Histories of Musicians'; Yin, p. 10.

<sup>92</sup> Sigurdur Gylfi Magnússon and István M. Szijártó, *What is Microhistory? Theory and Practice* (Abingdon, Oxfordshire, England: Routledge, 2013), p. 4; David A. Bell, 'Total history and Microhistory: The French and Italian Paradigms', in *A Companion to Western Historical Thought*, ed. by L. Kramer and S. Maza (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006).

Szijarto, and Helen Steele.<sup>93</sup> Michael Postan, speaking at his inaugural Cambridge lecture in 1939, said:

microscopic problems of historical research can and should be made macrocosmic – capable of reflecting worlds larger than themselves. It is in this reflected flicker of truth, the revelations of the general in the particular, that the contribution of the historical method will be found.<sup>94</sup>

In the New Zealand context, Caroline Daley uses local study and a ‘sharp focus on particular details’ to examine wider questions about the past through her specific focus on Taradale.<sup>95</sup> To paraphrase Szijarto, the particular is never isolated from the general and will always have a bearing on it and from this the ‘fabric of society may also be re-constructed.’<sup>96</sup>

There is a stress on agency in thinking about microhistory. This is defined by Anna Green as ‘the idea that individuals are equipped with the ability to understand and control their own actions and shape the direction of their lives’.<sup>97</sup> This is noted by many historians, including Sigurdur Magnusson and Szijarto: ‘For microhistorians, people who lived in the past are not merely puppets on the hands of great underlying forces of history, but they are regarded as active individuals, conscious actors’.<sup>98</sup> Although Edward P. Thompson, writing in the late 1960s, was not a microhistorian, his emphasis on the ‘autonomous agency of even the poorest and weakest members of society,’ had a huge influence on the development of microhistory.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Jill Lepore, 'Historians who love too much: Reflections on microhistory and biography', *The Journal of American History*, 88.1 (2001, June), 129-144 (p. 141); Thomas Gallant, 'Long Time Coming, Long Time Gone: The Past, Present and Future of Social History', *Historiein*, 12 (2012), 9-20 (pp. 12, 18) <<http://www.historeinonline.org/index.php/historein/article/view/162/151>>; J. Brewer, 'Microhistory and the histories of everyday life.', *Cultural and Social History*, 7.1 (2010), 87-109 (p. 97); István M. Szijártó, 'Four Arguments for Microhistory', *Rethinking History*, 6.2 (2002), 209-215; Helen Steele, 'Microhistory and Macrohistory: Different Approaches to the Analysis of History', (n.d.) (p. 1).

<sup>94</sup> M. M. Postan, 'The Historical Method in Social Science (Cambridge, 1939)', in *Study of Economic History: Collected Inaugural Lectures 1893-1970*, ed. by N.B. Harte (Florence, KY: Routledge, 2012), pp. 127-141 (139).

<sup>95</sup> Caroline Daley, *Girls and Women, Men and Boys: Gender in Taradale, 1886-1930* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999), p. 11.

<sup>96</sup> Szijártó, p. 211.

<sup>97</sup> Anna Green, *Cultural History* (Basingstoke, Hampshire, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 128.

<sup>98</sup> Magnússon and Szijártó, p. 5.

<sup>99</sup> Bell, 'Total history and Microhistory: The French and Italian Paradigms', p. 266; Edward Palmer Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1963).

It is on the microlevel that 'the human agency of past men and women at every level of society' is affirmed.<sup>100</sup> Following this mode of analysis it can be argued that from the beginning the new settlers in the Waikato had the ability to determine their leisure pursuits, develop local music-making and actively create the music scene that we have now. Microhistory is seen as history from the ground up.<sup>101</sup> By looking at the relationships within a community it is possible to deduce the cultural values of the wider society surrounding them. Thus, the social and cultural worlds are bridged.<sup>102</sup>

History from the ground up is also referred to as history from below and this term came to be used by historians in the 1960s following the eponymous article in the *Listener* by E. P. Thompson.<sup>103</sup> From this sprang 'Alltagsgeschichte' (the history of everyday life) in Germany, [and] 'microhistory' in Italy and France.<sup>791</sup> These are all part of people's history which focuses on ordinary people, their lives, their struggles, their everyday practices, and their beliefs and values.<sup>104</sup> This is of enormous relevance to the study of the development of orchestral music in the Waikato. There has been little written about how 'ordinary' settlers in New Zealand created and maintained their musical life, other than the excellent research by Kirstine Moffat, Philip Jane, and Allan Thomas.<sup>105</sup>

While it is unclear 'where, exactly, is "below"', and many historians writing about Europe have tended to see it as referring to the labouring classes or the peasantry (for example, Thompson, Richard Cobb, David Warren Sabean, Barry Reay,) "below" implies that there is an "above".<sup>106</sup> This conjecture in turn assumes

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<sup>100</sup> Brad S Gregory, 'Is Small Beautiful? Microhistory and the History of Everyday Life', *History and Theory*, 38.1 (1999), 100-110 (p. 103)

<sup>101</sup> Gregory, p. 103.

<sup>102</sup> Gallant, p. 18. Brewer, p. 97. Szijártó, p. 209.

<sup>103</sup> Edward Palmer Thompson, 'History from Below', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 3345 (1966, April 7), 279-280.

<sup>104</sup> Andrew I. Port, 'History from Below, the History of Everyday Life, and Microhistory', (2015), 108-113 (p. 108).

<sup>105</sup> Kirstine Moffat, *Piano Forte: Stories and Soundscapes from Colonial New Zealand* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2011); Jane, 'An Historical Survey of the Establishment of an Orchestral Tradition in Christchurch to 1939'; Thomas. *Music is Where you Find It*.

<sup>106</sup> Jim Sharpe, 'History from Below', in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, ed. by Peter Burke (Oxford: Polity Press in association with Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1991), p. 27; Thompson; Richard Cobb, *The Police and the People: French Popular Protest 1789-1820* (Oxford, Oxfordshire, England: Clarendon Press, 1970); David Warren Sabean, *Power in the Blood: Popular Culture and Village Discourse in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Barry Reay, *Popular Cultures in England 1550-1750*, ed. by John Stevenson, Themes in British Social History (Harlow, Essex, England: Addison Wesley Longman Ltd., 1998). Thomas, *Music is where you find it*.

that the history of 'the common people ... cannot be divorced from the wider consideration of social structure and social power.'<sup>107</sup>

Such studies, however, show how ordinary individuals had control over their own lives and were not just 'victims of large, amorphous, impersonal forces.'<sup>108</sup> This is especially relevant when considering music in the Waikato. There has been no real or lasting attempt by any local or national body to support local orchestral music. Even now, the self-styled "only professional" Waikato orchestra is desperate for finance and makes up its annual income from myriad requests of arts organizations, local businesses, and philanthropically minded individuals. So, from 1864 to the present day, it has been the agency of "ordinary" people that has ensured we have an astonishingly active local musical life.

In attempting to uncover the experiences, perspectives, and voices of orchestral musicians in the Waikato this thesis draws on a wide range of sources. Published material, particularly in the form of newspaper articles and advertisements, provides valuable insight into the musical life of communities and sometimes includes interviews with and comments from the musicians themselves. Archives are also rich in unpublished written material, such as photographs, minutes from meetings, letters, and private collections of scrapbooks and memorabilia. For the second case study, that of TAMCO, there was also another invaluable resource, that of in person interviews. As Staughton Lynd declares, 'the way to find out about people who ... do not write [or have not written] is, obviously, to talk to them', an historical source that is best known as oral history.<sup>109</sup>

Oral History is the 'recording of personal testimony delivered in oral form' based on the 'speaker's personal knowledge'.<sup>110</sup> In the present case, the purpose of oral history in this project was to preserve as much of the personal experience and knowledge of music in the Waikato as is possible, 'We cannot, alas, interview tombstones'.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Sharpe, 'History from Below', p. 33.

<sup>108</sup> Port, p. 108.

<sup>109</sup> Staughton Lynd, 'Oral History from Below,' *The Oral History Review*, 21.1 (1993, Spring), 1-8 (p. 1)

<sup>110</sup> Valerie Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), p. 4; Paul Thompson, *The Voices of the Past: Oral History*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. xi.

<sup>111</sup> Thompson, p. 5.

The historical value of oral testimony is that 'it can and does provide significant and sometimes unique information from the past'. In addition, the inevitable reflection leads to insights that give a 'historical perspective which allows us to assess long-term meaning in history'.<sup>112</sup> This meaning makes the facts significant. 'After all, history – or society – does not exist outside human consciousness.'<sup>113</sup> Furthermore, oral history can be used to preserve a 'historical record in cases where documents or physical remains no longer exist,' and, where they do exist, the testimony 'is a kind of information that makes other public documents understandable.'<sup>114</sup>

Oral and written testimony is retrospective, and both are selective according to motivation, interpretation, and memory. Memory is not just an assortment of facts, but is 'actively and creatively generated,' while 'seeking to make sense of the past'.<sup>115</sup>

In general, a person will remember the gist of an event, and, if a participant themselves, then 'the event will be better recalled'. In addition, 'events in which there were high levels of mental activity and emotional involvement will be remembered' as will be the case if the event is atypical.<sup>116</sup> For most instrumentalists I interviewed, music was a leisure pursuit and therefore rehearsals and concerts were a chosen extra to their lives. Thus, the case study of TAMCO, with its myriad sources of evidence, has been enriched by the interviewees and their testimony has been corroborated by the other archival material.

## Structure of Thesis

The thesis is divided into two main parts, each forming a case study of the evolution and development of orchestral music in the Waikato. Part One examines the first fifty years of European settlement of the Waikato, from 1864 – 1914. These years span from the end of the New Zealand Wars in the Waikato, and the subsequent military outposts populated with married men and their families, up to World War I. This was

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<sup>112</sup> Thompson, p. 172.

<sup>113</sup> Yow, p. 24.

<sup>114</sup> Yow, pp. 10, 12.

<sup>115</sup> Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and other stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1991), pp. 52, 56; Bartlett, *Culture and Cognition*, ed. by Akiko Saito (Philadelphia, 2000), p. 3; Thompson, p. 133; Peter Burke, 'History as Social Memory', in *Memory: History, Culture and the Mind*, ed. by Thomas Butler (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1989), p. 98; Green, p. 97. See also p. 88.

<sup>116</sup> Yow, p. 57.

a time when settlements were created from scratch with the aims of building homes, schools, churches and, later, town halls to cater to the increasing populations' needs. The region went from a time when the essentials of life were needed and when the incomers were looking back to "home," to second and subsequent generations when most of the essential infrastructure had been built, and who were attempting to improve and diversify their lives in what was their country of birth.

Part Two makes a chronological jump to 1975 – 2004, the time during which the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (TAMCO) was an integral part of both the musical and social life of its community. This second case study of an orchestra associated with a rural and fairly isolated part of the Waikato serves as both a record of an orchestra with a fascinating and vibrant history, and a means of testing the hypotheses developed in Part One about the reasons for orchestral growth and survival. The government of the time was concerned about too little social and physical activity with the advent of television, and so provided funds to enable sports and arts groups to start up. At the same time there was a remarkable trio of teachers at Te Aroha College who had the nous, expertise and vision to enable the creation and subsequent survival of the orchestra.

My initial question about the reason for the rich musical life in Hamilton was expanded and refined over time. The broad basis of why there was so much quality music in Hamilton, given that it was initially a military settlement, and the Waikato is still seen as a cultural desert, broadened to looking at how and why orchestras develop and grow. Why do some continually have problems? What keeps others going? The relationship with the period, the people involved, the social mores, the technological developments were all examined. With that I became convinced that there was no one person, period, or perspective that answered those fundamental queries. I looked at other settlements that had developed over the years, some of which were initially military strongholds within the confiscation line, others of which were the result of gold mining or farming needs. Initial ideas that coalesced in the earlier period were then tested in the case study of TAMCO.

There are two points to note in my research and in its reporting. In this thesis I use the term 'orchestra' to mean an instrumental group that has a conductor. 'Orchestra' in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries could mean a small group of people, such as we understand today by, for instance, 'quartet', without any conductor, on which this thesis is not focussed. Furthermore, in Part Two, I refer to

the people I interviewed, or felt I knew, by their first name, whereas those who are more removed from me I use their full name or surname.

I turn now to Part One which traces the development of orchestral music in the Waikato from the arrival of European settlers to the outbreak of World War I.

# Part One: The Evolution of Waikato Orchestral Societies

## 1864 - 1914

### Introduction to Part One

‘An excellent feature in New Zealand society is the general love of music and musical culture which prevails.’<sup>1</sup> This sentiment published in the *Waikato Times* in 1878 illustrates the milieu that the European settlers who arrived in the region from 1864 were creating for themselves. Music, I would suggest, was an essential part of their new society. It was a means of camaraderie in individual homes, it provided entertainment and a reason for social gatherings. Above all, it was also a means of fundraising for the collective needs and wants of the community.

This first part of the thesis focuses on my first case study, the establishing of community orchestral music in the Waikato from 1864 to 1914. Part One comprises six chapters, all of which examine, from different perspectives, the development of orchestral playing in the Waikato. It is necessary, when talking about this region, in relation to the introduction of western orchestral music, to acknowledge the military origins of European settlement. Until the invasion of the Waikato in 1863-4, the presence of Pākehā [New Zealanders of European descent] in the region was slight, consisting of a few mission stations and trading posts, such as that shown below in Waingaroa, Raglan.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 12 September 1878.

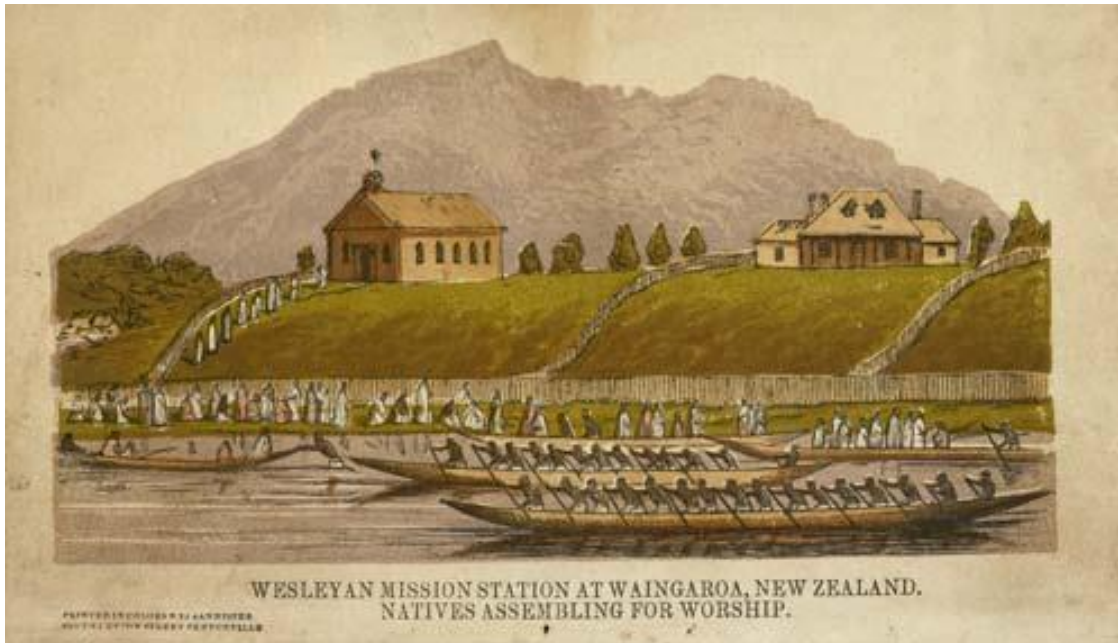


Figure 4 Wesleyan Mission Station, 1840<sup>2</sup>

Just before the British invaded the Waikato in 1863 all Māori were told to take an oath of allegiance to the Queen, and give up their weapons, those who did not forfeited the right to possession of their lands. In this way the Waikato iwi [a Māori community or tribe] lost almost all their land under the newly passed New Zealand Settlements Act (1863).<sup>3</sup> The map below shows the Waikato area at the time of what is referred to here as the “Waikato War”. It will be noticed that there was a “confiscation line” that ran south from the Firth of Thames, around the back of Cambridge and Alexandra (nowadays known as Pirongia), across to Pirongia mountain and north to the river that flowed into Whaingaroa harbour, a clear indication of the extent of the land taken from the Māori iwi.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Hirini Kaa, "Ngā hāhi – Māori and Christian denominations - Methodist Church", updated 2017, <<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/artwork/30636/whaingaroa-raglan-mission-1840>>

<sup>3</sup> 'Land Confiscation Law Passed', Ministry for Culture and Heritage, <<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/the-new-zealand-settlements-act-passed>>

<sup>4</sup> Referenced on the map as a dot dash dot pattern.

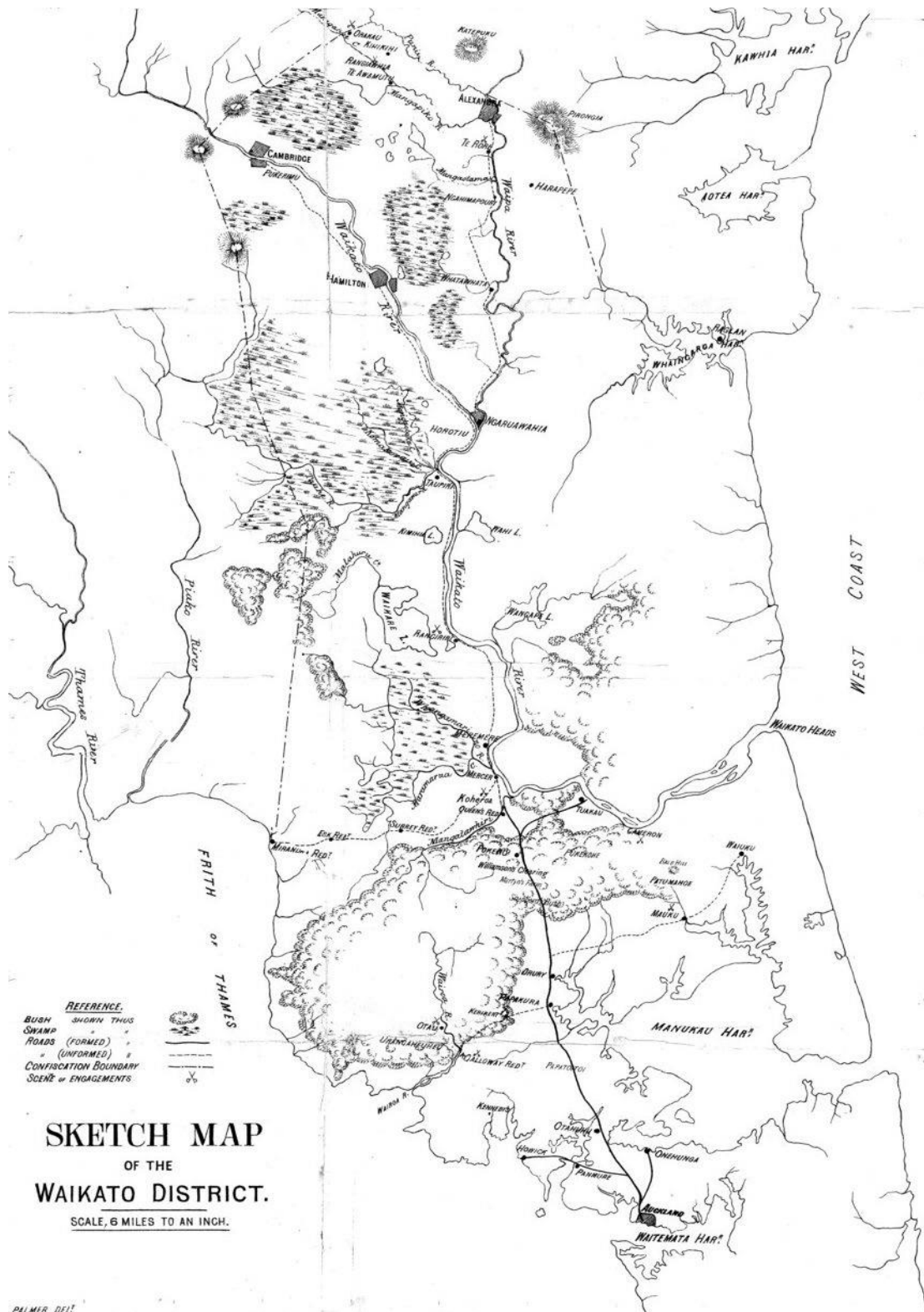


Figure 5 Sketch Map of the Waikato District at the time of the 'Waikato War'<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> John Featon, *The Waikato War 1863-4* (Auckland, 1879).

The geographic borders of my study follow similar lines to the map above, running from Huntly in the north, Raglan in the west, Kihikihi in the south and as far as Te Aroha in the east. These were the areas first established as military outposts or, as in the case of Te Aroha, goldmining towns. Remote from each other, the first European settlers established their own communities and quickly organised communication between them using rudimentary roads, or tracks, the rivers, and later rail. In focussing on a specific region in a designated time period, it is possible to use the methodology of case study which allows a thorough examination of multifaceted and complex issues within specific parameters. As highlighted in the Introduction, the use of the methodology of microhistory makes it possible to generalise some of the findings that are then explored in Part Two. The music created at this time was made by the settlers, for the settlers and so is classed as from the ground up. In this way the methodology of history from below is also pertinent.

This period shows that initially concerts started as a response to a hierarchy of physical and spiritual needs, typically organised as fundraisers for a greater cause. In this era concerts were initiated because of these needs, 'it being the easiest and least onerous way of raising the necessary funds'.<sup>6</sup> There was then a gradual development, which was clearly defined from 1889 with the development of orchestral societies, that led to proactive concerts created for the enjoyment of music. Here music became the primary focus.

The chapters in Part One are informed by the settlers' need to construct a satisfactory environment that would sustain them in their new land. They were not on their own. Historian Tony Ballantyne discusses the 'movement of people, commodities, things, capital, texts and ideas' that embodied the transportation of imperial culture to the southern hemisphere.<sup>7</sup> His concept of the 'webs of Empire' describes both the many connections between New Zealand, Australia, and Britain and the increasing connectivity of the Pacific with American culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>8</sup> Thus, in reference to my thesis, the

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<sup>6</sup> 'Roman Catholic Concert, Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 8 September 1881.

<sup>7</sup> Tony Ballantyne, 'Southern Circulations and the Making and Remaking of Australasia', in *The Making and Remaking of Australasia: Mobility, Texts and 'Southern Circulations'*, ed. by Tony Ballantyne (London: Bloomsbury, 2022).

<sup>8</sup> Tony Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire: Locating New Zealand's Colonial Past* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2013).

musical webs that connected New Zealand to Europe, America and the Pacific were 'dynamic', shifting and changing as performance culture evolved.<sup>9</sup>

European settlers brought with them both material possessions, such as the piano, and intangible cultural traditions which shaped their lives and the society they built.<sup>10</sup> In other words, they brought with them their own cultural contexts and value systems.<sup>11</sup> As Peter Gibbons highlights, 'settler societies are composed initially of very unsettled people' who have left the familiar and are dealing with a new world.<sup>12</sup> In order to adapt 'to an entirely different environment', they tried to normalise and transform their surroundings as much as possible, from changing the landscape to cultural transformation through 'the substitution of congenial European practices, forms, and phenomena'.<sup>13</sup> In other words, settlers aimed to create as much similarity with their old world as possible.

Initially there was generally a lack of 'entertainment infrastructure' and it appears that most of the entertainments/concerts in the Waikato were by amateurs who volunteered, regardless of ability.<sup>14</sup> However, to a large extent they can also be seen as a reproduction of 'the macrocosm in the microcosm,' where the local, essentially Pākehā community was for an evening brought into contact with the rest of the world.<sup>15</sup>

The first generation of settlers were predominantly from the military regiments employed in the New Zealand wars. They were granted land and needed to construct not only their houses but also schools, churches, and roads. Amongst all these practical immediate needs they would also have had feelings of homesickness, fears that there may be a Māori incursion necessitating protection of themselves and their families, but also hopes for a better future in this new country. The next generation, however, was generally born in New Zealand so "home" was not a distant land but on New Zealand soil. They had not experienced the initial

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<sup>9</sup> Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire*, p.297.

<sup>10</sup> Kirstine Moffat, *Piano Forte: Stories and Soundscapes from Colonial New Zealand* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> Erik Olssen, 'Where to from here? Reflections on the Twentieth-Century Historiography of Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 26.1 (1992), 54-77 (p. 74)

<sup>12</sup> Peter Gibbons, 'Cultural Colonization and National Identity', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 36.1 (2002), 5-17 (p. 7)

<sup>13</sup> John Mansfield Thomson, 'Reflections on Writing Musical History', *CaNew Zealandona*, 16.37 (1994), 2-5; Gibbons, 'Cultural Colonization', (p. 7).

<sup>14</sup> Barbara Brookes, 'Introduction', *Journal of New Zealand Studies*, NS15, 1-3 (2013) (p. 1)

<sup>15</sup> J. C. Alexander, 'Cultural Pragmatics: Social Performance between Ritual and Strategy', *Sociological Theory*, 22.4 (2004), 527-573

hardships but came to townships that had the basic amenities. From this they could start to look forward and have the energy to create more intangible assets. It is noticeable that the orchestral societies, such as Hamilton Orchestral Society, Te Awamutu Musical Society and many others started from this point in 1889.

Part One is divided into six chapters which reflect the musical evolution in the region. Chapter 1: Building a Society is very much concerned with the immediate needs of the settler families to build their houses, schools, churches and local halls. It deals with the types of concerts produced to raise the necessary funds. This chapter provides an overview of the fundraising and the celebrations the settlers enjoyed and covers the creation of their community assets. It is also evident that initially their offerings were primarily vocal but that gradually individual instrumentalists and then groups started to be involved.

Chapter 2: Challenges looks at the various difficulties facing these developments. The population grew with some immigration but essentially it was the second generation that provided most of the increase. There were many physical challenges to accessing local fundraising entertainment. These difficulties included how to reach concerts across fields and paths unlit at night, the unreliable weather that could make or break a concert if the performers or audience were unable to travel, or even the challenge of training an audience to listen and not talk during a performance. While they continued to support their own, they also started to think about wider needs, which also included those overseas. There was still a community focus, but with a more secure and developed infrastructure there was an increasing ability to look outwards to both national and international events.

Chapter 3: The Early Years 1864-1889 shows the tentative beginnings of groups of like-minded people coming together to make music, from the earliest mention of the Hamilton Entertainment Committee, in 1874, through to 1889. This chapter also looks at some of the musical personalities that were mentioned several times in the newspapers in this period and finishes with an individual case study of one outstanding musician, Mr Bell, who had a profound impact in his brief time as a musician in the Waikato.

The next chapter, Chapter 4: Orchestral Societies 1889-1914, looks at the extraordinary growth of music and orchestral societies that commenced in 1889. It was fascinating to see how many were created in this earlier period and for how long

they existed. I have created a table to show the comparative timings of when they were referred to by name in the newspapers with reference to concerts given.

Chapter 5: Orchestral Societies 1905-1914 looks at the continuation of the earlier societies and the start of two new ones. I include a table showcasing the complete growth of these groups that I have been able to track in the archives.

The final chapter, Chapter 6: Prominent Musical Personalities 1889-1914, showcases eight people who clearly were at the forefront of local music making. Their stories and occasional photographs are gleaned from museum archives of local newspapers, Papers Past, and photographs held in various collections. There are two women highlighted here, both of whom did much to advance not only music but the acceptance of women in positions of authority.

By 1914 most Waikato towns has established a community orchestra. The vibrant musical culture is seen in the many music societies that were established from 1889. Orchestral music was so important that each small community in the region experimented with their own orchestras, testament to both player enthusiasm and audience appetite. The rise and fall of some of these societies points to the way in which key factors were necessary for an orchestra to thrive. Part One of this thesis reveals the pivotal role of charismatic leaders of standing in the community and the importance of local support. This period sees a definite shift in the role and purpose of orchestral music in settler communities, the initial reliance on concerts to raise money for community needs expanded to encompass music as an ongoing and valued part of the fabric of the society and culture. By the end of the period there was an increasing awareness and support for events overseas, the local increasingly connected to what Tony Ballantyne describes as the 'webs of Empire'.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire*.

## Chapter 1: Building a Society

The Introduction to Part One of the thesis highlighted the complex nature of New Zealand settler society, with John Mansfield Thomson, Peter Gibbons and Tony Ballantyne emphasising settler attempts to make the new land familiar through replicating traditions and its dynamic, constantly mobile state of evolution and change.<sup>1</sup> This chapter focuses on the settlers' desire for a conducive environment for them and their community. How they did this and the incredible importance of concerts as a fund raiser is the subject of this chapter.

The concerts described here refer to those more specifically executed with a purpose beyond that of making music; they were part of the settlers' aim to raise finances to build what they deemed to be the essential needs of their areas. Several are highlighted with the aim of showing how concerts developed from entirely vocal presentations to including some instrumental items. In many ways, it can be argued that much of the infrastructure of European settlement in the Waikato was built on concerts, with music the primary means of fundraising for both religious, educational and community needs.

In the first section concerning religious matters, it is significant that the construction of churches for one belief was supported by those of a different faith. Congregations felt the need to furnish the churches with firstly harmoniums and then organs, constructed buildings for resident priests, and provided for cemeteries. In so doing, the new neighbourhood established a sense of community that would have gone far in helping these colonists, isolated from their families abroad, establish a sense of kinship with their fellows.

The second section pertains to the educational needs of the children, and also shows the varied ways that the locals provided entertainment to encourage as many people as possible to attend. Schools were established which ensured that children were able to learn and of course gain friends. In this earliest period there are few details of concerts given in the papers as there was no local paper, and news about the area has to be gleaned from the Auckland papers. In 1872 the *Waikato Times* was founded, and full details of many entertainments can be found.

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<sup>1</sup> John Mansfield Thomson, *The Oxford History of New Zealand Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Peter Gibbons, 'The Far Side of the Search for Identity: Reconsidering New Zealand History', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 37.1 (2003), 38-49; Tony Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire: Locating New Zealand's Colonial Past*, (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2013).

As the populations grew so did the necessity for a larger meeting place than the local school room. Hence community halls were built, to be used for a myriad of purposes, but also, in relation to this thesis, as concert halls. Apart from relaxation and respite from hard rural work, the performers', and to a large extent the audiences' aim was to raise sufficient money to build community halls deemed appropriate for an expanding population.

Then, I turn to other aspects of building their community which were also helped with fundraising concerts; these included the need for infrastructure, and the myriad ways that people congregated through a shared love of sport or gardening. However, these connections would be important as time went on as this thesis shows how orchestral music could only develop in an area if there were well respected people, embedded in the community, who were prepared to lead their fellow citizens. Gradually deeper bonds between adults who shared a love of music would have been formed. Thus, the settlers were able to build spiritual, physical, mental and emotional capital to support their immigration.

Finally, as their society developed, I look at how music was used to celebrate and/or fundraise for events overseas, such as Royal Anniversaries and the Boer War.

## **Religious Needs**

### ***Church Building***

Although there are few details, in 1864 there were at least two concerts in aid of church funds, in Raglan and in Port Waikato.<sup>2</sup> The former concert appears to have led to some confusion, not least in the reporting of it. The Courthouse was used as the venue and both vocal and instrumental music was performed by 'some of our amateurs ... in aid of the Wesleyan Chapel Building Fund'.<sup>3</sup> This evoked a furious letter to the Editor from 'A Subscriber to the Concert' who 'beg[ged] most distinctly to dispute':

The concert was got up for the benefit of the Presbyterian Church, and although the money collected has been (by some unaccountable blunder) handed over to the Wesleyans, I may, without the least fear of contradiction

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<sup>2</sup> 'Port Waikato', *New Zealand Herald*, 20 September 1864.

<sup>3</sup> 'Raglan', *New Zealand Herald*, 6 September 1864.

assert, that not only did the performers believe that their services were engaged for the Presbyterian body, but also nine-tenths of the people who attended the concert gave their money for the same object.<sup>4</sup>

The Presbyterian chapel itself was completed in 1865, and, in aid of decreasing the amount owing in the building fund, another concert that year raised £7. The Wesleyan chapel was completed shortly afterwards, 'so that the reproach of having no recognised place of worship here, cannot now attach to us as a community'. Previously the Wesleyans had been using the building of the Presbyterian chapel with their own minister for Wesleyan services and prior to that, like the Presbyterians, the Courthouse.<sup>5</sup>

This theme of cooperation between denominations is seen throughout the period, be it in the shared use of buildings or in support of each other's efforts to raise money to build their own place of worship. While the Wesleyan chapel was used for daily services for the military, the military themselves contributed to a concert that raised funds for the church, though with perhaps less musical success than some other offerings. 'The glees sung by the sergeants of the 12th Regiment, though evidencing from the hurried manner in which the concert had been got up that sufficient practice had not been obtained, passed off well.'<sup>6</sup>

However, the presence of the military also contributed to the variety and pleasure in the concerts. In Raglan the New Year of 1867 was celebrated by a party on the night of the first, and the following evening there was a concert, where mostly soldiers performed, the proceeds of which were for the funds of the Presbyterian church, the venue for the concert.<sup>7</sup>

Alexandra was another soldier settlement that had a regimental band that was able and willing to provide music for different occasions and causes. For example, in the summer of 1867 a ball was given by the Odd Fellows Society. For this 'a portion of the band of H.M. 57th Regiment did their best to aid all parties in passing a very pleasant night'.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> 'The Presbyterian Church at Raglan', *New Zealand Herald*, 20 September 1864.

<sup>5</sup> 'Raglan', *New Zealand Herald*, 2 August 1865.

<sup>6</sup> 'Raglan. (From Our Own Correspondent.)', *Daily Southern Cross*, 2 August 1865.

<sup>7</sup> 'Raglan. (From A Correspondent.)', *Daily Southern Cross*, 9 January 1867.

<sup>8</sup> 'The Daily Southern Cross', *Daily Southern Cross*, 25 February 1867.

Concerts were performed in other centres as well in these early years to raise money for church building. In Cambridge in 1866 a concert was performed in December for the Episcopalian church. Prior to this concert the comment was made:

A meeting was held of the performers on Saturday to draw up a programme &c. Several gentlemen have offered their services, as likewise, I am happy to say, some ladies. We have never had the pleasure of hearing any of our fair sex perform. The affair will, I have no doubt, bring a crowded house.<sup>9</sup>

This comment suggests that hitherto ladies had performed in the privacy of their own homes for their own pleasure and maybe for their family and close friends.

Somehow, possibly because it was a worthy cause, women felt they could venture beyond being an accompanist and into the limelight. It is interesting to note that the Raglan concert of the previous year (mentioned above) did feature a woman who 'presided at the piano and sang some songs with great taste and feeling'.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps the difference was that she was accompanying herself rather than standing at the front of the stage.

It is unclear where the Cambridge concert took place, but obviously it was in a public space, such as a school room, large enough to accommodate a piano and an audience. A further comment was that the concert was repeated and that 'Mr. Wallis, as usual, caused a great deal of amusement by his song, as also by his introducing a style of music during the interval'.<sup>11</sup> Again it is not clear what music was introduced during the interval, but it is to be assumed it was background music to the audience taking refreshments, whether vocal or instrumental.

The value of these concerts must not be underestimated. They provided a social outlet as well as a pleasant way to raise money, and it seems that in the latter they were very successful. In 1867 a 'second amateur concert' in aid of the Presbyterian church in Hamilton was held. 'The attendance was good, and the affair went off with great éclat, adding considerably to the funds. The church is nearly completed.'<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> 'Cambridge. (From Our Own Correspondent.) November 14', *Daily Southern Cross*, 22 November 1866.

<sup>10</sup> 'Raglan. (From Our Own Correspondent.)', *Daily Southern Cross*, 2 August 1865.

<sup>11</sup> '(From Our Own Correspondent.) December 12.', *Daily Southern Cross*, 17 December 1866.

<sup>12</sup> 'Hamilton.', *New Zealand Herald*, 20 March 1867.



Figure 6 St Andrews Presbyterian Church, Grey Street, 1870s<sup>13</sup>

Ngāruawāhia held a concert in aid of its Presbyterian church fund in 1877.<sup>14</sup> Over time these concerts continued, greatly assisting the church building funds and, also, the furnishings.

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<sup>13</sup> 'St Andrews Presbyterian Church, Grey Street', (Hamilton: Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, 1870s).

<sup>14</sup> 'Ngaruawahia', *Waikato Times*, 31 March 1877.



Figure 7 Ngāruawāhia Presbyterian Church<sup>15</sup>

### **Church Instruments**

Sometimes concerts raised money for the purchase of an harmonium or an organ for the local church. In 1871, the Hamilton Episcopalian church held a concert in aid of its harmonium fund. This was very popular, and it was remarked that ‘had any strangers dropped in they would have wondered where so many people had come from’. Here the programme included solos, part songs, choruses and instrumental duets. Without detail it is assumed that either two people were playing a duet on the piano or that other instruments were involved. While the reviewer did not name any of the performers, he singled out ‘the services of the lady presiding at the piano’ as being ‘deserving of the highest eulogy’, high praise indeed when his reflection on the other performers was that they ‘did their best’.<sup>16</sup> £22 12s 1d was raised by this endeavour, which in 2024 is worth \$4,032.49.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> William Archer, 'Presbyterian Church, Ngaruawahia', in *Collection of Post Card negatives* (Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library, n.d.).

<sup>16</sup> 'Hamilton', *New Zealand Herald*, 2 June 1871.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.rbnz.govt.nz/new-zealand/monetary-policy/about-monetary-policy/inflation-calculator>

A concert in Alexandra in 1876 shows the myriad ways that the inhabitants put together a programme in order to raise funds for their harmonium.

**A**  
**MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT**  
Will be given in  
**[THE HALL, ALEXANDRA,**  
**On TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14.**  
**SOLOS, DUETTS, TRIOS, ETC.**  
**ALEXANDRA CHRISTY MINSTRELS**  
Will again appear.  
**A Screaming Farce—**  
**“THE RIVAL SOOTERS.”**  
**D A N C I N G.**  
— Admission, 2s 6d ; Children, 1s.

Figure 8 A Musical Entertainment, Alexandra<sup>18</sup>

This concert included songs, a trio, and then in the second half included the Christy Minstrels who ‘acquitted themselves in a manner that took the audience by surprise and elicited the most hearty applause’. There were jokes, riddles, ‘local hits’, all of which was followed by a ‘screaming farce’. The evening concluded with a dance which ‘was kept up with Alexandrian spirit until morning’. Of interest in this concert is the fact that local Māori were present and thoroughly enjoyed the Christy Minstrels, declaring that the character ‘Bones’ was ‘Taipo himself’.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 14 November 1876.

<sup>19</sup> 'Alexandra. Nov. 15, 1876', *Waikato Times*, 16 November 1876. I understand Taipo to reference a dark-skinned devil in Māori legend.



Figure 9 St Peter's Church, Hamilton<sup>20</sup>

The following year a much more sedate affair was planned in Hamilton, 'to provide a fund for the purchase of a new harmonium, which is much needed, for the church'.<sup>21</sup>

**ST PETER'S CHURCH  
HAMILTON.**

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**A PAROCHIAL TEA PARTY AND  
ENTERTAINMENT**

Will be held at the Gymnasium—A C  
Barracks, by kind permission  
of COL LYON,

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25.**

TEA ON THE TABLE AT 6 P M.

The Entertainment consisting of Songs,  
Duets, Glee's, and Readings.  
Commence at 8 p m. Tickets, price 2/6,  
at the Stores and Hotels.

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**THERE WILL BE A GOOD MOON.**

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\* \* The proceeds to be devoted to Har-  
monium Fund.


Figure 10 St Peter's Church, Entertainment in aid of the Harmonium Fund<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> 'St Peter's Church, Hamilton.', *Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection*, Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, c. 1880), <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/objects/563/st-peters-church>>

<sup>21</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 19 April 1877.

<sup>22</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 21 April 1877.

In a similar way, Ohaupo held a concert in their schoolroom in 1880.<sup>23</sup> This time it concluded with a dance. It can be noted from the following advertisement that there would be both vocal and instrumental items.



**A** GRAND Vocal and Instrumental CONCERT will be held in the Ohaupo School-room on Friday, the 17th September, 1880, to raise funds for purchasing Harmonium for Church of England.

Tickets, 2s; children, half-price. To conclude with a dance. Doors open at 7.30, commence at 8 o'clock.

Figure 11 Ohaupo Concert in aid of Harmonium<sup>24</sup>

Later on, as settlements became more established, an organ was deemed necessary. This points again to the way in which British traditions and practices were being followed. The harmonium, as a cheaper, smaller, and more easily moved instrument, was ideal for early settlement, but as communities became more established the desire to obtain an organ grew, with this instrument seen as being an indispensable part of church worship. As early as 1879, there was a fund raising initiative for the Wesleyan church lining and organ fund in Cambridge.<sup>25</sup> In 1898 in Hamilton the Wesleyan church performed a cantata on Christmas night in aid of its organ fund.<sup>26</sup> And in 1903, Kawhia held a concert (followed by a dance) on a Saturday and a sacred concert the following evening, after service, both of them in aid of its Anglican church organ fund.

<sup>23</sup> 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 4 September 1880.

<sup>24</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 4 September 1880.

<sup>25</sup> 'Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 7 October 1879.

<sup>26</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 22 December 1894.



Figure 12 Kawhia Church<sup>27</sup>

The concert, which concluded with a farce 'netted seven pounds' and the sacred concert to which admission was gained through a silver coin donation realised 'quite a fair sum'.<sup>28</sup>

Karamu held two concerts at their school to raise money for their church organ, in 1903 and 1904.



Figure 13 Karamu School<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> 'Kawhia Church', Te Awamutu Museum, <<https://collection.tamuseum.org.nz/objects/11619/kawhia-anglican-church>>

<sup>28</sup> 'Kawhia', *Waikato Times*, 13 August 1903.

<sup>29</sup> 'Karamu School', (Hamilton: Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, 1889), <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/objects/7863/karamu-school>>

They had acquired their organ 'on the instalment system' and despite a 'considerable sum' being raised needed more. The concert and dance in 1903 was described as an 'unusual departure for Karamuites', and despite inclement weather 'people heroically rolled up from Te Rore, Tuhikaramea, and Whatawhata'.<sup>30</sup> The following year a similar entertainment was held, this time the musical entertainment was interspersed with a 'unique exhibition of Indian club swinging'. The concert was 'an unqualified success' and 'the Karamu residents have now the satisfaction of possessing a good instrument for Divine Service'.<sup>31</sup>

Funds were also raised to provide music for church choirs. St Andrews Cambridge was one that raised money for this purpose in 1886. The choir met fortnightly 'for the practise of secular music, on which occasions they are joined by several ladies belonging to different denominational choirs, and who kindly assisted on the above occasion'.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps the fact that it was secular music enabled different denominations to sing together, or perhaps, like nowadays, people sang together if there was a convenient choir in which to sing.

### **Church Maintenance**

The need for church fundraising did not end once the church was erected and the organ was in place. The costs of upkeep and expansion were ongoing, with church maintenance becoming a focal point of fundraising concerts. St John's Anglican church in Te Awamutu in 1898 held a concert as when there had not been a clergyman 'the funds were allowed to fall somewhat low', and this was an 'endeavour to swell the funds'. However, concerts such as these were not without some dissent. The vestry of St John's had 'unanimously resolved that this was to be the last entertainment of its kind for raising funds in direct connection with the church'. The vicar was not 'altogether opposed to dancing in connection with church amusements' although he believed that dancing 'carried on to the extreme might be considered as harmful'. The concert proceeded and 'a few dances followed'.<sup>33</sup>

That vicar would have approved of a sacred concert in aid of the Roman Catholic church in Ohaupo two years later, 'the object being twofold, to provide

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<sup>30</sup> 'Concert At Karamu', *Waikato Argus*, 26 June 1903.

<sup>31</sup> 'Concert At Karamu', *Waikato Argus*, 6 May 1904.

<sup>32</sup> 'St. Andrew's Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 9 November 1886.

<sup>33</sup> 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Argus*, 7 June 1898.

entertainment of a sacred and elevating nature and to collect funds for the repair of the church'. It was held on a Sunday afternoon and the priest said that 'although it was unusual to hold a concert on Sunday, the music was sacred and for a good purpose, and was, therefore, appropriate'. Over 100 people attended and a choir of 16 voices, three violins, a cello and an organ provided instrumental and vocal solos, quartets and an anthem, 'Ye That Stand in The Courts of The House Of The Lord, by the orchestra and choir, [which was] an impressive and grand piece of music, beautifully rendered'. During the concert there was obviously a degree of nervousness about whether applause was appropriate or not, so that after three items the Rev. Father said that a 'little mild appreciation from the audience would be cheering to the singers'. The collection at the door took £3 4s 6d.<sup>34</sup>

While organ and choral music was a core feature of church concerts, other instruments were, on occasion, included in the repertoire. The aforementioned concert in Ohaupo featured violins and a cello, while when Raglan's Congregational church held a concert to raise funds, apart from the usual singing there was a piano duet and a mandolin solo.<sup>35</sup>

The Catholic church in Cambridge held a bal-masque in order to accrue funds to 'defray the cost of renovating the Catholic church and the Priest's residence' which included an even wider range of instruments:

The music was first-class, the orchestra being a large one. It consisted of two violins, played by Messrs White and Harker; clarionet, Mr Stewart; cornet, Mr Drury; 'cello, Mr J. Edgecombe, and two double bass, by Mr Edwards and Dr. Kenny. The last-mentioned gentleman had full charge of the musical arrangements and right well he carried them out.<sup>36</sup>

Church concerts were often highly successful in their fundraising endeavours, as evidenced by a concert at St Andrew's Anglican church in Cambridge, in 1886. An entertainment in the form of music and drama were often part of the evening, this one being no exception. Over 150 people gathered to enjoy a 'feast' after which a concert was provided, apart from vocal items there were several piano pieces played

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<sup>34</sup> 'Ohaupo', *Waikato Argus*, 7 August 1900.

<sup>35</sup> 'Raglan', *Waikato Argus*, 19 June 1902.

<sup>36</sup> 'The Waikato Argus GEORGE EDGE CUMBE Proprietor. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1897.', *Waikato Argus*, 16 October 1897.

by different locals. This evening raised £70 nett for the church, about \$17,300 in today's terms!<sup>37</sup>

### ***Parsonages and Presbyteries***

During this period, it was considered that holding a concert was a relatively easy way to increase financial resources. As communities sought to provide their religious leaders with homes, they once again turned to the concert as an indispensable fundraising tool. In the earliest days of settlement there were few men of the cloth in the region and those who were present travelled enormous distances to reach several congregations. The Reverend Mr Thomas Norrie, for example, was resident in Papakura and yet frequently made the journey on horseback to 'supply the spiritual wants of his adherents' in Raglan.<sup>38</sup> As time went on, so the populations increased and, with that, the desirability of having a resident reverend, who of course had to be housed. Therefore, funds had to be accrued for this purpose.



Figure 14 The Reverend Thomas Norrie<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> 'The Annual Social Gathering of S. Andrew's, Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 15 May 1886.  
<https://www.rbnz.govt.nz/new-zealand/monetary-policy/inflation-calculator>

<sup>38</sup> 'Raglan. (From Our Own Correspondent.)', *Daily Southern Cross*, 2 August 1865.

<sup>39</sup> 'Our History', (Papakura: First Presbyterian Church, c1860),  
<<https://firstchurchpapakura.org.nz/about-us/our-history/>>

One such building fund was that of the parsonage for St Andrew's church, Cambridge, for which a concert was proposed and performed in 1877. By this time, it is clear that there were musicians regularly playing together, who were not just in a military brass band.

What will make the affair the more attractive will be the part taken in it by the Cambridge Harmonic Society and the Cambridge and Waikato reed band, both of which will make their appearance on this occasion.

The Harmonic Society comprised 22 members and the reed band 16. The programme consisted of choral items and solos, apart from the wind band. It was the latter's first public performance since their inauguration and 'their playing was a most agreeable surprise to everyone'. The reviewer was most appreciative of the way their conductor had encouraged them and 'drawn out the musical talent of the district'. The solos included a 'clarionet' [sic] performance by Mr Mackintosh and vocal ones by his wife and other individuals. Comic songs were also included in the mix.<sup>40</sup>

Likewise, when the Roman Catholic church in Cambridge needed money to furnish the new Catholic Presbytery in 1881, at a meeting several ladies 'bethought themselves of having a concert, it being the easiest and least onerous way of raising the necessary funds'. The concert in the Cambridge Public Hall was a success in this respect, and, also, musically, 'the spacious building being filled to excess with a respectable and appreciative audience, and the various musical contributions of the evening being choice and entertaining'. Some well-known performers from the region appeared, Mr Bell 'conducted the musical part of the proceedings', Mr Edgecumbe sang, and there were some instrumental offerings such as an overture consisting of two pianos, clarionet and harmonium (which included Mr Bell and Mr Stewart), and a violin solo accompanied by Mr Bell of a 'selection from the "Barber of Seville," a brilliant piece of music, well gone through, and which received the approbation it merited'.<sup>41</sup> Although the above concert does not state the numbers attending the concert, over 100 couples stayed for the dancing afterwards. It is noticeable that when a concert appealed, the audience was usually substantial. Perhaps this informed the decision to use music as a means of raising sums of money that nowadays would be impossible to imagine from an amateur entertainment.

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<sup>40</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 24 July 1877.

<sup>41</sup> 'Roman Catholic Concert, Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 8 September 1881.

## **Cemeteries**

The fundraising potential of music was also recognised in the wider community. This is highlighted in the concerts organised to fund the building and upkeep of cemeteries. Concerts were held in 1877 for both the Hamilton East and Hamilton West cemeteries that both needed refurbishments. In the case of Hamilton East, the road to it, as well as the graves themselves, needed attention. The reporter covering the event for the *Waikato Times* had a sense of humour:

The funds thus obtained will be devoted to the improvement of the cemetery generally, not to any particular division of it, but for the benefit of Christians, Jews, Turks, infidels and newspaper men alike.<sup>42</sup>

In Hamilton West, the trustees had already spent money on beautifying the cemetery and were in arrears, so the concert was to raise money to lessen the debt. There was a good reaction to the concert, with many people willing to help perform, sell tickets, and otherwise aid in any way possible.

It is a healthy sign of the good feeling and bon accord which exist in a district, when on an occasion of this kind people are found ready and willing to sink all class and denominational distinctions and work together for the advancement of a common object.<sup>43</sup>

So, for both of these concerts, it is clear that people of all denominations were buried in the same area, that people took financial responsibility for the upkeep of their cemeteries, and that while there is a clear awareness of class distinctions, that all were willing to contribute to this cause.

## **Education Needs**

In conjunction with churches, education was high on the list of priorities for early settlers. As communities were established, families in the Waikato would petition the Board of Education in Auckland for a school.<sup>44</sup> But it was not until the 1877 Education Act that free, and compulsory, primary education was made possible.<sup>45</sup>

The first newspaper for the Waikato, the *Waikato Times* was established in 1872 and from this date it is clear in the local articles that residents were working hard to raise

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<sup>42</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 19 July 1877.

<sup>43</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 13 November 1877.

<sup>44</sup> 'Correspondence', *Waikato Times*, 7 May 1874.

<sup>45</sup> Nancy Swarbrick, 'Country Schooling - Getting an Education: 1800s', <<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/country-schooling/page-1>> [accessed 22 March 2023]

money for their local schools. Once again, music was the main source of this fundraising.

In 1872 Alexandra held a concert to increase school funds. Described as very successful it was noted by the reviewer that there were 27 items on the programme, most of which were encored. He made the following comment:

However flattering to the singer or player it may be, to be asked to repeat a performance, it is nevertheless very often a great physical trial. Audiences should bear this in mind and have a little mercy on those who cater for their amusement.<sup>46</sup>

The reviewer was probably thinking of himself as much as the performers. Nevertheless, it is pertinent to note that he mentions 'singer or player' which suggests at least the presence of a piano, and possibly at this early stage a military band instrument. That same year Ngāruawāhia held its 'first soirée' which was in aid of its local school.<sup>47</sup>

Several schools were built in the first half of the period but, of course, needed maintenance or upgrades as time went on. Schools which had been built earlier needed improvements and, for example, Cambridge High and Paterangi schools needed painting, and used concerts to fundraise for this. A concert held for the former in 1886 raised £14. Like so many concerts it aimed to appeal to a variety of audience members and the concert was followed by 'Mrs Jarley's waxworks'. This ability to try and reach the maximum potential audience continues the trend shown in the earlier section, music items would be interspersed with other entertainment such as recitations, comic songs, or as in this case something totally different.<sup>48</sup>

Sometimes the school wanted to develop their facilities; Huntly put on two concerts in consecutive years in order to build outside 'shelter-sheds' for the girls and boys. These two concerts raised £18 'which, with the Board's subsidy, should amply serve to erect a much-needed school adjunct'. Later, it needed further 'repairs, improvements and additions to the school and the teacher's residence' and the school board asked the teachers to 'organise a school concert, the funds

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<sup>46</sup> 'The Waikato Times. Omne Solum Forti Patria', *Waikato Times*, 28 September 1872.

<sup>47</sup> 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 13 June 1872.

<sup>48</sup> 'Paterangi', *Waikato Times*, 3 May 1904; 'Cambridge High School Concert and Entertainment', *Waikato Times*, 14 December 1886.

therefrom to go to procuring some furnishings etc. for the new building'.<sup>49</sup> Newstead put on an entertainment the proceeds of which 'were more than the most sanguine expected and should forward the completion of the tennis courts'. In this concert, 'Mr Holloway's rendering of 'The Deathless Army' was well received, and he had to respond to an encore'.<sup>50</sup>

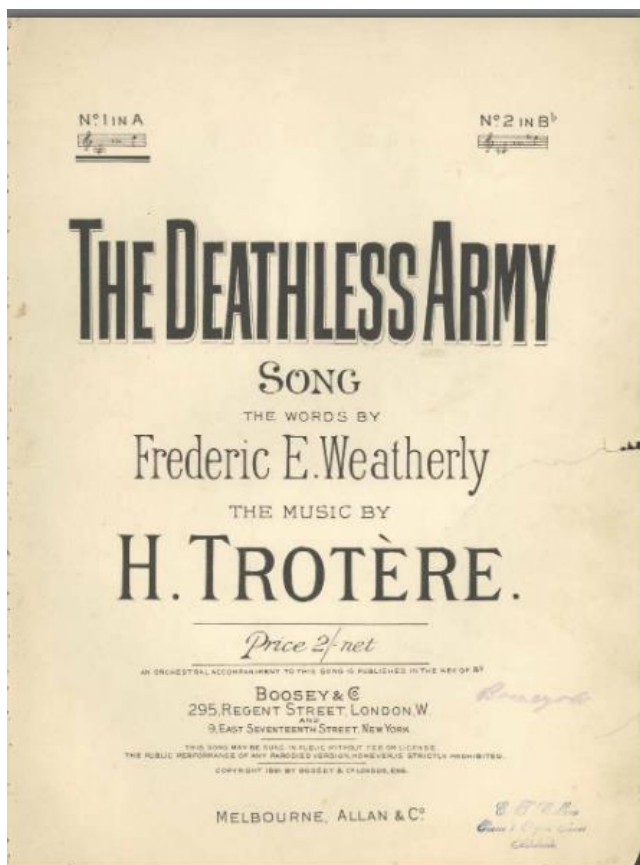


Figure 15 *The Deathless Army*<sup>51</sup>

Not just extra outdoor facilities for the schools were aided by such means. Cambridge West School put on a concert and dance in aid of its 'scientific apparatus funds'. This was hugely supported and the 'dance ... was well patronised, the large schoolroom being severely taxed with the young of both sexes, many of whom tripped it merrily till well-nigh daylight'.<sup>52</sup>

Children in Ngāruawāhia were very involved in the concert to fund raise for their school, providing the entire first half of entertainment prior to the adults

<sup>49</sup> 'Personal', *Waikato Times*, 27 April 1907; 'Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 1 April 1902; 'Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 4 September 1901.

<sup>50</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 27 April 1907.

<sup>51</sup> H. Trotère, *The Deathless Army*, Words by Frederic Weatherly, (Allan and Company. Melbourne) <<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-169366912/view?partId=nla.obj-169366920#page/n0/mode/1up>>

<sup>52</sup> 'Cambridge West', *Waikato Times*, 13 December 1904.

performing after the interval. The following year the school concert in aid of picnic funds opened with an overture by the school orchestra.<sup>53</sup>

## Town and Public Halls

The growth in population in the townships led to the need for halls where all could be accommodated. The editor of the *Waikato Times* felt 'they are badly wanted' and thought that the 'Government would give a site for this purpose' as had already been done elsewhere.<sup>54</sup> He then went on to make an economic argument for such building:

If erected by a company we feel confident there is not one township in the Waikato in which good interest for the money invested would not be obtained by letting the building for concerts and other purposes.<sup>55</sup>

Ohaupo, which had an overflow of Bohemian immigrants from Puhoi, already had a public hall, 'which, we are pleased to learn, has already been made good use of by Mr Edwards, the proprietor, for the purpose of entertaining the settlers'.<sup>56</sup> It is possible that the Bohemian settlers provided the impetus for this building as it was said by a descendant that 'they took every opportunity to play their music and dance and socialise'.<sup>57</sup>

Other townships also addressed the need. A concert in aid of the funds for the public hall in Alexandra was held under the auspices of the Alexandra Philharmonic Society in February 1875.<sup>58</sup> This was followed by other concerts later in the year including in October and December and then into the following year by which time the object was to lessen the debt on the building that had by then been erected.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> 'Ngaruawahia', *Waikato Argus*, 17 December 1901; 'Ngaruawahia', *Waikato Argus*, 9 July 1900.

<sup>54</sup> 'Alexandra', *Waikato Times*, 29 September 1874.

<sup>55</sup> 'Omne Solum Forti Patria', *The Waikato Times*, 20 September 1874.

<sup>56</sup> 'Omne Solum Forti Patria', *Waikato Times*, 29 September 1874.

<sup>57</sup> 'Puhoi's 150 years: Settlers Maintain Strong Bohemian Connections', *New Zealand Herald*, 26 June 2013.

<sup>58</sup> 'The Waikato Times. "Omne Solem Forti Patria."', *Waikato Times*, 25 February 1875. The society had been founded in 1874.

<sup>59</sup> 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 19 October 1875; 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 11 December 1875; 'December 29th, 1875. The Sports', *Waikato Times*, 1 January 1876; 'Alexandra', *Waikato Times*, 12 February 1876; 'Alexandra. June 12th. 1876.', *Waikato Times*, 15 June 1876.



Figure 16 Alexandra Hall<sup>60</sup>

Likewise, early in 1874 Ngāruawāhia was also raising funds for ‘the erection of a public hall in Ngāruawāhia - a most desirable object’.<sup>61</sup> That same year, in Te Awamutu, a concert was held to augment the building fund and in November 1875 a concert was held to celebrate its opening.<sup>62</sup> Mr Mackintosh from Cambridge supervised, and the concert was followed by a ball

which is sure to attract all the youth and beauty of the neighbourhood, and the cavalry force will doubtless be present in numbers to give brilliancy to the assemblage by their gay uniforms.<sup>63</sup>

It included both vocal and instrumental items and the performers and audience were from ‘several parts of the district and adjoining townships’,<sup>64</sup>

Sadly, the hall was ‘totally destroyed’ by fire in November 1894.<sup>65</sup> This was considered ‘rather unfortunate, as by it that township is deprived of its hall at the very period when most required, as the holiday season is just coming on’. It transpired there was an athletics concert planned, the ladies of St John’s church had a concert

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<sup>60</sup> ‘Armed Constabulary Hall’, (Te Awamutu: Te Awamutu Museum, 1880s), <<https://collection.tamuseum.org.nz/objects/20581/armed-constabulary-hall>>

<sup>61</sup> ‘Omne Solum Forti Patria’, *The Waikato Times*, 20 October 1874.

<sup>62</sup> ‘Omne Solum Forti Patria.’, *Waikato Times*, 4 August 1874.

<sup>63</sup> ‘The Waikato Times’, *Waikato Times*, 11 November 1875.

<sup>64</sup> ‘Opening Of The New Music Hall At Te Awamutu. (From A Correspondent.)’, *Waikato Times*, 18 November 1875.

<sup>65</sup> ‘Fire at Te Awamutu’, *Waikato Times*, 3 November 1894.

'in aid of their church repair funds', and the church Christmas concert had to be 'indefinitely postponed'. However,

The Musical Society saved their piano and all their music but lost the piano case, half a dozen music stands, and two old Mikado scenes. The dance committee were more unfortunate.

This inventory of the uses of the Town Hall shows how badly needed, and how well used, the local town hall was. This was recognised when the hall committee resolved to build a new one, 'a resolution which must commend itself to everyone, as the township cannot do without one for any length of time'.<sup>66</sup> Within a month the plans for the new town hall were approved and tenders called for: 'The Board are to be commended on their promptitude and pluck in building so large a hall, as the old one was too small for the requirement of the place'.<sup>67</sup> It was built by July 1895.<sup>68</sup> The fact that it was destroyed and then rebuilt within so short a time speaks to the community need for such a building.



Figure 17 Te Awamutu Town Hall 1895<sup>69</sup>

<sup>66</sup> 'The Late Fire at Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 6 November 1894.

<sup>67</sup> 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 18 December 1894.

<sup>68</sup> 'St. John's Church, Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 11 July 1895.

<sup>69</sup> 'Te Awamutu Town Hall', (Te Awamutu: Te Awamutu Museum Heritage Collection, 1895), <<https://collection.tamuseum.org.nz/objects/18398/te-awamutu-town-hall>>

The three examples above of the early creation of a public hall in a smaller settlement shows just how valued and necessary these communal meeting places were. These communities would have had correspondingly small schools and churches and did not have other meeting places for the larger gatherings that were being held. So where once a schoolroom might suffice, the increasing numbers involved in concerts dictated the need for a suitable venue where the community could come together and socialise in different ways. Thus, they became the first to provide their citizens with a public hall open to all.

The larger settlements of Cambridge and Hamilton had recourse to other venues such as school rooms, Volunteer Halls, the Court House in Hamilton, the Redoubt in Hamilton, and other places for their entertainments, but these proved insufficient in size for the growing population.<sup>70</sup> Previously, I referenced the 1876 concert in Alexandra, where not only was the stage crammed but that there was an audience of 100 people.<sup>71</sup> A similar situation occurred in Cambridge in 1877. A concert in April was held in the Oddfellows Hall with the following comment:

The room is unfortunately very small, which caused it to be rather inconveniently crowded, but as the evening was cool the consequences of this were not so ill as they might have been.<sup>72</sup>

Perhaps learning from this, a later concert in August, that was expected to be popular, was moved from the Odd Fellows Hall to the schoolroom. Here there was still insufficient space, 'the two anterooms were occupied by many gentlemen who could not find even standing room in the body of the school room'. The reviewer commented that this had been an extremely successful concert, raising £20 and felt that the 'settlers and tradesmen' should see the necessity of erecting a public hall. 'If we had a suitable building we might have entertainments monthly for some charitable purposes.'<sup>73</sup> Cambridge did in fact secure a hall by the end of 1877.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 29 August 1895; 'Entertainment At Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 14 May 1874; 'The Waikato Argus', *Waikato Argus*, 30 July 1898; 'The Waikato Times. "Omne Solum Forti Patria."', *Waikato Times*, 6 February 1875; 'Hamilton', *New Zealand Herald*, 27 February 1867.

<sup>71</sup> 'Alexandra', *Waikato Times*, 5 February 1876.

<sup>72</sup> 'Presbyterian Church Soiree, Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 3 April 1877.

<sup>73</sup> 'Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 2 August 1877.

<sup>74</sup> Personal communication Cambridge Museum staff.



Figure 18 Public Hall, Cambridge 1877<sup>75</sup>

This was replaced in 1909 by the Town Hall which stands to this day:



Figure 19 Cambridge Town Hall, 1909<sup>76</sup>

However, Hamilton did not have a public hall, even by the end of the nineteenth century. This was a source of enormous vexation over the years and as

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<sup>75</sup> 'Cambridge Public Hall', (Cambridge: Cambridge Museum, 1877).

<sup>76</sup> Cambridge, Cambridge Museum Heritage Collection, Cambridge Town Hall, 2958.12.15.

early as 1876 led to a letter to the paper venting frustration at the lack of progress made by the Public Hall Company on a government minister's visit to Hamilton. 'I should be much better pleased to hear it announced ... [it had] fairly awoke from its trance and commenced a course of vigorous action.' This person was particularly upset that both Cambridge was given £100 towards the erection of a hall, and Alexandra was promised help for the fixtures and fittings of the already built hall. 'Even Ngaruawahia, downtrodden, sat upon, neglected Ngaruawahia saw its opportunity ... and secured their point.'<sup>77</sup>

It was not until 1905 that the Town Hall was opened with great pomp and ceremony by the Prime Minister, Hon Richard Seddon with the Hamilton Orchestral Society playing at the occasion. (see Chapter 5 for greater details).



Figure 20 Town Hall and auditorium, Hamilton, opened 1905<sup>78</sup>

Thus, the story of the venues in the townships shows a sense of adaptation to changing circumstances and the increasing population in the districts, leading to greater numbers of performers and greater audience size. It also demonstrates the huge importance placed on having a venue capable of holding such numbers.

<sup>77</sup> 'Public Hall, Hamilton', *Waikato Times*, 10 June 1876.

<sup>78</sup> 'Town Hall, Hamilton N.Z.', (Hamilton: Heritage, Hamilton City Libraries, 1909), <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/objects/390/town-hall-hamilton-nz>>

## Community Needs

Concerts continued to be a favoured way of raising finances throughout this period. The immediate needs of church and education then gave way for purposes more appropriately described as community building, such as libraries, sporting facilities, horticulture, communication, and benefit concerts to those who had contributed to the community, or for those individuals facing hard times. And thus, a web of community was strengthened by these efforts.

Libraries were not the first concern of the earliest settlers, but within a generation were developed, as a library was seen as 'a potent means of educating the masses, and at the same time it provides healthy rational amusement'.<sup>79</sup> Initially, just as with churches and their requirements, there was a need to provide a building but later the purpose was to be able to buy more books for the library.

There is mention of many concerts in the different communities to raise funds for just such an aim, such as in Cambridge, Alexandra, Te Aroha, Cambridge West School (which raised £13), Wesleyan Sunday School Cambridge, St Andrew's Sunday School Cambridge, Te Awamutu, Kihikihi, Hamilton, Paterangi, Huntly, Pirongia, Morrinsville, and Te Rore.<sup>80</sup>

The library information given in the Te Rore concert is significant in that this was a small settlement between Te Pahu and Alexandra, a site of a battle in the New Zealand wars, and yet the library, 'though only in existence two years, has now shelved nearly 500 up-to-date books'. Five hundred books for a settlement comprising a few farming families seems a wonderful achievement. It is to be hoped that full advantage was taken of this resource. This concert followed the usual format

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<sup>79</sup> 'Te Aroha News And Upper Thames Advocate', *Te Aroha News*, 19 January 1884.

<sup>80</sup> 'Cambridge East', *Waikato Times*, 31 January 1884; 'Morrinsville', *Waikato Argus*, 21 February 1905; 'Page 2 Advertisements Column 3', *Waikato Argus*, 11 February 1903; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 3', *Waikato Argus*, 24 August 1901; 'Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 20 December 1900; 'Paterangi', *Waikato Argus*, 11 October 1905; 'Paterangi', *Waikato Argus*, 8 May 1900; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 10 August 1897; 'Kihikihi', *Waikato Argus*, 31 May 1898; 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 7 November 1895; 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Argus*, 25 June 1898; 'Te Awamutu Troubadours', *Waikato Times*, 13 November 1890; 'Concert At Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 7 September 1904; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 22 December 1900; 'Concert At Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 15 August 1900; 'Entertainment in aid of the Cambridge Library', *Waikato Times*, 20 January 1887; 'Saturday, April 10, 1886', *Waikato Times*, 10 April 1886; 'Te Aroha News And Upper Thames Advocate', *Te Aroha News*, 9 May 1885; 'Alexandra News', *Waikato Times*, 29 January 1887; 'Comments', *Waikato Times*, 13 December 1884; 'The Waikato Times AND THAMES VALLEY GAZETTE', *Waikato Times*, 18 September 1884. Alexandra was renamed Pirongia in 1896. [<https://New Zealandhistory.govt.nz/keyword/Pirongia>; <https://teara.govt.nz/en/waikato-places/page-10>]

of the time which was a musical first half and a farce in the second half, thereby appealing to music and drama lovers. Furthermore, 'after supper the usual dance followed, to the music of the pipes, accordion, violin and piccolo'.<sup>81</sup> There would have been little difficulty in hearing the music above the hubbub of talking.

A key purpose of musical fundraising was to improve the quality of the pioneers' lives. Many sports clubs were helped in this way, such as, in Hamilton, the Hamilton Bowling club, the Hamilton Rugby Union, the Hamilton Cricket Association. The Hamilton Rowing Club, for example, held a promenade concert. Raising funds for the Hamilton Tennis Club led to a concert in which apart from singing, there was a piano solo, a violin accompaniment, a mandolin solo and a banjo accompaniment. There was also a drummer in one song who 'did not appear to have much eye for music, and his time was atrocious'.<sup>82</sup> The photograph below shows a ticket from this concert:

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<sup>81</sup> 'Page 2 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 25 November 1902; 'Te Rore', *Waikato Argus*, 21 May 1903.

<sup>82</sup> 'Concert in Hamilton', *Waikato Argus*, 8 February 1902; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 3', *Waikato Times*, 9 September 1884; 'Rowing Club Concert', *Waikato Times*, 22 September 1904; 'Concert At Hamilton', *Waikato Argus*, 15 October 1903; 'Hamilton Bowling Club', *Waikato Argus*, 10 May 1904; 'Concert In Hamilton', *Waikato Argus*, 12 August 1903.



Figure 21 Ticket Hamilton Lawn Tennis Club, 1902<sup>83</sup>

In other areas local clubs held concerts to raise funds for themselves, such as the Kihikihi Football Club, and the Maungatautari Cricket Club. And some concerts were held to provide funds for children's sports.<sup>84</sup>

Horticulture was another aspect of the colonists' lives for which concerts provided entertainment and support. In 1900 the Hamilton Society show had promenade concerts in both the afternoon and evening sessions.<sup>85</sup> The Te Aroha Agricultural and Horticultural Society held its annual show in 1901, in the evening of which there was a 'grand concert' in the Town Hall devoting the proceeds to the Horticultural Society.<sup>86</sup>

One of the more unusual musical fundraising endeavours was a 1903 concert held to raise money for a telephone service between Cambridge West and Cambridge East, for which the government required a subsidy. It included a string

<sup>83</sup> Unknown, 'Ticket', (Hamilton: Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato, 1902).

<sup>84</sup> 'Kihikihi', *Waikato Argus*, 13 May 1901; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 22 November 1884; 'Maungatautari', *Waikato Argus*, 9 March 1904.

<sup>85</sup> 'Hamilton Horticultural Society', *Waikato Argus*, 17 November 1900.

<sup>86</sup> 'The Waikato Argus GEORGE EDGE CUMBE, Proprietor. SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1901', *Waikato Argus*, 19 January 1901.

quartet, clarinet solos by Mr Stuart, and opening selections from the Brass Band, and raised over £6.<sup>87</sup>

Throughout the period, given that there was no financial safety net, concerts were sometimes put on to raise money for those in need. So, for example, in 1913, there was a 'charity concert' the proceeds of which were 'be devoted to the relief of a family whose breadwinner has been in various hospitals for over three years'. The 'services of a fine orchestra in addition to the leading vocalists of the Waikato' were secured.<sup>88</sup>

## **Role of Individuals and Benefit Concerts**

One purpose that remained throughout the first 50 years was the giving of complimentary concerts to musicians who had served the community. Like those given to Mr Bell and Mr Mackintosh, which will be seen in Chapter 3, concerts were given for Mr Meacham in Hamilton, Miss Swan in Cambridge and Mr Sibley in Te Awamutu. As was typical with these earlier concerts, they were primarily vocal, but each was leavened with some instrumental music. In the case of Mr Meacham this was in the form of a String Band, (presumably that of Mr Bell who organised the concert), for Miss Swan an 'instrumental duet by Dr Murch (violin), and Mrs Mulholland (piano), which was given in excellent style'. Mr Sibley was the bandmaster in Te Awamutu, and the band played in the interval, with the vocal items introduced by an 'overture' on the piano.<sup>89</sup>

These concerts could sometimes be very lucrative. The gross receipts of Mr Meacham's concert 'amounted to about £18'. This is equivalent to approximately \$4,260 today.<sup>90</sup> However, Miss Swan's concert the following year, left her with £5 of which she had to spend £2 1s in railway fares. This led to a lot of dissatisfaction being expressed in the papers; having paid 5s for a ticket, one disgruntled writer asked who was benefitting from a concert that was very well attended.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> 'Cambridge West', *Waikato Argus*, 12 October 1903; 'Cambridge West', *Waikato Times*, 12 October 1903.

<sup>88</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 19 December 1913.

<sup>89</sup> 'The Waikato Times AND THAMES VALLEY GAZETTE', *Waikato Times*, 18 November 1884; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 9 May 1885; 'Complimentary Concert To Mr H. T. Sibley', *Waikato Times*, 25 August 1885; 'Complimentary Concert To Miss Swan', *Waikato Times*, 21 May 1885.

<sup>90</sup> Inflation Calculator, <<https://www.rbnz.govt.nz/monetary-policy/inflation-calculator>>

<sup>91</sup> 'Concert At Hamilton', *Waikato Times*, 27 November 1884; 'The Complimentary Concert To Miss Maggie Swan', *Waikato Times*, 23 June 1885; 'Miss Swan's Concert', *Waikato Times*, 28 July 1885.

A complimentary concert for Mr Hemus, an orchestral violinist, who also had a string band, was in the form of a ball, held in a hall in Hamilton. 'Mr J. Hemus himself [directed] the orchestra, which [was] composed of the principal local talent who have kindly volunteered their services for the occasion.'<sup>92</sup> Further information about this talented musician is to be found in Chapter 6.

Another concert in Cambridge was for a local man, Mr Stuart, 'in recognition of his laudable efforts for some years past in the cause of music in Cambridge'. He was responsible for 'resuscitating the town band', (previously under the baton of Mr Mackintosh) of which he had 'taught most, if not all, the players their instruments'. He was also a 'valued member' of the Cambridge Orchestral Society and for the occasion this latter was considerably augmented to play its three items on the programme. Apart from these there were solos, duets, trios, the Brass Band and a solo by Mr Stuart himself on the "clarionet," which evidently was well received:

Both Mr Stuart and his accompanist (Mrs Lowe) rose to the occasion, for never have we heard the clarionet played better in the colonies; and we cannot remember ever having heard a better tone produced from the instrument.

Several locals subscribed to give him a new clarionet and this with the £15 raised by the concert shows in just what esteem he was held.<sup>93</sup> Another complimentary concert was given to Mr Edwards who had done much for the Cambridge Orchestral Society.<sup>94</sup>

## **Celebrations – Anniversaries, Welcomes, and Farewells**

As communities became more established, the imperative to earn money from concerts to provide for a range of community needs became less pressing. Music remained a fundamental part of Waikato settler communities, continuing to provide both entertainment and social cohesion. Important anniversaries and the arrival and departure of prominent citizens were celebrated with concerts featuring a range of instruments and repertoires.

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<sup>92</sup> 'St. Peter's Social', *Waikato Times*, 28 September 1895; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 9 July 1895; 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 15 October 1895.

<sup>93</sup> 'News From Country Districts', *New Zealand Herald*, 11 July 1902; 'Concert At Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 18 July 1902; 'Cambridge Brass Band', *Waikato Argus*, 14 July 1902; 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 6000 Weekly. TJIRSDAU, JULY 10, 1902.', *Waikato Argus*, 10 July 1902.

<sup>94</sup> 'Concert At Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 7 February 1901.

Church anniversaries were celebrated with concerts. Of wider interest is a concert held to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the Huntly Methodist church, in 1903, when 'visitors from Auckland, Hamilton, Ngāruawāhia, and Kimihia [contributed] a goodly number of the items'. On this one night in Huntly there were three events:

The Huntly cricketers were most unfortunate in the choice of Friday evening as the night on which to hold a concert for the benefit of the club's funds, as next-door Antonio's circus had a fair audience, and the Methodist soiree had a splendid attendance. Although the sale of tickets was fairly good, the counterattractions prevailed, with the result that the concert was adjourned until another evening, and the usual dance substituted.

The reviewer went on to say, 'Huntly is not large enough yet to run three events on the same night'.<sup>95</sup> It is hard to imagine that today Huntly would be populous enough to hold three competing attractions on the same night. However, the following year Huntly Girls' Gymnasium Club had to postpone 'a grand concert in aid of the funds of the local cemetery', owing to 'the Huntly Volunteer Hall being engaged so continually, and there being so many entertainments ... before Christmas'.<sup>96</sup> Clearly, the townsfolk of Huntly (population 966 at the 1901 census) had a vibrant community.<sup>97</sup>

But it was not the only place to 'suffer' from excess entertainment. The Waikato Hunt concert in Hamilton in 1900, was poorly attended. It must have been very disappointing to the Cambridge ladies and gentlemen, who made the trip in such wretched weather for the purpose of swelling the funds of the Waikato Hunt Club. Possibly the rain may have kept a number from attending, but we are inclined to think that the plethora of entertainments from which we have lately suffered was an important factor in the case.<sup>98</sup>

The following month a masquerade ball in Ohaupo also had a poor turnout, no doubt owing to the wretched weather, and the fact that the night before a concert was held in Te Awamutu, which many of the Ohaupo residents

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<sup>95</sup> 'Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 29 September 1903.

<sup>96</sup> 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 5 December 1904.

<sup>97</sup> 1901 Census Results, [https://www3.stats.govt.nz/historic\\_publications/1901-census/1901-results-census/1901-results-census.html?\\_ga=2.249173255.1475588955.1597015901-1082954917.1597015901#d50e7465](https://www3.stats.govt.nz/historic_publications/1901-census/1901-results-census/1901-results-census.html?_ga=2.249173255.1475588955.1597015901-1082954917.1597015901#d50e7465)

<sup>98</sup> 'Hunt Club Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 26 September 1900.

attended. There had also been a concert at Paterangi on the previous Friday night, so our cup of happiness had evidently overflowed, hence the paucity of attendance.<sup>99</sup>

Several years later Morrinsville was 'well off for entertainments at present, the hall being occupied four nights last week'.<sup>100</sup>

The settlers obviously enjoyed the social aspect of concerts, as is evident in this following comment about the importance of church music making as a social hub:

The first of this season's "parish evenings" was held in S. Andrew's schoolroom, Cambridge, on Wednesday, and was a great success. These meetings have evidently "caught on " with the inhabitants of the town for the room was quite full and everyone appeared to be enjoying themselves.

Musical and literary items were given, including piano duets, flute and violin duets, as well as a zither solo.<sup>101</sup>

As well as bringing people together, many reasons were given for celebratory concerts. For example, it could be to welcome the arrival of a new member of the clergy, or the opening of a railway line.<sup>102</sup> Pirongia celebrated the 'opening of the new piano', a '£50 Allison ... suitable for ... public use in the hall' which was bought in Auckland.<sup>103</sup> Raglan celebrated the opening of their new hall in 1907 'with a concert and dance', the music for which was played by 'an orchestra from Hamilton'.<sup>104</sup> 'There was a large attendance at the concert, £42 being taken at the door.'<sup>105</sup>

They could also be farewells to members of the community. Herr Engels was a valued player in the Cambridge musical community, having led the Cambridge Orchestra and having 'delighted large audiences with his solo playing'. He moved to Auckland in 1903. This concert included 'an excellent programme of vocal and instrumental items' and drew together 'all the best musical talent in Cambridge'. As a founding member of the piano trio which held a totally instrumental concert earlier,

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<sup>99</sup> 'Ohaupo', *Waikato Argus*, 13 October 1900.

<sup>100</sup> 'Morrinsville Notes', *Te Aroha News*, 25 July 1911.

<sup>101</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 14 May 1892.

<sup>102</sup> 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 25 April 1885. 'Te Aroha AND Ohinemuri News AND UPPER THAMES ADVOCATE.', *Te Aroha News*, 24 April 1886.

<sup>103</sup> 'Pirongia', *Waikato Times*, 1 September 1903.

<sup>104</sup> 'Raglan', *Auckland Star*, 27 March 1907.

<sup>105</sup> 'Raglan Town Hall', *Waikato Times*, 23 March 1907.

they played selections from that concert, as well as the Cambridge orchestra contributing several items.

The following review shows just how important was one outstanding player to the musical development of a community. The audience was a large one, most of those present being attracted by the instrumental music, thinking they would not have the opportunity of hearing instrumental trios again for some time, the departure of Herr Engle [sic] for Auckland breaking up the combination which has given so much pleasure and good music to the Cambridge public.<sup>106</sup>

However, it was more than just being a good player that had such an effect on the music life of Cambridge as

the gem of the evening was the 'cello solo by Mr Kempe (Soyer's 'Air Varie.'). It was beautifully given, and, in response to a most pronounced encore, he played a little serenade which required very delicate handling to get the requisite tone.<sup>107</sup>

Mr Kempe, obviously a good cellist, was not mentioned prior to his playing with Mr Engel, nor after. This would suggest that there must be a quality of leadership in Mr Engel that enabled people who might otherwise shun the limelight to come out and play in public. Was this charisma? Was this the ability to cajole? Perhaps it was the opportunity of playing with a quality musician that convinced Mr Kempe to perform.

## Looking Outwards and Overseas

### *Royal Anniversaries*

European settlers to New Zealand felt very attached to their birthplace. There are many references to "Home", meaning the United Kingdom and usually England, throughout the period. An article addressing the desire 'to "go Home" to seek fortune and fame as singers', printed in 1908, is typical.<sup>108</sup> Later, talking about Ina Bosworth, the daughter of the late Mr Bosworth,

Lord Islington was strongly of opinion that the young lady possesses musical talents worthy of a finishing course in Europe, and said that if her friends

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<sup>106</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 11 March 1903; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 13 March 1903; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 18 March 1903.

<sup>107</sup> 'Concert At Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 21 March 1903.

<sup>108</sup> 'The Vocal Way', *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 16 October 1908.

would arrange for her to go Home, he would be pleased to look after her mother and herself while in the Old Country.<sup>109</sup>

How much stronger must have these feelings have been for the earlier settlers, and they showed their connection with their mother country when celebrating royal anniversaries.

The anniversaries of the reign of Queen Victoria were marked in various ways over the years. In 1887, that marking the fiftieth year of her reign, it was observed in a somewhat muted fashion by processions and tree planting in Te Aroha, the mayor of Hamilton attending a dinner held by the Auckland mayor.<sup>110</sup> A Jubilee Ball was held in Cambridge:

Figure 22 Citizens' Jubilee Ball, Cambridge, 1887<sup>111</sup>

During the interval of this ball there was a singer leading the National Anthem. However, her 'efforts were ... greatly marred by the piano – the old town scrubber –

<sup>109</sup> 'Page 6 Advertisements Column 3', *Auckland Star*, 4 February 1913.

<sup>110</sup> 'Te Aroha and Ohinemuri News AND UPPER THAMES ADVOCATE', *Te Aroha News*, 18 June 1887; 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 18 June 1887.

<sup>111</sup> 'Page 4 Advertisements Column 3', *Waikato Times*, 18 June 1887.

being most vilely out of tune'.<sup>112</sup> Otherwise there were church services in some centres and sports and races in others.<sup>113</sup>



Figure 23 St Peter's Church, Hamilton, Easter 1887<sup>114</sup>

While the above is a photograph of Easter decorations in Hamilton, it shows how the church may have been decorated for the Jubilee celebration.

<sup>112</sup> 'Celebration at Hamilton', *Waikato Times*, 23 June 1887.

<sup>113</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 21 June 1887; 'The Jubilee', *Waikato Times*, 21 June 1887; 'Jubilee Celebration At Te Aroha', *Te Aroha News*, 25 June 1887.

<sup>114</sup> 'St Peter's Church, Easter Decorations', (Hamilton: Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, 1887)

Ten years later, there were Diamond Jubilee celebrations in the district. This time there were more events, and most places had some form of firework display. However, Te Awamutu took advantage of the occasion to hold a concert 'in aid of the library funds' which included orchestral items, instrumental solos, as well as songs and recitations. Paterangi also held a concert which included piano solos and audience participation in the choruses of some songs, including 'Rule Britannia'.<sup>115</sup>

Kihikihi's march to the Public Hall was headed by the Māori Band, thus showing assimilation and acceptance by the many of the local Māori of Queen Victoria as their sovereign. In fact, at the ball in the evening there, 'the music [was] provided by the native band, and was really good'. Similarly, in Otorohanga, 'there was a large gathering of both European and Maoris [sic] at 4 o'clock to sing the National anthem'.<sup>116</sup>

Church services of course occurred throughout the area and in Hamilton there was a United service which was extremely popular:

The Hall was crowded to its utmost capacity, and at least two hundred people were obliged to content themselves with standing room outside the door or in the dressing rooms at the back of the stage, and many returned to their homes altogether disappointed.

Here there 'thronged the united choirs of the various churches, and a very large and efficient orchestra under the conductorship of Mr S. Meachem'.<sup>117</sup>

There was also a Mass held at St Mary's Catholic church at which a 'strong orchestra under the leadership of Dr Haeusler' played. As part of the service a Te Deum was

beautifully rendered, being performed with spirit and precision, and its rendition reflected great credit upon both orchestra and choir. The music throughout the service was very pleasing and gave great gratification to all present.

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<sup>115</sup> 'The Diamond Jubilee', *Waikato Argus*, 24 June 1897.

<sup>116</sup> 'The Diamond Jubilee', *Waikato Argus*, 24 June 1897.

<sup>117</sup> 'The Diamond Jubilee', *Waikato Argus*, 24 June 1897.



Figure 24 St Mary's Church, Clyde Street, 1890<sup>118</sup>

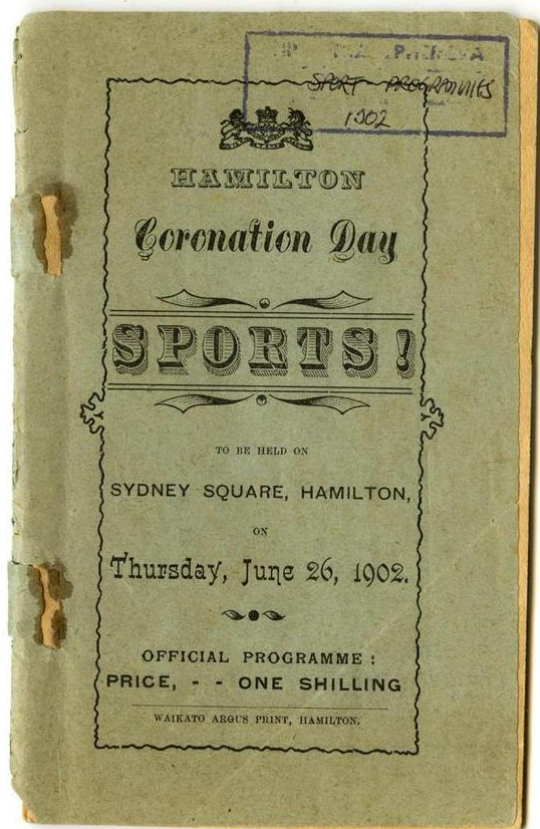
The service finished with “The War March of the Priests” from Athalie (Mendelssohn) as a recessional march’ by the orchestra. As this was part of the repertoire of the Hamilton Orchestral Society, it seems reasonable to assume that it was that orchestra that was involved in this service.<sup>119</sup>

There had been planned concerts for this Diamond Jubilee, as well on her death (1901) and subsequent coronation of Edward VII in 1902, and the death of King Edward in 1910 with the coronation of George V in 1911. However, in the main these did not eventuate. It is not known if that is because there was little notice to organise such events, a lack of general interest, or indeed a lack of desire for such entertainment. However, the following photograph shows that there were sports held in Hamilton on the occasion of Edward VII’s coronation:

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<sup>118</sup> 'St Mary's Church, Clyde Street', (Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, 1890), <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/objects/447/st-marys-church-clyde-street>>

<sup>119</sup> 'The Diamond Jubilee', *Waikato Argus*, 24 June 1897.



The coronations of King Edward VII and King George V were each subject to a pound for pound government subsidy for the celebrations. On both occasions the local mayors were keen to hold a public event, but also to commemorate the occasions with something lasting in the form of a permanent improvement to their towns. In the former instance, it appears that concerts were planned for Hamilton, Te Awamutu, and Ngāruawāhia. However, the Hamilton and Te Awamutu concerts were cancelled without any reason being given, and fireworks substituted for the evening entertainment.<sup>120</sup>

Figure 25 Coronation Sports Programme 1902<sup>121</sup>

Again in 1911 concerts were planned in Te Awamutu, Te Aroha, and Kihikihi. On these occasions they went ahead.<sup>122</sup>

One has to wonder why such pivotal moments were not celebrated with specific concerts more widely. Perhaps it was the quality of the piano, so often derided, maybe it was perceived as an elitist entertainment that most people would not enjoy. Whatever the reason, the Kihikihi concert of 1911 was called a 'Patriotic Concert' and one would assume that patriotism would have found expression in local concerts, if only in patriotic songs and marches. Maybe other manifestations of loyalty sufficed; Cambridge exulted in the number of flagpoles they had as a result of the Jubilee, Boer war and Coronation of 1902.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>120</sup> 'The Coronation', *Waikato Argus*, 29 May 1902; 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Argus*, 7 June 1902; 'Ngaruawahia', *Waikato Argus*, 24 June 1902; 'Coronation Celebrations', *Waikato Argus*, 5 August 1902.

<sup>121</sup> 'Programme: Hamilton Coronation Sports', (Hamilton: Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato, 1902), <<https://collection.waikatomuseum.org.nz/objects/13390/programme-hamilton-coronation-sports>>

<sup>122</sup> 'Coronation Celebrations', *Waipa Post*, 2 June 1911; 'Local And General', *Te Aroha News*, 13 June 1911; 'Kihikihi', *Waipa Post*, 20 June 1911.

<sup>123</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 6000 Weekly. FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1902', *Waikato Argus*, 5 December 1902.

## ***Patriotism and the Boer War***



New Zealand was not immune to worldwide events and sent troops to the Boer War, the first time New Zealanders had been involved in a war abroad. As government funding was limited this led to innumerable 'patriotic' entertainments throughout New Zealand to raise money for the troops, particularly in early 1900. In the area under scrutiny, most settlements including Hamilton, Te Aroha, Taupiri, Te Awamutu, Cambridge, Ohaupo, Ngāruawāhia, Pirongia and Hot Springs Hotel, Te Aroha did just that. The orchestras also became involved and a combined orchestral concert between Hamilton and Auckland players mustered 30 instrumentalists.<sup>124</sup>

*Figure 26 Ribbon: Boer War*<sup>125</sup>

Not only were there concerts to provide money for the troops or for their widows and children, but also it was felt appropriate to display patriotic fervour. Several settlements raised money to erect a flagstaff, amongst them Cambridge West which had found the cost greater than anticipated and so was trying to

liquidate the balance of expenses in connection with the flagstaff at the public school, one of the chief items of expenditure being greater than was anticipated.<sup>126</sup>

Prior to the end of this war various areas were preparing to celebrate the peace, 'whenever that may happen', with both Raglan and Te Awamutu preparing for peace in 1900.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 9 January 1900; 'Transvaal War Fund', *Te Aroha News*, 13 January 1900; 'The Waikato Argus GEORGE EDGE CUMBE, Proprietor. SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 1900', *Waikato Argus*, 13 January 1900; 'N.Z. Contingent.', *Waikato Argus*, 15 January 1900; 'Patriotic Concert at Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 18 January 1900; 'New Zealand', *Waikato Argus*, 22 February 1900; 'Patriotic Concert at Ngaruawahia', *Waikato Argus*, 24 February 1900; 'Pirongia', *Waikato Argus*, 13 March 1900; 'Shipping', *New Zealand Herald*, 23 January 1900; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 25 January 1900.

<sup>125</sup> 'Ribbon: Boer War', (Hamilton: Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato, 1899), <<https://collection.waikatomuseum.org.nz/objects/9062/ribbon-boer-war>>

<sup>126</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 1 April 1901.

<sup>127</sup> 'Raglan', *Waikato Argus*, 14 July 1900; 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Argus*, 7 July 1900.

Of course, when peace came two years later there was jubilation and music was part of that celebration. Church bells were rung in most settlements, flags were flown, and the local bands marched. At Rangiaohia, at the evening celebrations around the bonfire, 'sweet music was discoursed by the local band'.<sup>128</sup>

## Conclusion

This chapter has shown how a settler society grew from one immersed in its own immediate needs to one able to look after its fellow citizens, to being able to celebrate events far from New Zealand's shores. Throughout, music was a unifying strength in bringing people together to raise money for various causes and to socialise. Gradually, vocal offerings came to be interspersed with a little instrumental music and, in the later stages, orchestral concerts were given. Connections and respect were gained locally and those who were part of their community were able to lead and inspire their fellow citizens in the development of music making in this part of the country at that time.

Above all, this chapter has highlighted how utterly indispensable music was not only as a source of entertainment and relaxation, but as the foundation on which much of the infrastructure of settlement society in the Waikato was built. It was people coming together to perform concerts that funded the building of churches, schools, and public halls. It was music that people turned to to raise money for sports clubs, libraries, and charities. It was the fundraising capacity of music that communities exploited to refurbish cemeteries and build telephone lines. Once this infrastructure was in place, it was again music that provided the social glue that held communities together in joy and sorrow, with concerts organized to celebrate Queen Victoria's jubilees, mourn her passing, and encourage patriotism during the Boer War.

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<sup>128</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 24 July 1902; 'Peace Celebrations', *Waikato Argus*, 5 June 1902; 'The Late War', *Waikato Argus*, 7 June 1902.

## Chapter 2: Challenges

The early settlers in the Waikato faced many challenges in gathering together to make music. Even when suitable venues for performances had been built the roads and the weather continued to make travel to and from concerts difficult. Audiences could also cause problems on occasion, from sparsity to much liveliness.

The route south into the Waikato was difficult. The map already shown on page 27, Figure 5, and partially copied below, shows that formed roads south from Auckland continued only as far as Pokeno and surrounds.

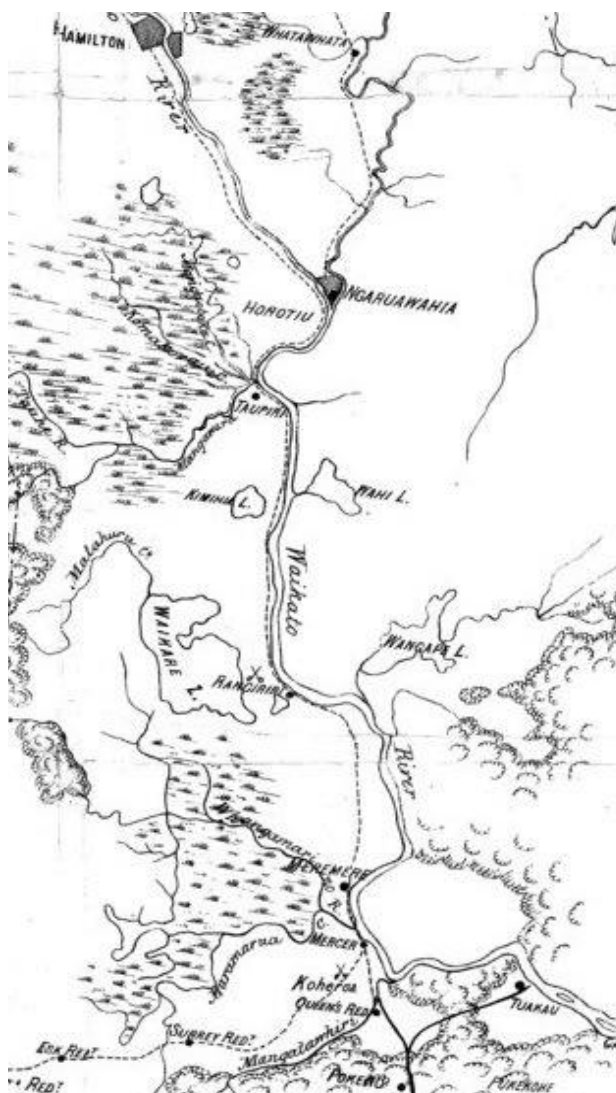


Figure 27 part of map from Featon<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Featon, *The Waikato War 1863-4* (Auckland, 1879).

Thus, from Pokeno south the route would have taken them through bush and along tracks. This photograph from the 1860s shows to good effect the state of the “roads” at this time; the path looks to be sufficient for single track walking or riding but at night, before or after a concert, such a journey would be a challenge.



*Figure 28 New Zealand History Campaign<sup>2</sup>*

Although unclear exactly where in the Waikato this photo was taken, the details of clothing in the image suggest that there were women in the party, in which case it could be inferred that this was part of the 4<sup>th</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> militia on their way to Hamilton or Cambridge respectively. The soldiers chosen for the invasion of the Waikato were men with families, who developed townships and communities once they arrived at their military outposts.

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<sup>2</sup> 'New Zealand History Campaigns', (Hamilton: Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, 1860s), <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/records/images/large/6517/27e0f0fe0c0f5daf68b4e4631ece9c92a4a58309.jpg>>

The following map shows the military settlements a few years later, 1868, showing how quickly the townships had grown within the confiscation line.

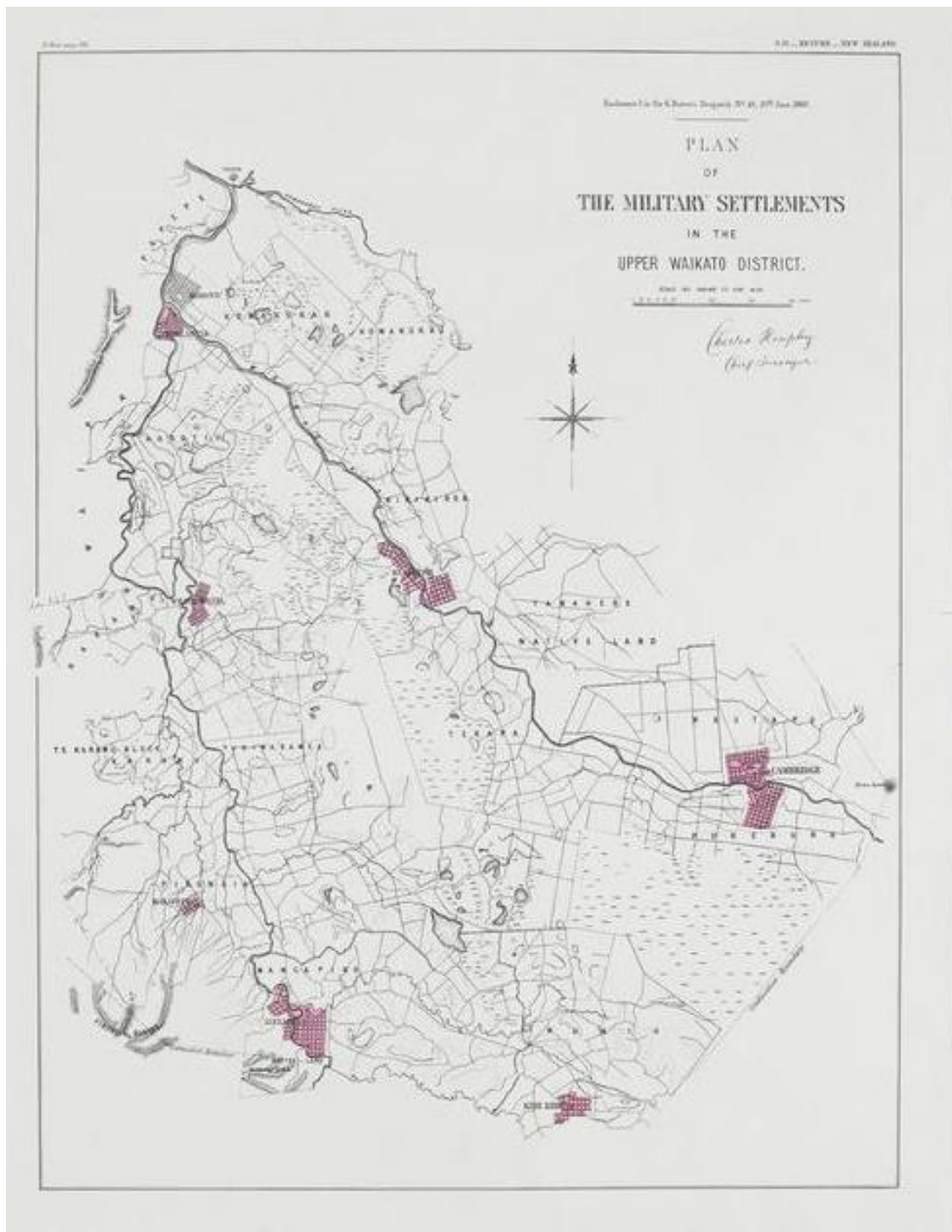


Figure 29 Plan of the Military Settlements of the Upper Waikato District 1868<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Charles Heaphy, 'Plan of the Military Settlements in the Upper Waikato District', (Hamilton: Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, 1868), <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/objects/23721/plan-of-the-military-settlements-in-the-upper-waikato-district>>

Thus, once the soldiers and their families had arrived at their military outposts, they wrought enormous changes on the physical landscape as townships and communities were developed. Concert giving was one way in which the new locals were able to raise money for their differing requirements.

Therefore, for there to be a good-sized audience and hence a good-sized profit, there had to be good weather to enable that audience, as well as the performers, to arrive at a concert in the knowledge they also would be able to reach home afterwards. The importance of the weather and the phases of the moon to provide light on the rough terrain, traversed on horseback or on foot without street lighting or metalled roads, was thus paramount and forms the first section of this chapter.

Following on from this I examine the methods of transport and travel that grew up around these concerts. Figure 28 above shows the atrocious conditions that people needed to overcome in order to support such fundraising, and the photograph below shows the development at the wharf in Hamilton, and some of the changes effected within a few years after settlement there.



*Figure 30 Hamilton Ferrybank 1860s<sup>4</sup>*

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<sup>4</sup> 'Hamilton Ferrybank', (Hamilton: Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, 1860s), <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/objects/5802/hamilton-ferrybank>>

However, they were still rudimentary roads and these show what people had to endure for them to gather. As time went on another commercial venture, that of providing transport to and from the concerts was born.

Finally, I look at another major challenge – the audience. Many would not have been accustomed to going to a concert with the protocol of sitting quietly and listening. Some of those recently arrived from Britain may have been more familiar with music hall entertainments, which encouraged audiences to be vociferous supporters of the acts on stage. It appears that between the mid-1870s and approximately 1903 that audience behaviour in the Waikato was a major problem for those who went to listen to the performances, the behaviour revealing a lack of knowledge and in several cases being downright rude.

My hypothesis is that, besides music performed for private pleasure in the homes of different musicians, for there to be public concerts there had to be a charismatic leader and a community willing and able to support this person. Looking at the geographical and psychological challenges faced by the settlers at this time, it is no wonder that exceptional drive by exceptional people was necessary.

## **Weather**

Weather conditions influenced the audience size and therefore the financial success of any entertainment. Two reviews of concerts show this to contrasting effect. In 1900, in Ngāruawāhia, 'a most successful school concert was given in the Town Hall in aid of the school funds. The promoters were favoured with fine weather, and the attendance was large'.<sup>5</sup> However, in 1885, an entertainment in Hukanui

was very enjoyable, and though the hall was comfortably filled, a great many people who would have come from Huntly and Taupiri were stopped by the rain which continued from three o'clock until too late to start.<sup>6</sup>

This comment highlights the consequence of bad weather but also shows the remarkable distances people were willing to travel to support a concert across unlit and rough terrain; Huntly is about 20 kms and Taupiri approximately 11 kms from Hukanui. At the very least they were prepared to travel for an hour on horseback, so it is not surprising if rain deterred them.

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<sup>5</sup> 'Ngāruawāhia', *Waikato Argus*, 9 July 1900.

<sup>6</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 4', *Waikato Times*, 3 February 1885.

One 1886 concert seemingly defied this in Shaftesbury, a settlement south of Te Aroha. On this occasion 'though the weather proved rather unpropitious, there was a large and appreciative audience' although later in the review it was remarked that,

several of those present expressed the hope that another opportunity would be given of a similar evening's enjoyment, especially as many who had arranged to be present were prevented from attending by the inclemency of the weather.<sup>7</sup>

A newspaper report about the drama "Lady Huntworth's Experiment" was explicit about the weather and its effect on audience numbers: 'Bookings are heavy for both nights, and we anticipate that in spite of the unfavourable state of the weather ... the production will be welcomed by crowded houses'.<sup>8</sup> The following day, the reviewer noted that 'the piece will be staged again this evening when, with finer weather, a bumper house may be anticipated'.<sup>9</sup>

Comments such as the above were commonplace indicating the reliance on the weather for the possibility of attendance. But it was not just the weather that was important, the phases of the moon were also a significant factor in determining audience size. A full moon would allow reasonable light at night for the people attending a concert to reach their homes after the event.

## **Moonlight! Moonlight! Moonlight!**

Figure 31 Advertisement for Concert, 1883<sup>10</sup>

The population at the time was essentially ambulatory or on horseback, and, without the benefit of street lighting, would be reliant on their lanterns to light their journey. This detail and the atmosphere are beautifully referenced in a reminiscence from 1969, as shown in Appendix 1 Reminiscences of early music making. A 'social gathering of the town and country settlers' in Raglan in 1868 once again underscores the benefits of moonlight:

<sup>7</sup> 'Concert At Shaftesbury', *Te Aroha News*, 17 July 1886.

<sup>8</sup> 'Lady Huntworth's Experiment', *Waikato Argus*, 30 March 1910.

<sup>9</sup> 'Lady Huntworth's Experiment', *Waikato Argus*, 31 March 1910.

<sup>10</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 3', *Waikato Times*, 4 September 1883.

A more pleasant day could not have been desired, and the night proved equal to the wishes of those who came from a distance, the moon affording sufficient help to most of the country settlers to return to their homes the same evening.<sup>11</sup>

Some advertisements, such as this from 1876, were very generous providing moonlight for their prospective audience.

**MOONLIGHT PROVIDED.** 12

*Figure 32 Advertisement Concert Hamilton, 1876*

And this later advertisement by the Hamilton Choral Society used humour to point out that it was going to be a moonlit night by providing the moonlight free of charge.

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Doors open at 7.30 ; commence at 8 p.m.  
Moonlight provided free.

-----  
ADMISSION, ONE SEILLING.  
H. CONNELL,  
Conductor.

13

*Figure 33 Hamilton Choral Society 1889*

Some even guaranteed a moonlight night, while others promised that there would be 'good moonlight'.<sup>14</sup> In fact, there were many such advertisements throughout this early period up to the First World War, emphasising how the phases of the moon were crucial to the viability of concerts.

Throughout this section, the evidence highlights how great an impact the weather conditions had on concerts, particularly attendance. While getting to a concert could be possible, even in wet weather, it was the return journey that caused the biggest challenge. Both performers and audiences could be prevented from attending if there were insufficient light to guide the way home.

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<sup>11</sup> 'President Magistrate's Court', *New Zealand Herald*, 11 March 1868.

<sup>12</sup> 'Page 2 Advertisements Column 3', *Waikato Times*, 19 December 1876.

<sup>13</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 6', *Waikato Times*, 4 June 1889.

<sup>14</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 3', *Waikato Argus*, 25 May 1899; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Argus*, 29 August 1914.

## Travel for Performers and Audiences

A concert in 1867 in Hamilton East in aid of the Presbyterian church fund shows its attraction to people outside of Hamilton, who were prepared to travel from Ngāruawāhia and Cambridge. It seems that their purpose in attending was because they were 'interested in the cause' rather than the concert itself. Unfortunately, the weather prohibited their presence on this occasion and a repeat concert was planned.<sup>15</sup>

It was not just as listeners but also as performers that people were prepared to travel long distances in aid of a good cause such as church services funds. One such example is a concert in Alexandra in February 1876 given in aid of the organ fund of the St Saviour's Church.<sup>16</sup> This had the support of 'many of the most talented of the lady and gentlemen amateurs from the other districts as well as our own and the immediate neighbourhood'. Mr Edgecumbe from Ngāruawāhia acted as manager of the concert. By road today that is some 43 kms. Whether he travelled on horseback or whether he travelled by ferry along the River Waipa he would have spent considerable time in reaching his destination, let alone the return journey. Possibly in recognition of this, 'his arrival in the hall was greeted by a perfect ovation from the audience'.<sup>17</sup>

There was a varied programme on offer. At 6 o'clock a 'bountiful' tea was provided by eight local ladies and once 'justice [had been] done' to this repast, the tables were cleared away and the concert began. To an audience of more than 100 people, a chorus was sung by a choir so numerous that 'the stage was ... completely filled by the performers.' Mr Edgecumbe and Mr Gibson, from Te Awamutu, sang comic songs and others sang to piano accompaniment. The second half of the evening's entertainment was a spelling bee with a prize for gentlemen and another for ladies; the whole evening finishing with a dance that 'the young folks kept up continuously until morning'.<sup>18</sup>

What is shown here is that there were sufficiently good communications between settlements, both on a friendship basis and by transport. The sharing of good food led to a sense of celebration and there is the feeling that many people

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<sup>15</sup> 'Hamilton', *New Zealand Herald*, 27 February 1867.

<sup>16</sup> 'Notes from Alexandra', *Daily Southern Cross*, 1 February 1876.

<sup>17</sup> 'Alexandra', *Waikato Times*, 5 February 1876.

<sup>18</sup> 'Alexandra', *Waikato Times*, 5 February 1876.

worked to make this a success, through organisation, through preparation, through moving furniture and through just making the effort to be there. Even within a settlement, the weather had a huge effect on turnout; the forecast had not been promising but it cleared 'up as if for the occasion.'<sup>19</sup> The fact that the evening comprised different elements will have also been a factor in its success; a meal, a concert, a spelling bee, and a dance. These will have enabled many people who might have balked at going to a concert on its own, to feel the desire to participate. At the same time, having large numbers of people involved in the performance will have encouraged family and friends to come along and support them. Here is amply exemplified the unifying power of an entertainment which includes music and dancing. The social cohesion that it engendered was, for many, probably worth far more than the takings at the door.

There is another example, worthy of note, of just such a varied concert eleven years later, with exceptional organisation, and, as it happens, some of the same performers. The organisers of a concert in Harapepe (Te Pahu) ensured that all who wanted could attend the celebratory concert of the opening of their school room:

There will be a capital moon for the occasion ... A paddock has been provided for the use of horses, and the Te Rori ferry will be kept running free all night, so that visitors from a distance may be placed at no inconvenience.<sup>20</sup>

A soirée, concert and dance, as well as a tea at 6pm at that venue, celebrated their achievement. Mr Edgecumbe from Ngāruawāhia was to have been part of the concert, but he was held up by the late arrival of the steamer, the whistle of which was heard at the end of the concert. However, dancing followed and he 'greatly helped to enliven the proceedings by singing several songs at intervals throughout the night.'<sup>21</sup>

The concert was vocal and instrumental, although there are no details of the latter apart from piano accompaniments and the use of the piano for the dances. Some of the accompanists played for some of the dances. It had been hoped that a gentleman from Te Awamutu would come to help with the music for the dancing. However, he 'failed to put in an appearance ... but volunteers were soon forthcoming

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<sup>19</sup> 'Alexandra', *Waikato Times*, 5 February 1876.

<sup>20</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Thames Star*, 1 October 1878.

<sup>21</sup> 'Harapepe Soiree', *Waikato Times*, 24 January 1878.

and dancing kept up with unflagging spirit till daylight did appear.<sup>22</sup> So, for this one concert, near Te Pahu, we see performers expected to come from as far away as Ngāruawāhia to the north and Te Awamutu to the south. Also, the needs of anyone not immediately in the vicinity were catered for with the provision of a paddock for their horses and the free running of the ferry. It was, also, an incredibly long celebration from 6 pm tea the night before to an approximately 6 am daybreak. It is very sad that this school room, so proudly celebrated, burnt down within thirteen years.<sup>23</sup>

The above examples used the tracks, roads and ferries for transport. Within 20 years of settlement a bridge was built over the Waikato River. This bridge enabled the people living in East Hamilton and West Hamilton to freely cross to the other side without waiting for a ferry. It also made a huge difference to the ability to access concerts. In the photograph of the bridge below, St Andrew's Presbyterian church and Le Quesne's Hotel (3 storey building) can be seen in the distance.



Figure 35 A view of Hamilton showing the first traffic bridge<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> 'Harapepe Soiree', *Waikato Times*, 24 January 1878.

<sup>23</sup> N. Clark, 'Te Pahu Community Website: Local History', 1986), <<https://www.tepahu.co.nz/info-centre/local-history/?fbclid=IwAR10x36v-GA4InC4zTCBu9Ajj1i00FkLWNS-C4fu0PYovv1T5Vxfa1fkyF0>>

<sup>24</sup> Daniel Manders Beere, 'A view of Hamilton showing the first traffic bridge', in *Hamilton showing traffic bridge*, 1882 Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/22770600, 1883),

However, given the state of the roads it is not surprising that bad weather, or even a full moon, had such an important effect on audience numbers. In awareness of this, commercial operators started to offer transportation to and from concerts. Most operators worked from Victoria Street on the west bank of the river. For example, the photograph below shows Victoria Street, Hamilton in the 1880s where there is full evidence of the mud and ruts formed on its clay surface:



*Figure 36 Victoria Street, Hamilton, 1880s<sup>25</sup>*

The two-storey building in the distance was Gwynne's Hotel and it was from here that C. R. Johnson advertised that he would be running a four-horse coach out to the concert at Hukanui, nowadays known as Gordonton, (approximately 15 kms northeast of Hamilton):

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pp. An entry in Daniel Manders Beere's photographers register which reads: "Hamilton showing traffic bridge, 1882".

<sup>25</sup> 'Victoria Street', (Hamilton: Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, 1880s), <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/objects/462/victoria-street>>

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## CHARLES JOHNSON

Intends to run a Four horse Coach to the above Concert, leaving Gwynne's Hotel at 6.15, returning after the Concert, at the very moderate rate of 4s each.

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MOONLIGHT GUARANTEED.

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*Figure 37 Concert Hukanui, 1885<sup>26</sup>*

This advertisement once again highlights the importance of the moon. Probably there would have been some members of the public who may have found the concept of travelling back to Hamilton and from there making their own way home in the dark, too much effort to make for a concert, whatever its purpose. This mention hopefully allayed their fears and, as the cost of the coach ticket was 4s, double the usual 2s for a concert ticket, it would also be necessary to encourage passengers to decide the concert was worth attending.

Other operators also offered coaches for specific concerts, and the following illustrate the points I have made:

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<sup>26</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 24 March 1885.

**T**AMAHERE CHURCH CONCERT.  
 A Vocal and Instrumental  
**C O N C E R T,**  
 In aid of the Building Fund of S Stephen's  
 Church, will be held at the  
 SCHOOL-HOUSE, TAMAHERE,  
 ON  
**WEDNESDAY, THE 16th INST.**  
 Doors open at 7 30 ; commence at 8  
 o'clock.  
 Admission,—Two Shillings.  
 MOONLIGHT.

Figure 38 Tamahere Church concert, 1885<sup>27</sup>

**W**ANTED KNOWN—A Coach leaves  
 Commercial Hotel, Hamilton, on  
 16th inst, for Tamahere Concert, 6 30  
 p.m.—James Calderwood.

Figure 39 Coach for Tamahere concert, 1885<sup>28</sup>

These two advertisements in the same column on the same page show the desire to encourage patrons to support concerts for a particular cause, moonlight is assured, and there would be a coach to facilitate attendance at this concert.

While the above advertisements were in the nineteenth century, photographs of Ohaupo Road after it was formed and then later in 1900 show conditions so challenging that even the coaches struggled.

<sup>27</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 12 September 1885.

<sup>28</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 12 September 1885.

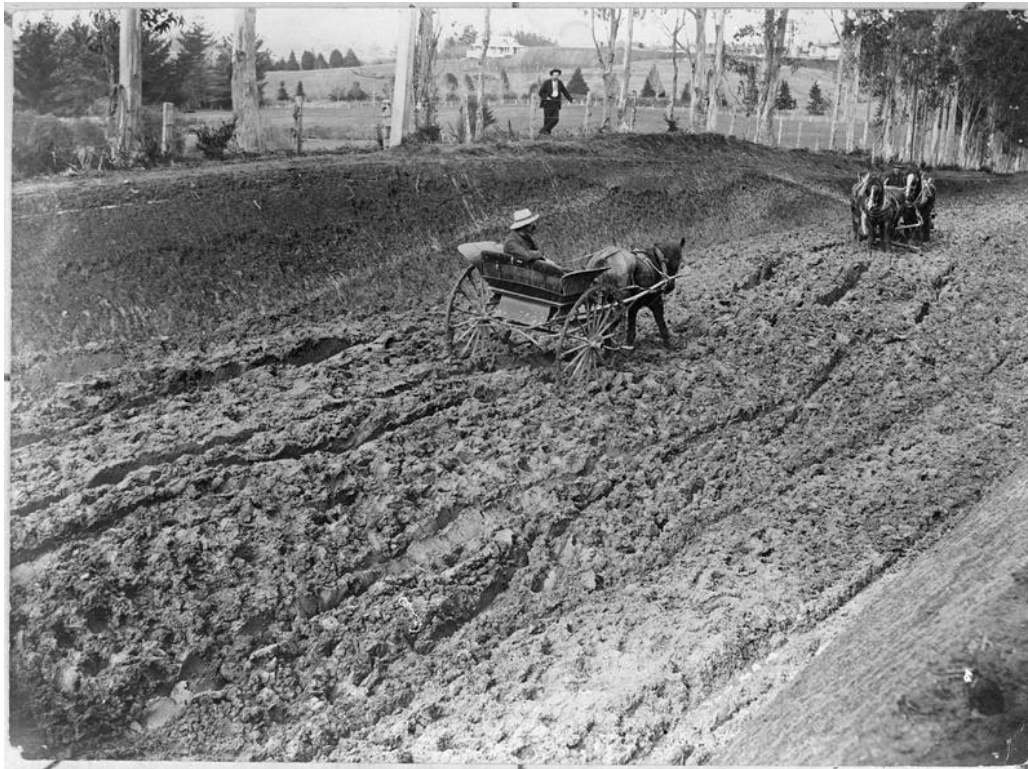


Figure 40 Traffic in Mud after new road formed<sup>29</sup>



Figure 41 Ohaupo Road, c. 1900<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> 'Traffic Stuck in Mud', Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/objects/27307/traffic-stuck-in-mud>>

<sup>30</sup> 'Traffic stuck in mud', (Hamilton: Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, c. 1900).

This is a photograph of what is now Pembroke Street not long after the road was cut through, and shows conveyances stuck in the mud. Potential passengers would have been aware of the difficulties, and it says much for their determination to get to a concert that they were used at all.

Even as late as 1908, the following photograph shows how awful the state of the roads would have been, given the multitude of purposes to which they were put:



Figure 42 *The Main Street, Hamilton c.1908*<sup>31</sup>

This section has again highlighted the importance of the moon, and the difficulties of transport, either on foot, on horseback, by ferry, or by public conveyance. It says much for the willpower and resolve of the settlers that such difficulties were anticipated and to a large extent resolved, and thus concerts could be held to support their communities.

## **Audiences**

Audiences were an indispensable part of concerts but could also provide challenges for the performers. Concert reviews can be a rich source of information about the

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<sup>31</sup> Hamilton, Collection of Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato, Photograph - The Main Street Hamilton, 1977/74/121.

people who attend the event. It is evident that reviewers noticed and commented not just on the quality of the performance but also on the type of audience present. For example, 'they have already attained ... a precision in execution', or 'the room was comfortably filled by a fashionable and appreciative audience'.<sup>32</sup> This latter concert was also notable in review for the following comment:

I may say, indeed, that it formed a striking contrast to many of the late Cambridge audiences. The absence of any kind of rowdyism [sic] in it is quite a new character.<sup>33</sup>

This "rowdyism" was a significant challenge to the performers as well as to the audience who were there to hear their neighbours and support whichever cause the concert was aiding.

One of the annoying behaviours frequently mentioned between approximately the mid-1870s and early into the twentieth century was the habit of talking during a concert, the perpetrators seemingly unaware that it was considered inappropriate. A concert in Cambridge in 1889 led to this comment by the reviewer:

we regret to say that it was the most talkative audience we have ever witnessed at any public performance ... the youngsters were not the only culprits, for many of mature years were almost as bad, and talked away with as much freedom as it they were in the middle of a forty acre paddock, and their nearest neighbour outside it.<sup>34</sup>

Many years later, in Hukanui, now Gordonton, the same complaint was laid:

It is with regret that we have to refer to the conduct of several young men in the audience, who persisted in talking and laughing in loud tones during the latter half of the entertainment.<sup>35</sup>

One reviewer was particularly shocked to discover at a concert in Kihikihi that the conversationalists included not just the expected larrikins but also ladies:

... the selfish and vulgar habit of talking, which some under bred people indulge in while some of the songs are being sung ...and not by the male hoodlums either, but by ladies! ... People of this sort can surely keep their

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<sup>32</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 1 August 1878; 'Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 13 June 1876.

<sup>33</sup> 'Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 13 June 1876.

<sup>34</sup> 'Concert at Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 17 December 1889.

<sup>35</sup> 'Concert At Hukanui', *Waikato Argus*, 25 August 1902.

choice bits of scandal for a more convenient season, and not annoy those who come to listen, and offer an affront to the singers.<sup>36</sup>

This behaviour was not confined to local amateur concerts, but also to visiting artists of great acclaim. In 1901 the Newbury-Spada Company visited the region giving concerts in Hamilton and Te Awamutu.<sup>37</sup> Mr Newbury, a New Zealand tenor, and Mme Spada, an American soprano, had sung in London and in Australia to much commendation and therefore might have expected their reception to have been rather more respectful.<sup>38</sup> However, they appeared before a 'large and talkative audience', leading Mr Newbury to complain that 'one would not meet a more ill-mannered crowd in any back block township'. On one occasion he even 'had to pause in the middle of his song until a young couple finished their conversation'. The shocked and annoyed reviewer went on to say:

Strange to say this cackle ceases as soon as each item is finished and is resumed with renewed vigour at each succeeding one. If such people cannot contain themselves for the short time they are expected to do so, they should certainly stay away and not interfere with the enjoyment of others.<sup>39</sup>

Talking was not the only annoyance some people indulged in. It appears that there was 'that abominable practice of stamping time with feet when pieces are being played and songs are being rendered'.<sup>40</sup> An earlier concert had had this problem as well:

some of the audience at this entertainment, who evidently, not feeling themselves to be in their proper element, wished to convert the concert into a "free and easy." This they did by whistling, shouting and otherwise annoying the speakers and singers.<sup>41</sup>

Many years later, one chairman attempted to educate their audience prior to a concert, speaking 'plainly about the nuisance of whistling and stamping of feet'.<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately it had little effect.

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<sup>36</sup> 'Concert At Kihikihi', *Waikato Times*, 14 May 1889.

<sup>37</sup> 'Newbury-Spada Concert Company', *Waikato Argus*, 25 July 1901.

<sup>38</sup> 'Newbury-Spada Concert Company', *Waikato Argus*, 19 July 1901; 'The Newbury-Spada Company', *Waikato Argus*, 17 July 1901.

<sup>39</sup> 'Newbury-Spada Concert Company', *Waikato Argus*, 25 July 1901.

<sup>40</sup> 'The Waikato Times. "Omne Solum Forti Patria."', *Waikato Times*, 26 September 1874.

<sup>41</sup> 'Unknown', *Waikato Times*, 27 August 1872.

<sup>42</sup> 'Concert At Kihikihi', *Waikato Times*, 14 May 1889.

Other reasons could lead to disruption. In 1876, in Cambridge, a mix-up led to the starting time being delayed by an hour and a half. As a result:

Some portion [of the audience] had utilized the time in hatching mischief, the effect of which was that a considerable amount of noise was made during the performance, and a few gentlemen, in whom the organ of risibility was largely developed, exerted their powers to the utmost towards the end of the evening.<sup>43</sup>

Of course, some of the audience came for reasons distinct from that of the music. In one, tea and refreshments were provided

and added not a little to the popularity of the entertainment which did not terminate till a late hour. Considerable annoyance was caused by a crowd of larrikins, and we would suggest to the committee the advisability of excluding them from any future meeting, more especially if refreshments are provided.<sup>44</sup>

It might be considered that choosing the evening of a day at the races for a concert, while allowing for a greater number of people to attend, also had its risks. Ironically the concert was held in aid of the Roman Catholic church in Kihikihi. While the performers came from other parts of the Waikato, notably Cambridge, there were also a 'number of strangers' in the crowded hall:

The harmony of the evening was somewhat disturbed by the interruptions of a number of persons who forgot at times that they constituted part of an audience, and from whom better behaviour might have been expected.<sup>45</sup>

One can only imagine the liquid refreshments that may have been consumed during the day.

It took a brave person to front some of the audiences in the townships. In 1887, it seems that the audience was in a boisterous mood at a drama and concert for the Cambridge Public Library. During the interval between plays there was a short concert which finished with Mr John Thomson performing a war song 'We don't want to fight', which

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<sup>43</sup> 'Cambridge. May 21, 1876', *Waikato Times*, 23 May 1876.

<sup>44</sup> 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 30 September 1876.

<sup>45</sup> 'Roman Catholic Concert at Kihikihi', *Waikato Times*, 27 May 1882.

completely brought down the house. It was a considerable time before Mr Russell could obtain a hearing in consequence of the cries of encore. When able to do so he announced that Mr Thomson had fled.

Despite the hapless Mr Thomson bolting, the audience did not calm down and the reviewer went on to say:

As usual there were a few talkers ... who were carrying on an animated conversation in the back seats. One man who appeared to have been imbibing also caused great annoyance by walking about.<sup>46</sup>

A similar audience was mentioned at the first outing of the Hamilton Orchestral Society. A group of people sitting at the back made quite a disturbance which not only was unpleasant to the rest of the listeners but also distressed the ladies on stage, 'we are told that the ladies who acted in the tableaux were made very nervous by the rude, ill-mannered conduct'.<sup>47</sup> There seems to have been quite a problem in Cambridge, and after one particularly noisy audience which must have been difficult for the performers in what was a small room, the correspondent concluded 'Cambridge ought to be grateful to those ladies and gentlemen who so kindly and ably assisted to make the entertainment a success'.<sup>48</sup> Several years later it was further suggested that the noise would fluster the performers, 'can it be wondered at that the performers were nervous?' and the observation was that many who would have come for the ensuing dance, 'should allow others to listen without being annoyed by their chatter'. The reviewer concluded that at the next concert 'we fancy the talent will all have to be imported, as the Cambridge performers must be getting tired of trying to amuse those who are not good listeners'.<sup>49</sup>

That same year in Cambridge, 1889, 'a portion of the audience behaved in a most disgraceful manner when Capt. Reid sang' which 'very nearly caused the termination of the concert before the end of the programme had been reached. The reviewer was astonished to find that both men and women were involved:

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<sup>46</sup> 'Entertainment in aid of the Cambridge Library', *Waikato Times*, 20 January 1887.

<sup>47</sup> 'Variety Entertainment', *Waikato Times*, 22 August 1889.

<sup>48</sup> 'Cambridge. May 21, 1876', *Waikato Times*, 23 May 1876.

<sup>49</sup> 'Concert at Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 17 December 1889.

We always expect the hoodlums to indulge in a little rough play, but we were hardly prepared to see young ladies joining their ranks, as was the case on Wednesday evening.<sup>50</sup>

However, all this conduct pales into insignificance compared with a benefit concert in Te Awamutu the previous year, 1888. While acknowledging the success of the concert the reviewer was appalled by 'the rude conduct of a number of young men at the back of the hall who created a disturbance and set dogs barking whilst the performers were rendering their parts.'<sup>51</sup> It was the unfortunate Capt. Reid whose singing was again interrupted. The dog was 'ejected' from the hall, and given the relatively small population, 'the guilty party or parties ... are well-known and certainly ought to have known how to conduct themselves in a better manner'.<sup>52</sup> One wonders if it was the quality of Capt. Reid's singing or of his demeanour that provoked such behaviour.

There were several suggestions as to how best to deal with the miscreants. As the townships were small, obviously many of the citizens were well known:

We have had the names of the offenders given us and are surprised to find amongst them those who should know how to behave in a public place where ladies are present. Larrikinism we find is often charged to the wrong class.<sup>53</sup>

Twelve years later it was noted that the offenders were 'very persons one would have least expected it from'.<sup>54</sup> This comment underscores the sense of class that was part of the society of the time. The fact that they should have known better, as well as the last sentence, indicates that it was far from unusual to find those from a local family with some standing in the community behaving in a boorish manner.

After one concert, the reviewer said:

... as the offenders were known, the committee would be wise if they refused them admission to any similar gathering in the future. There is only one way of dealing with gentlemen of this description. ... the individuals referred to might well take a lesson from the excellent behaviour of the large number of Maoris present. On several occasions lately we have had to refer to similar conduct

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<sup>50</sup> 'Concert At Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 18 May 1889.

<sup>51</sup> 'Complimentary Concert', *Waikato Times*, 20 December 1888.

<sup>52</sup> 'The Late Concert To Band Master Mettam', *Waikato Times*, 22 December 1888.

<sup>53</sup> 'Variety Entertainment', *Waikato Times*, 22 August 1889.

<sup>54</sup> 'Newbury-Spada Concert Company', *Waikato Argus*, 25 July 1901.

on the part of unruly members of audiences in various parts of the Waikato, who do not want to listen themselves and refuse to allow anyone else to do so, and trust that stern measures will be taken to suppress it.<sup>55</sup>

The reference to the 'excellent behaviour' of the 'Maoris present' is of interest. It is not often that the presence of Māori was remarked at general concerts in the area and shows perhaps a greater degree of inclusiveness and interest in Western music than hitherto supposed. At the same time, the observation is matter of fact, showing no surprise at their presence nor large numbers there. I would like to think this is holding up the Māori audience as an example, rather than a patronising comment.

Some of the behaviour exhibited by a less than sympathetic audience led to charges against three young men in Cambridge in 1902. They were charged with 'disturbing an audience' and were fined five shillings plus costs. The interesting part about this is that they appeared to be the scapegoats for the actions of many more at this unspecified concert.

Since the abovementioned young men were summoned it has been the talk of the town that they were not nearly all the culprits, and the names of quite a number (including ladies) who were equally guilty, have been freely mentioned.<sup>56</sup>

After the early twentieth century there is little comment about audience behaviour. The last comment about larrikin behaviour in the local newspapers was in 1903 when the Beatrice Vartha company performed in Hamilton:

It is very much to be regretted that there is in Hamilton, a larrikin element which sees fit to assert itself at concerts and other entertainments, and we question whether it has ever been more patently and disgracefully in evidence than at the high-class concert given by the Beatrice Vartha Company last night. There is nothing to prevent those who do not know what music is from staying away on such occasions, but if they do put in an appearance, they should at least allow others to enjoy what they do not seem to be capable of enjoying themselves. By no stretch of imagination could the noise which came from the back of the hall at certain stages of last night's entertainment be called applause. It was simply barbarous uproar, flagrantly discourteous to the

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<sup>55</sup> 'Concert At Hukanui', *Waikato Argus*, 25 August 1902.

<sup>56</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 25 August 1902.

talented company on the boards, and disgraceful alike to those who produced it and to the town of whose inhabitants they form a small and much too noticeable minority. If only these young people could realise to some extent the pain they thoughtlessly inflict on sensitive ladies who have suffered all the discomforts of travel in order to bring marvellous talent and the result of long and patient training into our district, they would, even if careless of the annoyance they cause to all the rest of the audience, forego for once the savage pleasure of shrieking, shouting and stamping.<sup>57</sup>

This quote amply demonstrates all the frustrations with the behaviour of minority elements in the audience. The reviewer was clearly riled and used, not unreasonably, hyperbolic language – ‘barbarous uproar’, ‘flagrantly discourteous’, and ‘savage pleasure’ that framed the behaviour as uncivilised. His alliterative reference to the sounds the audience made could have been accurate or could have been a writing conceit, although other reviews have mentioned stamping feet.<sup>58</sup>

It is noticeable that the comments on this review are to do with those seated in the back seats, the cheapest. Perhaps those who had paid less for a seat were less invested in the musical offerings and more focused on sociability and enjoyment. One 1901 review specifically mentions the behaviour of the ‘youths’ at the back, ‘it would have been far better if several of the back forms had been left empty’, when writing about their deplorable behaviour.<sup>59</sup> Those who bought tickets for the back seats would most likely be younger or with different tastes in music than what was on offer and certainly apparently different from those in the front seats, (it is of course possible that the front seat holders would have preferred more casual offerings but could not be seen to do so as they were most likely part of the establishment).

The point about staying away if they are uninterested in the music is mentioned in other reviews.<sup>60</sup> However, concerts provided a community social outlet as much as a musical one, and for many of the young people were possibly a courting event. This would probably explain the “mob like” behaviour of several men and women. It is quite possible that the organisers of concerts, and most of the

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<sup>57</sup> 'Hamilton Larrikinism', *Waikato Times*, 18 August 1903.

<sup>58</sup> 'The Waikato Times. "Omne Solum Forti Patria."', *Waikato Times*, 26 September 1874; 'Concert At Kihikihi', *Waikato Times*, 14 May 1889.

<sup>59</sup> 'Hamilton Band Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 23 November 1901.

<sup>60</sup> 'Hamilton Band Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 23 November 1901.

musicians involved, would have had experience of concert going in England before they came to New Zealand, while the audience, for the most part not of that class, would have had more experience of music hall and pub entertainment. In the latter, audience participation was a given, while in the former sitting quietly would have been the norm.

While the art of listening had yet to be developed amongst some members of the public, and it does seem that the audience needed to be trained in the etiquette of listening quietly to a concert, after 1903 there may have been a greater sense of maturity amongst the larrikin element. Perhaps audiences may have become more aware of the behaviour expected, or less inclined to show youthful defiance at a time when some of their number were of an age to be involved in the Boer War and thus forced to grow up very quickly.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has looked at the early challenges of establishing orchestras in the new settlements of the Waikato. The photographs show how the unformed roads/tracks looked with the often muddy and rutted surfaces making it challenging to move from home to concert. The ability to attend concerts was often dependent on weather with wet conditions resulting in poor audiences and sometimes even the rescheduling of a concert. A fascinating feature of concert going in this era was the way in which moonlight could be a determining factor of concert attendance and thus became part of the advertisements for those concerts. The fact that so many concerts went ahead in spite of these challenges is testament to the importance of music making in an era where concerts were necessary for fund raising and a vital part of community building. These factors determined, to a very large extent, the size of an audience and therefore the amount of revenue from each concert.

The question of unruly audiences was obviously excruciating for some of the performers and must have been extremely off putting for those wishing to pay attention to the music. It is testimony to the performers' love of music and community spirit that they continued to perform in order to raise necessary funds.

## Chapter 3: The Early Years: 1864-1889

This chapter on the early years of orchestral music in the Waikato focusses on the 25 years from 1864-1889 and shows the beginnings of settlers gradually coming together in a more organised way to hold concerts. The settlers brought with them their intangible cultural heritage of music. This ranged from music making in their own homes to sharing their musicianship in a public concert, and, in part, showcased the traditions of their countries of origin. At this time most settlers were just that, immigrants to a land that was new to them. These pioneers knew how vital music was in providing a focal point for local entertainment and sociability, and, in addition, recognised the crucial part this could play in fund-raising for their immediate needs, be it churches, schools, or other necessities. The music-making in this period exemplifies Eric Clarke, Nicola Dibben and Stephanie Pitts' contention that music is an act of 'social bonding' through which 'friendships, social networks, and a sense of belonging can be found'.<sup>1</sup>

This was a time of new developments in the musical life of the Waikato. Committees were formed and concerts given, although at this stage they relied heavily on vocal offerings with occasional instrumental soloists. Settlements had a few groups of singers – glee singers and choirs, probably initiated at the local church – and some instrumentalists who enjoyed playing together. After profiling the important work of the Hamilton Entertainment Committee and the Regional Musical Association the chapter turns to the establishment of early performing societies. In this early period a number of settlers made an important contribution to cultivating musical life in the Waikato. Mr W. Kelly, Sergeant Macintosh, Mr Holloway, and Mr Stuart/Stewart all fostered music in the region. Above all, the talented Mr Bell played a pivotal role in these early years.

### **Hamilton Entertainment Committee**

Of interest is the development, although short lived, of the Hamilton Entertainment Committee that provided entertainments in the mid-1870s. Hamilton people considered the issue of a musical society in 1873, contending that it should be the

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<sup>1</sup> Eric Clarke, Nicola Dibben, and Stephanie Pitts, *Music and Mind in Everyday Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 104, 165-6.

headquarters, as many settlements were 'desirous of joining the society for the purpose of acquiring as much efficiency as possible'.<sup>2</sup> The Hamilton Entertainment Committee was formed in 1874.<sup>3</sup> While it is unclear when exactly the first concert was held, the second one took place 'under the auspices of the Hamilton Entertainment Committee' on 1 September 1874.<sup>4</sup> This September concert consisted of songs, instrumental music, readings, recitations, i.e. the affair was a decided success, which should be an encouragement to those who come forward to amuse their fellow settlers without fee or reward.<sup>5</sup>

The Hamilton Entertainment Committee then put on concerts at very regular intervals in Hamilton, even holding monthly concerts around Hamilton for a period.<sup>6</sup>

As it widened its scope to include different types of entertainment, advertisements like the one below became more frequent:

**HAMILTON ENTERTAINMENT  
COMMITTEE.**

**A GRAND LITERARY  
AND  
MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT**

**WILL BE HELD IN THE  
SCHOOL-ROOM, HAMILTON EAST,**

**Friday Evening Next, the 10th' inst.**

**The performance will commence at 8 o'clock.  
Doors open at half-past 7.**

**PROGRAMME IN OUR NEXT.**

Figure 43 Advertisement Hamilton Entertainment Committee Concert<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> 'The Waikato Times. Unknown', *Waikato Times*, 25 March 1873.

<sup>3</sup> 'The Hamilton Entertainment Committee Concert', *Waikato Times*, 22 October 1874.

<sup>4</sup> "'Omne Solum Forti Patria.'" Thursday, September 3, 1874', *Waikato Times*, 3 September 1874; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 20 August 1874.

<sup>5</sup> "'Omne Solum Forti Patria.'" Thursday, September 3, 1874', *Waikato Times*, 3 September 1874.

<sup>6</sup> 'The Waikato Times. "Omne Solum Forti Patria." Thursday, February 4, 1875', *Waikato Times*, 4 February 1875; 'The Waikato Times. "Omne Solum Forti Patria."', *Waikato Times*, 6 February 1875; 'Saturday, February 20, 1875', *Waikato Times*, 20 February 1875; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 30 March 1875; 'The Waikato Times. Unknown Saturday, April 24, 1875', *Waikato Times*, 4 April 1875; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 19 June 1875; 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 14 August 1875.

<sup>7</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 9 March 1876.

It joined with other groups, including not only dramatic societies but also with the Good Templars to put on successful entertainments.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps the most ambitious undertaking was a performance in June 1876 when the concluding part of the programme was the *Beggar's Opera*. This was deemed a suitable choice both being 'popular' and only requiring two voices and thus suitable for what one reviewer described as 'amateurs of passable ability, such as Waikato, we are happy to say, can boast of'.<sup>9</sup> There was also the enticement of a 'new and first-class comic singer' who would also make his first bow to an Hamilton audience, and the hope that 'perhaps the most professional pianist in this part of the colony may be secured'.<sup>10</sup>

**THURSDAY'S ENTERTAINMENT**  
Will consist of  
**INSTRUMENTAL & VOCAL MUSIC,**  
**(COMIC, SERIO-COMIC, AND CLASSICAL).**  
—  
Concluding with Offenbach's best work,  
**"THE BEGGAR'S OPERA!"**

Figure 44 Entertainment Committee Concert June 1876<sup>11</sup>

At the end of that same year, 1876, a "drawing room entertainment" [was] given by the Entertainment Committee'. This entertainment was notable for the fact that the Cox family group of three family members and two friends, between them playing piano, flute, violin, and double bass, presented selections from the *Barber of Seville*. 'The applause at the conclusion of the piece was loud and prolonged and most deservedly so.' This may have been because a talented local family was a novelty and in itself deserving of applause, but it also indicates that the audience were receptive to a purely classical piece. That same concert also featured Mr

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<sup>8</sup> 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 28 August 1875; 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 14 August 1875.

<sup>9</sup> 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 6 June 1876.

<sup>10</sup> 'Proposed Native Meeting At Te Kuiti', *Waikato Times*, 8 June 1876.

<sup>11</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 8 June 1876.

Macintosh accompanied by his wife playing a piece on 'clarionet' which was 'really a musical gem and was loudly encored'.<sup>12</sup>

The next reference to the Entertainment Committee was in 1878. This could suggest that the committee was winding down from its hectic initial schedule, that maybe the committee was experiencing volunteer fatigue and felt that others should step forward to shoulder some of the burden, or that there was apparently less demand for such entertainment. Whatever the reason, this next concert is of consequence as it was held in Morrinsville, with a report in the *Waikato Times* mentioning that 'a number of natives were present'. In general, there was little remark on Māori presence in the audience at this time which could signal that the audiences were typically European, but also allows for the possibility that Māori interest was the norm and that, in general, European entertainments were attracting a wider audience from the earliest times. Apart from the mention of a violin solo, the player of which also provided the music for the subsequent dancing, there seem to have been vocal items and readings provided.<sup>13</sup> Hamilton Entertainment Committee was involved in essentially local to Hamilton events (apart from the last mention of Morrinsville). However, at about the same time as it started the idea of a regional musical association was mooted.

## **Regional Musical Association**

In 1874 a concert was held in the Volunteer Hall, Te Awamutu, in aid of repairs and fencing for the Te Awamutu church. A newspaper report highlighted that the concert was very successful, raising about £25, and noted that there was 'the hearty cooperation of members of all denominations'. Performers for the concert came from 'Alexandra and other settlements' and although amateurs it was felt that 'the entertainments which are held from time to time in the Waikato, will compare very favourably in comparison with those of any other district in the colony similarly situated'.<sup>14</sup>

There is an awareness and understanding shown by the correspondent of the very amateur nature of this and other concerts:

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<sup>12</sup> 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 5 December 1876.

<sup>13</sup> 'Piako', *Waikato Times*, 30 April 1878.

<sup>14</sup> 'Entertainment At Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 14 May 1874.

to endeavour to find defects in the efforts of those who labour under the considerable disadvantage of inability to obtain ample rehearsal, would be palpably unjust. The majority of the settlers of our district have their farms to tend, and cannot, therefore, spare the time in order to give that attention to musical practice - which is absolutely necessary to ensure complete success.<sup>15</sup>

The programme of this concert is presented below and shows a typical concert that is primarily vocal, obviously irking the reporter:

**PROGRAMME.**

'God Bless the Prince of Wales'; Solo—'My Old Friend John,' a theme, instrumental; Glee—'Merrily Rings the Bells of St Michael'; Solo—'When the Swallows Homeward Fly'; Song and Chorus—'The Little Church Round the Corner'; Solo—Italian song, 'Viravviso'; 'Tell Me Where do Fairies Dwell'; Part Song—'Here in a Cool Grot'; Solo—'Swing on Old Pendulum'; 'Ye Banks and Braes'; Solo and Chorus—'Marching Through Georgia'; Instrumental; 'Loud He Sang the Psalms of David'; Solo—'Auld Robin Grey'; Part Song; Solo—'I Know a Bank'; English Song—Moore's; Glee—'See our Oars'; Solo—English Song; Song and Chorus; Thy Voice is Near; National Anthem.

Figure 45 Programme of concert Te Awamutu 1874<sup>16</sup>

Although there were two unnamed instrumental pieces, probably solos judging from his later remarks about music in general, he commented that concerts tended to be 'the same old pieces, to the same audiences' and the correspondent hoped that in time 'matters will be more favourable to the growth of true music'. He noted that there was 'a considerable amount of musical talent in the Waikato, which only required to be cultivated to produce results that would be eminently satisfactory even to the most hypercritical', and hoped that were there 'means of getting from one part of the district to another more speedily' a musical association could be formed 'consisting, not only of vocalists, but also of instrumentalists, who are now compelled

<sup>15</sup> 'Entertainment At Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 14 May 1874.

<sup>16</sup> 'Entertainment At Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 14 May 1874.

to be satisfied with solos'. The reporter envisaged, even in 1874, that it should be possible:

Would it not be practicable, even now, to establish such a society? If the lovers of good music in each of the larger settlements were to make an effort, there is no doubt that a sufficient number of performers could be got together in each place, to form small societies, which could be considered branches of the large one.

This is truly prescient, foreshadowing the establishment of Chamber Music New Zealand in 1976. The reviewer concluded that 'it is a pity the musical talent of Waikato should have to descend to the performance of music scarcely worthy of the designation' because it lacked such a society.<sup>17</sup> This is significant in other ways as well. Here the reporter is talking about music and its performance in terms other than social, religious or military, and has separated it into the first discussion (in the local newspapers at least) about the quality of music and how that may be improved.

### **Early Performing Societies**

Cambridge formed an Harmonic Society of which the first mention was in 1877, giving concerts that year and the next two years.<sup>18</sup> The following advertised programme shows a typical concert of the era with the majority of it being solo singing and chorus, while there was a string band, a 'clarionette trio'. and the Cambridge Band as part of the mix.

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<sup>17</sup> 'Entertainment At Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 14 May 1874.

<sup>18</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 28 June 1877; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 31 December 1879.

CAMBRIDGE HARMONIC  
SOCIETY.

GRAND CONCERT AND DANCE.

JANUARY, 1st, 1879.

PUBLIC HALL, CAMBRIDGE.

PROGRAMME :

Chorus—"Now by day's Retiring Lamp"  
—Harmonic Society  
Song—Gentleman Amateur  
Song—Lady Amateur  
Quartette—"The soft Winds around us"  
Song—"Death of Nelson"  
Band—"Valentine Galop and Chorus"  
Song—Lady Amateur (first appearance)  
Song—"The Heart Bowed Down"—  
Gentleman Amateur (first appearance)  
Quartette—"Come to the Fair"  
Song and Chorus—"Children's Voices"—  
Lady Amateur (first appearance)  
Song, Comic—Gentleman Amateur  
String Band, Valse  
Song—Lady Amateur  
Song—Gentleman Amateur  
Song—Lady Amateur  
Clarionette Trio, by Members of the  
Band  
Song—Lady Amateur  
Chorus—"Now Tramp o'er Moss and  
Fell," full Chorus and Band  
Song—Lady Amateur

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

Ticket; Front Seats, 3s; with Dance,  
4s. Back Seats, 2s; with Dance, 3s.  
Doors open at 7.30 to commence at 8.

Figure 46 Programme Cambridge Harmonic Society Concert, 1879<sup>19</sup>

This society fell into abeyance until its revival in 1897.

The bands that are mentioned in some of the concerts included the Cambridge Band and the Hamilton Band. The photograph below shows the

<sup>19</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 31 December 1878.

Cambridge Municipal Band in 1885, when they performed at a church picnic at Major Wilson's residence "Waterside", Wilson Street, Cambridge. It is possible that some of the bandsmen played at the aforementioned concert.



Figure 47 Cambridge Band at Major Wilson's Residence, 1885<sup>20</sup>

As mentioned before, Ngāruawāhia held a concert in aid of its Presbyterian church fund in 1877. This concert also included a group of singers from Hamilton, the Orpheus Glee Club, which 'sang a number of glees in excellent style and gave us a treat not often obtainable in this part of the world'.<sup>21</sup> Thus, there was clearly an interest in forming musical groups, albeit choral, but it was not until 1889 that there was a blossoming of such societies.

In this period, then, there was a desire, albeit constrained by circumstances such as lack of easy transport, for there to be groups of likeminded musicians to play together. Music and its quality had been considered as an entity, with suggestions of how that quality could be improved, looking forward to the mid twentieth century.

## Prominent Personalities

There were several instrumentalists in the first 25 years who came to prominence in the newspapers, but it should be noted that, perhaps in keeping with the era, there were no ladies mentioned by name except as accompanists. At this time the men

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<sup>20</sup> Cambridge, Cambridge Museum, Image: Cambridge Band at Church Picnic at "Waterside", CM2958/3/1.

<sup>21</sup> 'Ngaruawahia', *Waikato Times*, 31 March 1877.

mentioned tended to be soloists or members of a reed or brass musical society, but this is not always clear. At the forefront, in terms of quantity, and probably quality, of music performed was Mr Bell, but there were also other instrumentalists who were highlighted. There is little known about them other than what I have found in the newspapers. In mining the archive, I have endeavoured to be as comprehensive as possible but acknowledge that there may well be other instrumentalists who made an important contribution but whose names do not feature in the newspaper reports which provide my source material.

### **Mr W. Kelly**

A violinist, Mr Kelly came to newspaper prominence in 1883. At a concert for St Peter's Church, Hamilton, accompanied by Mr T. A. Bell, Mr Kelly played 'Dancla'.<sup>22</sup> The reviewer commented that this piece 'evinced much careful study of the instrument' and therefore one can assume that it was possibly a little too difficult for the violinist. As having a violin soloist was considered 'an unusual feature' in the programme, it is a shame that Mr Kelly did not choose perhaps an easier piece, or as the commentator said, 'we cannot help thinking that some piece with which country audiences are familiar would be better appreciated'.<sup>23</sup>

Later that year Mr Kelly performed at a concert with the Hamilton Choral Society, conducted by Mr Bell. This time his piece should have been more accessible, even though still of a classical nature – 'Il Trovatore'.<sup>24</sup> With no other detail it is unclear whether this was a medley or a particular aria.<sup>25</sup> A month later he performed at a concert in aid of Hamilton West school library, again with Mr Bell in charge. The String Band was playing, of which presumably Mr Kelly was a member, but he also gave a solo, 'The Blue Bells of Scotland'.<sup>26</sup> It seems that he had taken on board the comments made about the choice of music being accessible to an audience.

These three entries about Mr Kelly's programming of solos are of note as they mirror the programming difficulties of orchestras today. Music that is unfamiliar to an

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<sup>22</sup> This is probably one of the studies for violin by Charles Dancla, published in 1855. (IMSLP)

<sup>23</sup> 'S. Peter's Church Concert', *Waikato Times*, 17 May 1883.

<sup>24</sup> *Il Trovatore* received its premiere in 1853 and was first performed at Covent Garden, London, in 1855. It is unlikely that most of those present will have known the opera and it is to be hoped that he played a more accessible melody from it.

<sup>25</sup> 'Hamilton Choral Society', *Waikato Times*, 30 August 1883.

<sup>26</sup> 'Hamilton West School Concert', *Waikato Times*, 27 September 1883.

audience does not engender box office receipts. John Psathas (a New Zealand composer of Greek origin) notes that commissioned pieces from lesser-known composers tend to be of short length and are sandwiched in a programme of more familiar and popular pieces.<sup>27</sup> The latter ensure an audience is engaged, and the hope is that the listeners appreciate the unknown. As at that time a violin solo was still a novelty, and military bands were commonly heard, it would be a shame if Mr Kelly's playing deterred people from listening to string instruments.

### **Sergeant Macintosh**

A resident of Cambridge, Sergeant Macintosh was a "clarionet" player who contributed his musicianship around the region. His title suggests either a military or police connection and rank, but the archives do not reveal anything else about his professional life. He supervised a concert for the opening of the Public Hall in Te Awamutu in 1875, he performed in aid of the Cambridge District School, and a month prior to this he had performed at the Good Templar's meeting where his solos were 'as usual excellent'.<sup>28</sup> Successful performances continued, for example in 1878 a concert in aid of church funds was held with an audience of 300: 'A clarionette solo by Mr Mackintosh came next, and upon this comment is needless, as everyone knows the talent and musical taste of this instrumentalist'.<sup>29</sup>

At a Presbyterian church Soirée a few years later, with an audience again of over 300, he 'gave a solo performance on the clarionete [sic] which took with the audience so well, that a loud encore was given, although on the remonstrances of the chairman, it was not insisted upon'.<sup>30</sup> Much of the reported "entertainment" at this event seems to have been assorted reverend gentlemen talking, which would perhaps explain the extreme enthusiasm that greeted Sergeant Macintosh's solo.

It is notable how much Sergeant Macintosh was appreciated by the Waikato and Cambridge Reed Band, and in 1878 he was presented with a bass 'clarionette' which had been funded by his 'pupils and friends, the members of the Band', and

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<sup>27</sup> Seminar organised by Emeritus Professor Martin Lodge, 2021.

<sup>28</sup> 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 11 November 1875; 'Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 13 June 1876; 'Cambridge. May 3rd, 1876', *Waikato Times*, 4 May 1876.

<sup>29</sup> 'Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 16 May 1878.

<sup>30</sup> 'Cambridge Presbyterian Church Soiree', *Waikato Times*, 18 December 1880.

which cost the band £25.<sup>31</sup> Major Clare gave an address which included the following:

We have great reason to congratulate ourselves in being able to secure the direction of such a talented musician as yourself. You have in a wonderfully short period of time, by the exercise of your high musical attainment, brought us as a band to a state of efficiency and delighted us as a community in developing much talent, of which the many pleasing entertainments of the past bear ample testimony.

In reply, Sargeant Macintosh declared that he believed there was no other bass clarinet in New Zealand and only one in Australia and had last played one nine years prior. He played a short selection on it 'which led us to anticipate a very great treat on some future occasion, when he has thoroughly mastered the instrument'.<sup>32</sup>

As a valued conductor of the Cambridge Brass and Reed Band since its inception, it was determined that there should be a farewell complimentary concert, when he announced his departure from the district.<sup>33</sup> This happened at the end of May 1882. It was possibly not the finest concert he was involved in as the 'band was too strong altogether for indoor playing, the drummer and a few of the instrumentalists not adding much to the harmony of the music'.<sup>34</sup> Sadly for the locals he (and the bass clarinet) moved to Wellington.

### **Mr Holloway**

Mr Holloway was a music teacher and bandmaster based in Hamilton and was not only a string player and cornet player, but also a luthier. In 1883 he made a 'double-bass viol, standing about 7ft. high' out of New Zealand timber.<sup>35</sup> His musicianship was also evident when his string band played at the Waikato Rowing Club's Promenade Concert, he sang an item in the programme, and he also played his cornet for the dancing that followed.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> 'Cambridge And Waikato Reed Band', *Waikato Times*, 28 May 1878. This is worth about \$5000 today <https://www.rbnz.govt.nz/monetary-policy/about-monetary-policy/inflation-calculator>.

<sup>32</sup> 'Cambridge And Waikato Reed Band', *Waikato Times*, 28 May 1878.

<sup>33</sup> 'The Waikato Times And Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 9 May 1882.

<sup>34</sup> 'Complimentary Concert To Mr C. D. Mackintosh', *Waikato Times*, 1 June 1882.

<sup>35</sup> 'The Waikato Times and Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 22 December 1883.

<sup>36</sup> 'Waikato Rowing Club's Promenade Concert', *Waikato Times*, 13 September 1883.

Notices.



WAIKATO ROWING CLUB.

POPULAR PROMENADE

With {CONCERT} Dancing.

To be held in the

PUBLIC HALL, HAMILTON,

ON

Tuesday, September 11th, 1883,

AT 8 P.M.

PROGRAMME.

Overture (Operatic)—“Boccaccio Quadrilles” ... Holloway’s String Band

POLKA

SONG—“Molly Asthore” ... Mr Burnand

GALOP

SONG—Irish Comic ... Mr Holloway

MAZURKA

Figure 48 Advertisement (part) Rowing Club Promenade Concert, 1883<sup>37</sup>

Apparently, Mr Holloway did not come from Hamilton, and there was rivalry between him and other players in the township. He was appointed conductor of the Choral Society in 1883, and it was felt that his ability and ‘happy knack of teaching’ would ensure he made good headway.<sup>38</sup>

### Mr Stuart/Stewart<sup>39</sup>

Mr Stuart was a longtime resident of Cambridge, playing both cello and clarinet. It is likely that his clarinet playing was initiated in the local band. He led the Cambridge String Band which in one concert in Cambridge played as a group and accompanied the anthems. It appears in this instance that the String Band was augmented, because of a comment made by the reviewer:

<sup>37</sup> ‘Page 3 Advertisements Column 3’, *Waikato Times*, 4 September 1883.

<sup>38</sup> ‘Waikato Whisperings’, *Observer*, 12 May 1883.

<sup>39</sup> There is a Mr Stuart of Cambridge, and a Mr Stewart of Cambridge mentioned in the papers. As both played the cello and clarinet, I have assumed they are one and the same: “Messrs Johnson (piano), and Stewart (clarionet) providing the music” ‘Concert And Dramatic Performance At Cambridge’, *Waikato Times*, 24 September 1881. “clarionet solo by Mr James Stuart” ‘Concert At Cambridge’, *Waikato Times*, 15 January 1881. “A very enjoyable dance followed the concert, J. H. Johnston and Jimmy Stewart providing the music.” ‘Waikato Whisperings’, *Observer*, 25 March 1882.

We would suggest to Mr Stuart the advisability of placing his band somewhat differently on another occasion. The 'cello was almost unheard through being placed in the background, and at times the band sounded all cornet.<sup>40</sup>

This is a comment that can be made today in some concerts.

Much later, at the turn of the century, Mr Stuart received a complimentary concert, 'in recognition of his laudable efforts for some years past in the cause of music in Cambridge'.<sup>41</sup> He was responsible for 'resuscitating the town band', of which he had 'taught most, if not all, the players their instruments'.<sup>42</sup> He was also a 'valued member' of the Cambridge Orchestral Society, and for this occasion the latter was considerably augmented to play its three items on the programme.<sup>43</sup> Apart from these there were solos, duets, trios, pieces by the Brass Band, and a solo by Mr Stuart himself on the 'clarionet,' which evidently was well received:

Both Mr Stuart and his accompanist (Mrs Lowe) rose to the occasion, for never have we heard the clarionet played better in the colonies; and we cannot remember ever having heard a better tone produced from the instrument.<sup>44</sup>

Several locals subscribed to give him a new clarionet and this, with the £15 raised by the concert, shows in just what esteem he was held.

There are no local newspapers of the time apart from the *Waikato Times* (from 1872) and so there are obvious limitations in the research. There are most likely other instrumentalists in the smaller centres, but their concerts remain in the shadows. The musicians mentioned above were from Hamilton and Cambridge, the largest settlements of the area, and notably three of the four played band instruments and so most likely were primarily involved in the local military bands.

The next part of this chapter is devoted to one man who was based in the Waikato for a short time but who made an indelible musical impression. He foreshadowed the beginning of orchestral societies in 1889. This is the story of Mr Bell.

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<sup>40</sup> 'Presbyterian Church Concert, Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 19 May 1883.

<sup>41</sup> 'Cambridge Borough Council', *Waikato Argus*, 31 May 1902.

<sup>42</sup> 'Concert At Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 18 July 1902; 'Cambridge Brass Bamd', *Waikato Argus*, 14 July 1902.

<sup>43</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 6000 Weekly. TJIRSDAU, JULY 10, 1902.', *Waikato Argus*, 10 July 1902.

<sup>44</sup> 'Concert At Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 18 July 1902.

## The Story of Mr Bell (c1853 – 1886)

In the earlier years of the colony there was little opportunity for professional music making. There were few full-time music teaching positions, and it has been commented that 'the jack-of-all-musical-trades was most likely to succeed'.<sup>45</sup> One man who gave the lie to that statement is Mr T. A. Bell, 1853 – 1886, who was maybe a "master-of-all-musical-trades". Although only a few years of his life were spent as a full-time music teacher with the Auckland Education Board, 1879 - 1884, he showed an outstanding ability as a pianist, an accompanist, an organist, a teacher, a violinist, an arranger of music, a conductor and even as a concertina player.<sup>46</sup>

Mr Bell came to prominence in Thames as a musician and thespian in the 1870s and then was appointed 'as instructor of local music to the children attending the Government schools in the Waikato district'.<sup>47</sup> On his departure from Thames to take up the position of Singing Teacher in the Waikato under the auspices of the Auckland Education Board, a complimentary concert was given for him, and the 'benefit was a success in every sense of the word, and such as Mr Bell deserved'.<sup>48</sup>

It is hardly necessary to remind our readers of the very great interest and trouble Mr Bell has taken during a residence of six years on the Thames in originating and carrying out performances for charitable purposes of a dramatic and musical character.<sup>49</sup>

For those interested in Mr Bell's early musical career in New Zealand, see Appendix 2 Mr Bell's Background and his Work in Thames.

Mr Bell arrived in Hamilton in July 1879.<sup>50</sup> The day of his arrival he advertised his intentions of setting up singing lessons for young and old, as well as teaching the piano and harmonium:

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<sup>45</sup> John A. Ritchie, 'Music', in *The Pattern of New Zealand Culture*, ed. by A. L. McLeod (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968).

<sup>46</sup> 'Comments', *Waikato Times*, 30 October 1883; 'The Concert', *Waikato Times*, 15 July 1875.

<sup>47</sup> 'The Thames Advertiser', *Thames Advertiser*, 8 July 1879.

<sup>48</sup> 'Amateur Dramatic Performance', *Thames Advertiser*, 27 March 1878.

<sup>49</sup> 'Untitled', *Thames Advertiser*, 9 March 1878.

<sup>50</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 19 July 1879.

## MR T. A. BELL

**H**AVING been appointed by the Board of Education Teacher of Singing to the Waikato Public Schools begs to inform the inhabitants of Cambridge, Ohaupo, Hamilton East and West, Newcastle and the neighbouring townships that, independent of these duties that after the 18th inst. he will be prepared to take pupils, for singing, the Pianoforte or Harmonium. Mr Bell will be glad to enter into arrangements for the formation of Singing Classes on the Tonic-Sol-Fa method or the old Notation at any of the above towns to which admission may be had at very reasonable terms. Testimonials as to ability &c., may be seen at Captain Dawson's, East Hamilton.

Figure 49 Mr Bell Teaching Advertisement<sup>51</sup>

Thus, he quickly became part of the musical life of the area, not just because of his employment position and extra teaching, but also because his great love of music lent itself to many contributions to the community.<sup>52</sup> Mr Bell threw himself into any causes that his musicianship was able to help. I have separated the various activities he was involved in into church related activities, teaching, involvement with the Cambridge Musical Union, a Complimentary Concert, the Comus Dramatic Club concert, and his dismissal.

### **Church**

Mr Bell initiated the giving of sacred concerts in 1880 with the Harvest Thanksgiving Sacred concert in aid of the repair of the church roof.<sup>53</sup> As choirmaster of St Peter's

<sup>51</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 3', *Waikato Times*, 19 July 1879.

<sup>52</sup> 'The Evening Star. Published Daily At Four O'clock P.M. Resurrexi.', *Thames Star*, 13 September 1879; 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 4 May 1880; 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 7 September 1880.

<sup>53</sup> 'Hamilton News', *New Zealand Herald*, 6 February 1880.

Church choir, he took an enormous role and also gave an instrumental recital (presumably on the harmonium), midway through the performance, of 'The 'Gloria' from the 12th Mass [which] was much admired for the manner in which it was played'.<sup>54</sup> Although there were occasions when the choir could have been better, - 'the chorus was a little vague in coming in, and rather heedless of the baton' - he was fulsomely praised for how the choir of 21 had improved under his leadership.<sup>55</sup> This sacred concert appears to have been the first to happen in Hamilton and had an audience of 200.<sup>56</sup>

Similar audience numbers occurred the following year when Mr Bell was involved in a concert in aid of the harmonium fund of the Presbyterian church in Hamilton. The concert is significant in that the overture comprised a group of two pianos, two flutes, a violin, and a cornet, showing a greater variety of instruments playing together in public. There were also piano duets in which Mr Bell was a performer. The reporter commented that 'in instrumental music the company were remarkably strong' and another observed that 'the instrumental items of the programme were especially good'.<sup>57</sup> Already Mr Bell was gathering around him instrumentalists prepared to play in public. He must have inspired them with confidence, and again supports my hypothesis of the requirement to have a local charismatic leader.

In 1882, at the Presbyterian church, there was a service of song at which children at the Sunday school sang

some very excellent vocal music ... The instruction in music so ably afforded by the Government teacher of music, Mr T. A. Bell, to the Waikato schools, is beginning to be appreciated in all parts of the district, as the result is becoming everyday manifest.<sup>58</sup>

Mr Bell showed no distinction between different denominations should there be a need to raise money for a good cause, and in 1882 performed organ solos as well as training the choir at the Cambridge Baptist church. As usual his playing 'was

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<sup>54</sup> 'St. Peter's Church, Hamilton', *Auckland Star*, 6 February 1880.

<sup>55</sup> 'Hamilton News', *New Zealand Herald*, 6 February 1880; 'St. Peter's Church. Recital Of Sacred Music.', *Waikato Times*, 5 February 1880.

<sup>56</sup> 'The Rotorua Road', *Waikato Times*, 31 January 1880.

<sup>57</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 1 October 1881; 'Untitled', *Auckland Star*, 1 October 1881.

<sup>58</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 21 July 1882.

rendered in that gentleman's usual masterly manner' and the choral work 'reflect[ed] credit upon Mr Bell, the tutor'.<sup>59</sup>

### **Teaching**

It seems that the quality of Mr Bell's school vocal teaching was excellent; there are many reports of government visitors and locals being impressed by his achievements with the pupils:

The children at the Hamilton schools, and especially at the West side school, are profiting largely by the services of Mr T. A. Bell, the instructor of music appointed for the Waikato by the Board of Education. The local committee visited the Hamilton West school on Friday and were much astonished at the remarkable proficiency shown in singing.<sup>60</sup>

Another comment the following year echoed this. 'The singing of the children ... was much admired by their many friends present and reflected most creditably on the Government instructor of music, Mr T. A. Bell.'<sup>61</sup> Hamilton West school is again mentioned in 1882 when a concert there in aid of their school library was a success and 'reflected most creditably on the evident pains which have been taken by the public instructor of music to the Waikato schools, Mr T. A. Bell, in the discharge of his duties'.<sup>62</sup>



Figure 50 Hamilton West School<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> 'Entertainment At Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 16 November 1882.

<sup>60</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 11 May 1880.

<sup>61</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 20 December 1880.

<sup>62</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 27 April 1882.

<sup>63</sup> C. F. Bell, 'Hamilton West Public School', *New Zealand Graphic*, 1880s), <<https://collection.waikatomuseum.org.nz/objects/25777/photograph-hamilton-west-public-school>>

At Alexandra in 1881, the children gave an entertainment to raise funds for their school library including a dramatic presentation (*Jack and the Princess who Never Laughed*) followed by a concert of singing and piano solos and duets by the students there.<sup>64</sup> Mr Bell was again congratulated at having 'brought the children to such a degree of musical efficiency'.<sup>65</sup>

Mr Bell was also recognised by his pupils. At the end of term Prize giving at The Lodge seminary in Hamilton, there was a programme of vocal and instrumental music performed by the children. Most of the performances seem to have been classical instrumental including solos, duets, and quartets, including Figaro, Grand Valse, Wedding March, and Carnival of 'Venise'. He was presented with a 'handsomely bound copy of Hymns Ancient and Modern by members of the singing class'.<sup>66</sup>

Such was his reputation that in 1882 the new school committee of Cambridge West school applied to the board 'for the services of Mr T. A. Bell as music teacher'.<sup>67</sup> By midyear the school children were involved in a concert to raise funds for the school library. It was reported that 'some of the more musical pupils [had] been undergoing a careful training' under their 'able music instructor, Mr T. A. Bell'.<sup>68</sup> The children performed well, 'the singing of Monday evening showed to what a high degree of proficiency in the vocal art children could be brought when properly trained'.<sup>69</sup> The children sang part songs, glees, choruses as well as solos accompanied by chorus, and some of the pupils played piano solos and duets. This is remarkable given that Mr Bell would have started earlier in the year without there having been a music teacher prior. He must have worked extremely hard to produce a full evening's concert given by school children in less than six months.

Mr Bell's job was no sinecure. Although he was paid well, his annual salary was £200 with rent and horse allowances of £25 and £75 respectively, he taught 19

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<sup>64</sup> Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker, 'Jack and the Princess who never laughed', in *Alice and Other Fairy Plays for Children* (London: W.S. Sonnenschein and Allen, 1880).

<sup>65</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 3 October 1881; 'Juvenile Entertainment At Alexandra', *Waikato Times*, 13 October 1881.

<sup>66</sup> 'Waikato Times And Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 20 December 1881.

<sup>67</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 31 January 1882.

<sup>68</sup> 'The Waikato Times and Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 27 July 1882; 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 27 July 1882.

<sup>69</sup> 'Cambridge Public School Concert', *Waikato Times*, 3 August 1882.

classes in 16 schools travelling 120 miles a week on horseback.<sup>70</sup> From the newspaper reports of concerts he gave and areas he visited it appears that he must have travelled between Ngāruawāhia in the north and Kihikihi in the south and Cambridge to the east. Probably more time was spent riding between these places than actually at them.

However, Mr Bell's schedule with the schools did enable him to meet and be part of several communities who were all glad to have his help in their fundraising endeavours. For example, in Te Awamutu, quite early on in his appointment, he played an

excellent pianoforte accompaniment ... his services so kindly rendered contribute in no small measure to the great success of the entertainment. ...It is the first concert at Te Awamutu at which Mr Bell has assisted and his playing added an air of novelty and freshness to the affair which was greatly appreciated.<sup>71</sup>

He was also involved in Hamilton with the Hamilton Band helping them raise funds to pay off the debt on their instruments. These occasions were dances at Le Quesne's Hall at which the band played. In this case, in addition to the musicians of the Band, he played the piano accompanied by a cornet, a violin and a flute.<sup>72</sup>

It is quite possible that the following photograph of the Hamilton Municipal Band, in 1878 depicts some of the instruments that were being funded.

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<sup>70</sup> 'And Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 18 October 1883.

<sup>71</sup> 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 3 August 1880.

<sup>72</sup> 'Waikato Times and Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 4 October 1881.

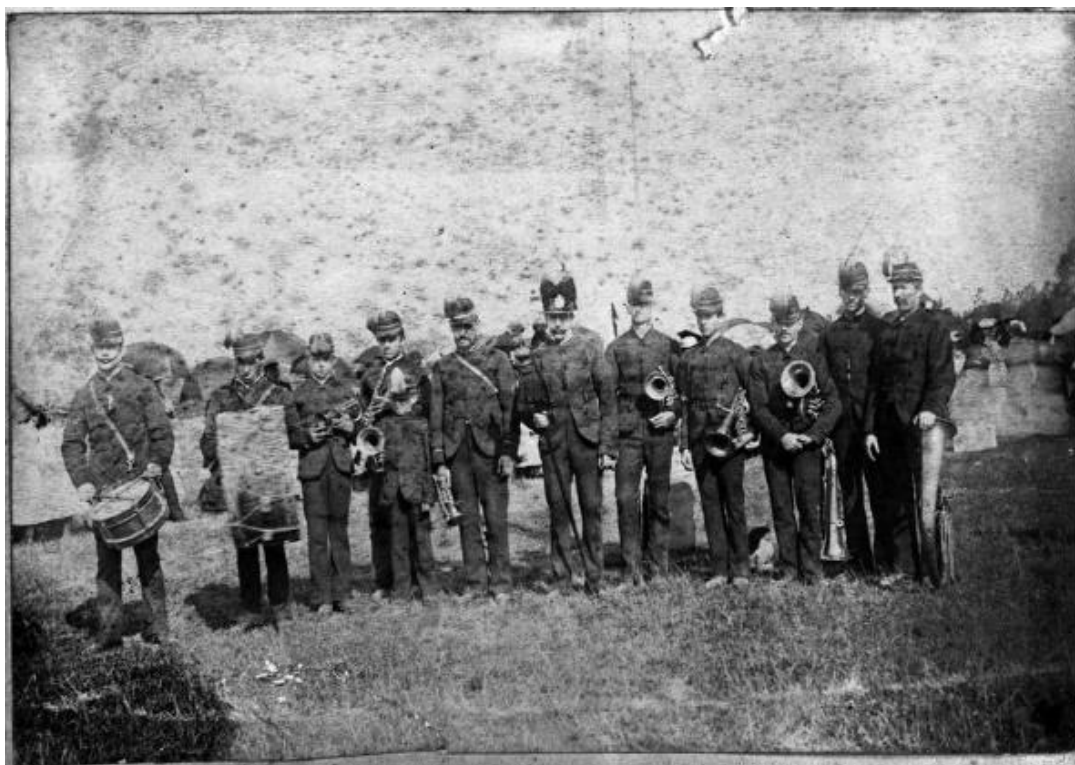


Figure 51 Photograph Hamilton Municipal Band, 1878<sup>73</sup>

### **Cambridge Musical Union**

Mr Bell's love of choral music led him to become involved with adult choirs in the Waikato and in July 1881 he was appointed conductor of the Cambridge Musical Union. His reputation had preceded him: 'From the respect in which this gentleman is held, and also from his well-known capabilities as a musical instructor, we have no doubt the society will make rapid progress'.<sup>74</sup> Quite a lot of hope was placed on his shoulders: 'as the services of Mr T. A. Bell, of Hamilton, have been secured as conductor, the success of the society has been insured'.<sup>75</sup>

He started working with them that month and by the end of the year they gave a concert to raise funds for their society which was warmly received:

Under the able superintendence of their conductor, Mr T. A. Bell, the ladies and gentlemen who took part in the performance succeeded in acquitting themselves with marked success. That circumstance, coupled with the fact that the union or class has only recently been formed, goes to prove that it

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<sup>73</sup> 'Hamilton Municipal Band', *Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection*, 1878), <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/objects/42/hamilton-municipal-band>>

<sup>74</sup> 'Saturday, July 2, 1881', *Waikato Times*, 2 July 1881.

<sup>75</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 4 July 1881.

has been subjected to careful training. ... Indeed, the entertainment as a whole, reflected credit upon both the conductor and his pupils.<sup>76</sup>

Furthermore, he then took them and a string band to Hamilton to perform at the public hall and raise money for their piano.<sup>77</sup>

This is possibly the first time a home-grown choir in the Waikato had travelled en masse from one town to another to give a concert that required paid entry. What is also significant is the string band that accompanied them, 'whose execution was much admired'.<sup>78</sup> It is unclear who they were, and what instruments were represented, but they played an overture to each half of the concert and supplied the music for the dance that followed. Mr Bell conducted and along with other Cambridge musicians, accompanied some of the songs on the piano. The *Waikato Times* reporter commented that 'the choruses ... were exceptionally good. They were sung with a correctness and verve which does the conductor, Mr T. A. Bell great credit'.<sup>79</sup> The *New Zealand Herald* reviewer wrote that 'the concert was conducted by Mr T. A. Bell to whose zeal as their instructor the Musical Union Company owe their proficiency as a musical society'.<sup>80</sup> It would be safe to say that Mr Bell was as admired in the Waikato as he had been in the Thames district.

### **Complimentary Concert**

As in Thames, a complimentary concert was offered to Mr Bell. It was first advertised in December 1881, barely two years after he had started work as government instructor of music for the Waikato. The notices recognised the effort Mr Bell expended for his community, for example, '[Mr Bell] has been ever ready to assist in arranging and conducting musical Entertainments in all parts of the district for charitable and other objects'.<sup>81</sup> The following showed how much he was appreciated as a musician but also as a member of their community:

The estimation in which Mr. Bell is deservedly held, both as a musician and as a private individual, will no doubt render the affair one of the most successful of the kind held in Waikato. Friends from Cambridge, Te Awamutu, Alexandra,

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<sup>76</sup> 'Cambridge Musical Union', *Waikato Times*, 22 December 1881.

<sup>77</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 31 May 1882.

<sup>78</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 15 June 1882.

<sup>79</sup> 'Concert At Hamilton', *Waikato Times*, 15 June 1882.

<sup>80</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 15 June 1882.

<sup>81</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 22 December 1881.

and elsewhere in the district, have promised their hearty cooperation, whether as performers or audience.<sup>82</sup>

The fact that people were prepared to travel such long distances is remarkable; a further comment claimed that the concert would be 'one in which the whole district will to a great extent take part'.<sup>83</sup> The programme included 'some of the most popular amateurs from all parts of the Waikato, including Cambridge, Alexandra, and Ngāruawāhia' but while the programme was printed the names of those performing was omitted so that the entertainment would 'possess the merit of novelty as well as excellence'.<sup>84</sup> In the event the 'wretched state of the weather' meant that few who had bought seats were able to attend and the concert was repeated the following week.<sup>85</sup> The second concert was considered a musical and financial success, and as with his Thames complimentary concert, Mr Bell was involved in the arrangements of the concert and accompaniments to some items.<sup>86</sup>

By 1883, Mr Bell had increased his standing as a musician and now had a string band, 'Mr Bell's String Band'. It was to be incorporated with the 'old Hamilton Choral Society ...and this will be a great orchestral addition'.<sup>87</sup> It also had a reputation for adding to the quality of an entertainment, such as in a 1883 concert in aid of the funds of St Peter's Church.<sup>88</sup> As usual Mr Bell was praised as choirmaster for the musical arrangements of this event, and the comment was made that not only should there be more 'entertainments of this kind ... held monthly during the winter,' but also that the newly formed string band 'gave promise of greater things in the future'.<sup>89</sup> This foreshadows by more than a decade the development of the Hamilton Orchestral Union in 1894, when the Orchestral Society and the Choral Society joined forces for a few years. This will be examined more fully in Chapter 4.

Mr Bell's job was not without risk, and it is notable that there were several reports of him falling from his horse from early on and throughout his tenure:

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<sup>82</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 18 February 1882.

<sup>83</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 27 February 1882.

<sup>84</sup> 'The Waikato Times and Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 28 February 1882.

<sup>85</sup> 'Complimentary Concert to Mr T. A. Bell', *Waikato Times*, 2 March 1882.

<sup>86</sup> 'Complimentary Concert to Mr T. A. Bell', *Waikato Times*, 9 March 1882.

<sup>87</sup> 'The Waikato Times and Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 28 June 1883.

<sup>88</sup> 'Waikato Whisperings', *Observer*, 26 May 1883.

<sup>89</sup> 'S. Peter's Church Concert', *Waikato Times*, 17 May 1883.

WE regret to state that Mr T. Bell, when returning home on Tuesday evening, was heavily thrown from his horse, and seriously injured. It is supposed that the animal shied at an object on the side of the road. Owing to the unfortunate occurrence, Mr Bell will be unable to attend to his public duties for some little time.

Figure 52 1879 Mr Bell injury<sup>90</sup>

It is not surprising given the state of the roads and the distances he travelled, let alone the late hours he put in conducting choirs. When such an accident occurred, it meant that he was unable to perform so it was mentioned in the papers. A few accidents happened in 1883 and in November of that year one caused the Cambridge school library concert to be postponed.<sup>91</sup> Mr Bell was mounting his horse in Cambridge 'when the animal bolted. In trying to pull the horse up, Mr Bell got knocked against a tree and sustained serious injury to his right hand and face'.<sup>92</sup> It is possible that accidents such as these were a contributing cause to his early death.

### **Comus Dramatic Club Concert**

In 1883 a remarkable concert took place. The members of the Comus Dramatic Club 'produced an original musical drama, written and arranged by one of themselves'.<sup>93</sup> It is unknown who the author of this piece was, although the music being of a classical nature would suggest Mr Bell who not only had a penchant for this genre of music, but also a keen interest in drama. Well known music by composers including Mozart, Beethoven and Handel were chosen, as well as patriotic songs, and English words were written to them, 'the whole [arranged] in the form of a dramatic sketch'. It was noted that:

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<sup>90</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 20 November 1879.

<sup>91</sup> 'The Waikato Times and Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 23 March 1882; 'The Waikato Times and Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 22 November 1883.

<sup>92</sup> 'The Waikato Times and Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 6 November 1883; 'The Waikato Times and Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 22 November 1883.

<sup>93</sup> 'Comus Dramatic Club', *Waikato Times*, 20 December 1883.

the inhabitants of the Waikato have, unfortunately, few opportunities of cultivating a taste for the higher classes of music; nevertheless the concert was an unqualified success, and the members of the club deserve our thanks for demonstrating that the works of Beethoven and Mozart may be made as 'popular' as the ephemeral productions of 'Miss Maudlin,' or 'The Great Splash'.<sup>94</sup>

In this, as in earlier productions by the Comus club, (in January it was mentioned that the orchestra was 'under the efficient leadership of Mr T. A. Bell'), Mr Bell's string band 'contributed the overtures in their well-known style'.<sup>95</sup>

By this time, there clearly was a coterie of singers and performers who were frequently involved in musical productions. In this case, apart from Mr Bell, newspapers mention Mr Edgecumbe and Mr Swarbrick as performers, both of whom have been mentioned several times. The former came from Ngāruawāhia and the latter from Cambridge.

The performance of the Comus Dramatic Club encapsulates the development of performed music over the previous 20 years in the Waikato. First of all, it is home grown. The music was chosen and arranged by a local musician, for local performers. Possibly this is the first instance of such a performance held in public in the Waikato. Secondly, it shows that there was a growing number of performers who could be relied on to learn and produce a performance guaranteed to be 'all that could be desired'.<sup>96</sup> Furthermore, the use of a string band as part of the music is showing the beginnings of the use of an orchestra – strings are the foundation of any orchestra – as an integral part of a concert, not just as an occasional item. Fourthly, bringing together a group of performers from different parts of the Waikato to rehearse and create something of this scale is no mean feat. It is a testament to the enthusiasm and love of music and performance that these players had.

However, this event also shows the power of leadership. When one person of musical stature steps up, they can compel others to follow. The amount of effort required for this production both on show and in the background demonstrates how a group of like-minded individuals, prepared to work for the common good in

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<sup>94</sup> 'Comus Dramatic Club', *Waikato Times*, 20 December 1883.

<sup>95</sup> 'The Waikato Times Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 13 January 1883; 'Comus Dramatic Club', *Waikato Times*, 20 December 1883.

<sup>96</sup> 'Comus Dramatic Club', *Waikato Times*, 20 December 1883.

conditions far from easy, can create something of real value for their community. In addition, it shows that the personal connections of Mr Bell and his friends, who were invested in this project, involved the wider community which in turn generated an audience to support them. Given the interest at this time in the development of musical societies (as shown in Chapter 4, The Evolution of Orchestral Societies), it was a propitious time for such an undertaking.

### **Dismissal**

Given his apparent universal approbation, it is surprising to read that Mr Bell was threatened with dismissal by the Auckland Education Board. His amateur background meant that he had had little formal training and while his knowledge of 'tonic sol-fa' was sufficient to gain him an elementary certificate, he did not pass the required intermediate certificate. On 5 October 1883 the decision was made that his employment would be terminated and an advertisement for a new singing teacher was resolved.

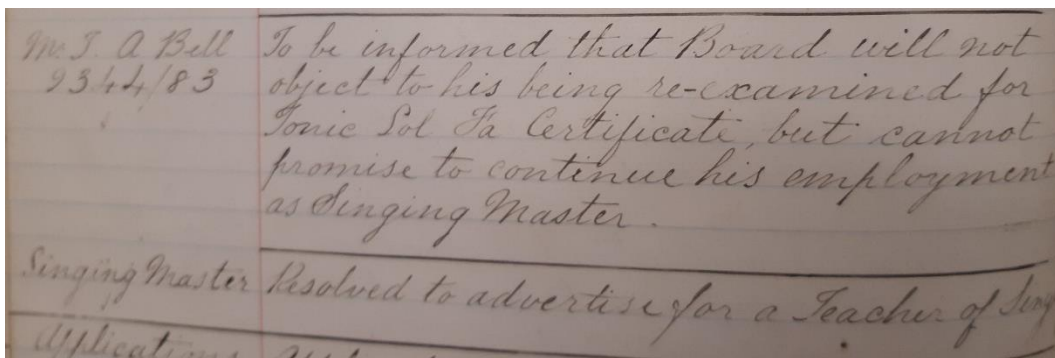


Figure 53 Extract from Auckland Education Board Minutes, 1883<sup>97</sup>

A fortnight later he was given three months' notice, with the proviso that should he pass the examination he could reapply for his job, if there were a position.<sup>98</sup>

This evoked a furious response in the papers and by the schools themselves.<sup>99</sup> The Auckland Education Board received complaints and tried to find a compromise.<sup>100</sup> Suffice it to say that this continued throughout 1884. Those interested in this debate please refer to Appendix 3 Newspaper Response to news of Mr Bell's Dismissal.

<sup>97</sup> Auckland, Auckland Education Board, Minutes May 1883-December 1884.

<sup>98</sup> Auckland Education Board, Minutes May 1883-December 1884.

<sup>99</sup> 'Comments', *Waikato Times*, 30 October 1883; 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 24 November 1883.

<sup>100</sup> Auckland Education Board, Minutes May 1883-December 1884. 7 December 1883, 11 January 1894, 1 February 1884.

Despite what must have been a year of considerable stress to Mr Bell, he continued with his teaching and performing in the Waikato. At the end of 1884 at a Ngāruawāhia school concert he also 'gave a lesson before the audience, by way of explanation of the Tonic Sol-fa system. This was highly appreciated'. Tonic sol-fa examinations may have been his nemesis, but he did at least know enough to impart it to an audience which lacked that knowledge, and in a way that obviously was not boring. This is a sign of a good teacher. The concert itself, of current and past pupils, 'reflected great credit on their teacher Mr Bell'.<sup>101</sup> Furthermore, in addition to all his other activities, Mr Bell conducted the Hamilton Choral Society in September of that year. It was noted that the choruses and solos were very much appreciated, 'while the instrumental pieces were warmly received'.<sup>102</sup>

Mr Bell then went to teach in Auckland schools and was no longer mentioned in the Waikato. Sadly, he died not long after in 1886 at the Whau asylum where he had apparently been happy and, to the annoyance of the other patients there, sang loudly all day and all night.<sup>103</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Mr Bell's had been a life where he was respected as a man and as a musician.<sup>104</sup> His activities ranged beyond the merely musical, while that was considerable. The music he taught to the children and performed with his choirs and orchestras was both sacred and secular, and it is interesting to note that his taste, which informed the choices he made, did not include the lighter music of the day and was invariably classical in origin.

He obviously had a keen sense of his civic duty and performed in many philanthropic concerts as conductor, keyboard player, violinist as well as schoolteacher, raising money for, among other things, the Hamilton Band, instruments, school library funds, school prize funds, church building funds, and even a school picnic.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> 'Ngaruawahia School Concert', *Waikato Times*, 23 December 1883.

<sup>102</sup> 'Hamilton Choral Society's Concert', *Waikato Times*, 11 September 1884.

<sup>103</sup> 'Coroner, Auckland Date: 14 August 1886 Subject: Inquest proceedings on Thomas Aubrey Bell', Wellington Repository, 1886).

<sup>104</sup> 'Waikato District News', *New Zealand Herald*, 18 February 1882.

<sup>105</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 11 March 1880; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 4', *Waikato Times*, 18 May 1880; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 17 September 1881; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 1 October 1881; 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 25 November 1882. 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 27 October 1883; 'The Waikato Times', *Waikato Times*, 3 January 1880. 'Waikato

What is the most important factor to realise in this study of a remarkable man is that the sharing of his gifts showed that music was an extremely relevant part of the local settlers' lives and provided a unifying theme in their disparate existences.

## **Conclusion**

The first 25 years from 1864-1889 laid the groundwork for the extraordinary flourishing of the music societies that followed. The intangible culture which arrived with the settlers led to many instances of music making (as shown in Chapter 1) and indeed led to the development, albeit short-lived, of the Hamilton Entertainment Society. Music was considered, for the first time in the papers at least, in terms of its quality. This was following the concert of 1874 in Te Awamutu where, in despair at what he was having to listen to, the reviewer made suggestions of forming local groups that could be part of a wider society. Into this mix came Mr Bell. His remarkable musicianship, indefatigable energy for bringing people together to make music, and the esteem in which he was held by all who knew him and witnessed the concerts, make him, in my opinion, the prime example of a charismatic leader, a figure whose importance is a central stand of this thesis.

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Times AND THAMES VALLEY GAZETTE', *Waikato Times*, 22 November 1881; The Times', *Waikato Times*, 15 January 1880.

## Chapter 4: Orchestral Societies 1889-1905

1889 was a watershed moment in the musical history of the Waikato for both Hamilton and Te Awamutu started societies that year: the Hamilton Orchestral Society and the Te Awamutu Musical Society. These played through to about 1901, although with some years of no report, and then there was a break of several years before they reformed. There were other orchestral groups which commenced in this period in Cambridge and in the smaller settlements nearby of Ngāruawāhia and Huntly.

The societies all espoused the need to present quality entertainment for their locality. In some instances, musicians travelled to help other orchestras or even helped provide a concert in a different venue, highlighting the much-improved communications between settlements. For instance, in 1894 several members of the Hamilton Orchestral Union travelled to Te Awamutu to provide a 'small but efficient orchestra'.<sup>1</sup>

The structure of the following section is based on geography rather than chronology, to best describe each township's orchestral development. I include the following table to exemplify and enable comparison with what was happening in these townships. This table spans the period from 1889 to 1905.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Concert and Social at Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 23 June 1894.

Table showing recorded years in which the following orchestras played 1889-1905										
	HOS	HOU	HHS	COS	TAMS	TAOS	TAPS	Ng	Huntly	Aroha
1889	Blue				Yellow					
1890					Yellow					
1891	Blue				Yellow					
1892					Yellow					
1893				Green	Yellow					
1894	Blue	Orange								
1895		Orange		Green						
1896		Orange		Green					Light Green	
1897	Blue	Orange			Yellow					
1898	Blue	Orange		Green				Blue		
1899	Blue	Orange	Red	Green	Yellow	Purple				
1900	Blue		Red		Yellow	Purple		Blue	Light Green	
1901			Red	Green	Yellow	Purple		Blue	Light Green	
1902			Red			Purple			Light Green	
1903						Purple				
1904	Blue					Purple			Light Green	
1905	Blue	Orange		Green		Purple				

Legend:

HOS Hamilton Orchestral Society

HOU Hamilton Orchestral Union

HHS Hamilton Harmonic Society

COS Cambridge Orchestral Society

TAMS Te Awamutu Musical Society

TAOS Te Awamutu Orchestral Society

TAPS Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society

Ng Ngāruawāhia Orchestra

Huntly Huntly Orchestral Society

Aroha Te Aroha Orchestra

## Hamilton Orchestral Society

The first mention of the Hamilton Orchestral Society was in June 1889, when it was noted that the 'Hamilton Orchestral Society recently formed ... [placed] their services at the disposal of the Choral Society'. This was to prepare for a performance of Mendelssohn's Oratorio '*St Paul*'.<sup>1</sup> At this stage the Society comprised fifteen instrumentalists, and was under the conductorship of Mr Kent, the organist of St. Peter's Church.<sup>2</sup> It was this connection that informed most of their early performances. For example, their first concert was given a few months later in August, at a fundraiser for the St Peter's Sunday school, 'on this occasion the Hamilton Orchestral Society, amongst whom are several good players, will make their debut'.<sup>3</sup>

The concert itself was essentially a continuation of earlier concerts in terms of its content. It was billed a 'Variety Entertainment' and shows the emphasis on song, along with recitations, tableaux, as well as two instrumental trios and the orchestral society. The ticket prices were also very reasonable – 1s an adult with children at 6d., perhaps reflecting the effects of the depression that New Zealand had been experiencing since the late 1870s.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 22 June 1889.

<sup>2</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 27 June 1889.

<sup>3</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 3', *Waikato Times*, 10 August 1889.

<sup>4</sup> Brian Easton, 'Economic history - Boom and Bust, 1870–1895', *Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand* (2010) <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/economic-history/page-5>>

**S**T. PETER'S SUNDAY SCHOOL.  
**VARIETY ENTERTAINMENT.**  
 ODDFELLOWS' HALL, HAMILTON.  
 Tuesday, 20th August, 1889.

PROGRAMME.

1. Overture ... Hamilton Orchestral Society.
2. Trio ... Miss McPherson, Miss Sage, and Mrs Connell
3. Song ... .. Mr Swarbrick
4. Reading... .. Mr Cowper
5. Duet ... .. Mr and Mrs Connell
6. Tableau Vivant—Gipsy Scene
7. Comic Song (in character) ... Mr E. Forbes
8. Trio (instrumental) ... Miss Newell, Dr Murch, and Mr J. S. Edgecumbe
9. Recitation (character) ... Mr C. A. Stevens
10. Song ... .. Dr Kenny
11. Tableau—"Caught"
12. Song ... .. Miss Chappell
13. Quartette .. Messrs Whitehouse, Montgomery, Edgecumbe & Connell
14. Song ... .. Mrs Connell
15. Tableau—from Uncle Tom's Cabin
16. Trio (instrumental)—Miss Newell, Dr. Murch and Mr J. S. Edgecumbe
17. Song ... .. Mr Montgomery
18. Song ... .. Mr Whitehouse
19. Comic song (in character) ... Mr T. G. Sandes.

**God Save the Queen.**

Doors open at 7.30. To commence at 8 sharp. Admission, 1s ; children, 6d.

Figure 54 Programme Sunday School Variety Entertainment, 1889<sup>5</sup>

The instrumental trio was of Miss Newell on piano, Dr Murch on violin, and Mr Edgecumbe on cello, who had played together in previous years.<sup>6</sup>

Despite their avowed intention of frequent concerts - 'it has been decided that orchestral recitals shall be given periodically to the public on Sunday afternoons, free of charge' - there is little further mention of the Hamilton Orchestral Society in the

<sup>5</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 17 August 1889.

<sup>6</sup> 'Concert At Hamilton', *Waikato Times*, 27 November 1884; 'Cambridge Cricket Club Concert', *Waikato Times*, 20 January 1885; 'Complimentary Concert', *Waikato Times*, 20 December 1888.

papers until 1897 when they reformed under the conductorship of Dr Hauesler.<sup>7</sup> It was hoped that 'under his instruction the Society should make good progress'.<sup>8</sup> However, there was no public performance by the full society and while some members played a Te Deum at the Catholic church in honour of the Queen's Jubilee, and a few 'played some lively music, it is hardly necessary to write, in a most finished manner' at a play later in the year, there seems to be no public concert of the full orchestra at this stage.<sup>9</sup>

While the Hamilton Orchestral Society was apparently still in existence, it was mentioned in 1894 with reference to the visit of the violinist, Bessie Doyle, it appears that for the next few years the Orchestral Union was the main concert provider of orchestral music.<sup>10</sup> A resuscitation of the Hamilton Orchestral Society was attempted in 1897 and under the baton of Mr Munro in 1898 gave a very successful concert in August. Perhaps because there had been little 'in the way of an entertainment in Hamilton ... the music loving public their appetites whetted by the temporary respite, rolled up in large numbers'.<sup>11</sup> The Orchestral Society was joined by players from Cambridge (including Mr Edwards) thus showing the reciprocal and continuing nature of this relationship. However, there seemed to be little enthusiasm for a new start:

We understand that efforts are being made to infuse fresh life into the Hamilton Orchestral Society, and that a meeting for that purpose will be held on Tuesday evening. Such a society is a valuable acquisition to any town, and we sincerely hope the attempt at resuscitation will be attended with success.<sup>12</sup>

There is mention of rehearsals and proposed concerts (although no reviews) after this, so it may be inferred that the lack of advertisements and reviews of concerts indicated no public showing for the orchestra.

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<sup>7</sup> The Hamilton Orchestral Society was mentioned fleetingly in 1891 and 1894. 'Waikato Horticultural Show', *Waikato Times*, 14 March 1891; 'Bessie Doyle', *Waikato Times*, 29 March 1894.

<sup>8</sup> 'The Waikato Argus George Edgecumbe, Proprietor. Thursday, February 11, 1897', *Waikato Argus*, 11 February 1897.

<sup>9</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 15 June 1897; 'Caste', *Waikato Argus*, 12 August 1897.

<sup>10</sup> 'Page 4 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 29 March 1894; 'Bessie Doyle', *Waikato Times*, 29 March 1894.

<sup>11</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Society's Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 11 August 1898.

<sup>12</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 29 April 1899.

## Hamilton Orchestral Union

In the mid-1890s there was a significant development in Hamilton when another musical group started up, the Hamilton Orchestral Union. It appears that this was primarily a union between instrumental players (some from the Hamilton Orchestral Society) and the Hamilton Choral Society which hitherto had been accompanied on the piano. Given the presumably limited number of instrumentalists in the town at the time, it could be assumed that the organisations had different functions and different foci, allowing the musicians to perform in either group. There is mention of the Choral Society and the Orchestra performing together, and rehearsing for another concert, but there is no other information about this.<sup>13</sup>

However, the following year, in July 1895, a concert was given that showed a remarkable development in programming:

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<sup>13</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 9 August 1894.



GRAND  
**W**INTER **C**ONCERT  
OF THE  
HAMILTON ORCHESTRAL UNION.

Tuesday, July 16, 1895.

VOLUNTEER HALL, HAMILTON.

**PROGRAMME.**

PART I.

1. Overture—"Rigoletto" ... Orchestral Union
2. Song—"The Wolf" (Shield) ... Mr E. Walton
3. Duet—"Nocturne" ... Miss Soppett and Mr Gribble
4. Song—"What Am I, Love, Without Thee" (Stephen Adams) ... Mrs Whitaker
5. String Quartette—(Selected) ... Messrs J. Hemus, White, Meachem and Edgecumb
6. Song—(Selected) ... Mr Meachem
7. Waltz—(No. 3) "Hauraki" (Gribble) Orchestral Union

Interval of five minutes.

PART II.

1. Overture—"Tancredi" ... Orchestral Union
2. Song—"The Diver" (Nelson) ... Mr E. Walton
3. Song—(Selected) ... Miss Davies
4. Violin Duet—"Grazioso" (in C major and minor) ... Messrs Hemus and White
5. Song—"The Better Land" ... Miss Soppett
6. Quartette (unaccompanied) "Bells of Eve" ... Misses Soppett and Wilson and Messrs Walton and Gribble
7. Waltz—"Dreams of the Past" (Chas. Le Thiere) ... Orchestral Union
8. Finale—National Song and Chorus: "Maoriland" (local) ... Mr Gribble and Company, with full orchestral accompaniment.

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Doors open at 7.30 p.m. Overture at 8.

Admission, one shilling.

J. S. EDGE CUMBE,

Hon. Sec.

Figure 55 Hamilton Orchestral Union Concert, 1895<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> 'Page 12 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Times*, 13 July 1895.

This programme is possibly the first of this type with a balance between instrumental and vocal items (7:8), as well as the joint production of choir and orchestra at the end. The instrumental items are of note in that there are new names in the violin department of Messrs Hemus and White, and Mr Meachem, usually a singer or conductor, was the viola player, while Mr Edgecumbe was a cellist in the Orchestral Society.<sup>15</sup>

The orchestral items show a marked increase in technical ability (or at least aspiration) as well as a desire to overtly programme classical music. Both *Rigoletto* and *Tancredi* are obviously classical in nature, while the inclusion of waltzes may be a sop towards more accessible and popular music. The finale '*Maoriland*' does include the choir, with full orchestral accompaniment and thus justifies the name of the group. There are no surviving details about just what this finale consisted of, but the title is indicative of a desire to be part of the new land and an acknowledgment of the presence of Māori. Composed by Mr Gribble, the conductor, this piece also highlights the way in which repertoire, while predominantly European, also included some local compositions.

The reviewer of this concert was complimentary about all the orchestral and instrumental items, commenting that *Rigoletto* was a 'rather difficult piece, and one not usually attempted by an orchestra of so limited a number, but, with the exception of one or two passages, it was well rendered', and that *Tancredi* 'showed to advantage the various solo instruments of the orchestra'. Both the violin duet and the string quartet were favourably received, the former responding to an encore 'which, we must say is rather unusual with instrumental items'. The waltz item at the end of the second half and the choral item at the end of the concert were both composed by the conductor, Mr Gribble, showing a level of musicianship that suggests he may have had some form of formal training.

The comments about the final piece *Maoriland* were less complimentary about the orchestra, which was 'so loud that the words of the refrain could not be heard'. The reviewer had plenty of advice for the instrumentalists, who could have been 'subdue[d] sufficiently to give good effect as an accompaniment to a vocalist', or, indeed, as was 'wished' by many, 'omitted'.<sup>16</sup> The size of the orchestra is a marked

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<sup>15</sup> 'Library Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 1 September 1898.

<sup>16</sup> 'Orchestral Concert', *Waikato Times*, 18 July 1895.

increase on the previous year, possibly because the musicians were attracted to such a programme. The large audience obviously enjoyed some of the pieces, particularly the waltz '*Dreams of the Past*' which 'was done full justice to by the Orchestral Union, so much so that it was noticeably hard for some of the audience to keep perfectly still'. The reviewer finished by saying 'we must congratulate the Society on the production of a really good winter concert' and noted that with the abilities of 'Messrs Hemus and White, beside the other instrumentalists of merit', the 'Society should now make rapid advance'.<sup>17</sup>

It is unknown whether there was much of an advance as the only other concert review in which the Orchestral Union was mentioned in 1899 was for the Cambridge Chrysanthemum Society at which they joined with the Cambridge Orchestral Society to provide the music over the two days of the show. Mr Edwards, conductor of the Cambridge Orchestra, was responsible for the music.

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<sup>17</sup> 'Orchestral Concert', *Waikato Times*, 18 July 1895.

# CHRYSANTHEMUM SHOW,

C A M B R I D G E,  
FRIDAY & SATURDAY,  
21ST & 22ND APRIL, 1899.

**T**HE Cambridge Chrysanthemum Society will hold its eighth annual Exhibition of the Queen of Autumn Flowers in its new and spacious Marquee as above.

**A NEW DEPARTURE!** Splendid Illumination of the Marquee. **SUN-LIGHT AT NIGHT.**—By arrangement with Messrs Wilkinson and Co., the Spacious Marquee will be lit with the **NEW ACETYLENE GAS.** Under the rays of this powerful illuminant, all colours and shades of the blooms are accurately distinguished.

**VASE OF 25 SHOW BLOOMS, EACH ONE VARIETY**—The Finest Chrysanthemum Display in the Colony!

**250 SHOW BLOOMS IN COMPETITION,** set up for artistic effect in 10 vases—Prizes by Mrs W. Thornton.

**GRAND ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS** each afternoon, 3.30 till 4.30, and each evening, 8 till 9.30.—The Cambridge Orchestra, assisted by friends from Auckland and Hamilton, under the conductorship of Mr J. H. EDWARDS, and led by Miss EDITH WHITELOW, Auckland's Premier Lady Soloist.

Figure 56 Advertisement Cambridge Chrysanthemum Show, 1899<sup>18</sup>

Following this the Orchestral Union played in concerts in aid of St Peter's Sunday School and for the Hamilton Horticultural Society, this latter being particularly of note as it had two women in prominent positions. It was conducted by Mrs Swarbrick and was led by Mme Isherwood, who is looked at in greater detail in Chapter 6.<sup>19</sup> The Hamilton Orchestral Union as a group did not then play until 1905

<sup>18</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Argus*, 20 April 1899.

<sup>19</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 23 May 1899; 'Hamilton Horticultural Society', *Waikato Argus*, 23 November 1899; 'Hamilton Horticultural Society', *Waikato Argus*, 25 November 1899.

when it reformed under the conductorship of Mr Savage, had a committee of seven people and a membership of about 15 players, with the hope that a 'clarionet' player would join them.<sup>20</sup>

That year, 1905, they performed several concerts in aid of different bodies, raising money for the Hamilton Band, providing entertainment at the Ladies Rifle Match, supporting the Hamilton Comedy club by performing entr'acte music, providing music in aid of the Rowing Club and giving a concert in aid of the Hospital Library Fund.<sup>21</sup> A telling comment was in regard to the latter. 'The attendance was not large considering the worthiness of the object; but unfortunately for the promoters the market has been somewhat overstocked of late.' Nevertheless, there was appreciation for the orchestra and its musicians, and the reviewer of this concert went on to write:

Never before, perhaps, has Hamilton possessed so much musical talent of a high order as the present time; and the concert given in the Town Hall last evening in aid of the funds of the Waikato Hospital library was indeed a revelation in this direction.<sup>22</sup>

Local appreciation for the orchestra was high this year with a review of the April concert exclaiming:

We are glad that we have now so good an orchestra in Hamilton, and trust that no pains will be spared to keep it up to a high pitch of excellence.<sup>23</sup>

After this year there was no more reference to the Hamilton Orchestral Union. However, the question has to be asked why did the two orchestras, the Hamilton Orchestral Society and the Hamilton Orchestral Union cease to perform between approximately 1901 and 1905? A partial answer lies in a fascinating development which happened in the July of 1899.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 21 January 1905.

<sup>21</sup> 'Hamilton Band Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 14 February 1905; 'Volunteering', *Waikato Times*, 16 March 1905; 'Sherlock Holmes', *Waikato Argus*, 8 April 1905; 'Helping Hands', *Waikato Argus*, 19 July 1905; 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 26 July 1905.

<sup>22</sup> 'Hospital Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 27 July 1905.

<sup>23</sup> 'Sherlock Holmes', *Waikato Argus*, 8 April 1905.

<sup>24</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 13 May 1899; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 16 May 1899; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 2 May 1900; 'The Waikato Argus George Edgecumbe, Proprietor. Saturday, July 1, 1899', *Waikato Argus*, 1 July 1899.

## Hamilton Harmonic Society

Less than a year after Mr Munro had conducted the Hamilton Orchestral Society concert in 1898, mentioned above, there was 'a meeting of those desirous of forming another orchestra' which held enormous interest for 'those present'. It was decided that it should be named the 'Hamilton Harmonic Society' with Mr John Munro as conductor. The comment was then made that a 'very good company should result'. Clearly this was probably quite an affront to the Hamilton Orchestral Society and mindful of this the report of this development goes on to say:

It is only fair to state that the new Harmonic Club is in no way antagonistic to the present Orchestral Union; but as several were unable through one cause or another to attend the practices of the latter society, they deemed it advisable to form another club with the above result.<sup>25</sup>

There were ten instrumentalists present, and one can only imagine what the real reason was behind such a development. Was it a personality clash? Obviously, as it was the same conductor, Mr Munro was not the cause. Maybe he had had a falling out with some of the players of the Orchestral Society? Maybe the playing standards of some players were not good enough?

Perhaps the players just wanted to play more often than hitherto. There were several performances in this year of 1899. The first was within two months and, comprising thirteen players, two first violins, four second violins, oboe, flute, contrabass, two cornets and a euphonium as well as the ubiquitous piano, was part of a production by the Comedy Club. Here they played an overture and the entr'actes, 'the selections were good and excellently played'.<sup>26</sup>

After this, they played both as accompaniment, and in their own right, giving a concert for hospital patients.<sup>27</sup> They were involved in church services with the Presbyterian church, as well as the 'third annual soiree and concert' with this church.<sup>28</sup> At this latter they played '*Songs of the Rhine Land*' and later an orchestral selection, '*Martha*'.

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<sup>25</sup> 'The Waikato Argus George Edgecumbe, Proprietor. Saturday, July 29, 1899', *Waikato Argus*, 29 July 1899.

<sup>26</sup> 'Hamilton Comedy Company', *Waikato Argus*, 7 September 1899.

<sup>27</sup> "'The Magistrate'", *Waikato Argus*, 26 October 1899; 'The Waikato Argus George Edgecumbe, Proprietor. Saturday, November 25, 1899.', *Waikato Argus*, 25 November 1899.

<sup>28</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 19 December 1899.

A beautiful selection of airs from ' Maritana '. by the Harmonic Society and the singing of the National Anthem brought a very pleasant evening to a close, after a hearty vote of thanks had been accorded to the performers.<sup>29</sup>

However, they still had not finished playing for the year and gave 'a very charming musical programme' at the social to welcome home the medical superintendent of Waikato Hospital and his new bride.<sup>30</sup> It seems that the aim of this group was to play more often and with greater community involvement: drama, church, hospitals, socials and fundraising.

The society's run of regular performances continued in 1900 and 1901, with four concerts in both years.<sup>31</sup> One of these was to raise funds for the Hamilton Library by playing dance music at a ball held at the Volunteer Hall in Knox Street. It was so successful that the 'hall accommodation was taxed to the utmost'. They 'provided first-class music' and the dance 'was one of the most enjoyable little gatherings held in the town for a considerable time', raising 'about £30'.<sup>32</sup>

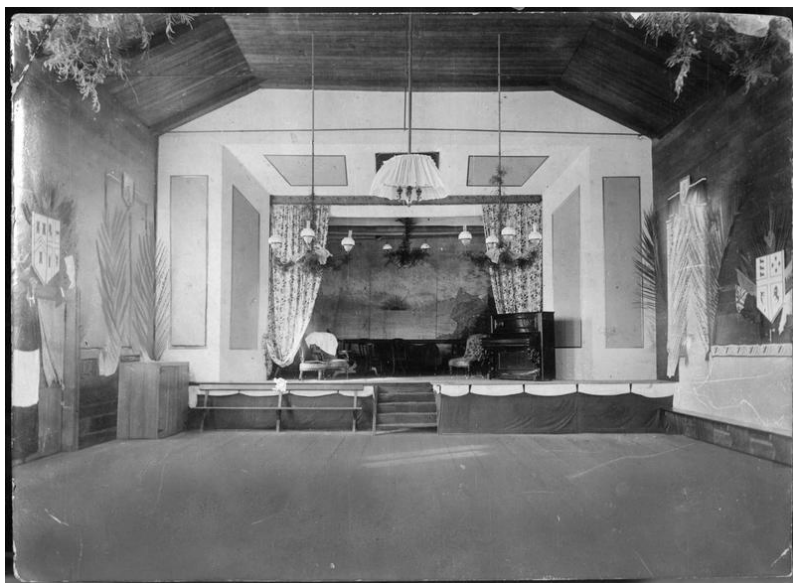


Figure 57 Photograph Hamilton Volunteer Hall, (presumed) opened 1881, photo taken in 1895<sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup> 'Solree and Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 20 December 1899.

<sup>30</sup> 'Welcome To Dr. And Mrs Douglas', *Waikato Argus*, 22 December 1899.

<sup>31</sup> 'Presbyterian Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 15 June 1900; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 6 August 1900; 'The Waikato Argus George Edgecumbe, Proprietor. Saturday, October 12, 1900', *Waikato Argus*, 13 October 1900; 'Hamilton Comedy Club', *Waikato Argus*, 26 October 1900; 'The Waikato Argus [Published Daily.] Saturday, September 21, 1901', *Waikato Argus*, 21 September 1901; 'Cricket Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 26 September 1901; 'Hamilton Horticultural Society', *Waikato Argus*, 29 November 1901; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 18 December 1901.

<sup>32</sup> 'The Library Ball', *Waikato Argus*, 11 August 1900.

<sup>33</sup> 'Said To Be Interior Of Volunteer Hall However Ceiling And Stage Consistent With Town Hall Auditorium - Requires Investigation', *Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection*, 1895), <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/objects/460/volunteer-hall-interior>>

The Harmonic Society's highlight was in the latter year, 1901, when they played at the Royal visit to Hamilton, conducted by Mr Tudehope.<sup>34</sup> This was not such a grand occasion as may be imagined; the train pulled into Frankton station, the King was welcomed to the Waikato, assorted dignitaries then joined the royal party for lunch on the royal train, and then the train left. However, many school children and onlookers were involved and sang the National Anthem and other songs. This was apparently a huge disappointment to the children, 'we sat in the blistering sun frantically waving our flags and we sang to them. All I saw of the Royal visitors was the top of their hats'.<sup>35</sup>

The concerts which featured the Harmonic Society showed them more as an accompaniment to an event, such as playing for a dance, than as a concert that featured them as the main attraction.<sup>36</sup> At the end of 1901 Mr Tudehope left Hamilton and it seems that the Hamilton Harmonic Society performed no more. It had fulfilled a short niche in Hamilton for a mere three years following its coup of the Hamilton Orchestral Union. (See <sup>37</sup>)

This latter, however, reformed in 1905 when Mr Savage was elected conductor.<sup>38</sup> Both the departure of Mr Tudehope and the end of the Hamilton Harmonic Society, and the advent of Mr Savage and the resuscitation of the Hamilton Orchestral Union, underline the importance of the individual charismatic leader in providing a nucleus around which musicians could gather.

## **Te Awamutu Musical Society**

In the same year as the Hamilton Orchestral Society was formed, 1889, the Te Awamutu Musical Society came into being and seemed to enjoy a steadier progress.<sup>39</sup> It had a slightly different intention being both a choral and instrumental

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<sup>34</sup> 'The Royal Visit', *Waikato Argus*, 10 June 1901. 'The Royal Visit', *Waikato Argus*, 14 June 1901.

<sup>35</sup> Elsie Fitz-William, *Life at the Oaks: Memories of Raglan and Hamilton 1890-1912* (Christchurch: The Pegasus Press, 1975), p. 39.

<sup>36</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [Published Daily.] Saturday, September 21, 1901', *Waikato Argus*, 21 September 1901.

<sup>37</sup> The Hamilton Harmonic Society, 'newly formed', had a practice in 1902 with 40 people present including players and a 'strong committee'. It was to be conducted by Mr Bosworth. It was mentioned no more thereafter. 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 24 July 1902.

<sup>38</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 7500 Weekly. Saturday, January 21, 1905.', *Waikato Argus*, 21 January 1905.

<sup>39</sup> 'Te Awamutu Musical Society', *Waikato Times*, 5 November 1889.

group, the former considerably more numerous than the latter (approx. 40 members compared with five in their first outing). In addition, it aimed for one production a year which, after their first performance of the *Wreck of Hesperus*, tended to be Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, much in vogue at the time and thus assured of an audience. Some unexpected comments were made at their first outing. It seems that the society 'has had the effect of discovering many accomplished musicians, vocal and instrumental, who hitherto persistently hid their lights, not exactly under bushels but under cover of their own modesty'; several of the performers 'made their debut that evening in public.'<sup>40</sup>

The orchestra 'which consisted of two violins, piano, cello, and a very fine toned American organ ...played several selections very beautifully, as well as some of the accompaniments at intervals'. Several of the soloists received particular praise. Mr Paterson, the organist, played the 'best instrumental piece of the evening ... the performance ... of one of Mendelssohn's "Songs without words"', Mr Tristram 'one of our best-known musicians' was commended for his cello playing, and Mr Wall was seen as 'quite an acquisition to the district'. Here we can see the commendation for Mr Patterson who 'played with great taste and showed that he is a master of the organ' but also the value seen in the familiar and the new musicians of Mr Tristram and Mr Wall.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, while the choral work was of major importance in the programme, the instrumentalists provided more than just an accompaniment to the singers and were seen as an important entity. The fact that many of these musicians were reluctant to perform until there was a society to which they could adhere suggests that they were shy about presenting themselves in public as soloists at one of the many concerts held prior to this date.

Over the next few years the Te Awamutu Musical Society presented a show a year.<sup>42</sup> These consisted of popular shows such as '*Britannia and her daughters*' which was so popular that, 'long before the doors were opened a large crowd had assembled from all parts of the Upper Waipa'. Once inside 'the building was

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<sup>40</sup> 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 12 November 1889.

<sup>41</sup> 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 12 November 1889.

<sup>42</sup> 'Concert At Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 6 May 1890. 'Te Awamutu Musical Society', *Waikato Times*, 28 May 1891. 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 2 August 1892. 'The Mikado at Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 2 December 1893.

crammed, there being scarcely standing room'.<sup>43</sup> In fact, it was repeated the following week by popular request, 'when there was another "bumper house", the hall being literally crammed to the doors'. The reviewer certainly thought highly of the performance and concluded:

The performance was certainly deserving of the liberal patronage it received, and too much praise cannot be bestowed upon the popular and painstaking conductor of the society for his untiring efforts with those who cooperated with him to achieve such a success.<sup>44</sup>

This encomium highlights again the importance of the charismatic leader who inspires and carries along the people around him.

*Trial by Jury* and *The Mikado* followed where again there was a huge following, and, in both cases, a second performance.<sup>45</sup> *The Mikado* was also performed in 1903 with at least three shows.<sup>46</sup> The Musical Society participated in concerts up to 1901 and is mentioned again in 1908 when an orchestra of eight people performed at a masonic ball. 'The success of the evening was considerably enhanced by the orchestra ... and reflected credit on the Te Awamutu Musical Society, of which the orchestra forms part.'<sup>47</sup> No further concerts or performances by the Te Awamutu Musical Society are commented upon. However, from the end of the nineteenth century, the Te Awamutu Orchestral Society came into being.

## **Te Awamutu Orchestral Society**

The first mention of the Te Awamutu Orchestral Society was in 1899 when it performed in the first part of a concert in the Te Awamutu Town Hall 'in aid of a fund for carrying out stage improvements'.<sup>48</sup> This 'entertainment ... was a great success'.<sup>49</sup> The following year, 1900, it again performed in aid of the Town Hall funds. This 1900 concert is notable because for the first reported time in the Waikato, apart from the usual orchestral 'selections', local solo vocalists were

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<sup>43</sup> 'Concert At Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 6 May 1890.

<sup>44</sup> 'Te Awamutu Musical Society', *Waikato Times*, 13 May 1890.

<sup>45</sup> 'Te Awamutu Musical Society', *Waikato Times*, 28 May 1891.

<sup>46</sup> 'The Mikado', *Waikato Argus*, 6 November 1903.

<sup>47</sup> 'Te Awamutu Horticultural Show', *Waikato Argus*, 16 February 1901; 'Te Awamutu', *King Country Chronicle*, 18 September 1908.

<sup>48</sup> 'The Waikato Argus George Edgecumbe, Proprietor. Tuesday, July 18, 1899', *Waikato Argus*, 18 July 1899.

<sup>49</sup> 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Argus*, 22 July 1899.

accompanied by orchestra. This was 'greeted with loud applause'. Furthermore, there was a cello and piano duet performed. This again is unusual. Generally, at this time instrumental duets tended to be either flute or violin with piano; to hear a cello in this combination would have been a new experience. The piece and the player, however, are unknown.<sup>50</sup>

1900 also saw the patriotic flag raising at Te Rahu district school in Te Awamutu, where approximately 500 people were present. That evening there was a 'grand concert and dance'<sup>51</sup> which opened with 'a selection by the members of the Te Awamutu Orchestral Society under their able conductor Mr Pringle'.<sup>52</sup> The orchestra then had a small hiatus, and its later years will be covered in Chapter 5.

### Cambridge Orchestral Society

In 1893, the Cambridge Orchestral Society came into being:

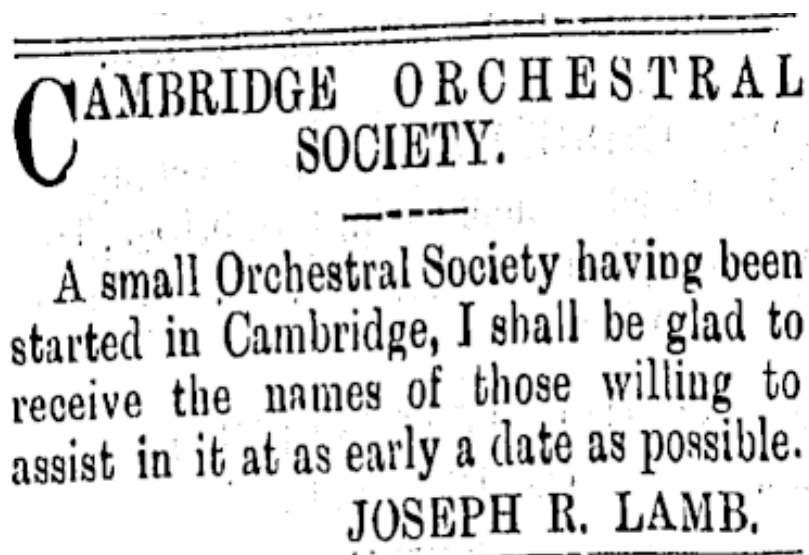


Figure 58 Cambridge Orchestral Society advertisement for players, 1893<sup>53</sup>

<sup>50</sup> 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Argus*, 8 September 1900.

<sup>51</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 12 September 1900.

<sup>52</sup> 'Unfurling Of The Flag At Te Rahu', *Waikato Argus*, 18 September 1900.

<sup>53</sup> 'Page 4 Advertisements Column 3', *Waikato Times*, 17 October 1893.

Like the Hamilton Orchestral Society before it, it had a rocky start and did not appear in newspaper reports over consecutive years. 1895 however, showed it to be a regular part of Cambridge social and fundraising life.<sup>54</sup>

The social aspect in performance, which often is overlooked, came to the fore in an event held in St Andrew's schoolroom.

The members of the Cambridge Orchestral Society lent their assistance which added greatly to the success of the meeting, the excellent manner in which they performed, and the progress they had made being the subject of general comment.

Here, there was no mention of fundraising, but purely the social aspect of gathering to hear music and then partake of some refreshments in a convivial atmosphere. The pieces the orchestra played were dance tunes (waltzes and mazurkas); and individuals contributed items such as a 'clarinet' solo by C Stuart and a violin solo by Miss Archer.<sup>55</sup>

Aiding the funds to pay off the Presbyterian manse debt was another function for the orchestra that year. In fact, it had been formed with just such a rationale: 'The Cambridge Orchestral Society ... was formed for the purpose of assisting any deserving cause at which its services were required.'<sup>56</sup> As has been seen in previous concerts, having differing attractions in the evening increases the chance of a large audience. This was certainly the case in this concert as papers, periodicals and games were spread on the tables to entertain others, while 'there was an apparently unlimited supply of viands of excellent quality, which received due attention at the hands of those present'.<sup>57</sup>

The orchestra's final outing that year was to provide a Christmas concert. What is noteworthy about this concert is that 'the members have secured the services of several good players from Hamilton' which the commentator hoped would provide a 'decided improvement in the instrumental items'.<sup>58</sup> Thus, musical connections between the two towns had been made and they continued. For

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<sup>54</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 29 August 1895; 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 10 September 1895; 'The Waikato Times and Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 14 September 1895. 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 19 December 1895.

<sup>55</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 29 August 1895.

<sup>56</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 19 December 1895.

<sup>57</sup> 'The Waikato Times and Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 14 September 1895.

<sup>58</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 19 December 1895.

example, in the following year the orchestra 'was greatly strengthened by the addition of five gentlemen from Hamilton'.<sup>59</sup> This concert had several features showing the development of orchestral music:

One great feature will be the addition of an oboe to the orchestra, for this the Society are to be indebted to Mr J. Jackson of Auckland, who happens to be in the district, most opportunely. Many in Cambridge have never heard an oboe, and to give everyone an opportunity of hearing this peculiar and useful orchestral instrument, Mr Jackson has kindly consented to play a solo and an obligato to a song, which will be sung expressly to show the fitness of the instrument for such work.<sup>60</sup>

It was well reviewed and the audience 'were charmed by the masterly manner in which the player drew sweet strains from it'. Furthermore, a quintet of female string players performed (including a double bass player) which received the comment that 'it is but few country towns that can boast of a full complement of string instruments played by ladies, but in this respect Cambridge is fortunate'.<sup>61</sup>

Today, this may sound patronising, but at the time 'lady' string players performing together in public was indeed a novelty. While from the earliest times in the Waikato women accompanied male soloists, it was relatively recently that they had sung solos in public. To have female instrumentalists playing together thus would have been a marked change from the typical band members performing together. Thus, this is a significant shift in the kinds of roles female musicians fulfilled in the largely rural environs of the Waikato.

Regarding this concert, another factor worth noting is that so much possible entertainment in the town meant that audiences were lessened for each performance:

The hall was well filled, but there would undoubtedly have been many more had it not been for the Hamilton Dramatic Society having announced 'Rob Roy' for the following evening. The clashing of these two Societies did harm to both of them, for the inhabitants of Cambridge have become so staid that they cannot stand two nights' dissipation, and consequently some went to the

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<sup>59</sup> 'Concert At Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 24 September 1898.

<sup>60</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 20 September 1898.

<sup>61</sup> 'Concert At Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 24 September 1898.

concert and others to the play, which did not help the finances of either of them.<sup>62</sup>

This is a recurring theme of the limited audience pool only being able to sustain a modest number of concerts in these small townships.

In 1899, 'a number of Hamilton friends, who kindly gave their services' also helped at the Cambridge Chrysanthemum Show where the orchestra numbered 17 players and was conducted by Mr Edwards.<sup>63</sup> By June that year they were up to 20 players and 'in order to accommodate the augmented orchestra the stage of the Public Hall [was] enlarged'.<sup>64</sup> This was a complimentary concert to their 'popular' conductor Mr Edwards, and so large was the audience that many had to stand.<sup>65</sup>

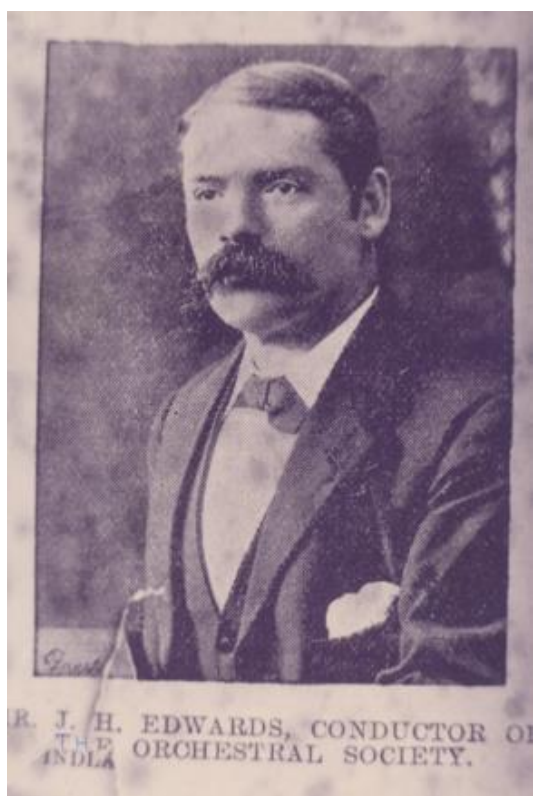


Figure 59 Photograph J H Edwards<sup>66</sup>

It seems that this was the last performance by the Cambridge Orchestral Society until they were re-formed in 1905.

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<sup>62</sup> 'Concert At Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 24 September 1898.

<sup>63</sup> 'Cambridge Chrysanthemum Show', *Waikato Argus*, 25 April 1899.

<sup>64</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 2', *Waikato Argus*, 22 June 1899; 'Cambridge Orchestral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 27 June 1899.

<sup>65</sup> 'Cambridge Orchestral Society's Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 1 July 1899.

<sup>66</sup> 'J. H. Edwards', *Weekly Press*, 4 October 1899.

While much of the musical activity in this period was centred around Hamilton, Te Awamutu, and Cambridge, other smaller centres also established orchestras in this period, for example, Ngāruawāhia and Huntly.

## **Orchestras in Ngāruawāhia and Huntly**

In this section, I concentrate on two smaller townships and their orchestras. They have been organised chronologically and individually in this segment. Apart from the importance of local leadership these orchestras also exemplify another aspect of orchestras which is how important and relevant they are in their communities.

### ***Ngāruawāhia***

The Ngāruawāhia Orchestral Society was mentioned as early as 1895 in a concert in aid of the local school, 'the concert was brought to a successful finish with a musical selection given by the Ngāruawāhia Orchestral Society'.<sup>67</sup> Little is known about this apart from the newspaper article and it was another few years before the orchestra was mentioned again.

While the previous concert had been in aid of the Ngāruawāhia school, in 1900, a concert was held in the Ngāruawāhia Town Hall to raise funds for the orchestra itself.<sup>68</sup> This suggests a strong sense of their worth to the township as they must have believed there would be sufficient audience to make it worth their while. They also provided music at other events such as for the Debating Society where during the evening they played 'several selections which were duly appreciated'.<sup>69</sup>

The following photograph shows Ngāruawāhia in 1902. As can be seen it was rural with a cluster of buildings and makes it all the more remarkable that there were audiences, who must have travelled some distance, for their different outings.

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<sup>67</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 10 September 1895.

<sup>68</sup> 'Ngaruawahia', *Waikato Argus*, 18 September 1900.

<sup>69</sup> 'Ngaruawahia', *Waikato Argus*, 4 August 1900.

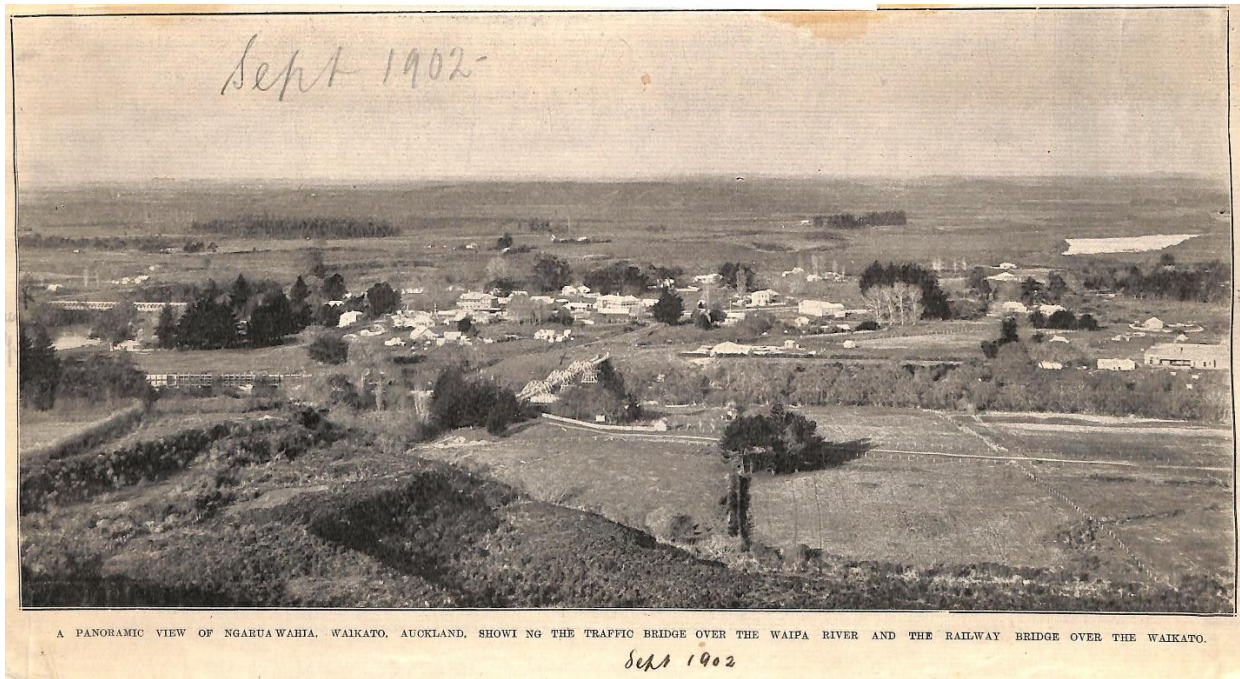


Figure 60 Photograph 'A Panoramic View of Ngaruawahia', 1902<sup>70</sup>

In 1901, the following year, this is perhaps borne out by a concert for 'the annual re-union of the employees of the New Zealand Dairy Association'. Here the orchestra gave an evening concert to which 'all the residents of the township were invited, and the hall was crammed'.<sup>71</sup> Not only did the orchestra play in local fundraising concerts, for example for the local Roman Catholic church, it also contributed to the efforts to raise money for the Kihikihi Roman Catholic presbytery.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Hamilton, University of Waikato Archives, A Panoramic View of Ngaruawahia, Waikato, Auckland showing the Traffic Bridge over the Waipa River and the Railway Bridge over the Waikato, 530.12 PoH 1902.

<sup>71</sup> 'Re-Union of Dairy Association's Employees', *Waikato Argus*, 7 June 1901.

<sup>72</sup> 'Ngaruawahia', *Waikato Argus*, 11 August 1900; 'Ngaruawahia', *Waikato Argus*, 7 December 1900; 'Ngaruawahia', *Waikato Argus*, 7 December 1900.



Figure 61 Kihikihi Catholic Church and Presbytery<sup>73</sup>

There is a sense that the local communities were always prepared to help each other, particularly in aid of the financing of a new church or community hall. At the time Mr Hogg, a violinist, conducted the Ngāruawāhia orchestra and also played solos.

The records are patchy, but the orchestra, numbering seven on this occasion, played at the Ngāruawāhia School Concert two years later and 'contributed to the success of the juveniles'.<sup>74</sup> A further two years and the orchestra again played at the school concert in 1905: 'Our ever-obliging Ngāruawāhia Orchestra, under the leadership of Mr AV. Hogg, was in attendance, and contributed to the success of the evening'.<sup>75</sup> There is a sense of pride in their orchestra shown when it is referred to as 'our orchestra', and I sense that the use of 'ever-obliging' denotes that the orchestra was in far greater demand than the archives suggest.

### **Huntly**

In Huntly, the theme of a charismatic leader attracting musicians and providing the impetus for concerts is exemplified. In this case that person was the conductor Mr R.

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<sup>73</sup> 'St John the Baptist Church Kihikihi', (Te Awamutu: Te Awamutu Museum Collections online, n.d.), <<https://collection.tamuseum.org.nz/objects/11146/st-john-the-baptist-church>>

<sup>74</sup> 'Ngaruawahia School Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 16 December 1903.

<sup>75</sup> 'Ngaruawahia School Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 11 December 1905.

Skellern. A concert was held in aid of the building fund of the Roman Catholic church in Huntly in 1900.

The presence of an orchestra under the baton of Mr R. Skellern was a distinct advantage, their tuneful and harmonious selection filling up those awkward gaps at the beginning of the programme and during the interval which so often characterise entertainments of this kind. Mr Skellern is to be congratulated in the success of the initial effort, and the unanimous hope of the auditors was that the orchestra had 'come to stay'.<sup>76</sup>

Mr Skellern, a violinist, led a string band which provided music for dances.<sup>77</sup> He then expanded his group to provide an orchestra for other events. The quote above also shows how it was initially used, as background music while people were entering, or mingling in, the hall. Clearly, as shown by the quote, it was appreciated and from a "background" initial event it then went on to play for a Sunday School soirée.<sup>78</sup> The following month at a concert in aid of the public library this comment was made:

Since the advent of this institution the members have been continually called upon, with the result that the last selection is always better than the previous one, constant practice being evident in both style and finish.<sup>79</sup>

Thus, from a tentative beginning as incidental music that could be listened to if one so chose, the orchestra became more confident and continued over the next few years. Its ability was noted, it played 'two pieces in a finished style', and the following year, 1901, it 'rendered some fine selections which were much appreciated'.<sup>80</sup> Clearly, it was making good progress under their conductor, but also it was seen as a valuable part of local society.

1902 marked the debut of the Huntly Musical Society at a concert that had both local and outside talent. The orchestra, 'under the baton of Mr Skellern, won many encomiums'.<sup>81</sup> It played again that year and then two years later, when it was referred to as 'Mr R. Skellern's orchestra', a clear indication of the importance of this one person.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> 'Huntly', *Auckland Star*, 3 September 1900.

<sup>77</sup> 'Huntly', *Auckland Star*, 22 June 1900; 'Football', *Waikato Argus*, 11 May 1904; 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 14 October 1904.

<sup>78</sup> 'Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 5 October 1900.

<sup>79</sup> 'Huntly', *Auckland Star*, 27 November 1900.

<sup>80</sup> 'Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 30 September 1901; 'Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 10 December 1901.

<sup>81</sup> 'Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 12 May 1902.

<sup>82</sup> 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 14 October 1904; 'Country News', *Auckland Star*, 28 May 1904.

## Conclusion

In the period from 1889-1905 orchestras in the Waikato developed from ad hoc occasional instrumental concert offerings performing in response to a perceived local financial need, to orchestral societies created by individual townships. Why now? I posit that it was the natural evolution for areas once their initial needs were met. It is striking that in all the main populated areas of New Zealand, the first mention in the newspapers of an Orchestral Society is approximately 25 years after first settlement. See [Appendix 4 Table](#) showing this. This would be the second generation coming through who had the benefit of schools and churches already built and would be looking more for structured entertainment. In fact, 'by the mid-1880s a majority of the population were New Zealand born'.<sup>83</sup> The difference, as I see it, is that whereas the earliest settlers reacted to a need and asked for items that could be put into a fundraising concert, in this next phase the settlers had the luxury of being more forward looking. An orchestral society suggests the feeling of a person being grounded in the area, rather than the possibly precarious feeling of first moving to New Zealand, looking backwards to their homeland, and being unsure if it would be a successful relocation.

All of these societies appeared to be dependent on gifted and passionate individuals, many of them profiled at greater length in Chapter 6, who were able to gather around them a group of musicians, so that when these people moved to other parts of New Zealand the impetus for the orchestras' music making seemed to disappear. The orchestra which bucked this trend was the Te Awamutu Orchestral Society, which had a succession of conductors leading to their performing every year from first mention in 1899 to 1905. Each of the societies also exemplifies the need for an orchestra to be embedded in its community for it to achieve its relevance and audience. This may have been why the Te Awamutu Orchestral Society continued throughout years that showed little activity in other centres.

This chapter has focussed on an astonishing amount of orchestral playing in these sixteen years. Encompassing Hamilton, Te Awamutu, Cambridge, Ngāruawāhia and Huntly, here is a snapshot of the importance of music in the lives of the earlier settlers. The orchestras coalesced around their conductors who were

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<sup>83</sup> Alex Calder, 'Settlement', *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand* (2014) <<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/non-fiction/page-3>>

not only charismatic but also extremely able. They could be respected both as musicians and as members of their communities. The communities themselves welcomed the opportunities for fundraising, socialising and entertainment and supported these organisations. It is not unreasonable to suppose that other rural areas of New Zealand also enjoyed this development.

## Chapter 5: Orchestral Societies 1905-1914

The period from 1905-1914 was one of burgeoning and active orchestral societies. The musical groups that began in the period of 1889-1905 continued throughout this later period, and others started as well. The chapter commences with a discussion about the short gap in concerts seen in most centres between approximately 1900 and 1905. The events in the smaller centres of Ngāruawāhia and Huntly and the introduction of the Te Aroha Orchestral Society in 1907 and the Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society in 1908 follow this. The two bigger centres of Cambridge and Hamilton and the fortunes of their Orchestral Societies conclude the chapter.

From 1901 to 1905 there was a form of musical hiatus, with very occasional concerts being provided in the smaller townships, which included the Te Awamutu Orchestral Society. The two major organisations in Hamilton and Cambridge ceased performing for a period of time before reforming and continuing to entertain their communities. Perhaps the Te Awamutu Orchestral Society was more active or found more reasons to be involved in local activities. It is possible that in this smaller town it was the only orchestral music making group, so that it provided not just concert items but also dance music. Likewise, Ngāruawāhia and Huntly maybe had such a limited pool of musicians that their orchestras were used as well. In the bigger towns they had other musicians who could step into these roles.

There are a number of possible reasons for this brief hiatus in Hamilton and Cambridge. I speculate that the Boer War, which resulted in a burst of patriotic enthusiasm (as shown in Chapter 1) and continued for longer than expected, may have meant that individuals were less likely to be interested in the onerous work of organising the larger groups and concerts. Perhaps there was a lack of conductors capable of garnering respect. However, as Mr Edwards conducted the Cambridge Orchestral Society despite gaps right up until his departure for Gisborne in 1906 that may not be the reason. Alternatively, key players might have moved away or been involved in the war.<sup>1</sup> Without the quality and maybe leadership skills of some of these, conceivably other amateur musicians with less confidence may not have wished to put themselves forward.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 11 December 1906.

Whatever the reason, there was limited reported orchestral music in 1902 and 1903. September 1904 saw the Hamilton Orchestral Society play in a concert in aid of the Hamilton Rowing Club at the Volunteer Hall, Hamilton. The Hamilton Town Band and several piano items were featured and the orchestra 'opened the second part with the selection, "Imperial Voyage," (encored)'.<sup>2</sup> In other words, it had a small part to play in this concert. However, in 1905 not only did it play for the opening of the Town Hall, but also the Cambridge Orchestral Society was again being mentioned in the papers for the first time since 1899. In Te Aroha a new orchestra was formed in 1907, and in 1908 the Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society was established, similar in vein to the Te Awamutu Musical Society that had been inaugurated in 1889, but with more orchestral emphasis. This era saw an increase in the frequency of performances and the growth of musical communities which were less reliant on the motivating power of one person.

Some truly remarkable musicians came to the fore after 1905, many of whom will be profiled in more detail in the next chapter on key musical personalities. Women were represented in leadership roles for the first time: a conductor, Madame Isherwood, and an orchestral leader, Mrs Langley Shaw. Gone were the days of women in the background. There were also more people earning their living doing a variety of jobs in different musical milieux: Mr S. Riley had a music shop, and was an organist and conductor, Mr Tutschka was a piano tuner, conductor and violinist, and Mr Bosworth was a teacher, violinist, and dance orchestra leader. Of course, there were gifted amateur musicians as well who were part of this blossoming of orchestral creativity.

After the Boer War, which was the first time New Zealanders had sent troops to fight another's battle, there must have been a feeling of relief and excitement for a new and more settled life. To a large extent communities had been built with their churches, schools and halls completed. This enabled them to start changing the direction of thinking towards providing music solely for entertainment. As will be shown, subscriptions for orchestral concerts began, so that instead of raising money for other causes, orchestras raised money for themselves.

The orchestras became more embedded in their communities in this period. With a pool of orchestral players, people in the community willing to serve on

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<sup>2</sup> 'Rowing Club Concert', *Waikato Times*, 22 September 1904.

committees and support the orchestras, and a series of able conductors who themselves were supported by the committee, the departure of one conductor did not lead to the disintegration of the orchestra. Others moved in, such as Mr Tutschka and Mrs Langley Shaw, and then moved on and others took their place. The webs of music – making were truly established.<sup>3</sup>

The following table shows the evolution of the orchestras in these small townships, from 1889-1914. I have chosen to include the whole table, rather than the part only from 1905, in order to better show the continual development of the orchestral societies. The legend below shows the full names of the orchestras in the table.

Legend:

HOS Hamilton Orchestral Society

HOU Hamilton Orchestral Union

HHS Hamilton Harmonic Society

COS Cambridge Orchestral Society

TAMS Te Awamutu Musical Society

TAOS Te Awamutu Orchestral Society

TAPS Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society

Ng Ngāruawāhia Orchestra

Hu Huntly Orchestral Society

Te Ar Te Aroha Orchestra

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<sup>3</sup> Tony Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire: Locating New Zealand's Colonial Past* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2013).

**Table showing recorded years in which the following orchestras played 1889-1914**

	HOS	HOU	HHS	COS	TAMS	TAOS	TAPS	Ng	Hu	Te Ar
1889	Blue				Yellow					
1890					Yellow					
1891	Blue				Yellow					
1892					Yellow					
1893				Green	Yellow					
1894	Blue	Orange								
1895		Orange		Green						
1896		Orange		Green					Light Green	
1897	Blue	Orange			Yellow					
1898	Blue	Orange		Green				Light Blue		
1899	Blue	Orange	Red	Green	Yellow	Purple				
1900	Blue		Red		Yellow	Purple		Light Blue	Light Green	
1901			Red	Green	Yellow	Purple		Light Blue	Light Green	
1902						Purple			Light Green	
1903						Purple				
1904	Blue					Purple			Light Green	
1905	Blue	Orange		Green		Purple				
1906	Blue			Green		Purple		Light Blue	Light Green	
1907	Blue			Green					Light Green	Red
1908	Blue						Dark Blue		Light Green	Red
1909	Blue			Green		Purple	Dark Blue		Light Green	Red
1910	Blue			Green			Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Green	Red
1911	Blue			Green			Dark Blue		Light Green	
1912	Blue						Dark Blue			Red
1913	Blue			Green			Dark Blue			Red
1914	Light Blue						Dark Blue		Light Green	

## Ngāruawāhia

This small community kept its orchestra going and in 1906, the *Waikato Times* remarked that the 'inhabitants of Ngāruawāhia will be under a debt of gratitude' for the concerts provided during winter. Their first for that year was held in April and the reviewer noted

in connection therewith the first performance of the Ngāruawāhia Orchestra on Wednesday evening proved that in our little settlement there are musicians of no mean ability. Under the conductorship of Mr Win. Hogg, the orchestra played with taste and expression.<sup>1</sup>

Their concert in the July of 1909 was well attended and a number of 'friends from Hamilton and Auckland, came to assist, and had a most enjoyable though somewhat cold trip'. This concert programme not only had four orchestral slots in the programme, but also a clarinet trio, of 'clarinet, piano, and violin', and a performance of *Zigeunerweisen* (Gypsy Airs) written by Sarasate. This latter requires much technical ability, and was performed by Mr Turner, a Ngāruawāhia local teacher.<sup>2</sup> The following year, 1910, the orchestra played at Horotiu Institute Association's social, where it had 'evidently devot[ed] a lot of time to practice and ... rendered two pleasing selections'. The purpose of this institute was to 'raise the standard of music in the district' and the reviewer thought they

are to be congratulated on the trouble they are going to, ... and the programme put on last evening was indeed a revelation to the large audience, who forgathered from all parts of the district.<sup>3</sup>

The township of Ngāruawāhia thus had an orchestra and a nearby local institute intent on raising musical standards from at least the beginning of the twentieth century. Evidently there was a lot of support for music, and it is suspected that there were more outings by the orchestra than is shown by the available records.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 6 April 1906.

<sup>2</sup> 'The Waikato Argus', *Waikato Argus*, 1 July 1909.

<sup>3</sup> 'Social at Horotiu', *Waikato Argus*, 18 June 1910.

## Huntly

The township of Huntly continued to give concerts of which the most interesting musically was the November concert in 1906 which was given by the Huntly Musical and Orchestral Society. Unfortunately, rain and 'an extraordinary number of entertainments held immediately before' led to a poor sized audience.<sup>4</sup> However, 'those present [were] amply compensated for venturing out by having the privilege of listening to a programme which was as enjoyable as it was interesting'.<sup>5</sup> It appears from the reviews (I have been unable to find a programme) that the concert consisted entirely of items by the members of the Huntly Musical and Orchestral Society, including vocal solos, choruses, instrumental solos, and orchestral pieces. What a magnificent musical occasion with all local musicians!

The Huntly orchestra under Mr H. Skellern continued to give several concerts a year for several years. The purposes were mainly fundraising, as before, with all church denominations represented, local sports clubs, the St John Ambulance Association, and celebrating the driving of the first pile for the new bridge over the Waikato.<sup>6</sup>

However, one concert stands out and that is a wholly orchestral concert given in 1911. The orchestra had won praise in its previous concerts for its quality and enthusiasm, which may have given it the courage to present a concert of instrumental music. Also, there was a new conductor, Mr Webster, who may have had greater ambitions for the orchestra than hitherto. In general, in the past, the orchestra had played at the most 'two selections' in any fundraising concert. This concert had seven. It should be noted that the 'attendance ... almost filled the hall' justifying this attempt of a concert without vocal items.

The seven orchestral pieces submitted, though somewhat ambitious for a young society, were well attacked, the spirit of the music being appreciated by the players, and the rendition, consequently, being sympathetic. The conductor, Mr T. S. Webster, is to be congratulated on the success of his

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<sup>4</sup> 'Huntly', *Waikato Times*, 21 November 1906.

<sup>5</sup> 'Huntly News', *Auckland Star*, 21 November 1906.

<sup>6</sup> 'Huntly News', *Auckland Star*, 24 June 1907; 'Country News', *Auckland Star*, 13 August 1907; 'Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 11 October 1907; 'Huntly', *Auckland Star*, 24 June 1908; 'Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 2 December 1908; 'Country News', *Auckland Star*, 9 March 1909; 'Catholic Bazaar at Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 4 November 1909; 'Horticultural Show at Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 29 April 1910; 'Huntly News', *Auckland Star*, 3 September 1910; 'Huntly', *Auckland Star*, 26 April 1911; 'New Huntly Bridge', *Auckland Star*, 23 October 1911.

initial concert; the material he has under his baton, and the prospects for the future.<sup>7</sup>

This concert programme may have been a surprise to some of the audience, but there is no doubting the local support for such endeavours. There is no mention after this year, but it is quite possible that there may have been other concerts locally by the orchestra.

## Te Aroha

Te Aroha began its orchestra in this period, and it follows a similar pattern of development as the other smaller societies profiled in the previous chapter, exemplifying both the leadership necessary and how well it was rooted in the community it represented.

In 1907 the following advertisement informed the locals in that township that an orchestra had been formed:

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**A New Orchestra.**

We learn that Mr W. McInman has formed an orchestra consisting of the following players :—

Piano  
Miss Faes

1st violin	Messrs Talty and McInman
2nd violin	Master Alfred Sherlock
Viola	... .. Mr Oliver
1st cornet	... .. Mr L. Buchan
2nd cornet	... .. Mr Lewis
Piccolo	... .. Mr H Whitehead
Bass trombone	... .. Mr Sherlock
Horn	... .. Mr Bougen

Figure 62 Te Aroha Orchestra Players, 1907<sup>8</sup>

This advertisement again underlines the importance of the leadership that can bring together musicians and encourage them to play in public. Noticeably, as reported in the local paper the orchestra was sometimes called 'McKinnon's Orchestra'.

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<sup>7</sup> 'Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 25 March 1911.

<sup>8</sup> 'A New Orchestra', *Te Aroha News*, 25 April 1907.

A very enjoyable social was held in the Public Hall last night by the Oddfellows' Lodge. Owing to the stormy night the attendance was not as large as it might otherwise have been. The music was provided by the Te Aroha Trio, assisted by members of McInman's Orchestra who also played a selection from Maritana.<sup>9</sup>

While this clearly shows the importance of his leadership it could also be seen as a slight not using his title. Maybe the playing was not all that could be desired, and as he was associated with the orchestra the reporter could not bring himself to be respectful? Nevertheless, that year they also played at a hockey club dance and a farewell social.<sup>10</sup>

By the following year, 1908, the orchestra under Mr McInman, continued to attract new members and was 'now capable of rendering classical music with credit to itself, and also to its hard-working leader'. They continued to support their local community: the Fire Brigade, local school, and even at Hetherington's corner with their display of summer fashions.<sup>11</sup> Possibly their most successful outings were when they accompanied the Te Aroha Choral society which was formed in 1909. 'The Society has been strengthened by the addition of a small orchestra, ... [which] contributed largely to the success of the concert.'<sup>12</sup> At the Choral Society's concert, the following year:

The accommodation was taxed to its utmost capacity, every available seat being occupied, thus showing the appreciation in which the Society's work is held by the public ... The success of the concert was also in no small measure due to the generous support given by the orchestra, which was highly creditable.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, choral music and the orchestra was valued in that small township.

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<sup>9</sup> 'Local and General', *Te Aroha News*, 25 May 1907.

<sup>10</sup> 'Ladies' Hockey Club Social', *Te Aroha News*, 16 May 1907; 'Farewell to Miss Crombie', *Te Aroha News*, 24 August 1907.

<sup>11</sup> 'Te Aroha and Ohinemuri News Thursday, April 9, 1908. Local and General', *Te Aroha News*, 9 April 1908; 'Fire Brigade', *Te Aroha News*, 1 June 1909; 'Te Aroha School Concert', *Te Aroha News*, 30 October 1909; 'Preparing for the Summer', *Te Aroha News*, 17 September 1910; 'Sacred Concert', *Te Aroha News*, 15 October 1908; 'Te Aroha Gymnastic Club's Concert and Dance', *Te Aroha News*, 7 May 1908; 'Local and General', *Te Aroha News*, 16 July 1908.

<sup>12</sup> 'Te Aroha Choral Society', *Te Aroha News*, 9 October 1909.

<sup>13</sup> 'Te Aroha Choral Society', *Te Aroha News*, 10 September 1910.



Figure 63 Postcard Te Aroha, 1908<sup>14</sup>

Although small the town built the 'Theatre Royal' in 1912, and at the concert celebrating its opening both the Municipal Band and the orchestra played. The venue was intended for 'public meetings, concerts, socials and balls as well as for picture and theatrical purposes'. Of enormous significance was the comment that 'and in the matter of rent local people would be granted material reductions'.<sup>15</sup> This is not something that necessarily pertains to this day.<sup>16</sup> Clearly, smaller settlements also had a strong desire to host artistic events.

The last mention of the orchestra is in December 1914 when it accompanied the Te Aroha Convent High School in their performance at the end of the year of *Princess Chrysanthemum*. 'Special orchestral music accompaniment will be rendered by the Symphony Orchestra' which comprised violins, double bass, flute, 'clarinet', cornet and piano with Mr McInman.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Hamilton, University of Waikato Archives, Main Street of Te Aroha, 3 August 1908.

<sup>15</sup> 'The Theatre Royal', *Te Aroha News*, 18 December 1912.

<sup>16</sup> I understand the Founders' Theatre in Hamilton charged the local community orchestra, Trust Waikato Symphony Orchestra, the same amount as international touring events.

<sup>17</sup> 'Princess Chrysanthemum', *Te Aroha News*, 3 August 1914; 'The Convent High School', *Te Aroha News*, 7 December 1914.

GOD SAVE THE KING  
**THEATRE ROYAL**  
**FRIDAY, December 4th**  
**JAPANESE GRAND**  
**OPERETTA.**  
 "PRINCESS CHRYSANTHE-  
 MUM."  
 By fully over 120 of the  
 PUPILS and EX-PUPILS of the  
 TE AROHA CONVENT HIGH  
 SCHOOL  
 Special Scenery and Stage Effects.  
 Full Orchestral Accompaniment.  
 PRICES, 3s, 2s and 1s

Figure 64 Advertisement Princess Chrysanthemum, Te Aroha, 1914<sup>18</sup>

The entire production was warmly praised, and the orchestra came in for its own congratulations:

It was staged magnificently, the singing throughout was of a high standard, while the orchestra proved to be a most excellent combination of musicians, and very materially assisted in the triumph attained by the performers.<sup>19</sup>

Please see [Appendix 5 Programme Princess Chrysanthemum](#) for the entire programme of this operetta. Whether the Te Aroha Orchestra continued beyond the First World War or not, it certainly provided much entertainment and was greatly appreciated by the local inhabitants.

## **Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society**

On 20 July 1908 a group of people 'interested in the formation of a musical society' met in the Te Awamutu library, at which it was decided that the group would be known as the Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society.<sup>20</sup> Apart from reports of a committee meeting and hall hire, little more was mentioned in the papers that year apart from an Oddfellows ball held in the Te Awamutu Town Hall. The event 'was considerably enhanced by the orchestra, which consisted of some eight performers, and reflected credit on the Te Awamutu Musical Society, of which the orchestra forms part'.<sup>21</sup> It is

<sup>18</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 5', *Te Aroha News*, 27 November 1914.

<sup>19</sup> 'The Convent High School', *Te Aroha News*, 7 December 1914.

<sup>20</sup> 'District News', *Waikato Times*, 23 July 1908.

<sup>21</sup> 'Te Awamutu', *King Country Chronicle*, 18 September 1908.

assumed that this was a slip of the pen referring to them as the Musical Society rather than the Philharmonic Society, as this had been the name of the previous society set up in 1889.

The AGM in July 1909 year showed a balance of £10 in credit, possibly because of events rather than Philharmonic Society concerts in Te Awamutu.<sup>22</sup> The orchestra 'came cheerfully to the assistance of the Rangiaohia hall committee' in a concert given in March, at which they played overtures at the beginning of each half of the programme and Herr Moeller, the conductor, played a violin solo.<sup>23</sup> In August they played at the Oddfellows ball in Te Awamutu and within a few days the orchestra was involved in a public farewell in the Town Hall to a Mr Vause, where the 'local orchestra also assisted'.<sup>24</sup> The orchestra played at a military social at which there was a concert, where they provided an overture and Herr Moeller a violin solo, followed by a ball, 'excellent music being supplied by the Te Awamutu Orchestra'.<sup>25</sup>

It was not until December 1909 that I have been able to find information about the full Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society giving a concert, apparently their third.<sup>26</sup> This was given before 'a small but very appreciative audience'. The orchestra opened and closed both halves of the programme, and in the middle of each part there was an instrumental item, a clarinet solo in the first half and in the second, a piano solo and a violin duet, this latter featuring Herr Moeller. Interspersed amongst these items were songs, vocal duets and the Philharmonic Society choir. The programme was clearly well organised to provide variety, performance opportunities for several members, and items where the choir and orchestra performed in their respective groups. Herr Moeller's ability conducting the orchestra and, separately, the choir was noted: the 'orchestral and part singing items were all very well rendered under the able conductorship of Herr E. Moeller'.<sup>27</sup>

The following years seem to follow this pattern of the orchestral section of the Philharmonic Society travelling to assist different organisations, and possibly earning money for the society, at different events in the neighbourhood. Clearly, they were

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<sup>22</sup> 'Te Awamutu', *King Country Chronicle*, 26 July 1909.

<sup>23</sup> 'Rangiaohia', *Waikato Argus*, 10 March 1909.

<sup>24</sup> 'Te Awamutu Lodge of Oddfellows', *Waikato Argus*, 6 August 1909; 'Oddfellows Ball at Te Awamutu', *King Country Chronicle*, 9 August 1909; 'Presentation to Mr J.P. Vause', *Waikato Argus*, 12 August 1909.

<sup>25</sup> 'Military Social Te Awamutu', *Waikato Argus*, 30 October 1909.

<sup>26</sup> 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Argus*, 10 December 1909.

<sup>27</sup> 'Concert at Te Awamutu', *King Country Chronicle*, 13 December 1909.

seen as an essential part of their locale, and while it was variously mentioned as Mr or Herr Moeller's orchestra, the Te Awamutu orchestra or, as in one case, the 'Te Awamutu Philmaronic Society' it was clearly the same group of people being conducted by Herr Moeller playing in different townships for different events.<sup>28</sup>

Possibly the multiple outings for the dances in other townships gave Herr Moeller the idea as to the probable success of such an event for the Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society, which he proposed at a committee meeting in August 1911.<sup>29</sup> At a further meeting it was decided to hold a 'plain, fancy and masquerade dance' in the Town Hall by the end of the following month.<sup>30</sup> This was a great success:

What will certainly be remembered as one of the most enjoyable dances held at Te Awamutu during the present season was the plain, fancy, and masquerade dance held on Wednesday in connection with the local Philharmonic Society. There was a very good attendance, which is unquestionable evidence of the popularity of the Society. This is the first dance the Society has arranged, it having hitherto come before the public only on the occasion of the regular concerts.<sup>31</sup>

It is probable that only the orchestra was involved, but this is not made clear in the review. Dancing started at 8.30 with 'about 80 couples on the floor, and from the outset was carried out with a swing that could only be the result of systematic organisation'.<sup>32</sup> With a strong committee committed to the success of the dance the society won praise from all, which could only have increased their standing in their community.

The success of this venture led to a repeat in June 1912. Unfortunately, there was rain so that many 'residents from adjoining districts were unable to attend but despite this there were ninety couples dancing who were all 'pleased with the

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<sup>28</sup> 'Rangiaohia', *Waikato Argus*, 10 May 1910; 'Oddfellows' Third Annual Ball', *King Country Chronicle*, 16 July 1910; 'Otorohanga', *King Country Chronicle*, 21 September 1910; 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Argus*, 30 November 1910; 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Argus*, 9 December 1910; 'Popular Teachers', *Waikato Argus*, 31 March 1911; 'Concert at Te Awamutu', *Waipa Post*, 18 April 1911; 'Local and General', *Waipa Post*, 28 April 1911; 'Dance at Te Awamutu', *Waipa Post*, 2 May 1911; 'Polo Ball-Te Awamutu', *Waipa Post*, 23 June 1911; 'Untitled', *Waipa Post*, 25 July 1911; 'Druids' Dance at Te Awamutu', *Waipa Post*, 1 August 1911; 'Military Ball at Pirongia', *Waipa Post*, 8 August 1911.

<sup>29</sup> 'Local and General', *Waipa Post*, 11 August 1911.

<sup>30</sup> 'Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society', *Waipa Post*, 25 August 1911.

<sup>31</sup> 'Philharmonic Society Dance', *Waipa Post*, 29 September 1911.

<sup>32</sup> 'Philharmonic Society Dance', *Waipa Post*, 29 September 1911.

successful and enjoyable evening's entertainment'.<sup>33</sup> The ball was also held in May the following year.<sup>34</sup>

The AGM of 1912 discussed the rules of the society that allowed four concerts a year to be held. This had not happened previously, and it was hoped that this forthcoming year would provide concerts 'at not more than three-month intervals'.<sup>35</sup> Perhaps this was in response to a suggestion made barely a week earlier at a committee meeting that 'monster combined concerts by the musical societies of Hamilton, Cambridge, and Awamutu' be created, playing once a year in each of the three towns.<sup>36</sup> This has echoes of the reviewer from Te Awamutu of 1874, mentioned in Chapter 3, who thought that with better communications available between different centres such a joint enterprise might be possible. At this meeting 'the secretary was instructed to approach the Hamilton Musical Society with a view to arranging for combined concerts of the two societies'.<sup>37</sup>

Not all the concerts that the Philharmonic Society put on were mentioned or even reviewed in the papers. After the third one at the end of 1909, the fifth concert was put on in September 1910, while the seventh concert by the society was given in July 1911, and the ninth in April 1912.<sup>38</sup> The only other concert, of which I have found records, was given by the full society in December 1913 which followed the well-oiled procedure of orchestral items interspersed with vocal and instrumental solos, including two violin solos from Mr Moeller, as well as some glees that were sung by the members of the society. 'The orchestral selections were especially well rendered, and the playing of the orchestra calls for special mention.'<sup>39</sup>

In the ninth concert of April 1912 there were 17 members in the choir and 13 in the orchestra, all conducted by Mr Moeller. This received compliments from the reviewer who noted that 'if the furthering of the interests of music is the main object of the Society, then without doubt it has, by its recent concerts, fully justified its existence'. He went on to say that the way in which 'each item was rendered reflected credit upon the conductor and showed clearly that under good tuition

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<sup>33</sup> 'Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society', *Waipa Post*, 4 June 1912.

<sup>34</sup> 'Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society', *Waipa Post*, 23 May 1913.

<sup>35</sup> 'Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society', *Waipa Post*, 26 July 1912.

<sup>36</sup> 'Local and General', *Waipa Post*, 16 July 1912.

<sup>37</sup> 'Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society', *Waipa Post*, 26 July 1912.

<sup>38</sup> 'The Waikato Argus, [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly', *Waikato Argus*, 24 September 1910; 'Philharmonic Society Concert', *Waipa Post*, 7 July 1911; 'Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society', *Waipa Post*, 3 May 1912.

<sup>39</sup> 'Philharmonic Concert', *Waipa Post*, 30 December 1913.

Te Awamutu is capable of producing music of a distinctly creditable order'. This shows the importance of a respected leader in a group. For amateurs to raise their level of playing or singing there has to be correction, repetition and private practice. If the conductor is not respected amateurs can leave, unlike professional players. However, the numbers clearly remained stable enough for regular concerts in Te Awamutu or fundraising concerts in the local area to proceed.

In 1912 the Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society took on an enormous project, the staging of the operetta *Princess Chrysanthemum*, composed by C.K. Proctor in 1907. As Adrienne Simpson highlights in her history of New Zealand opera, this genre had a 'pervasive presence' in settler New Zealand. She emphasises that the melodramatic subject matter and 'its amalgam of stage spectacle, music, dance and vocal virtuosity gave it wide appeal across all levels of society'.<sup>40</sup> *Princess Chrysanthemum* certainly contained all these elements, with its narrative of a Japanese princess who is kidnapped by a false Prince and his cat accomplice Saucer Eyes before being rescued by her true love with the aid of Fairy Moonbeam.

Rehearsals started in August with an intention to perform later in the year at the Te Awamutu Town Hall.<sup>41</sup> With such an enormous workload for one performance they 'resolved' to also perform it in Pirongia, Ohaupo, Kihikihi, and Otorohanga, with 'half of the nett proceeds be handed over to the respective school committees for the children's Xmas prize fund'.<sup>42</sup> By mid-November it was reported that the rehearsals had gone well with good attendances by all the 'principals, members of choruses, and orchestra ... New scenery is being painted, and the necessary costumes are being procured'.<sup>43</sup> Mr Moeller rearranged the vocal score for the orchestra, 'but for Mr Moeller's able assistance the players would have been deprived of the valuable services of the orchestra'.<sup>44</sup>

Wednesday last was a red-letter day in the history of local entertainments in Te Awamutu, and the very fine performance by the Philharmonic Society of the Japanese operetta, "Princess Chrysanthemum" will long be remembered

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<sup>40</sup> Adrienne Simpson, *Opera's Farthest Frontier, A History of Professional Opera in New Zealand* (Auckland, New Zealand: Reed, 1996) p. 70.

<sup>41</sup> 'Local and General', *Waipa Post*, 2 August 1912; 'Local and General', *Waipa Post*, 18 October 1912.

<sup>42</sup> 'Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society', *Waipa Post*, 5 November 1912.

<sup>43</sup> 'Local and General', *Waipa Post*, 12 November 1912.

<sup>44</sup> 'Local and General', *Waipa Post*, 29 November 1912.

as having been at the same time one of the most ambitious, and most successful of local productions.<sup>45</sup>

With a full hall owing to the 'great interest taken in the first production of opera in Te Awamutu for many years' and with the weather being 'favourable', the audience was treated to an experience that the 'Town Hall stage has rarely if ever displayed'. The Philharmonic vocalists numbered 28 and the orchestra 13: 'many beautiful selections were played by the orchestra under the able baton of Mr E. Moeller'.<sup>46</sup>

The performances were also highly praised in the other centres to which they travelled. In Kihikihi, it was claimed that 'rarely if ever has Kihikihi experienced such a treat in the musical line, and the Society has every reason to be proud of the performance'. The 'overture, introduction, ... instrumental prelude, and numerous accompaniments were played by the orchestra ... and the Society may well be proud of the performance of its orchestral branch'. It seems as if almost everyone travelled to each performance as in this case there were 12 members of the orchestra attending.<sup>47</sup> Such an operation would cost the organisation, not just for the scenery and props but also the travel required to transport the orchestra by train to each venue.<sup>48</sup> The gross receipts were approximately £70 with expenses of nearly £48, but nevertheless 'the financial result of the tour was considered very satisfactory' by the committee. As a reflection of the magnitude of their profits, it can be noted that at that meeting they 'resolved that the conductor be paid an honorarium of £15 per annum'.<sup>49</sup> It was well deserved.

The following photograph was taken in on 27 November 1912 while performing *Princess Chrysanthemum*. Apart from the cast, Mr Moeller is shown in the back row fifth from the right. His wife is the lady at the front on the right.

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<sup>45</sup> 'Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society', *Waipa Post*, 29 November 1912.

<sup>46</sup> 'Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society', *Waipa Post*, 29 November 1912.

<sup>47</sup> 'Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society: Visit to Kihikihi', *Waipa Post*, 10 December 1912.

<sup>48</sup> 'Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society', *Waipa Post*, 13 December 1912.

<sup>49</sup> 'Philharmonic Society', *Waipa Post*, 4 February 1913.



Figure 65 Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society, 1912<sup>50</sup>

After this the society did not perform in public for a year, and this was the full Philharmonic Society concert, as mentioned above, held in December 1913.<sup>51</sup> Perhaps because of the success of their operetta the members of the society numbered 91 in September 1913.<sup>52</sup> Despite the enormous support both within the society and outside it, there were no more performances other than those outlined above. They tried to prepare another operetta, *The Magic Ruby*, but there was little enthusiasm for it, and then they tried another, *The Missing Duke*, for which they could not find enough copies.<sup>53</sup>

The orchestra did support other fundraising objectives but the society as such is not mentioned as giving a performance again. However, the final outing of the year

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<sup>50</sup> 'Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society', (Te Awamutu: Te Awamutu Museum Collection, 1912), <<https://collection.tamuseum.org.nz/objects/18872/te-awamutu-philharmonic-society>>

<sup>51</sup> 'Local and General', *Waipa Post*, 12 December 1913.

<sup>52</sup> 'Te Awamutu Philharmonic Society', *Waikato Argus*, 25 September 1913.

<sup>53</sup> 'Local and General', *Waipa Post*, 4 April 1913; 'Philharmonic Society', *Waipa Post*, 27 June 1913; 'Local and General', *Waipa Post*, 20 January 1914; 'Philharmonic Society', *Waipa Post*, 27 February 1914.

1914 had the orchestra providing a selection for the Belgian Relief Concert.<sup>54</sup> It is likely that the outbreak of World War I affected the viability of the Society.

## Cambridge Orchestral Society

The interval during which the Cambridge Orchestral Society did not perform was acknowledged in the press, thus suggesting it was not due to a lack of newspaper reportage. A notice about their first concert in 1905 included 'this is the first time in five years that the society has appealed to the musical public ... With the assistance of Auckland friends, the orchestra ... will comprise twenty instrumentalists. The inclusion of Auckland musicians suggests a real desire to make a good impression on the Cambridge public. They were successful in this: 'On the whole the orchestra showed good balance, firmness and tone.' The reviewer was particularly pleased with the turnout for the concert. There had been a cantata performed just a few days earlier which also had a large attendance, the reviewer commenting that 'it is highly satisfactory to find vocal and instrumental music so much appreciated here'. He went on to suggest that 'this should be an incentive to the members of both organisations to appear more frequently in public'.<sup>55</sup>

The society did indeed play more frequently in public and an advertised rehearsal the following year asked the members to turn up punctually as 'the Society [was] booked for several engagements'.<sup>56</sup> At this time it had eighteen players.<sup>57</sup> These outings sometimes involved the orchestra playing as an adjunct to an event in aid of a particular cause, such as the Cambridge Dramatic Society's production of *The Ticket of Leave Man* which was raising money for the 'Waikato Central Agricultural Association's Grandstand Debenture Fund, where they 'were in grand form and were loudly applauded'.<sup>58</sup> Many other performances with different groups and events followed that year.<sup>59</sup> This highlights both the increasingly embedded

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<sup>54</sup> 'Entertainments', *Waipa Post*, 11 December 1914.

<sup>55</sup> 'Orchestral Society's Concert', *Waikato Independent*, 6 June 1905.

<sup>56</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 20 March 1906.

<sup>57</sup> 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 7 June 1906.

<sup>58</sup> 'The Show Nights', *Waikato Independent*, 3 March 1906; 'Dramatic Performance At Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 9 March 1906.

<sup>59</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 29 March 1906. 'Cambridge Chrysanthemum And Root Show', *Waikato Times*, 21 April 1906. 'Farewell Concert', *Waikato Independent*, 12 May 1906. 'Men's Smoke Concert', *Waikato Independent*, 24 May 1906. 'Waikato Farmers' Club Social', *Waikato Independent*, 10 July 1906. 'Archidiaconal Conference At Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 29 August 1906. 'Lecture At

nature of the societies in the wider community, and the value those communities placed on those societies.

The society also took part in a concert with the Hamilton Orchestral Society 'under the able conductorship of Mr H. Tutchska'.<sup>60</sup> This shows the enduring and reciprocal relationship between the musicians of these towns. Mr Edwards, the conductor of the Cambridge Orchestral Society since 1898, moved to Gisborne at the end of 1906 and never again did the orchestra play so many concerts in one year.<sup>61</sup> This again underlines how the presence of a key person affects the quality and quantity of musical output. However, it must also be noted that the orchestra did continue to a lesser degree.

From 1907 the Society's performances were a little sporadic, perhaps because of frequent changes of conductor. In 1907 the orchestra was conducted by Mr Stewart and Mr Gibbs and then there is no mention of it until 1909.<sup>62</sup> In 1909 and 1910 they were conducted by Mme Isherwood, at whose residence they also rehearsed.<sup>63</sup> What a newspaper terms 'a resuscitation' was attempted in 1911 under Mr Boyce when they played for the 'Cambridge Chrysanthemum and Root Show' and the 'Rose and Fancy Fair'.<sup>64</sup>

Another revival was attempted in 1913 when it was hoped the orchestra, 'which once did yeoman service in Cambridge', could be prevailed upon to play at the Chrysanthemum and Produce Show.<sup>65</sup> Mr Boyce Junior was pressed into service as conductor.<sup>66</sup> The reporter of this commented that:

There are plenty of instrumentalists in Cambridge to form a good orchestral society and it is hoped success will attend the efforts to establish a really efficient orchestra in the town. The lack of such a society has been greatly felt

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Cambridge', *Waikato Times*, 7 September 1906. 'Euchre Party And Dance', *Waikato Independent*, 13 September 1906. 'Trinity Presbyterian Church', *Waikato Independent*, 15 November 1906.

<sup>60</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 9 August 1906.

<sup>61</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 11 December 1906.

<sup>62</sup> 'Waikato Central Show', *Waikato Argus*, 7 March 1907; 'St. Andrew's Rose Show And Fancy Fair', *Waikato Independent*, 7 December 1907.

<sup>63</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 11 February 1909. 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Tuesday, June 29, 1909.', *Waikato Argus*, 29 June 1909. 'Local And General', *Waikato Independent*, 19 April 1910.

<sup>64</sup> 'Local And General', *Waikato Independent*, 16 March 1911; 'The Waikato Argus, [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Tuesday April 25, 1911', *Waikato Argus*, 25 April 1911; 'Local And General', *Waikato Independent*, 11 November 1911.

<sup>65</sup> 'Chrysanthemum And Produce Show', *Waikato Independent*, 5 April 1913.

<sup>66</sup> 'The Waikato Argus. [PUBLISHED DAILY] Tuesday, July 8, 1913', *Waikato Argus*, 8 July 1913.

of late, but that want will cease to exist if the members will be regular in their attendance at practices.

There had been mention of instrumentalists in Cambridge in 1911, when, during the hopes of restoring the Cambridge Orchestral Society, it was felt that 'there will doubtless be a strong muster of new members, for many musicians have lately come to reside in Cambridge'.<sup>67</sup> Apart from a concert at the Sanatorium in that year, 1913, and a request for rehearsal attendance the following year, there is no other record of the Cambridge Orchestral Society.<sup>68</sup> This is probably because the outbreak of World War I in 1914 caused a shift in priorities as well as in the balance of society.

It is unclear why, if these musicians existed, there was no continuation of the society in these latter years. The intermittent performances of the Cambridge Orchestral society underscore my hypothesis that despite support and encouragement from other people in the community but without a charismatic leader an orchestra is without direction and ceases to exist.

## **Hamilton Orchestral Society**

The situation was more complex in Hamilton, with conflicting evidence of the Society's existence in the period from 1901-1905. The photograph below shows the Hamilton Orchestral Society and is dated c.1903. I suggest that it is more likely to be from about 1906 based on the age of the conductor. It is likely that this is Mr Tutschka, highlighted in Chapter 6, who conducted the orchestra in 1906. At the time he was a relatively young man. On the other hand, it could be Mr Tudehope who conducted the Hamilton Harmonic Society briefly in 1901, before moving to Cambridge, which in this case would suggest the orchestra is misnamed.

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<sup>67</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Saturday March 18, 1911.', *Waikato Argus*, 18 March 1911.

<sup>68</sup> 'Local and General', *Waikato Independent*, 21 October 1913; 'The Waikato Independent. Saturday, May 16, 1914. Local And General', *Waikato Independent*, 16 May 1914.



Figure 66 Photograph Hamilton Orchestral Society, 1903<sup>69</sup>

However, this photograph is significant for both its proof of the 19 strong nature of the orchestra and for the evidence it provides of a virtual gender balance of performers. There are no newspaper records of performances in 1901, 1902, or 1903. The society was mentioned in 1904, and this may have been in preparation for the opening of the Hamilton Town Hall in March 1905.

The Hamilton Town Hall opening was certainly an auspicious occasion for the orchestra as the 'Right Hon. E. J. Seddon, Premier of the colony' declared the hall open. For the orchestra to be deemed worthy of such an honour shows the high regard in which it was held. A 'musical programme was then rendered under the direction of Mr A. E. Savage', in which the orchestral society played a march at the beginning and at the end of the concert, and, interspersed with some songs, violin and banjo solos were performed.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Hamilton, University of Waikato Archives, Historical Photos of the Waikato and New Zealand, Hamilton Orchestral Society c 1903, 530.12 PgH [211].

<sup>70</sup> 'The Premier at Hamilton', *Waikato Times*, 23 March 1905.



Figure 67 Photograph Hamilton Town Hall Official Opening, 1905<sup>71</sup>

Mr Savage was an extremely busy man that year as the Hamilton Orchestral Union, conducted by him, performed several times. He was already the bandmaster of the Hamilton Town Band, and now the Orchestral Society was under his baton. This latter gave several concerts in 1905.<sup>72</sup> At this time, a highly rated musician, Mrs Langley Shaw, who is profiled in Chapter 6, came to the fore. Hitherto she had been an accompanist to various pieces in other concerts, but now there was the orchestra she became its leader. She and Mr Savage often contributed duets and other solo items in these concerts and their music making must have been a great pleasure to both the performers and the audience. It would be tempting to believe that it was this combination of quality music making that ensured the survival of the Hamilton

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<sup>71</sup> 'Town Hall Official Opening', (Hamilton: Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, 1905), <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/objects/48/opening-of-the-hamilton-town-hall>>

<sup>72</sup> 'Concert At Hamilton', *Waikato Times*, 20 May 1905. 'The Waikato Argus [Published Daily.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 7500 Weekly. Tuesday, August 8, 1905', *Waikato Argus*, 8 August 1905. 'Dramatic Performance At Hamilton', *Waikato Times*, 1 September 1905. 'The Waikato Times, Thames Valley Gazette, And Kawhia Advocate. Established Thirty-Three Years. The Oldest Daily Newspaper In The Waikato. The Largest Circulation Of Any Daily Paper South Of Auckland. Saturday, October 7, 1905. Local And General.', *Waikato Times*, 7 October 1905. 'Entertainments On Show', *Waikato Argus*, 10 November 1905.

Orchestral Society for several more years. However, Mr Savage was no longer the conductor of the orchestra in the years following. Mr Tutschka was appointed conductor in 1906, and the orchestra's first concert came off in August.

Mr Tutschka had connections to Auckland and with the committee's blessing 'secure[d] the services of Mr Hamilton Hodges' for the upcoming concert.<sup>73</sup> In addition, a network of sustained musical connections in the region was beginning to emerge and the orchestra was 'considerably augmented by members of the Cambridge Society'.<sup>74</sup> Both of these examples show the effect of an inspirational leader able to encourage, as it turned out, 32 instrumentalists, including 13 from Cambridge and attract a worthy and talented soloist.

The reviewers' comments are illuminating. One described the orchestra as having given a 'finished rendering of the four pieces allotted to it'.<sup>75</sup> Another was more effusive:

never have music lovers listened to such a local production as the concert given last night in the Town Hall by the Hamilton Orchestral Society. The first appearance, under the baton of Mr H. J. Tutschka, was naturally a matter for some conjecture, but all is now glorious certainty, as on all sides congratulations were showered on the conductor by a delighted dilettanti [sic].<sup>76</sup>

This latter reviewer also added some further comments. He stated that the orchestral selections were 'the more enjoyable part of the programme' commenting that 'every instrumentalist put his or her best work into the matter, and, kept well in hand, gave a pleasing interpretation of the four pieces played'. He also provided a list of the players showing in the strings, 17 violinists, with viola, cello and bass represented. The woodwind comprised flute and clarionets and the brass included cornets, horns, trombone, drums, and as ever there was a 'pianiste' (Miss Newell). With the addition of players from the Cambridge Orchestral Society there was what would nowadays be considered quite a spread of instruments in an amateur society.

The question of the varying fortunes of previous orchestral societies was also broached:

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<sup>73</sup> 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 18 July 1906.

<sup>74</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 6 August 1906.

<sup>75</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 9 August 1906.

<sup>76</sup> 'Orchestral Concert', *Waikato Times*, 9 August 1906.

Hamilton has in bygone years heard many concerts given by now defunct orchestral societies, that for several reasons have not remained in existence for any length of time. But, if the quality of their music is any criticism the present society is a permanency.

He went on to say that 'the material is there, the numbers are there, and by united efforts much more intricate and pretentious music can be mastered'. This reviewer finished his critique in encouraging style; 'we look forward with confidence and lively anticipation to some real musical treats'.<sup>77</sup>

The orchestra continued to give a variety of concerts with the mainstay of Mrs Langley Ward as leader and Mr Tutschka as conductor until the end of the year. Yet again, this highlights the presence and importance of key people. Their last concert together featured, amongst other offerings, a string quartet with Mrs Langley Shaw, Mr Tutschka, Mr Meachem, and Mr Edgecumbe playing *Marche Militaire* by Schubert and an encore *A La Hungroise* [sic]. Mr H. Tutschka, was presented with 'a silver-mounted baton as an appreciation of his efforts on behalf of the society' prior to his departure for Wellington.<sup>78</sup>

A different conductor may have led to the fact that there is mention of several 'practices' at the beginning of 1907 but no reported concert.<sup>79</sup> Does this indicate that the orchestra was attempting to advertise that it still existed? Perhaps the number of rehearsals was in stark contrast to previous concerts. Did this number of practices prevent musicians from joining the group? Maybe it was simply that after such quality music making with Mr Tutschka it was felt by many that this quality could not be repeated and was better left alone.

In 1908 a group of people decided to "form" the Hamilton Orchestral Society.<sup>80</sup> Twenty members were immediately enrolled, and others invited to join the society. The mention of Mr S. Riley in the advertisement could have led many to hope for good quality playing again. He was an organist from England who had already made a musical name for himself.

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<sup>77</sup> 'Orchestral Concert', *Waikato Times*, 9 August 1906.

<sup>78</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 18 October 1906.

<sup>79</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 20 February 1907. 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 26 February 1907. 'Local And General', *Waikato Times*, 27 February 1907. 'Local And General', *Waikato Times*, 12 March 1907. 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 9 April 1907.

<sup>80</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 19 June 1908.

# HAMILTON ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY.

Ladies and Gentlemen desirous of joining the above Society should communicate with MR S. RILEY, Hon. Conductor, at once.

Figure 68 Hamilton Orchestral Society advertisement for players<sup>81</sup>

By the end of the year the society produced a very successful concert, 'one of the best ever presented to a Hamilton audience'. Their programming was bold, starting with a 'selection from *Tannhauser*... This was magnificently played, the opening theme receiving a correct interpretation'. There were also violin solos and duets and cello solos by visiting musicians from Auckland, and the orchestra was led by Mrs Langley Shaw who also played some of the piano accompaniments. The reviewer concluded:

we must add a few words of praise to the excellent work of the orchestra, which, as an organisation only recently established, shows promise of taking a high place in the standard of orchestral work in the Dominion. Mr S. Riley, the indefatigable and enthusiastic conductor, has had a wide experience in matters musical, and under his guidance and tuition the orchestra should become a permanent and successful organisation. The items played last night were ambitious, but the performance fully justified their selection. We hope the public will give unstinted support, financial and otherwise, to make this orchestra a permanent and useful organisation in the town.<sup>82</sup>

This conclusion is prescient. It acknowledges the quality and value of the orchestra to the town and makes the case for the need for support of such an organisation.

This was borne out the following year when the orchestra put on a fine performance but made a financial loss. They had advertised a concert frequently in the papers and one such article appealed to the populace for support: 'A programme

<sup>81</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 4', *Waikato Argus*, 20 June 1908.

<sup>82</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 13 November 1908.

will be presented that will appeal to all classes of the community, classical as well as popular items being included in the selections'. The article went on to say that there would be visiting artistes from Auckland (including a humourist).<sup>83</sup> A couple of days later another article suggested that the prices were reasonable, and the following day an article about the forthcoming concert talked about there being an orchestra of over 30 players that would play 'popular as well as classical items':

We trust the people of Hamilton will roll up in great numbers on this occasion, and thus encourage the Hamilton Orchestral Society in its endeavour to develop musical taste in the town.<sup>84</sup>

This attempt to appeal to all potential audience members is possibly at odds with the effort to develop 'musical taste'. Would all readers of the paper be amenable to having their musical preference developed? It appears condescending to readers today, but maybe those hoping to raise themselves in society would appreciate this guidance? However, one could imagine this may have dissuaded some people from attending.

Similar sentiments of appealing to all classes of society appeared the following day. This article also noted that it was a worthy amateur organisation whose existence was solely predicated on 'the development of the musical taste of the town', and exhorted readers to ensure that the orchestra had a crowded house.<sup>85</sup> The committee appears to have been striving overtime to ensure that people were aware of the concert. Perhaps the advance ticket sales were not going well, perhaps the fees for the Auckland visitors were uncomfortably high, perhaps there was a groundswell against classical music concerts.

The concert made a financial loss of about £5.<sup>86</sup> Artistically it was a success, but 'unfortunately the weather was extremely unfavourable, and in consequence there was only limited attendance'.<sup>87</sup> *The Argus* thundered:

What could be more disheartening than this? The society are not an exclusive band of musicians who work with the object of making money for themselves;

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<sup>83</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 27 March 1909.

<sup>84</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Monday, March 29, 1909', *Waikato Argus*, 29 March 1909; 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Tuesday, March 30, 1909', *Waikato Argus*, 30 March 1909.

<sup>85</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 31 March 1909.

<sup>86</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 2 April 1909.

<sup>87</sup> 'Country News', *New Zealand Herald*, 2 April 1909.

they are actuated purely by a love of music and are prepared to place their talents at the disposal of every local institution, and there is not a more public spirited combination in the place. Under these circumstances does it not seem a standing disgrace to this town that their efforts are not commensurately rewarded?<sup>88</sup>

However, it was a “blessing in disguise” as this led to putting the society on a firmer financial footing.

An initiative to have members of the community become patrons of the orchestra helped to ease the financial woes. Some people became patrons at a guinea, and ‘honorary members’ paid 10s 6d. With the society planning ‘to give three concerts a year’, this was seen as both a ‘good’ investment and a way of supporting a ‘worthy’ cause.<sup>89</sup> After playing at a valedictory concert and for the Waikato Winter Show, the Hamilton Orchestral Society played their first subscription concert in the Town Hall at the end of August.<sup>90</sup> As before, the articles in the days leading up to the concert referenced the attraction to ‘all the lovers of music in the town’, that it ‘should appeal to all classes of the community’, and that the society ‘is deserving of strong support by the townspeople’.<sup>91</sup> The final article not only talked about the ‘very choice programme ... consisting mainly of instrumental items which should give the players an excellent opportunity of demonstrating the great progress they have made since their last entertainment’, but also informed their readers that

it might be mentioned that a good deal of public sympathy has latterly been aroused by the society, and as the result of an appeal made for subscribers over £50 worth of tickets were disposed of.<sup>92</sup>

This figure suggests that at least 100 people became subscribers. That number, although many, is still some way off the 600-700 that would fill the hall.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 2 April 1909. (Argus 2 4 09)

<sup>89</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Thursday, April 14, 1909', *Waikato Argus*, 15 April 1909.

<sup>90</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 2 June 1909; 'The Winter Show', *Waikato Argus*, 6 July 1909; 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Tuesday, August 24, 1909', *Waikato Argus*, 24 August 1909.

<sup>91</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Wednesday, August 25, 1909.', *Waikato Argus*, 25 August 1909; 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Thursday, August 26, 1909.', *Waikato Argus*, 26 August 1909; 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Saturday. August 28, 1909', *Waikato Argus*, 28 August 1909.

<sup>92</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 31 August 1909.

<sup>93</sup> 'The Premier at Hamilton', *Waikato Times*, 23 March 1905. (1905, WT)

However, the concert received encomiums from a visiting Trinity College examiner, who considered the 'artistic success ... far beyond anything I thought possible twelve months ago ... what appealed to me with so much force, they played in tune!' After commenting favourably on some Tchaikovsky, he continued:

After this came a surprise - 'The Surprise Symphony' to wit. In England this is the battle horse of all young orchestral societies, and we are so used to it that I really think the only way we could secure the necessary effect to still justify the title would be to omit the well expected crash. But Hamiltonians are not so blasé, and it was refreshing to me to see half the audience leap out of their chairs with alarm when, with admirable precision, the naïve effect was rendered.

His discussion of the programme finished with him congratulating 'Hamilton on having so earnest a body of music lovers in its midst'. He singled out the strings:

They gave me much pleasure, not only by playing in tune, as I said above, but by the precision and excellence of their bowing, in which they certainly have a graceful example in the lady who plays principal first.

Mr Riley, the conductor, was much praised, and 'the only fault I can find with him is that he worked ten times as hard as anyone else, and ought to be reported to some union for it'.<sup>94</sup>

The photograph below shows the Hamilton Orchestral Society with no date attached to the photograph. Because of the variety of instruments and the age of the conductor it is likely to be with Mr Riley, the conductor, and the orchestra around 1910.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 1 September 1909.

<sup>95</sup> Mr Riley was an older conductor compared to the previous ones, hence my assumption.



Figure 69 Hamilton Orchestral Society n.d.<sup>96</sup>

The second subscription concert came off in December and this time featured visitors from Auckland. It can be noted that there were 25 players in the orchestra. Like the previous concert the orchestral items tended to be far more classical in nature - Mozart, Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, Verdi - while the singers in the programme offered more accessible items to appeal to a wider audience.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', (Hamilton: Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, n.d.), <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/objects/779/hamilton-orchestral-society>>

<sup>97</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 15 December 1909.

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HAMILTON ORCHESTRAL  
SOCIETY.

SECOND SUBSCRIPTION  
CONCERT,  
Town Hall, Hamilton,  
WEDNESDAY, 15th DECEMBER,  
1909.

Mrs McKinnon      Soprano  
Mr A. W. Shaw      Baritone  
Mr S. Jackson, Solo Clarionet  
Full Orchestra of 25 performers.

Prices: 3s, 2s and 1s.

Doors open at 7.30.      Concert at 8.

Plan at Paul's Book Arcade.

Figure 70 Advertisement Hamilton Orchestral Society Subscription Concert, 1909<sup>98</sup>

The audience was described as 'fair', but the reviewer felt that there was more appreciation for orchestral music than before and that the conductor, Mr Riley, was 'slowly, but very surely, ridding Hamilton of that reproach—perhaps well deserved—as being a most unmusical town'. He went on to say that:

The society is doing good work in presenting to the public orchestral music in a land where there are no professional orchestras, and every lover of music should encourage their efforts.<sup>99</sup>

The Hamilton Orchestral Society can be seen therefore as of fundamental importance in spreading knowledge about and interest in orchestral music in Hamilton and surrounds.

Mr Riley continued to conduct in 1910 but had to step down because of ill health. Fortunately, Mr Towsey and his wife, Miss Mary Cooper [stage name], who are profiled in Chapter 6, arrived in Hamilton that year and the Orchestral Society lost no time in utilising their talents and contacts. At the December concert they both performed along with a friend, Mr Farrow, a bass singer, 'the high reputation of these

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<sup>98</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 4', *Waikato Argus*, 11 December 1909.

<sup>99</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 16 December 1909.

artists augurs well for the concert'.<sup>100</sup> The April subscription concert of 1911 showed a remarkably classical programme in its pieces – *Tancredi*, *Mignon* Gavotte, the last movement of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* and the Minuet and Trio from Mozart's *Eb Symphony*, which was encored. The reviewer remarked that, 'the orchestra played with a swing and finish that reflects credit upon the conductor, Mr Cyril Towsey, who has every instrument under the control of his baton'. The writer also noted that the 'concert was well received by the audience which appears to be fast appreciating good music'.<sup>101</sup> It had been somewhat of a trial in the early days of encouraging people to listen to a purely classical concert, now it seems that the audience was well versed in the etiquette and enjoyed the music for its own sake.

The orchestra continued to search for new players by placing advertisements in the local papers. One such is this which was posted almost immediately after the above-mentioned concert: 'Instrumentalists are invited to become active members of the Hamilton Orchestral Society. All instruments are required to strengthen the society in anticipation of performing some very excellent works'.<sup>102</sup> The article also mentions that there were weekly practices under Mr Towsey's direction. Whether this increased the numbers is not known as there was no prior information, but by the third subscription concert there were 26 players on stage in the orchestra: the strings comprised five 1<sup>st</sup> violins, eight 2<sup>nd</sup> violins, one viola, one cello, two double basses, the woodwind included two flutes, two clarinets, one oboe, and the brass was two cornets and one baritone [presumably either a saxophone or trombone, hence the placing here in the list]. There was also an accompanist as well as Mr Towsey, the conductor. Furthermore, this July concert included some opera – the orchestra played excerpts from *Il Trovatore* – as well as the two Auckland singers presenting solos from operas. The reviewer remarked that 'since their last appearance the orchestra has made considerable progress under the leadership of Mr Cyril Towsey, and their performance last evening was a distinct advance on anything they have yet attempted'.<sup>103</sup>

It was not just Mr Towsey's links with Auckland singers that increased the variety of the work of the Hamilton Orchestral Society, but also his local connections;

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<sup>100</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Monday, November 28, 1910', *Waikato Argus*, 28 November 1910.

<sup>101</sup> 'The Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 21 April 1911.

<sup>102</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 13 May 1911.

<sup>103</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 21 July 1911.

he conducted the Hamilton Choral Society. The Hamilton Orchestral Society had played with the Hamilton Choral Society in 1889, its first mention in the papers. Again, in 1908, under the baton of Mr Riley, the two societies joined forces. On this occasion, in 1911, the work was the *Ancient Mariner* and the 'chorus of 60 voices have during the last three months been working very assiduously under the tuition of Mr Cyril Towsey'.<sup>104</sup> As shown in the advertisement below Mr Towsey's wife also performed.

**H**AMILTON CHORAL SOCIETY  
 Town Hall, Hamilton,  
**TO-NIGHT!**  
**TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 1911,**  
 At 8 p.m.  
**"THE ANCIENT MARINER,"**  
 BY  
 Chorus of **60** Voices,  
 ASSISTED BY  
 MISS MARY COOPER SOPRANO  
 MR W ASPINAL ... TENOR  
 MR A. W. SHAW ... BARITONE  
 AND  
 The Hamilton Orchestral Society.  
 Conductor ... Mr Cyril Towsey  
 Prices: 3/-, 2/- and 1/-.

Figure 71 Advertisement: *The Ancient Mariner* 1911<sup>105</sup>

Sadly, there appears to be no review of this performance, which must have been a huge undertaking with the full choir and orchestra on stage.

Under Mr Towsey the orchestra continued with the tradition of supporting local events and fund raisers, for example for the Polo Club, at which Mrs Towsey also sang, for the Fire Brigade at which the orchestra played incidental music, for the Summer Flower Show and again for the Waikato A&P show:<sup>106</sup>

<sup>104</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 2 August 1911.

<sup>105</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 3', *Waikato Argus*, 8 August 1911.

<sup>106</sup> 'The Waikato Argus, [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Saturday, August 26, 1911', *Waikato Argus*, 26 August 1911; 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 2 September 1911; 'Amusements', *Waikato Times*, 2 November 1911; 'Day by Day', *Waikato Times*, 27 November 1911; 'Hamilton Comus Club', *Waikato Times*, 21 October 1911.

**Amusements.**

SHOW NIGHT'S ATTRACTION.

TOWN HALL HAMILTON

TO-MORROW AND WEDNESDAY  
(NOVEMBER 7 and 8),

At 8 o'clock,

THE HAMILTON COMUS CLUB

In

Byron's favorite 3-Act Comedy,

"NOT SUCH A FOOL  
AS HE LOOKS."

Papers Past | Newspapers |  
1911 | Page 5 Advertiseme

"I won't have any more fathers;  
it seems to me it's been raining  
father and mothers for the last two  
years!"

INCIDENTAL MUSIC BY HAMIL-  
TON ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY.  
COME AND ENJOY A HEARTY  
LAUGH.

Proceeds in aid of Waikato A. and  
P. Association.

PRICES—3s, 2s and 1s; Box Plan  
now open at Paul's Book Arcade.

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Figure 72 Advertisement Not such a Fool as He Looks 1911<sup>107</sup>

This outing was in aid of the Waikato Agricultural and Pastoral Association, and the Comus club, with which it may be remembered that Mr Bell was involved, chose the 'eccentric comedy' written by Henry J. Byron in 1867.<sup>108</sup> Although the Hamilton Orchestral Society played 'Incidental Music' they were not critiqued in the reviews.<sup>109</sup>

This was followed by their First Subscription concert for the year December 1911 - December 1912.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>107</sup> 'Page 5 Advertisements Column 5', *Waikato Times*, 6 November 1911.

<sup>108</sup> 'Not Such a Fool as He Looks', *Waikato Argus*, 9 November 1911.

<sup>109</sup> 'Amusements', *Waikato Times*, 8 November 1911.

<sup>110</sup> 'Licensing in Britain', *The Waikato Times*, 12 December 1911.

Entertainments.

TOWN HALL, HAMILTON.

DECEMBER 12th, 1911, at 8 p.m.

HAMILTON ORCHESTRAL  
SOCIETY.

FIRST SUBSCRIPTION  
CONCERT

(3rd Season.)

PROGRAMME—PART I.

Overture, "Son and Stranger,"  
Orchestra.

Duett, "Trip, Trip, Top," Miss  
Madoline Knight and Mr Wilfred  
Manning.

Song, "The Toreador Song," from  
Carmen, Mr Wilfred Manning.

Ballet Music, "Rosamond," Orchestra  
Song, "Che Faro" from "Orpheo,"  
Miss Madoline Knight.

Selection, "Yeomen of the Guard,"  
Orchestra.

PART II.

Overture, "Rienzi," Orchestra.

Song, "A Summer Night," Miss  
Madoline Knight.

Song, (A) "Had a Horse," (B)  
"Sincerity (My Friend)," Mr  
Manning.

Piano Solo, "Ballad in A Flat," Mr  
Cyril Towsey.

Duett, "Venetian Song," Miss Mado-  
line Knight and Mr Wilfred  
Manning.

Minuet, Trio and Finale from the B  
Flat Symphony, Orchestra.

PRICES—3s, 2s, and 1s. Box Plan  
at Paul's. 547

Figure 73 Programme 1st subscription concert December 1911<sup>111</sup>

As usual the orchestra played selections throughout the concert, this time including some Gilbert and Sullivan. Mr Towsey conducted the orchestra and accompanied the singers. It appears that the weather was 'wretched'. One reviewer commented:

<sup>111</sup> 'Page 5 Advertisements Column 7', *Waikato Times*, 9 December 1911.

True to tradition, the tears of the offended (or otherwise) gods fell on the occasion of the initial concert of the Orchestral Society's third season, it having become almost a dependable date for bad weather; for mud and music are freely bracketed in local musical circles.<sup>112</sup>

Another wrote that of the ten concerts that had been given by the society they had created a record, 'only one occasion have they had a fine night. If this can be beaten, we would like to hear by whom'.<sup>113</sup> This affected audience size of course, as shown in Chapter 2, but in general the listeners were pleased by what was on offer, although the reviewer had some choice comments to make about some of the orchestral performance: 'it may be news to some ... but it is generally reckoned a safe rule for every instrument to be in tune before and throughout the rendering of all items'. The review became even more scathing as it progressed:

A word in passing about the presiding genius over the drums (to say nothing of his diminutive assistant). We would beg of him to keep down a little more in certain parts. Against the rasping brass in certain passages the crash of drums and cymbals prepared one for the deafening debacle which arrived on more than one occasion last evening.<sup>114</sup>

It is hard to imagine how Mr Towsey, who had mixed with Europe's best musicians, kept up his enthusiasm for conducting this orchestra. He later showed his real feelings in a concert given by Auckland Orphans' Club Orchestra which was hosted by the Hamilton Orchestral Society in the Town Hall in 1913. When replying to a toast he said, 'the concert was the first occasion on which he had thoroughly enjoyed orchestral music since leaving the Old Country'.<sup>115</sup> It certainly shows that he had true community spirit and resilience to continue to conduct in spite of these clear difficulties for him.

By the end of this year, 1911, the orchestra had played in at least eight different events which shows enormous dedication and a huge amount of work by both conductor and orchestra. Mr Towsey's piano playing and in the next two years, his wife's solos, are doubtless reasons for the sizeable audiences for the Hamilton

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<sup>112</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Times*, 13 December 1911.

<sup>113</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 13 December 1911.

<sup>114</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Times*, 13 December 1911.

<sup>115</sup> 'Orphan's Club Orchestral Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 27 September 1913.

Orchestral Society. But they also had a substantial following with record ticket sales in 1913:

Never in Hamilton's history has such a record been attained; 300 seats booked in one day is reported from the booking office for next Tuesday night's orchestral concert.<sup>116</sup>

The following years continued in similar vein with subscription concerts three times a year, and these continued up until October 1914 after the beginning of the First World War.<sup>117</sup> They also played incidental music for the Comus Club plays which were in aid of local causes, for example:

**SHOW NIGHT ATTRACTION.**  
**TOWN HALL, HAMILTON**  
TOMORROW (TUESDAY) AND  
WEDNESDAY,  
NOVEMBER 12 and 13.

**The Hamilton Comus Club**  
In that Most Amusing Farcical Comedy,  
"The Strange Adventures of  
Miss Brown."  
Three Acts of Laughter.  
(A Cast of 17 Ladies and Gentlemen).  
IN AID OF LOCAL INSTITUTIONS.

MUSIC by HAMILTON ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY.  
Overture at 8 p.m.

Prices: 3s, 2s and 1s. Box Plan now  
rapidly filling at Paul's Book Arcade.

Figure 74 advertisement Comus Club 1912<sup>118</sup>

Again in 1913 they twice supported the Comus Club.<sup>119</sup> Music was played at different events as well such as the Winter Show, for the Hamilton Beautifying Society, and for the opening of the new Catholic church in Hamilton, in 1912.<sup>120</sup> There is little

<sup>116</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 17 May 1913.

<sup>117</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 29 March 1912; 'The Hamilton Orchestral Society's Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 21 August 1912; 'Amusements', *Waikato Times*, 4 December 1912; 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 21 May 1913; 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 17 September 1913; 'Hamilton Orchestral Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 27 May 1914; 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 24 October 1914.

<sup>118</sup> 'Page 1 Advertisements Column 5', *Waikato Times*, 11 November 1912.

<sup>119</sup> 'Ann', *Waikato Argus*, 3 December 1913; 'Niobe', *Waikato Argus*, 5 July 1913.

<sup>120</sup> 'The Opening Day', *Waikato Argus*, 5 June 1912; 'A Night with the Classics', *Waikato Argus*, 24 August 1912; 'The Church of the Rosary, Hamilton', *Waikato Argus*, 25 November 1912.

mention of the orchestra, apart from its subscription concerts in 1913 and 1914 but there is one concert in 1914 that is worthy of discussion.

The First World War started on 28 July 1914. As with the Boer War there were orchestral concerts in aid of the troops, the widows, the homecoming celebrations over those years, but the Hamilton Orchestral Society played at The Towsey Patriotic Concert 4 September 1914.<sup>121</sup>

**TOWN HALL, HAMILTON**  
**TO-NIGHT**  
AT 8 O'CLOCK.

**Grand Concert**  
Proceeds for Ladies' PATRIOTIC  
FUND

**PROGRAMME**

- 1—God Save the King
- 2—Overture, "Light Cavalry" (Von Suppé), Hamilton Orchestral Society
- 3—Chorus "Red, White and Blue" Pupils Hamilton West School
- 4—Song, "There's a Land" (Allitsen) Mr W. E. N Wright
- 5—Recitation "Eve of Waterloo" (Byron), Mrs Martin Williams
- 6—Duet, "Night of Stars and Night of Love" (Offenbach), Mrs Cyril Towsey and Miss Kathleen Hally
- 7—Dance, "Sailor's Hornpipe" Miss Darz, age 7 years.

**INTERVAL.**

<sup>121</sup> 'Patriotic Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 5 September 1914.

- 8 - Selection, "Faust" (Gounod), Hamilton Orchestral Society  
 9 - Song, "Land of Hope and Glory" (Elgar), Mrs Cyril Towsey  
 10 - Song, "Through Love to Light" (Wynne), Miss Kathleen Hally  
 11 - Piano Solo, "Scherzo in B flat Minor" (Chopin), Mr Cyril Towsey  
 12 - Song Cycle, "Gloria" (Ed Ringo) First Performance in New Zealand.  
 Mrs Cyril Towsey ... Soprano  
 Mr E N Wright .. Tenor  
 Mr Cyril Towsey ... Piano

BRINSMEAD PIANO kindly supplied  
 by British and Continental Piano  
 Co.—S. RILEY, Manager.

Tickets, 3/- and 2/- Box Plan at Paul's  
 Book Arcade.

Figure 75 Programme The Towsey Patriotic Concert 1914<sup>122</sup>

The contrast with Cambridge is noticeable and again supports the premise that a charismatic leader is essential to the continuation of an orchestra. There is someone for the players in the orchestra to respect and this someone has the confidence of a group around them that thinks it worth the time and effort to support the orchestra. The fact that they had subscribers to their concerts and supported local causes shows how embedded they were in their community.

## Conclusion

It is astonishing to see so much orchestral music happening in this area at this time; the reputation of the Waikato would have suggested a very different story. But the enormous importance of music in settlers' lives has been amply demonstrated in this and the previous chapters. This chapter has shown that not only were the established orchestras thriving, but new ones were launched so that there was a form of orchestral music regularly available to the listeners as well as to the increasing number of willing performers.

Many of these orchestras revolved around a pivotal performer or conductor who was the driving force behind the formation and development of the orchestra.

<sup>122</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 3', *Waikato Argus*, 4 September 1914.

The following chapter looks in greater detail at some of the major personalities in this period which enhances my contention that a charismatic leader is an essential part of the success of any musical endeavour.

## Chapter 6: Prominent Musical Personalities 1889-1914

In the early years of settler music-making in the Waikato there were only a few prominent figures in the establishment of orchestras, as Chapter 3 has foregrounded. By the late nineteenth century, there is considerably more mention in the newspapers of the day of the conductors and players who furthered the development of orchestral music. These individuals have been briefly mentioned in relation to their work with the orchestral societies but are now profiled in more detail.

Joanne Cormac has written of the way in which the 'focus on forgotten individuals has offered one of the most important contributions of biography to musicology in recent years'. This chapter mines the archives for traces of the figures so important to the development of orchestral music in the Waikato. As Cormac highlights, this can be a challenge, particularly in relation to female musicians who tend to be even more overlooked than their male counterparts. The lives considered here are 'based on fragmented documentary evidence', but from this, fascinating insights into the stories of a range of amateur and professional musicians emerge. This chapter mines the archives for traces of the figures so important to this development.<sup>1</sup>

Like Mr Bell before them, those considered in this chapter all had a significant reach and impact, particularly in Hamilton, Cambridge and Te Awamutu. Most of the material in this chapter focusses on these centres as they were the ones which most frequently had newspapers and reporters in their areas.

There are eight people included here, chosen for their different backgrounds and capabilities. Some were musically trained; others were gifted amateurs. But through their lives the love of music is evident. There are two women of note in this period, Madame Isherwood, a singer and conductor, and Mrs Langley Shaw, a violinist and pianist. Each must have had a charismatic personality and remarkable talent to have been in positions of leadership. The men I have chosen to investigate are each different in terms of instruments, training, and professions. Mr Hemus worked over a large area of the Waikato as a violinist, possibly the equivalent today of a free-lance musician. Mr Tudehope had a clothing shop of note in Cambridge, Mr Bosworth was a teacher of music and a conductor, and Mr Tutschka was a gifted

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<sup>1</sup> Joanne Cormac, 'Introduction: Music and Biography', *19th Century Music*, 44.2 (2020), 61–66 (p. 64)

violinist whose income was derived from piano tuning and teaching. Englishman Mr Riley was a church organist who conducted choirs and then orchestras, but who was also a keen businessman with a music shop in Hamilton and the agency for quality pianos. Finally, I focus on Mr Cyril Towsey, who had a brilliant international career as an accompanist, but who chose to return to New Zealand and settle in Hamilton.

These people provided the leadership and musical know how to advance the quality, and therefore acceptance, of orchestral music in this locality. They are organised in this chapter chronologically.

## Mr Hemus

Mr Hemus is included here as an example of a possible professional musician, which is uncommon in this period. He had a varied life as a musician appearing as a violinist, usually leader of the orchestra, and occasionally as a conductor. He was also a composer of the *Ping Pong Waltz*, 'the music of which is very pretty'<sup>2</sup>. Unlike many of his contemporaries he appeared in many places in the general area; Thames, Auckland, Hamilton, Whatawhata, Waihi, Paeroa, and Te Aroha, where he conducted the Karangahake orchestra for the annual social of the Te Aroha bowling club.<sup>3</sup>

In 1895 he was a hospital inpatient and was part of a concert put on for all the patients. Dr Kenny, a keen musician, played double bass and his wife played cello. In addition, there was a pianist and Mr Hemus on violin. Solos and group playing provided a successful concert that relieved 'the monotony of hospital'. The following year the Waihi Minstrels gave a benefit for 'Mr J. Hemus, who had recently met with reverses'.<sup>4</sup>

It is unusual at this time to have a musician in demand over such a large geographic area and this suggests that he might have been a professional musician, making his living by performing. There is no mention of any teaching by him, unlike

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<sup>2</sup> 'The Ohinemuri Gazette. Upper Thames Warden Friday, June 27, 1902. Local and General', *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 27 June 1902.

<sup>3</sup> 'Karangahake Notes', *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 29 May 1903; 'The Ohinemuri Gazette. UPPER THAMES WARDEN FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 1902. Local and General', *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 27 June 1902; 'Service of Song', *Thames Star*, 17 September 1881; 'Auckland Art Society Conversazione. Auckland, Dec. 8', *Te Aroha News*, 12 December 1888; 'Orchestral Concert', *Waikato Times*, 18 July 1895; 'The Waikato Times and Thames Valley Gazette', *Waikato Times*, 14 September 1895; 'Waihi Notes', *Thames Advertiser*, 8 June 1896; 'Paeroa Choral Society', *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 2 October 1901; 'Bowling Club Social', *Te Aroha News*, 2 September 1905.

<sup>4</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Times*, 13 August 1895; 'Waihi Notes', *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 13 May 1896.

other players of the time. It is equally difficult to say that he advanced orchestral music in the Waikato, except as a quality violinist much in demand, but his working life makes him worthy of inclusion here.

## Mr Tudehope

Mr Tudehope is an example of the gentleman amateur, who through force of personality and some ability, shared his love of music and enabled musical events and musical enjoyment through his own connections and endeavours.

Formerly of Sydney, Mr Tudehope first came to musical prominence in the Waikato as the conductor of the Hamilton Harmonic Society on the occasion of the Royal visit in 1901.<sup>5</sup> At that time he had only been in the country for a few months but stepped in to work with the Harmonic Society for the rest of that year, resigning to move to a business acquisition in Cambridge.<sup>6</sup> He was obviously appreciated as at their final concert with him:

His Worship the Mayor (Mr Dyer), on behalf of the Hamilton Harmonic Society, presented the conductor, Mr Tudehope, with a very handsome silver-mounted baton.<sup>7</sup>

He was succeeded as conductor of the Hamilton Harmonic Society by Mr Bosworth.

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<sup>5</sup> 'Shipping', *New Zealand Herald*, 23 January 1900; 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 16 June 1905; 'The Royal Visit', *Waikato Argus*, 10 June 1901; 'The Royal Visit', *Waikato Argus*, 14 June 1901.

<sup>6</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1901.', *Waikato Argus*, 14 December 1901.

<sup>7</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 18 December 1901.



Figure 76 Mr Tudehope Shopfront<sup>8</sup>

Once in Cambridge, Mr Tudehope was swiftly taken up by the choir and orchestra of St Paul's Church, and at a concert in May in the Oddfellows Hall, he was congratulated, not only on the quality of the orchestral playing which 'under the conductorship of Mr R. T. Tudehope quite excelled themselves', but also, for his organisation of the event:

Everything was in order; the concert started punctually and was finished at a reasonable hour; everybody was ready to go on the moment they were required; the choir and orchestra were placed where they could be heard to the best advantage; the lady members of the choir were dressed in similar attire ... and everything denoted that Mr Tudehope is very thorough in all he undertakes.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Cambridge, Cambridge Museum, Image: R T Tudehope's store, Victoria Street, Cambridge, between 1904 and 1913, CM2958/32.

<sup>9</sup> 'News From Country Districts', *New Zealand Herald*, 23 May 1902; 'Concert At Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 18 July 1902.



Figure 77 Oddfellows Hall<sup>10</sup>

He continued to conduct this ensemble for several years but was also active as a singer, organist, accompanist and double bass player in concerts in the area.<sup>11</sup> On Christmas Day, 1902, Mr Tudehope conducted a concert at the Oddfellows' Hall, involving a large choir of 40 voices, several soloists, an organist and a 'special orchestra'.<sup>12</sup> For an amateur it is a large undertaking and speaks volumes for his ability and dedication to music. Ever ready to help out in organizing concerts for others, Mr Tudehope helped raise money for the local Brass Band or planned one at Pukerimu to raise funds for the building renovations.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Cambridge, Cambridge Museum, Boulton Collection, Image: Oddfellows Hall, CM4266.17.

<sup>11</sup> 'News From Country Districts', *New Zealand Herald*, 11 July 1902; 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 6000 Weekly. MONDAY, MARCH 2, 1903.', *Waikato Argus*, 2 March 1903; 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 5 April 1905; 'Day by Day', *Waikato Times*, 18 December 1911; 'Sand Concert at Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 18 March 1912; 'News From Country Districts', *New Zealand Herald*, 11 July 1902; 'Footballers' Smoke Concert', *Waikato Independent*, 20 October 1906; 'Advertising Memorandums', *Waikato Independent*, 9 June 1906; 'Golf', *Waikato Argus*, 11 June 1906; 'Concert at Leamington', *Waikato Independent*, 16 September 1911; 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 2 July 1904; 'Home and Foreign', *Waikato Argus*, 29 October 1904.

<sup>12</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Argus*, 24 December 1902.

<sup>13</sup> 'The Waikato Argus. [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 1912', *Waikato Argus*, 15 March 1912; 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 26 July 1905.

He obviously had a good relationship with his employees not only continuing to observe a half day holiday on Wednesdays, but also organised picnics for them as shown in following in the following photograph.<sup>14</sup>



Figure 78 Mr Tudehope's Picnic<sup>15</sup>

A strong sense of civic duty led him to be involved in his community, using his skills to be on committees – library, Waikato Sanitorium, social committee for Methodist church, cycling club, Gentleman's Social Club, Cambridge District High School committee.<sup>16</sup> A keen Methodist and mason, he was also a sound businessman, attaining a position of prominence in the town, being on the council of the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce as well as being elected for a seat on the Cambridge Borough Council.<sup>17</sup> His love of music meant that even in the business

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<sup>14</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 6 December 1904.

<sup>15</sup> Cambridge, Cambridge Museum, Image: Staff from Tudehope's Store on a Picnic in Cambridge, CM2958/32/1.

<sup>16</sup> 'Mr Mandeno Jackson's Concert', *Waikato Times*, 17 February 1904; 'Mr Mandeno Jackson's Concert at Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 19 February 1904; 'Hamilton East School Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 24 June 1905; 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 16 October 1905; 'Hamilton Orchestral Society's Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 9 August 1906; 'Cambridge District High School Committee', *Waikato Independent*, 12 November 1907.

<sup>17</sup> 'Local And General', *Waikato Independent*, 24 December 1912; 'Chamber Of Commerce', *Waikato Independent*, 21 November 1905; 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 12 October 1907.

sphere, he included being the 'local agent of the E. and F. Piano Company', thus enabling him to be able to lend pianos for local concerts.<sup>18</sup>

There were many advertisements placed in the papers advertising his drapery shop. Two in particular are worthy of attention. An advertisement, one of many similar, shows that even while advertising his latest clothing shipment, he also included an advertisement for a Promenade concert which would be held while customers were shopping. Having music at a fashion show may be the first time that happened in the Waikato and thus could be the start of a tradition that continues to this day.

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<sup>18</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 1 June 1905; 'Cambridge Orchestral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 5 June 1905.

**A GOOD THOUGHT,**

If POORLY expressed, loses half its value;  
If NOT expressed, is of no value at all.

**W**ELL, here's a good thought—worth more than a penny—act on it:—  
Come and hear our  
**PROMENADE CONCERT,**  
Saturday Night, November 12th,  
**FREE.**  
GOOD music by a little orchestra.

At the same time we would like to draw your attention to the **SECOND SHIPMENT** of our **NEW SEASON'S GOODS** especially in

**MEN'S CLOTHING.**

<p>WE have men's <b>TWEED SUITS</b>, well made, latest cut, 21/- to 52/6.</p> <p>WE have men's <b>FELT HATS</b> in every conceivable shape or color, 2/11, 4/6 to 13/6, 14/6.</p> <p>WE have <b>REAL panamas</b>, 15/6, 19/6, 29/6.</p>	<p>WE have <b>MEN'S</b> neat and <b>STRONG</b> boots, 10/6, 12/6 to 23/6.</p> <p>WE have fine <b>GLACE</b> <b>KID</b> boots, 12/6, 13/6 to 23/6.</p> <p>WE have just opened a heap of child's sandals, all sizes.</p>
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WE make suits to measure and to fit from 57/6.  
WE have heaps of **TIES** and **COLLARS** and **BRACES**  
WE have **Tennis Shirts** from 2/11 to 15/6.

The busy **At** **R. T. TUDEHOPE'S,**  
draper, clothier, booter.  
"The poor man's friend,"  
**CAMBRIDGE.**

Figure 79 Advertisement Promenade Concert 1904<sup>19</sup>

The second shows his enormous sense of humour, seen, for example, in item 7 (Acrobatic Display: Counter Jumping performed by Assistants) which would have stood him in good stead while conducting an orchestra and choir.

<sup>19</sup> 'Page 2 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 7 November 1904.

# MORE MUSIC AT TUDEHOPE'S

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3RD,

BY A SELECT LITTLE ORCHESTRA.

WE WILL BE DELIGHTED TO SEE YOU.

No Charge for Admission.

No Collection.

Ladies may wear their hats during the Performance.

Carriages at TEN

We reserve the right to alter the Programme.

1. SELECTION: "Slap, Bang, Here we are Again" ... .. ORCHESTRA.
2. SONG: "We are the People" ... .. OUR PRICES.
3. SONG: "The Hand that Rocks the Cradle wears our Gloves" ... .. DENTS'.
4. SONG: "The Divers" ... .. BARGAIN HUNTERS.
5. PART SONG: "Strike the Lyre" (serve him right) ... .. MIS-REPRESENTATION.
6. BASS SONG: "Listen to my Tale of Woe" (not Tudehope's) ... .. BAD VALUE.

INTERVAL—To enable our friends to get more money.

7. ACROBATIC DISPLAY: Counter Jumping ... .. ASSISTANTS.
8. GLEE: "She Wore a Wreath of Roses" (on her bonnet—Tudehope's of course) ... .. MISS CHARMING.
9. SONG and CHORUSES: "Songs of the C" ... .. BOYS SAILOR SUITS.
10. HAVAGUE "The Unwashed Tenth" ... .. TOWELS.
11. DUET: "What are the Wild Waves Saying" ... .. XMAS GIFTS.
12. A WAIL: "How can I Bear to Leave Thee" ... .. OUR FRIENDS.

**R. T. TUDEHOPE,**  
CAMBRIDGE.

**DRAPER, CLOTHIER,  
BOOTER.**

Figure 80 Advertisement Fashion Show and Music<sup>20</sup>

Here was a man, an amateur, with a deep love of music and a character that enabled him to combine his love of music with his business acumen. He gained the respect of his fellows through enormous hard work and civic duty, while at the same time keeping his humanity at the forefront of his life. He moved to Auckland in January 1913.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> 'Page 4 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Independent*, 29 November 1904.

<sup>21</sup> 'Local and General', *Waikato Independent*, 4 January 1913.

## Mr Bosworth



MR. T. H. BOSWORTH.

Figure 81 Mr T H Bosworth<sup>22</sup>

Mr Bosworth moved to New Zealand from Australia and from Auckland to Cambridge within the space of a few years. Obviously a talented musician, in Tasmania he had a composition of his printed, the *Exhibition Waltz*:

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<sup>22</sup> Cyclopedic Company Limited, 'The Cyclopedic of New Zealand [Auckland Provincial District]', (Christchurch, 1902), <<https://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/Cyc02Cycl-fig-Cyc02Cycl0259b.html>>



Figure 82 Music, *Exhibition Waltz* by T H Bosworth<sup>23</sup>

Mr Bosworth, his wife, and their daughter Ina, moved from Auckland to the Cambridge area in early 1902 and swiftly became part of the wider Waikato music scene.<sup>24</sup> He was a teacher of music, a tuner of pianos and organs, and, later, Waikato agent for selling imported pianos.<sup>25</sup> He then was asked to become conductor of the Musical Society of Ngāruawāhia, having already become the conductor of the Cambridge and Tamahere societies.<sup>26</sup> So it was within five months that he was responsible for conducting the Cambridge Choral and Cambridge Orchestral Societies' concert in August 1902.<sup>27</sup> It was here that Ina was introduced to the public when Mr and Mrs Bosworth and Ina performed a piano trio, 'the violin playing of the last mentioned was much admired'.<sup>28</sup> Shortly after that Mr Bosworth formed a 'private orchestra, and is now prepared to accept engagements for

<sup>23</sup> T. H. Bosworth, *Exhibition waltz [music]* / by T.H. Bosworth, (Launceston, [Tas.]: T.H. Bosworth, 1891), <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-165639486/view?partId=nla.obj-165639493&partId=nla.obj-165639606#page/n1/mode/1up>.

<sup>24</sup> 'Concert in Hamilton', *Waikato Argus*, 8 February 1902; 'Volunteer Concert at Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 24 March 1902.

<sup>25</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 3', *Waikato Argus*, 16 April 1902; 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 4 July 1905.

<sup>26</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 30 July 1902.

<sup>27</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 6000 Weekly. TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1902', *Waikato Argus*, 19 August 1902.

<sup>28</sup> 'Cambridge Choral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 1 September 1902.

concerts, balls, parties, etc. for the same'.<sup>29</sup> Named the 'Waikato Quadrille Band', this was much in demand and played in many parts of the Waikato, including in Hamilton and Te Awamutu.<sup>30</sup>

Presumably in the hope of garnering more pupils, the Bosworths moved to Hamilton within a year and Mr Bosworth set himself up as a teacher of piano, violin, cello and singing:

**MR T. H. BOSWORTH,**  
TEACHER OF PIANO, VIOLIN, CELLO AND  
SINGING,  
Having taken up his residence in Hamilton,  
is now prepared to receive pupils at  
CLAREMONT VILLA.  
Cambridge — Every MONDAY and  
TUESDAY.  
Te Awamutu — Every FRIDAY.  
Mr Bosworth's "Waikato Quadrille  
Band" is now open to accept Engagements  
for Concerts, Balls, etc., in any part  
of the Waikato.

Figure 83 Advertisement Lessons & Quadrille Band<sup>31</sup>

Here he became the conductor of the Hamilton Choral Society and Orchestra, where he trained the singers and players to perform 'The Merrie Men of Sherwood Forest', which he had previously performed with the Cambridge Societies.<sup>32</sup>

Sadly, he became ill and spent time in hospital. He had continued to conduct the Cambridge Choral Society while living in Hamilton, and so it is not surprising that they put on a benefit concert for him.<sup>33</sup> The Hamilton Choral Society also put on a benefit concert which was supplemented with items by the Hamilton Brass Band,

<sup>29</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 6000 Weekly. WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1902', *Waikato Argus*, 8 October 1902.

<sup>30</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 7500 Weekly. SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 1904.', *Waikato Argus*, 25 June 1904; 'Hamilton Comedy Club', *Waikato Times*, 31 October 1902; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 11 October 1902.

<sup>31</sup> 'Page 2 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 25 November 1902.

<sup>32</sup> 'Local And General', *Waikato Times*, 5 December 1902.

<sup>33</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 6000 Weekly. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1903', *Waikato Argus*, 10 February 1903; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 23 March 1903.

and a 'quartette' for 3 mandolins, banjo and piano.<sup>34</sup> This latter concert was a great success:

The idea was taken up heartily, a large number of tickets were disposed of, and the hall last night was comfortably filled with those who felt kindly disposed towards one who has shown himself ever ready to assist in any movement for the advancement of musical matters in the town ... the entertainment ... we are pleased to say will result in a substantial sum being handed to Mr Bosworth.<sup>35</sup>

Once recovered, Mr Bosworth again conducted the Cambridge Choral Society.<sup>36</sup> By the end of the year his students put on a concert, including 'songs, piano and violin solos, duets, trios, and orchestral items'. It was further noted that 'The orchestra is a strong one' and apart from the flute and bass players, 'all are his own pupils'.<sup>37</sup>

By now Mr Bosworth had conducted in Cambridge, Hamilton and Ngāruawāhia. In 1904 he conducted the Te Awamutu Orchestral Society in a concert that was so successful it was repeated several weeks later.<sup>38</sup> The society was re-formed 6 months prior and had 'certainly made much progress under Mr Bosworth's tuition'.<sup>39</sup> It played later in 1904 under his conductorship, providing 'splendid music'.<sup>40</sup>

He became secretary of the Board which intended to form a branch of the Trinity College musical exams in Hamilton, again showing his standing in the community.<sup>41</sup> This came about and the following year his daughter became the youngest person in Australasia to pass the senior division in violin playing in the Trinity College Exams.<sup>42</sup> In 1905, he was 'appointed by the Education Board,

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<sup>34</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 6000 Weekly. SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 1903', *Waikato Argus*, 18 April 1903.

<sup>35</sup> 'Complimentary Concert to Mr Bosworth', *Waikato Argus*, 24 April 1903.

<sup>36</sup> 'Cambridge Choral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 26 August 1903.

<sup>37</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 7000 Weekly. THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1903', *Waikato Argus*, 17 December 1903.

<sup>38</sup> 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 13 January 1904.

<sup>39</sup> 'Concert at Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 19 January 1904.

<sup>40</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 7500 Weekly. SATURDAY, AUGUST 27, 1904', *Waikato Argus*, 27 August 1904.

<sup>41</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 7000 Weekly. MONDAY, SEPT. 21, 1903.', *Waikato Argus*, 21 September 1903.

<sup>42</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 7800 Weekly. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1904', *Waikato Argus*, 15 September 1904.

Auckland, to conduct the oral examination in music at the annual examination of candidates for employment'.<sup>43</sup> Within a few weeks of this appointment, he died.<sup>44</sup>

Mr Bosworth appears to have felt unsettled. He lived in different parts of Australia prior to his move to New Zealand, and then was always ready to take on extra work a distance from home so it is not surprising that he succumbed to illness. Clearly, he touched many in a wide area and was recognised as a man of musical stature. A professional musician he follows the idea of the “jack of all trades” in his efforts to make a living from his musical ability.

## Mr Tutschka

Mr H. Tutschka moved to Hamilton as a piano tuner in 1905.<sup>45</sup> Prior to this he had worked for nearly five years with the ‘Collier and Colonial Piano Company, New Plymouth’.<sup>46</sup> In this profession he was undoubtedly successful, even earning plaudits from a London Trinity College visiting examiner:

I am not easy to please in the matter of piano tuners, but I must say the piano you tuned for use at the last Trinity College examination gave entire satisfaction in regard to the tuning.<sup>47</sup>

Mr Tutschka first came to musical prominence, however, as a young violinist in Auckland, and once in Hamilton he lost no time in sharing his violin playing.<sup>48</sup> He played for a concert in aid of the Hospital, provided dance music for a military ball, a social in Huntly, the Waikato Hunt Ball, and if in aid of a good cause such as the local Fire Brigade, supplied ‘the music gratis’.<sup>49</sup> He also played to entertain ‘the inmates of the Government Sanatorium’ along with a ‘party of vocalists from Cambridge’, which one can suppose was also ‘gratis’.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 23 June 1905.

<sup>44</sup> 'Local And General News', *Thames Star*, 10 July 1905.

<sup>45</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 7500 Weekly. SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 1905.', *Waikato Argus*, 17 June 1905.

<sup>46</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 24 June 1905; 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 10 August 1905.

<sup>47</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 21 October 1905.

<sup>48</sup> 'Entertainments and Meetings', *New Zealand Herald*, 4 October 1900; 'Entertainments and Meetings', *New Zealand Herald*, 13 November 1900; 'Entertainments and Meetings', *New Zealand Herald*, 2 November 1901.

<sup>49</sup> 'Hospital Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 27 July 1905; 'The Military Ball', *Waikato Argus*, 15 July 1905; 'Huntly', *Waikato Argus*, 3 August 1905; 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 7500 Weekly. WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30, 1905', *Waikato Argus*, 30 August 1905; 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 29 August 1905.

<sup>50</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 15 May 1906.

Testament to Mr Tutschka's ability is the fact that he became leader of the Cambridge Orchestral Society within two months of his arrival.<sup>51</sup> At the time Mr J. H. Edwards was the conductor and both were recognised for the valuable work they did in promoting successful performances.<sup>52</sup> He also performed violin solos in some of the concerts, which made a good impression on the audience, 'Mr H. Tutschka's violin solos were a feature of the evening, and needless to say such a clever musician met with a hearty reception'.<sup>53</sup> Another reviewer of this concert was more effusive:

One of the chief features of the concert last evening was Mr H. Tutschka's violin playing. The piece chosen by the young artist was Vieuxtemp's elaborate "Souvenir d' Amerique," in which the familiar "Yankee Doodle" forms the motif. The piece abounds in technical difficulties which were overcome by the performer with conspicuous ability. Mr Tutschka plays with great distinction; he has a sure technique, true intonation and good tone. In response to an enthusiastic recall, he gave Raff's Cavatina with great taste and good feeling. His playing in this piece, which was in complete contrast to his first solo, was marked by refinement and sentiment. Cambridge is fortunate in having the services of such an artist as Mr H. Tutschka as soloist and teacher.<sup>54</sup>

As a piano tuner, not surprisingly, Mr Tutschka was also an able pianist and was an accompanist in one concert given by the Cambridge Orchestral Society.<sup>55</sup> He visited Cambridge weekly to tune pianos and 'receive pupils for the violin'.<sup>56</sup> Little other mention of his teaching is made, but it is reasonable to assume that he must have taught violin in Hamilton. Despite his affiliation to Hamilton, he maintained his connection with Cambridge throughout his time in the Waikato playing at parish

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<sup>51</sup> 'Cambridge Comedy Society', *Waikato Independent*, 15 August 1905; 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 15 August 1905.

<sup>52</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 2 December 1905.

<sup>53</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 9 December 1905; 'Advertising Memorandums', *Waikato Independent*, 10 May 1906; 'Farewell Concert', *Waikato Independent*, 12 May 1906.

<sup>54</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 12 May 1906.

<sup>55</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 29 March 1906.

<sup>56</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 5 April 1906.

socials, conducting the Cambridge Orchestral Society, and playing at the Cambridge Fire Brigade's social.<sup>57</sup>

Shortly after this Mr Tutschka performed violin in a concert in aid of the St Andrew's Tennis Club, in Hamilton, and was then invited to 'undertake the conductorship' of the Hamilton Orchestral Society.<sup>58</sup> His first concert with them was to celebrate the election of Mr Greenslade as local MP in the House of Representatives.<sup>59</sup> His next task was more sombre, the memorial to the late Prime Minister, Mr Seddon. It was held at the Town Hall that Mr Seddon had opened but a year previously. About 1000 people were crammed into the hall with another approximately 200 outside. Here he led on the violin and conducted an orchestra of nine players; 'the musical portion of the service was of a high order of merit'.<sup>60</sup>

Having been invited to conduct the Hamilton Orchestral Society, in May 1906, their first major concert was to be held in August. It, as well as others here, were a great success. Mr Tutschka took players to other venues to provide entertainment such as to the Waikato Hospital, and it is probable it was the same instrumentalists involved when 'an orchestra, under the baton of Mr Tutschka, rendered a number of selections which were greatly appreciated' at the opening of St Andrew's Young People's Bazaar in Hamilton.<sup>61</sup>

It was with enormous local regret that Mr Tutschka moved to Wellington at the end of the year. His time in the Waikato had been short, but he had contributed enormously to the musical life, as a piano tuner, as a violin player of distinction, as an able pianist and finally as a remarkable conductor. He did return occasionally to perform in Hamilton in succeeding years, but essentially his period of influence was over.

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<sup>57</sup> 'Advertising Memorandums', *Waikato Independent*, 30 June 1906; 'Ourselves as others see us', *Waikato Independent*, 8 September 1906; 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 12 July 1906.

<sup>58</sup> 'The Waikato Times. THAMES VALLEY GAZETTE, AND KAWHIA ADVOCATE. Established Thirty-Three Years, THE OLDEST DAILY NEWSPAPER. IN THE WAIKATO. THE LARGEST CIRCULATION OF ANY DAILY PAPER SOUTH OF AUCKLAND. TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 1906. Local and General.', *Waikato Times*, 24 April 1906; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 3 May 1906.

<sup>59</sup> 'Complimentary Social to Mr. H. J. Greenslade, M.H.R.', *Waikato Argus*, 31 May 1906; 'The Member for Waikato', *Waikato Times*, 31 May 1906.

<sup>60</sup> 'The Funeral', *Waikato Times*, 22 June 1906.

<sup>61</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 15 August 1906; 'St Andrew's Young People's Bazaar', *Waikato Argus*, 5 July 1906.

## Madame Isherwood



Figure 84 Mme Isherwood<sup>62</sup>

Mme Isherwood, who lived in Cambridge, taught dancing, voice and piano.<sup>63</sup> By being involved in the Waikato competitions, both as a committee member and entering her singing

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<sup>62</sup> Cambridge, Cambridge Museum, Image: Evelyn Mary Isherwood, CM3160/1.

<sup>63</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 11 August 1906; 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 6 November 1906; 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 18 April 1907; 'Business Memos', *Waikato Independent*, 28 May 1910; 'The Waikato Independent. SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 1913. Local and General', *Waikato*

and piano pupils, she was a valued member of the community in terms of helping people achieve their musical potential.<sup>64</sup> However, it is as a local and appreciated performing musician that gives her a place in this list of musical personalities. Frequently called upon as a vocal soloist, she performed with the Cambridge Orchestral society and sang for soirées and church benefits.<sup>65</sup> Her love of singing led her to form a Glee Club, which she conducted:

The Club is to be congratulated on their first efforts, as the whole piece went off without a hitch, and time, tune, and expression were excellent.<sup>66</sup>

The Glee Club had many outings over the three years that she was involved, and before long had a small orchestra accompanying it.<sup>67</sup> This orchestra, referred to as Madame Isherwood's orchestra, continued playing with Madame Isherwood, even occasionally without the Glee Club. The following shows how she was able to gather around her a varied group of musicians to contribute to a performance, and suggests that she was held in high esteem:

A concert will be held in the Methodist Gymnasium on Friday evening next, commencing at 8 o'clock. Selections will be given by Madame Isherwood's orchestra, vocal items by Madame Isherwood ... and others, in addition to which pianoforte duets and cornet and violin solos will be contributed.<sup>68</sup>

Her conducting experience, and doubtless her ability, then led to her conducting the Cambridge Orchestral Society from 1909. It appears that at this stage rehearsals were held at her house, Waterside.<sup>69</sup> In 1909 and 1910, the orchestra, under her baton, played at several events contributing music to the annual Chrysanthemum Shows, the opening of a new school, a hunt ball, and at the opening ceremony of the Cambridge Town Hall.<sup>70</sup>

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*Independent*, 23 August 1913; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 30 September 1908; 'Welcoming the Premier', *Evening Star*, 8 September 1909.

<sup>64</sup> 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1910', *Waikato Argus*, 7 December 1910; 'Hamilton Musical Competitions', *Waikato Independent*, 26 April 1910; 'Local And General', *Waikato Independent*, 21 May 1910.

<sup>65</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 7 September 1906; 'Local And General', *Waikato Times*, 14 November 1906; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 6 July 1908.

<sup>66</sup> 'Glee Club Concert', *Waikato Independent*, 3 December 1907.

<sup>67</sup> 'Band Concert', *Waikato Independent*, 8 October 1908; 'Cambridge Glee Club', *Waikato Independent*, 15 March 1910; 'Concert', *Waikato Independent*, 31 October 1908.

<sup>68</sup> 'The Waikato Independent. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1908 NOTES AND COMMENTS', *Waikato Independent*, 26 September 1908.

<sup>69</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 11 February 1909.

<sup>70</sup> 'The Chrysanthemum Show', *Waikato Independent*, 17 April 1909; 'The Chrysanthemum Show', *Waikato Independent*, 26 April 1910; 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Tuesday, June 29, 1909.', *Waikato Argus*, 29 June 1909; 'Hunt Bail at Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 28 August 1909; 'Cambridge Town Hall', *Waikato Argus*, 15 December 1909.



Figure 85 Cambridge Town Hall<sup>71</sup>

It is extraordinary to think of a woman at this time conducting an orchestra. She must have had a captivating personality to have been able to garner the respect of the various musicians, some of whom would have only known male leaders. There is no doubt that she was exceptionally capable in many musical spheres and was also renowned for her organisation. Her ability to marry the various talents she had in memorable events continued over the years, but the following description of a ball held at the end of a term of dancing classes shows the scope of her skills:

The plain, fancy dress and masquerade ball, held at the Alexandra Hall, Cambridge, last evening in connection with the wind-up of Madame Isherwood's dancing classes was a great success, there being a very large attendance from all parts of the district. Notwithstanding the crowded state of the ballroom, the dancers spent a most enjoyable time, the arrangements being perfect. The floor was in splendid order, and the light fantastic was indulged in until 3 o'clock this morning. ... Extras were played by Madame Isherwood ... The arrangements in this connection were superintended by Madame Isherwood ...<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> 'Cambridge Town Hall', (Hamilton: Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection, 1909), <<https://heritage.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz/objects/5509/cambridge-town-hall>>

<sup>72</sup> 'Masquerade Ball', *Waikato Independent*, 13 October 1906.



Figure 86 Alexandra Hall, Cambridge<sup>73</sup>

The following years showed the respect in which her musical planning was held. In connection with a church social evening: 'the arrangement of the programme of music, etc., has been kindly undertaken by Madame Isherwood, which ensures that it will be excellent'.<sup>74</sup> With reference to the musical arrangements for the Methodist Bazaar the following year, it was commented 'that it will be a good one goes without saying, for Madame Isherwood has control of this department'.<sup>75</sup>

A concert given at the end of 1909 shows all Madame Isherwood's interests coming together; this was the occasion of a bi-annual concert given by her pupils:

Whenever there is an entertainment to be given in Cambridge Madame Isherwood is always to the front in assisting, and during the past year both she and her pupils have helped in making several functions a success; and on Friday evening the public demonstrated that they had not forgotten the fact, and the consequence was a bumper house.

In this concert, not only were there her pupils performing, but also the Cambridge Orchestra and the Glee Club. The latter's selection 'was one of the best items of the evening' and the orchestra also came in for praise: 'the orchestra is certainly improving, for though it is but small in numbers it was well in tune, and the two selections given by it were much appreciated'. She even played the accompaniments for some of the singers.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Cambridge, Cambridge Museum, Image: Alexandra Hall, CM2958/12/6.

<sup>74</sup> 'The Waikato Independent. SATURDAY, JULY 25, 1908', *Waikato Independent*, 25 July 1908.

<sup>75</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 27 October 1909.

<sup>76</sup> 'Concert at Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 15 November 1909.

So far in my research, I have not come across a lady as talented musically and as capable of inspiring friendship and respect, apart from Avis Pennell, who is the focus of Part Two, Chapter 9.

## **Mrs Langley Shaw**

Mrs Langley Shaw, formerly Miss Joe Reeve, was first heard upon the stage in the Waikato in 1904. She accompanied visiting artists and then led the Hamilton Orchestral Society. At this time, it was unusual for a woman to be a leader of an orchestra and so it is worth investigating how this came about. Prior to her marriage in 1900 to Langley Shaw, she had performed in Auckland as a pianist and violinist, and had led the Young Ladies' Orchestra for several concerts, 'exhibiting great skill as leader'.<sup>77</sup> Thus, from her teenage years she had much experience on the concert platform.

Being part of the Ladies' Orchestra enabled opportunities that might have been denied her otherwise. For example, she learned and played cornet successfully in several concerts.<sup>78</sup> As the cornet was more usually part of a military band it was customarily played by a man. Playing this instrument would have given her a certain confidence when dealing with male members of the orchestra, and perhaps enabled her to be part of their camaraderie. She also ably helped in the percussion section where necessary.<sup>79</sup>

Obviously, Mrs Langley Shaw had great musical ability. Coming from a musical family, her sister studied piano and voice in Germany, she studied music at Auckland University College in 1894.<sup>80</sup> Her piano playing must have been exemplary as she played accompaniments to visiting artists in Auckland, such as Fraulein Fuchs and Bessie Doyle.<sup>81</sup> This continued once she was based in the Waikato and she accompanied Mandeno Jackson, who visited in 1904, winning plaudits for her

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<sup>77</sup> 'The Social Sphere', *Observer*, 24 February 1900; 'The Arab Napoleon', *Hawke's Bay Herald*, 20 February 1900; 'Untitled', *New Zealand Herald*, 11 December 1888; 'Grafton Orpheus Club', *New Zealand Herald*, 12 April 1889; 'Untitled', *Auckland Star*, 1 June 1889; 'Untitled', *Auckland Star*, 9 December 1889; 'Concert by the Ladies' Orchestra', *Observer*, 21 December 1889.

<sup>78</sup> 'Untitled', *New Zealand Herald*, 28 November 1892; 'Young Ladies' Orchestral Concert', *New Zealand Herald*, 22 May 1894; 'Young Ladies' Orchestra', *Auckland Star*, 22 May 1894.

<sup>79</sup> 'Orchestral Concert', *New Zealand Herald*, 4 August 1893.

<sup>80</sup> 'Concert At The Opera House', *New Zealand Herald*, 31 March 1898; 'Local And General News', *New Zealand Herald*, 5 April 1894.

<sup>81</sup> 'Concert At The Opera House', *New Zealand Herald*, 31 March 1898; 'Fraulein Fuchs', *Auckland Star*, 29 March 1898; 'Untitled', *Auckland Star*, 26 October 1894.

work.<sup>82</sup> The Hamilton Orchestral Society quickly made use of her talents, both as a leader and as an accompanist, which situation lasted for many years.<sup>83</sup>

In order to be perceived as capable, particularly at this historical moment, a woman frequently has to be more than just talented; she also needs to inspire confidence in her abilities. Mrs Langley Shaw showed herself to be an extremely efficient organiser of events. In 1905, Hamilton show night had an operatic concert and 'the musical direction [was] in the able hands of Mrs Langley Shaw'.<sup>84</sup> It was a great success:

Mrs Langley Shaw ... set to work to organise something really choice in the musical line. That she succeeded beyond all possible doubt everyone will readily admit, and the entertainment was a really enjoyable one. ... Mrs Shaw put on a programme that was indeed a treat to anyone who can appreciate good music.<sup>85</sup>

In addition, not only did the Hamilton Orchestral Society play some items, but there was

a violin duet by Mrs Langley Shaw and Mr Savage [the conductor of the orchestra]. Mrs Langley Shaw was mainly responsible for working up the concert, and she is to be warmly congratulated on its success.<sup>86</sup>

She was on the committees of the Hamilton Orchestral Society, and the Waikato Musical and Elocutionary Competitions.<sup>87</sup> So, this lady was a talented musician, an able organiser and she also sang, both in Auckland and in the Waikato.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> 'The Mandeno Jackson Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 17 February 1904; 'Mr Mandeno Jackson's Concert', *Waikato Times*, 17 February 1904; 'Mr Mandeno Jackson's Concert at Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 19 February 1904.

<sup>83</sup> 'Hamilton East School Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 24 June 1905; 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 26 July 1905; 'Hamilton Comedy Club', *Waikato Times*, 8 April 1905; 'Betsy', *Waikato Times*, 2 September 1905; 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 7 October 1905. 'Untitled', *Waikato Independent*, 9 August 1906; 'Hamilton Orchestral Society's Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 9 August 1906; 'The International Fete', *Waikato Argus*, 27 December 1907; 'Concert at Cambridge', *Waikato Argus*, 17 February 1910.

<sup>84</sup> 'Personal', *Waikato Times*, 8 November 1905.

<sup>85</sup> 'Entertainments On Show', *Waikato Argus*, 10 November 1905.

<sup>86</sup> 'Local and General', *Waikato Times*, 11 November 1905.

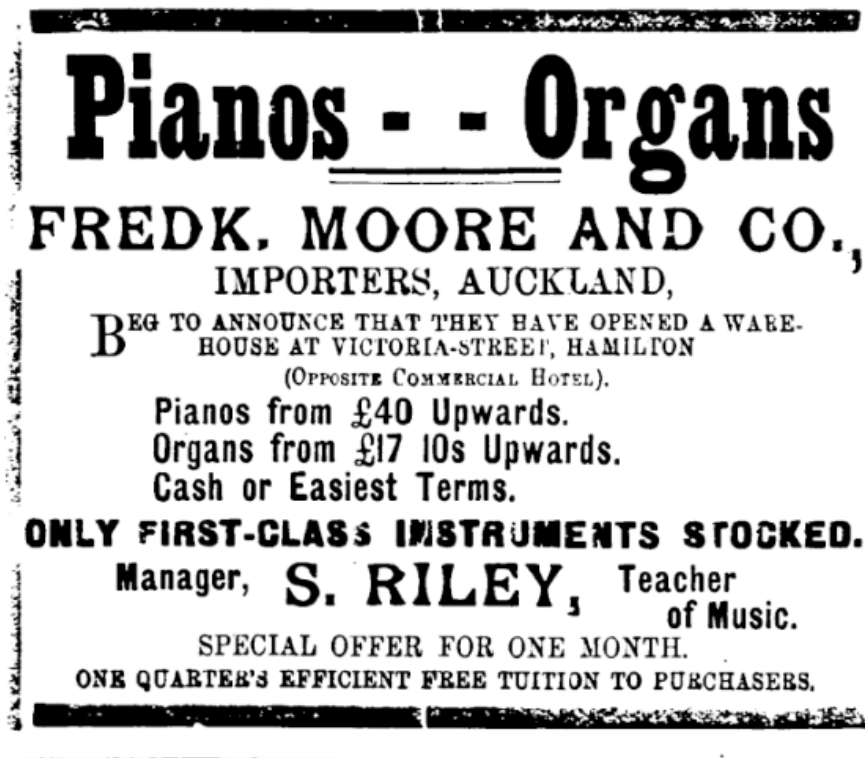
<sup>87</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 27 February 1907; 'Waikato Musical and Elocutionary Competitions', *Waikato Argus*, 15 February 1910.

<sup>88</sup> 'Meetings and Entertainments', *New Zealand Herald*, 1 July 1898; 'The Waikato Argus [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of Over 7500 Weekly. SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 1906.', *Waikato Argus*, 30 June 1906; 'Concert at the Waikato Hospital', *Waikato Argus*, 4 September 1906.

Unfortunately, for the region, she, her husband, and two children left in 1910 for London via Sydney.<sup>89</sup>

## Mr Riley

Fortunately for Hamilton, following the departure of Mr Tutschka in 1906, Mr S. Riley moved to Hamilton from England, via Auckland, in 1907.<sup>90</sup> He had been an organist at St Mark's in Auckland, and taught piano, organ and music theory.<sup>91</sup> However, he was also a businessman like Mr Tudehope and Mr Tutschka and had 'the local agencies for several makes of pianos and organ, besides other lines'.<sup>92</sup>



**Pianos - - Organs**  
**FREDK. MOORE AND CO.,**  
IMPORTERS, AUCKLAND,  
BEG TO ANNOUNCE THAT THEY HAVE OPENED A WARE-  
HOUSE AT VICTORIA-STREET, HAMILTON  
(OPPOSITE COMMERCIAL HOTEL).  
Pianos from £40 Upwards.  
Organs from £17 10s Upwards.  
Cash or Easiest Terms.  
**ONLY FIRST-CLASS INSTRUMENTS STOCKED.**  
Manager, **S. RILEY,** Teacher  
of Music.  
SPECIAL OFFER FOR ONE MONTH.  
ONE QUARTER'S EFFICIENT FREE TUITION TO PURCHASERS.

Figure 87 Advertisement Pianos and Organs for sale<sup>93</sup>

Mr Riley clearly had good business sense in offering free tuition for a term to those who purchased an instrument. His business quickly expanded, and he became

<sup>89</sup> 'Shipping', *New Zealand Herald*, 28 June 1910; 'London Personal Notes', *Southland Times*, 5 November 1912.

<sup>90</sup> 'Personal', *Waikato Times*, 27 April 1907.

<sup>91</sup> 'Fancy Fair And Rose Show', *Waikato Independent*, 30 November 1907.

<sup>92</sup> 'Personal', *Waikato Times*, 27 April 1907.

<sup>93</sup> 'Page 2 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Times*, 20 June 1907.

a branch of A. Eady and Co. in Auckland, and of the British and Continental Piano Company. His shop, 'The Musical Budget, Hamilton' had in stock

a number of pianos and organs by the most celebrated manufacturers. The names of Bechstein, Brinsmead, Haake, and Hopkinson, are world famed, and are household words. The prices vary from £45 upwards. Other instruments are stocked in great variety—violins, mandolins, guitars, banjos, brass instruments, accordions, mouth organs, phonographs and gramophones, the latter giving a perfect reproduction of the human voice. The records stocked include items by Melba, Tetrazzini, Caruso, Scolle, Radford, Harrison, Lloyd, Battistini, etc. A large selection of phonograph records is also kept.<sup>94</sup>

This is an remarkable array of instruments and records, and it is hard to imagine nowadays seeing a shop like this. However, there are a few noticeable absences such as the rest of the string instruments. How did local people acquire them? Maybe with his connections he was able to order from Auckland.

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**P**RELIMINARY ANNOUNCE-  
MENT.

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MR S. RILEY begs to announce a  
**Grand Concert**  
in the Town Hall, Hamilton,  
W E D N E S D A Y, 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY.  
**Magnificent array of talent.**

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Figure 88 Advertisement Town Hall Concert <sup>95</sup>

To make himself known locally, Mr Riley organised a 'grand concert' shortly after his arrival in Hamilton at the Town Hall, at which many well-known and

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<sup>94</sup> 'Personal', *Otago Daily Times*, 27 January 1908.

<sup>95</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Waikato Argus*, 27 April 1907.

acclaimed performers from Auckland took part.<sup>96</sup> Among them were Mr Hamilton Hodges, voice, Mr Colin Muston, violin, and Miss Annie Taylor, cello, who were all accompanied by Mr Riley. Apart from a quibble about the length of the concert which included 16 items all encored, (one can safely assume therefore that the concert was very much enjoyed by the audience), the reviewer commented on the 'high class of the entertainment' and the 'programme of rare excellence'.<sup>97</sup>

Mr Riley quickly entered into the musical life of Hamilton, playing organ for the Baptist church, the Methodist church and the Wesleyan church, where he also conducted the choir, training the 'Kentucky Darkies', and conducting a small orchestra of local musicians accompanying a pantomime.<sup>98</sup> He also played at weddings of different denominations.<sup>99</sup> He had a lifelong interest in Band Music and so was on the committee to arrange band contest music. Doubtless, it helped his business as he was the main provider of music and musical instruments in Hamilton.<sup>100</sup>

As is shown, in Chapter 5, Mr Riley became the conductor of the Hamilton Orchestral Society and conducted it with much approbation from 1908 to 1911, when he resigned due to ill health.<sup>101</sup> Notwithstanding, he became the president of the society and continued his interest up to First World War.

Mr Riley's concern with matters musical in the Waikato was evident soon after his arrival. For example, he was on the executive committee of the Waikato Musical and Elocutionary Competition, which was held for the first time in 1909 and was such a success that it was continued the following years. In 1910 the "'Waikato Musical and Elocutionary Society" came into existence' to help promote the competition.<sup>102</sup> Mr Riley held the 'schedules, entry forms and full information' and sold the audience

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<sup>96</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 27 April 1907.

<sup>97</sup> 'Mr Sam. Riley's Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 17 May 1907; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 25 January 1908; 'Musical Evening', *Waikato Argus*, 28 January 1908; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 12 October 1909; 'Citizenship Sunday', *Waikato Argus*, 6 December 1909; 'References in the Churches', *Waikato Argus*, 9 May 1910.

<sup>98</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 20 July 1907; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 30 April 1907; 'International Fete and Sale of Work', *Waikato Argus*, 24 December 1907.

<sup>99</sup> 'Weddings', *Waikato Times*, 12 August 1908; 'Wedding at Hamilton', *Waikato Argus*, 2 September 1909.

<sup>100</sup> 'Band Contest in Hamilton', *Waikato Argus*, 23 June 1908; 'Band Contest at Hamilton', *Waikato Argus*, 1 July 1908; 'Frankton Town Band', *Waikato Argus*, 9 October 1912; 'Frankton Town Band', *Waikato Times*, 20 December 1912; 'Concert at Frankton', *Waikato Argus*, 19 July 1913; 'The Waikato Argus. [PUBLISHED DAILY] TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23 1913', *Waikato Argus*, 23 December 1913; '16th (Waikato) Regimental Band', *Waikato Argus*, 22 January 1914.

<sup>101</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Society', *Waikato Times*, 11 October 1911.

<sup>102</sup> 'Waikato Musical Competitions', *Waikato Argus*, 17 May 1910.

tickets from his shop in Hamilton.<sup>103</sup> Apart from this, he was the official accompanist for the contestants and oversaw the arrangements for 'special trains ... from Thames and Cambridge'. He also was responsible for the medals that were tendered for, and the approved design, which, in 1910, was 'in the shape of a golden lyre'.<sup>104</sup> In 1910 he was also the conductor of the winning choir (from the Wesleyan church), thus winning the 'beautiful silver mounted baton' donated by 'Messrs A. Eady and Co, of Auckland', which firm also 'generously supplied, through their local agent, Mr S. Riley, the piano to be used at the competitions'.<sup>105</sup> This was good advertising for his business as well. The concerts were held in the Town Hall with a final grand prize-winners' concert the evening after the competitions. He continued to work with the committee through to 1913.<sup>106</sup>

Another example of his desire to be part of the general promotion of music is that he was secretary of the Trinity College of Music local examinations and was responsible for providing the syllabus and collecting exam entries, from 1908 to 1914.<sup>107</sup> All of these were provided for or collected at his shop, which would have been free advertising for him. Obviously, his business informed a lot of his activity; would he have been so active in the community without that spur?

Mr Riley's conducting of the Hamilton Orchestral Society brought it to a high level of achievement. From the beginning, he programmed music of a more classical nature and one of the first concerts included the overture to Tannhauser, amongst many other classically composed items. He was described as an 'indefatigable and enthusiastic conductor', and it was felt that the orchestra showed

promise of taking a high place in the standard of orchestral work in the Dominion.... and under his guidance and tuition the orchestra should become a permanent and successful organisation.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> 'Musical and Elocutionary Competitions', *Waikato Independent*, 9 April 1910; 'Waikato Musical Competitions', *Waikato Argus*, 14 May 1910.

<sup>104</sup> 'Waikato Musical Competitions', *Waikato Argus*, 3 May 1910.

<sup>105</sup> 'The Waikato Argus. [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. FRIDAY, MAY 27, 1910.', *Waikato Argus*, 27 May 1910; 'Waikato Musical Competitions', *Waikato Argus*, 14 May 1910.

<sup>106</sup> 'Waikato Musical and Elocutionary Competitions', *Waikato Argus*, 24 September 1912; 'Waikato Competitions', *Waikato Argus*, 13 October 1913.

<sup>107</sup> 'Personal', *Otago*, 27 January 1908; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 27 November 1908; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 29 April 1909; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 11 April 1910; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 22 April 1911; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 10 April 1912; 'The Waikato Argus. [PUBLISHED DAILY] MONDAY, APRIL 21, 1913.', *Waikato Argus*, 21 April 1913; 'The Waikato Argus. [PUBLISHED DAILY] TUESDAY. MARCH 31, 1914', *Waikato Argus*, 31 March 1914.

<sup>108</sup> 'Hamilton Orchestral Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 13 November 1908.

Two years later, the conductor who followed him, Cyril Towsey, praised his efforts:

Mr Riley has done remarkably well with the material at his command. I am able to appreciate the amount of work that has been done, and the difficulties he had to encounter, and he has done famously. I am satisfied the raw material is to be found in Hamilton and district, and another year of hard work should show a marked improvement in the status of the society.<sup>109</sup>

This is a little condescending about the available local musicians but at the same time realistic; there would not yet be a plethora of well taught and able amateur instrumentalists.

### Mr Cyril Towsey



Figure 89 Mr Towsey on his return to New Zealand<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> 'The Hamilton Orchestral Society's Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 15 December 1910.

<sup>110</sup> 'Portrait of the New Zealand Pianist Cyril Towsey', *The New Zealand Graphic and Ladies Journal*, 8 June 1910 <<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/periodicals/new-zealand-graphic/1910/06/08/19>>.

By the time Mr Towsey arrived in Hamilton he had already had an illustrious career in New Zealand and in England. (Those interested in learning more information about his studies and career prior to his return to New Zealand and Hamilton can see Appendix 6 Mr Towsey). After his international, highly prestigious, career it would have taken a lot of courage to move to a country area not known for its musical proclivity. However, maybe the combined pulls of a regularly paid organist post at St Peter's Church, not far from Auckland, and family life helped him adjust. He married Miss Mary Cooper, a very gifted mezzo-soprano, whom he had met in England, and within 18 months they had a son.<sup>111</sup> He may also have recognised that there could be a more varied career in Hamilton with many more opportunities there.



Figure 90 Miss Mary Cooper... returning to New Zealand<sup>112</sup>

Mr Towsey continued with his solo and accompanying career, mainly in Auckland which was probably the geographical appeal of Hamilton.<sup>113</sup> His wife, known variously by her stage name of Miss May, or Mary, Cooper or Mrs Cyril Towsey, gave many recitals which he accompanied, and they both supported good

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<sup>111</sup> 'The Waikato Argus', *Waikato Argus*, 15 August 1911; 'Births, Deaths, and Marriages', *Waikato Times*, 15 January 1913.

<sup>112</sup> 'Returning to New Zealand', *The New Zealand Graphic and Ladies Journal*, 4 May 1910 <<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/periodicals/new-zealand-graphic/1910/05/04/20>>.

<sup>113</sup> 'Page 12 Advertisements Column 8', *Auckland Star*, 1 June 1910; 'Amusements', *Auckland Star*, 9 June 1910.

causes such as the Auckland competitions, the Auckland Catholic church fund and a 'Miss Champion's' concert which was designed to raise money to support her career.<sup>114</sup> He and his wife toured 'the Dominion' and he and his wife accompanied Mr Hamilton Hodges on tour as well.<sup>115</sup> His accompanist career gradually took off in Hamilton and he played at a variety of concerts in his home town, such as 'A Night with the Classics', 'Scout Entertainment', a concert for Ina Bosworth, and others including one entitled 'The Towsey Concert' which was given in Cambridge.<sup>116</sup>

Many opportunities in Hamilton came not long after Mr Towsey's arrival there. Apart from being the organist at St Peters Anglican Church in Hamilton for several years, he had other commitments in the township.<sup>117</sup> He was invited to be the conductor of the Hamilton Choral Society, the Hamilton Orchestral Society and he had a full teaching schedule.<sup>118</sup> Like Mr Riley before him he became involved with the Waikato Musical and Elocutionary Society, for which he was the official accompanist.<sup>119</sup> On one occasion, in 1911, the competition had made a loss, and at the subsequent meeting he very generously waived his fee.<sup>120</sup>

Thus, along with teaching, solo and accompanying work, Mr Towsey was fully involved in the musical life of Hamilton.<sup>121</sup> He had a dual musical career, one which still brought him in contact with visiting musicians of high calibre and also one that nurtured the musical life of a small country town.

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<sup>114</sup> 'Amusements', *Auckland Star*, 17 September 1910; 'Page 12 Advertisements Column 6', *Auckland Star*, 17 September 1910; 'Entertainments', *New Zealand Herald*, 17 September 1910.

<sup>115</sup> 'Entertainments', *New Zealand Herald*, 4 July 1911; 'The Waikato Argus, [PUBLISHED DAILY.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Thursday, July 20, 1911', *Waikato Argus*, 20 July 1911.

<sup>116</sup> 'Amusements', *Waikato Argus*, 22 October 1912; 'Amusements', *Waikato Argus*, 22 October 1912; 'Ina Bosworth Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 26 March 1913; 'Physical Culture Innovation, "Smoke Concert"', *Waikato Argus*, 19 July 1913; 'The Towsey Concert', *Waikato Independent*, 28 April 1914.

<sup>117</sup> Ric Carlyon, 'Music-Makers of Yester-Year', <<https://dispatches.co.nz/music-makers-of-yester-year/>>

<sup>118</sup> 'Hamilton Choral Society', *Waikato Argus*, 24 January 1911; 'The Waikato Argus [Published Daily.] A Guaranteed Circulation of over 8500 Weekly. Wednesday December 7, 1910,' *Waikato Argus*, 7 December 1910; 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 14 February 1912.

<sup>119</sup> 'Waikato Musical Competitions', *Waikato Argus*, 5 May 1911; 'Waikato Musical and Elocutionary Competitions', *Waikato Argus*, 24 September 1912; 'Waikato Competitions', *Waikato Argus*, 13 October 1913.

<sup>120</sup> 'Musical and Elocutionary Society, Country News', *New Zealand Herald*, 10 May 1912.

<sup>121</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 14 February 1912; 'Ina Bosworth Concert', *Waikato Argus*, 26 March 1913; 'Song and Piano Recital', *Waikato Argus*, 29 August 1913; 'Sacred Concert at Hamilton', *Waikato Argus*, 6 October 1913.

## Conclusion

The musicians considered in this chapter, outstanding in their place and time, contributed significantly to the enormous growth in orchestral music in the Waikato. While Mr Hemus was not a conductor and in essence reacted to what he was offered rather than led the concerts, there is no doubt that his presence in an orchestra would have given reassurance to more insecure players. He was obviously sought after and the large area that he played in suggests that his ability and, presumably, personality encouraged those invitations to play. Mrs Langley Shaw, a married woman, was an extremely gifted amateur musician, who was classically trained at Auckland University and offered her services to local music.

Mr Tudehope, Mr Tutschka and Mr Riley earned their living from their businesses. But they combined those with their love of music. Mr Tudehope held the licence for pianos and introduced music to his fashion shows, Mr Tutschka tuned pianos in Cambridge and built up both teaching and performing in that settlement. Mr Riley was probably the most astute of them all, having control over music sales for the competitions, entry forms, ticketing for concerts and of course playing and conducting in a multitude of venues.

Mr Boswell, Mme Isherwood and Mr Towsey earned their living through music. Again, multiple income streams were needed so Mr Boswell taught, played and conducted; Mme Isherwood taught dancing and singing and conducted; while Mr Towsey a brilliant pianist had a dual life of performing and touring with his wife as well as regular income from his organist position at St Peter's Church, teaching and conducting in Hamilton.

These were all gifted people, and I would submit that they had the charisma and personality to appeal to players and audience alike. Without their energy and determination, like Mr Bell beforehand, and probably similar people about whom little is currently known, it is hard to imagine the plethora and growth of orchestral societies in the Waikato before World War I.

## Conclusion to Part One 1864-1914

1864 to 1914 was a time of enormous musical growth in the Waikato and saw the formation of a musical society or an orchestra in many of the townships in the region. This demonstrates a continuous demand for music and perhaps references the growing population and the intangible culture all newcomers bring to an area. Infrastructure, in particular transportation and halls, developed during this time which made it possible to sustain these kinds of musical activity.

As Tony Ballantyne has highlighted, the 'webs' connecting cultures and societies meant that by creating their own musical entertainment they were connecting with 'Home'.<sup>122</sup> This would have provided both a feeling of attachment to their past as well as a feeling of belonging to a community in their new country. The social outlet provided, as Chapters 1 and 2 have shown, was an extremely effective way of raising the money required to build their townships: their churches, schools, and town halls, and even some telegraph communication between settlements. The mighty challenges they faced were extraordinary and the fact that they continued with their fundraising efforts shows the public importance attributed to all these factors.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 examine from the Early Days through the Orchestral Societies and then in Chapter 6 I looked at specific people who contributed enormously to their local townships, particularly in Hamilton and Cambridge. These individuals had both musical talent, which garnered them respect from the players, and, crucially, the ability to inspire and lead others. Being a valued part of their community, either through their musical work or their civic status, was essential to the orchestras' successes. There are clearly some standout people, for example Mr Bell who is highlighted in Chapter 3. Those profiled in Chapter 6 encompass both amateur and professional musicians. In this later period, after 1900, women were taking leadership roles, which is both testament to a societal change but also to their remarkable abilities which enabled others to appreciate what they had to offer.

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<sup>122</sup> Tony Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire: Locating New Zealand's Colonial Past* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2013).

In the first 25 years concerts were generally a reaction to immediate requirements, but the development of musical societies from 1889 meant, I believe, that there was a fundamental shift in thinking. It indicates there was now an attitude of looking forward in a longer-term way about their music-making, rather than a concert being an outcome of some need. In other words, concerts and their organisation moved from being a reaction to needs to a proactive stance. This is possibly a reflection of the societal shift from being a newcomer and feeling torn between the familiar life left behind and the new settler existence, to being a first generation born in New Zealand, and feeling grounded in their environment.

The advent of societies needed individual musicians who were possessed of the temperament and charisma to gather a host of instrumentalists together. These charismatic leaders needed to have the energy, commitment, and musical ability to inspire respect. The case study of Mr Bell, who possessed these traits, created some unforgettable musical concerts, but I suggest that he was in a sense a 'one-man band' and did not have the appropriate backup for his work to continue after he left. This also appears to be the case, particularly between 1889 and 1905, where the leader, usually the conductor, provided the energy and commitment to enthuse fellow musicians, but often when he left there was a small period when that orchestra did not play. Significantly, this is endorsed in Part Two where I profile another remarkable musician and conductor, Avis Pennell, on whose departure the orchestra was unable to make headway without the committee support and went into recess.

By the early twentieth century, Chapter 5, the leader was increasingly surrounded by a group of people capable of giving the practical support, be it advertising, selling tickets, programming, booking a hall, finding players and music, and all the myriad tasks necessary for putting on a concert. These could be either the players themselves or the wider community, through personal connections or general interest. This community then provided the support, and the audience, and often the reason, for the concert.

It should be noted at this point that the theme of the local charismatic conductor and the orchestra being a supportive part of its community to ensure its continuance, moved into a different territory – that of the orchestra itself having value. Instead of always supporting others in their fundraising endeavours, the Hamilton Orchestral Society developed a subscription series of concerts, thus raising much needed money for itself.

The next part of the thesis looks at the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra which was in existence between 1975 and 2004. This rural area, remote even in the later twentieth century, created an orchestra from local musicians and demonstrates and develops the themes foregrounded in Part One of the thesis: the charismatic leader, the volunteer support group, and being truly a part of its community.

## Part Two: Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra

### 1974 – 2004

#### Introduction to Part Two 1974 - 2004

As I drove past lush Waikato paddocks through a small township, Morrinsville, to Te Aroha, I felt excited and nervous. Te Aroha was the site of nineteenth century gold mining which later developed into a spa town with the only soda spa in New Zealand. However, in the latter half of the twentieth century it was also the base for an orchestra, hitherto unknown outside of their local community. One of my first doctoral interviews with a musician friend had led me to the knowledge that an orchestra had existed in the area in which both she and a mutual friend had played.<sup>1</sup> That friend, in an interview, expanded on the orchestra, saying there were a few stalwarts who had been there from the beginning, that there was a wonderful woman conductor when she was playing, and that she had been there till the end.<sup>2</sup> She also told me that there were archives to be found, probably in the Te Aroha Museum. A phone call to the museum ensued, but there the trail went cold, no such records were found. I was disappointed. However, a few weeks later and the day before my drive, I received a phone call; the records had been located, filed under “Bands”.

I was ushered into the back room of the museum, situated in a beautiful Edwardian building, where tea and coffee and cataloguing took place. On a large wooden table sat a leather suitcase, old, battered, with straps and catches. It was labelled “Te Aroha – Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books”. Under the watchful eye of the President of the museum committee I fumbled with the catches, and it opened creakily. The suitcase was full of school exercise books of meeting minutes, programmes, performance reviews, correspondence, and photographs! Unlike the nineteenth century I had not found a precious metal, but instead doctoral gold.

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<sup>1</sup> Katrina Carswell, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Hamilton, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> Debbie Cotter, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Paeroa, 2016).



Figure 91 TAMCO suitcase full of exercise books<sup>3</sup>

This second part of the thesis focusses solely on the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (hereafter TAMCO). It is intended to show points of connection with the orchestras of the earlier period as well as differences. There are many reasons for concentrating on this one orchestra. Firstly, the archive is outstanding, previously undiscovered, and with a wealth of information. In addition, I was able to interview several key figures involved since its inception. The variety of material is extraordinary. Economies of scale are necessary in a thesis and to write about all the Waikato amateur orchestras not only would be impossible with the word count required, but also would dilute the exceptional nature of my find. While there are no examinations of other Waikato community orchestras yet, Hamilton Civic choir was written about by Phillippa Ulenberg for their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> TAMCO suitcase, Te Aroha Archives, Photograph property of writer.

<sup>4</sup> Phillippa Ulenberg, *In Sound Voice: Hamilton Civic Choir - the First 60 Years 1946-2006* (Hamilton: Half Court Press Ltd, 2010).

In addition, there is a pedagogical reason to this decision. Te Aroha and Morrinsville are small settlements, even today, and in the mid-1970s were remote, rural and with poor communications. The area is plagued with fog in the winter months meaning travelling is difficult, and there are currently only three buses on weekdays between Te Aroha and Hamilton, and none at the weekends. Thus, there are similarities between the isolated rural communities of yesteryear and today. Focussing on this one orchestra also enables me to draw on several relevant methodologies – case study, history from below, microhistory, oral history and ethnomusicology.

As shown in the Methodology section of the Introduction, the orchestra conforms to the requirements of these avenues of historical investigation. Case study is a robust methodology as any research can be corroborated through its different archives.<sup>5</sup> I was able to triangulate information not just from different museum archives but also through ‘recording ... personal testimony’ in interviews with some of the key personnel involved.<sup>6</sup> In addition, TAMCO was established at grassroots level. It was not imposed from an agency “above” but was the idea of schoolteachers in a classroom to extend their pupils’ musical ability. Thus, history from below is relevant as the orchestra’s story is about ordinary people and ordinary lives.<sup>7</sup> At the same time the closely related methodology of microhistory is highlighted by its emphasis on agency – individuals control their actions and shape their lives.<sup>8</sup> Likewise, the relationships within the community illustrate the cultural values of the surrounding society, and from an examination of this one orchestra the society of the time may be ‘reconstructed’, bridging the cultural and social worlds of late twentieth century rural Waikato, and probably representative of many of the difficulties and successes of other community orchestras.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 3rd edn (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2003).

<sup>6</sup> Valerie Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015) p.4; Paul Thompson, *The Voices of the Past: Oral History*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988) p. xi.

<sup>7</sup> Edward Palmer Thompson, ‘History from Below’, *The Times Literary Supplement*, 3345 (1966, April 7), 279-280.

<sup>8</sup> Anna Green, *Cultural History*, (Basingstoke, Hampshire, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

<sup>9</sup> István M. Szijártó, ‘Four Arguments for Microhistory’, *Rethinking History*, 6.2 (2002) 209-215. Thomas Gallant, ‘Long Time Coming, Long Time Gone: The Past, Present and Future of Social History’, *Historein*, 12 (2012), 9-20.

There are several points of continuity between the first half of the thesis and the second. Both establish the absolute importance of key individuals who inspire respect, have good communication skills, and who believe absolutely in the value of the orchestra to their community. Both periods of time show the value of the orchestras to the people involved and to their wider audience; and show the value of music-making as a fund raiser for other local organisations. The larger the number of people involved, the larger the audience.

However, there are also some major points of difference. The earlier period showed people were quite transient and moved from larger centres to smaller, and back again, presumably looking for work. The people most involved with TAMCO were settled, jobs may have changed but their housing location often did not. Thus, the greater stability of personnel ensured the longer lasting nature of this orchestra.

Furthermore, the connection with the schools, Te Aroha College and Morrinsville College, was a major difference. This enabled external connections with the Ministry of Education and initially garnered some government support. At the beginning, the conductor was an itinerant teacher, and as a community and school project this became part of his teaching duties. Later, it became an adult education class, and again had Ministry of Education support, allowing minimal fees to be charged to the musicians.

Another point to note is that in the earlier period the audiences had to be taught to be quiet, and many newspaper editors referred to educating the populace with appropriate classical music. TAMCO of course played classical pieces, but it chose to use its concerts to entertain both players and audience. The programme for a 1976 concert reveals that the orchestra's 'aim is to give pleasure to the community as well as the orchestra members and in doing so, to help raise funds for worthwhile causes'.<sup>10</sup> Of course, at the beginning of the early period between 1864 and 1889, the programmes were not planned, and the organisers were grateful for any contribution from their fellow settlers. These contributions tended to be of well-known songs, many harking back to the Music Hall experiences to which all could relate. Later, with the advent of the music societies the programmes were planned and once into the twentieth century the editors of the papers, and presumably some of

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<sup>10</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Concert Programme, 10 July 1976, Accession Number 2005.06.01, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

the members of the societies, felt that there should be a more advanced listening audience.

The story of TAMCO is one of differing fortunes over the time of its existence between an idea in 1974 and permanent recess in 2004. I have, from my research, determined four distinct periods: 1974-1977, 1978-1989, 1989-2002, 2002-2004. The first is what I refer to as the Genesis. This period was like a “honeymoon”. It started as an idea in 1974 of three people, an itinerant music teacher Tom Cooper, and two Te Aroha College teachers Elaine Hills and John Andrew. The initial meeting showed support from 30 playing musicians, justifying their hopes. Tom was the conductor, John became the President, and Elaine was elected Secretary. A local clarinettist, Frank Finn, became the librarian. For three years it continued in good heart.

Following Tom’s departure to a job in Australia at the end of 1977, and changes in the support team over the next two years, the orchestra went through a period that I refer to as a Plateau. TAMCO continued, with several consecutive conductors but without much sense of direction. By 1984 they even contemplated stopping. Fortunately, by this time Judy Finn, the wife of Frank the librarian, had taken over as secretary and injected much needed energy and impetus, and it continued.

Then came the era that I refer to as Stability. In this period a remarkable woman, Avis Pennell, conducted the orchestra for 13 years until her retirement in 2002. During this time, the orchestra performed in a variety of different local towns and raised money for myriad causes. A recording shared with me showed that it had reached, as a community orchestra, great heights of endeavour and musical achievement.

After Avis, there was again a lack of direction and those who had valiantly sought to keep the orchestra going from the beginning, especially Frank and Judy Finn, were older and needed others to take over their voluntary roles. This was not forthcoming and so the orchestra went into permanent recess in 2004.

The following chapters will now look at each of the four periods, shaped from the research I have done, commenting in greater detail on some of the factors important in relation to its long-lived history.

## Chapter 7: Genesis 1974 – 1977

This chapter explores the beginnings of the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra. It covers the first three years of the orchestra and examines the main people involved at that time, the evolution of the orchestra musically, and the development of its place in the community. In so doing, this chapter highlights elements that I consider important in the maintenance of a local community orchestra. These hark back to some of the themes found in the study of the earlier period from 1864 to 1914, particularly the need for passionate and committed leaders, the volunteer help and support, and the strong ties between orchestra and community. There is also a key difference between this orchestra and those considered in the first half of this thesis. While all three of the initial protagonists had useful connections in their community outside of their positions at the school, just like the leaders in the early period, financially they had backing from the Department of Education and did not have to pay the conductor, nor did they have to pay for the rehearsal venues. Tom Cooper, the conductor, commanded respect as a musician and had good communication skills appealing to both students and adults alike. A school is the heart of a small rural community and by having both Te Aroha and Morrinsville as their base, they had a richer pool of potential support. The orchestra made use of this by helping others raise money, and so became embedded in their community with reciprocal relationships being developed with local groups.

### Origins

The catalyst for the start of the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra was Tom Cooper, who became its conductor.<sup>1</sup> He was an itinerant music teacher based in Morrinsville but teaching at other schools, including Te Aroha College. He 'wanted to form an orchestra to give students the opportunity to play alongside older and more experienced players'.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Elaine Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Matamata, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> Te Aroha Museum Accession Number 2005.06.14., Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Random Memories of TAMCO, Judy Finn.



Figure 92 Photograph of Tom Cooper<sup>3</sup>

At Te Aroha College there were two teachers who themselves had felt that music needed to be expanded in their school, Elaine Hills and John Andrew. Elaine Hills, Senior Woman Teacher, had always loved music and while she taught commerce, she was eager to see music develop at Te Aroha College. John Andrew, HOD of English and later Deputy Head, 'was a very quiet person, very much into music' and played the violin.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> 'Orchestra Now in Full Swing', *Te Aroha News*, 6 May 1975.

<sup>4</sup> Te Aroha, Personal Papers Elaine Hills, John Andrew Eulogy.



*Figure 93 Photograph of John Andrew and Elaine Hills<sup>5</sup>*

There was therefore a perceived need for the growth of music in the school and these three people came together. Elaine recalls:

I think it probably [is] more just Tom and John and I sat down, because I had the clerical skills which they needed, he [John] had the music ability and the administration to be able to get things going, Tom had the expertise ... so between us we sat down and thought we could have a go.<sup>6</sup>

This seems rather ad hoc and not necessarily the basis of an orchestra that would live for 30 years. However, it did, and by examining these three people in more detail it may be possible to ascertain why this orchestra succeeded, where others have not.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> 'Photograph of Orchestra, Te Aroha College', (Matamata: Personal papers of Elaine Hill, 1978).

<sup>6</sup> Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

<sup>7</sup> For example, Matamata was trying to form an orchestra at the same time. There are no records of it.

Tom Cooper was recognised as the 'motivating spark ... behind the revival of musical interest in the Thames Valley'.<sup>8</sup> He was an Englishman who for 24 years had been an army and air force bandsman. While studying at the Royal Military School of Music from 1963-1967, he played part time with the London Symphony Orchestra and the BBC Symphony Orchestra.<sup>9</sup> After his student days he spent two years with the Symphonic Band of Great Britain, as well as nine months with the National Theatre Company of Great Britain. Then he was with the Queen's Horse Regiment and later was bandmaster of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment until it disbanded in 1970. These experiences in classical and symphonic band music stood him in good stead on his arrival in New Zealand in 1971. He and his family moved to Morrinsville where he took up the post of music teacher at the Morrinsville College and then became itinerant music teacher for the South Auckland Education Board, teaching at Matamata, Thames, Morrinsville, Paeroa and Te Aroha Colleges.<sup>10</sup>

Apart from the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra, he conducted the Hamilton Citizens' Band, the Waikato Swing Orchestra, and also Waikato Junior Symphony Orchestra, and was also involved with the Morrinsville Municipal Band.<sup>11</sup> As a drummer he naturally had a preference for playing percussion instruments, but he was also able to play most wind and brass as well. Thus, he was a versatile and able musician, respected by fellow players and the wider community.

Elaine Hills felt that it was natural to see music develop at Te Aroha College, just as she had enjoyed music in her youth. Her parents were musical, her father played the piano accordion and her mother the piano, but with a modest background they could only borrow a piano in order for her to have a few lessons. Therefore, it must have seemed a wonderful opportunity for the pupils at the College to have instrumental lessons and orchestras to play in. A great friend of John Andrew, she became involved in TAMCO because it was happening at the College. She had to step down after a few years when she was 'seconded to the Department of Education'.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> 'Orchestra Now in Full Swing', *Te Aroha News*, 6 May 1975.

<sup>9</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Band Man taking Last Bow, Accession Number 2005.06.02, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>10</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Biography Mr Tom Cooper, Accession Number 2005.06.02, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>11</sup> 'Orchestra Looking Ahead to Winter', *Morrinsville Star*, 21 March 1976; Te Aroha Museum, Accession Number 2005.06.02, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Musician will be Missed.

<sup>12</sup> Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

John Andrew 'was trying to get a music department together and trying to get things going. But it was pretty hard work'.<sup>13</sup> He was so determined to build up music at the College that he taught 'the violin to primary school pupils to ensure that when they came to College they could benefit fully from the expertise offered by the itinerant music teachers'.<sup>14</sup> He was also involved with the Piako 'Arts Council and ... he had the business acumen and Elaine was teaching at the College at the same time. So it all seemed to fall in place'.<sup>15</sup>

The three of them could see that there was a lot of talent in the students and according to Elaine Hills there were many children playing instruments in the 70s. Tom Cooper felt that the students needed something to aspire to because while the Te Aroha College Junior Orchestra fed into the Senior Orchestra, those more advanced players then needed something more.

Not only a lover of music, John was also President of the Little Theatre in Te Aroha. He had recognized that in Te Aroha 'there was quite a group of adults who had musical ability'.<sup>16</sup> So it came about that his links united a perceived need for extra music in the school with the possibility of providing a musical outlet for the community.

### ***Tom Cooper and Orchestral Development***

The orchestra had its first meeting and rehearsal on 13 March 1975 at the Te Aroha College Hall. At this meeting 26 orchestra players were present, with apologies received from a further four interested musicians. It was decided that rehearsals would alternate weekly between the Te Aroha College and Morrinsville College centres with an organised car roster for players. Furthermore, they noted that:

In order to link the formation of this orchestra with the national 'Come Alive' programme, it was decided to approach both the Te Aroha and Morrinsville press in order to obtain publicity in the local papers. A representative from each paper is to be invited to attend the next two meetings for this purpose.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

<sup>14</sup> John Andrew Eulogy

<sup>15</sup> Judy Finn, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Te Aroha, 2017).

<sup>16</sup> Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

<sup>17</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 13 March 1975, Accession Number 2005.06.01. Minutes 13 March 1975.

The fact that there were 30 potential players from the advent of the orchestra, was a remarkable number in a provincial area and a validation of the three's optimism. In addition, they were pragmatic about meeting in the alternate rehearsal school venues 'because that cut the cost'.<sup>18</sup> Thus, from a very firm foundation of many players and efficacious management the orchestra was off to a good start.

Right from the beginning Tom Cooper gave a sense of purpose to the orchestra; at the first meeting he rehearsed music for the first concert. That concert was a mere six weeks after the orchestra began its journey together, at the PTA meeting of Te Aroha College, where four pieces were played by an orchestra of 31 players – adults and secondary students, comprising a string section of 20 and the balance woodwind.<sup>19</sup>

With regards to the development of the orchestra and given that a proportion of the players were teenagers, Tom Cooper had to choose repertoire that would appeal to a wide range of people. He would have wanted to retain players and encourage new members. At the same time some of the players may not have had an orchestral background and would need to learn the art of ensemble playing.

It is noticeable that the pieces selected were carefully chosen not only for the make-up of the orchestra, but also for their intended audience. They tended to be short and lighter classics with a few even more accessible pieces thrown in. There must have been quite an interest in this new venture, and the pieces chosen for their first public outing included music by Handel, Daniel Türk and Haydn. The orchestral management recognised that 'such music has the advantage of being tuneful and yet relatively simple. However, to play it well requires a disciplined approach by all members of the orchestra'.<sup>20</sup> In the meantime, during those few weeks the orchestra had also played some Tchaikovsky, 'Windy – Pop music, and *Orchestral Rock Artistry* amongst others'.<sup>21</sup> This displays sensitivity to the different tastes of the players and had the advantage of maintaining attention with such variety of repertoire. Some of this music would have needed to be arranged for the forces he

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<sup>18</sup> Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

<sup>19</sup> 'Te Aroha Morrinsville Community Orchestra', *Te Aroha News*, 6 May 1975.

<sup>20</sup> Te Aroha Museum Archives, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, The Community Orchestra, Press Release, March 1975, Accession Number 2005.06.01.

<sup>21</sup> Te Aroha Museum Archives, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Minutes 3 April 1975, Accession Number 2005.06.01.

had at his disposal and fortunately he had the training and musical insight to be able to do this for whichever group he was conducting.

Tom's wide range of music making gave him access to many community groups and thus his concerts often involved other bands as well. In the winter concerts of 1976 and 1977, the Hamilton Citizens' Band played in the second half. In the 1976 concert, which was in aid of the Te Aroha Crippled Children's Society, the orchestra played six items which included Saint-Saëns, Brahms and Weber as well as a *Tango* and other light music. It was a varied programme and made the more interesting for the listeners by hearing the Hamilton Citizens' Band after the interval.<sup>22</sup> This would have increased the orchestra's appeal to the public as well as to the players.

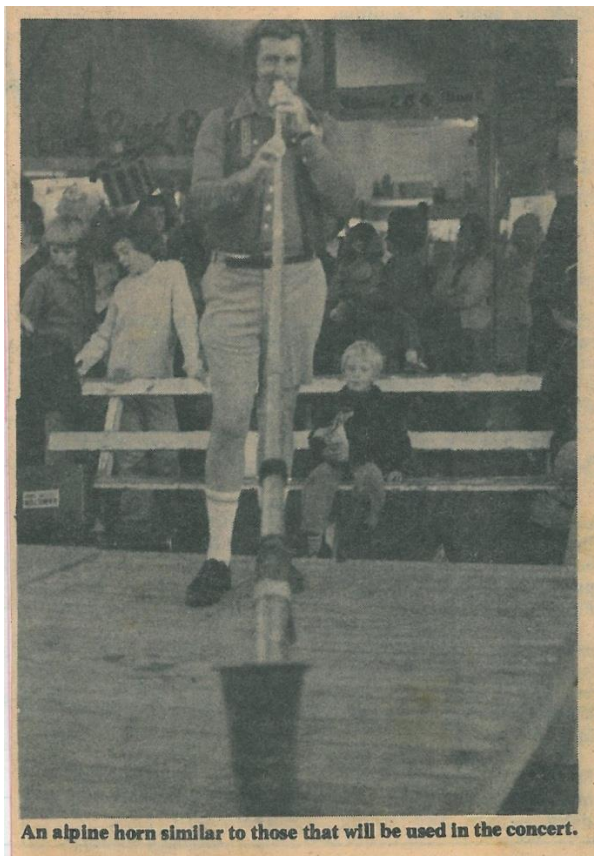


Figure 94 Newspaper Photograph 'An alpine horn similar to those that will be used in the concert'<sup>23</sup>

Tom Cooper, also had a flair for entertainment and a sense of the theatrical (maybe from his days at the National Theatre) and in the concert of 1976, not only was there an alpine horn in evidence, but also 'Bruce Borthwick made an impressive surprise

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<sup>22</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Programme, 10 July 1976, Accession Number 2005.06.01.

<sup>23</sup> 'Photo of Alpine Horn', *Morrinsville Star*, 1 July 1976.

entry and walked up the centre aisle while executing his piece ...Tom Cooper delighted the audience when he swapped roles and displayed his skill on the xylophone'. This reviewer commented on the high-performance standard of the orchestra 'still in its infancy,' but also described the band's performance as 'a never to be forgotten experience' Linking these two performing groups in an electrifying concert would have had the effect of inspiring the orchestral musicians as well as the audience and given TAMCO greater status in the community.

By June 1975 the membership of the orchestra numbered 40 with personnel coming from both Te Aroha and Morrinsville, and also Paeroa, where Tom Cooper also taught. A brass section had been added to the original strings and wind.<sup>24</sup> This latter had apparently had 'quite a stimulating effect on the orchestra'.<sup>25</sup> In November, the orchestra played at the Morrinsville College Senior Prizegiving ceremony, thus giving exposure to the other school centre.<sup>26</sup> The following year the orchestral numbers increased to 56 members, of whom 25 came from Te Aroha and Waihou, similar numbers came from Morrinsville and the rest travelled from Paeroa. Thus, the orchestra was firmly based in the area.

At the beginning of 1977 the orchestra was described in the *Te Aroha News* as:

not a competitive orchestra but meets regularly and provides an opportunity for those with an interest and love of music to come together in an enthusiastic and most enjoyable atmosphere culminating in providing a worthy contribution to the cultural life of Te Aroha.<sup>27</sup>

Tom Cooper was obviously a fine musician and, equally importantly, had the personal characteristics to encourage amateur musicians. Described as a 'talented, good-humoured man,' he was said to have been 'a lot of fun'.<sup>28</sup> Whenever a new player joined the orchestra 'a warm welcome was extended'.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Te Aroha Museum Archives, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Minutes 26 June 1975, Accession Number 2005.06.01.

<sup>25</sup> Te Aroha Museum Archives, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Minutes 31 July 1975, Accession Number 2005.06.01.

<sup>26</sup> Te Aroha Museum Archives, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Minutes 6 November 1975. , Accession Number 2005.06.01.

<sup>27</sup> 'Notices', *Te Aroha News*, 10 Feb 1977.

<sup>28</sup> Biography Mr Tom Cooper, Accession Number 2005.06.02; Personal communication, Alison Shannon.

<sup>29</sup> Minutes 3 April 1975: Minutes 24 April 1975: Minutes 26 June 1975: Minutes 12 February 1976: Minutes 1 April 1976: Te Aroha Museum Archives. Accession Number 2005.06.01.

A main aim of the founding of the orchestra was to give secondary students an orchestra to aspire to, once they had played in the Junior and Senior Orchestras at Te Aroha College. One older player remarked that he had been 'dragged along the first night ... There were lots of kids... Tom was a good teacher for that'.<sup>30</sup> It was mentioned in the review of the 1976 concert that 'a creditable feature was the number, 17 in all, of college pupils participating'.<sup>31</sup> It is surprising to find so many capable instrumentalists within one school, but this is likely the result of the work of John Andrew who started the grassroots of violin playing in the local primary school and saw his goal for an orchestra which fostered student talent achieved.

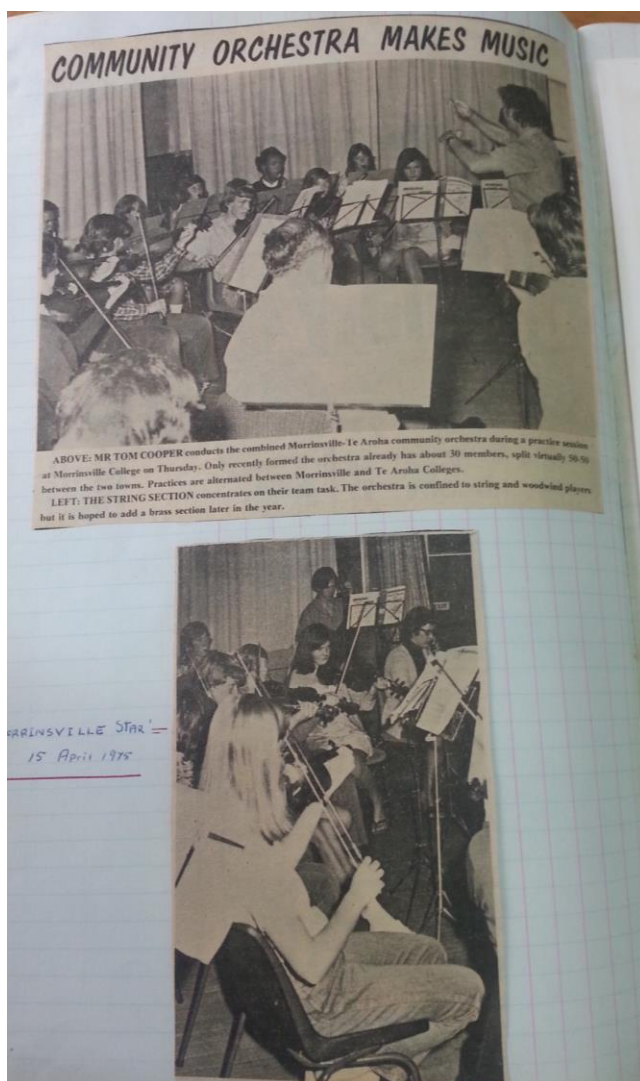


Figure 95 Newspaper Photograph advertising for the orchestra showing large numbers of school children<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Frank Finn, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Te Aroha, 2017).

<sup>31</sup> 'Concert was a Musical Feast', *Te Aroha News*, 20 July 1976.

<sup>32</sup> 'Community Orchestra Makes Music', *Morrinsville Star*, 15 April 1975.

As the students left the area at the end of their schooling, it was necessary to continue attracting new players. Some of these would come from the colleges but Tom Cooper was also keen to ensure local players felt welcome. When there were string vacancies at the beginning of 1976, Tom Cooper wanted 'no one to be put off because they haven't played for some time. Some of those already playing have returned after 20 years and are enjoying it'.<sup>33</sup> But it should also be noted that there were also players of a high standard who enjoyed playing with TAMCO. One had been in the National Youth Orchestra, and another also played with the Hamilton Civic Orchestra.<sup>34</sup>



Figure 96 Alan Scott and John Andrew<sup>35</sup>

Tom Cooper was the energetic front man to this orchestra but quietly and behind the scenes the management team ran the orchestra with efficiency. I now turn to the financial backing that turned enthusiasm into reality.

### ***Finances and Government Support***

The Department of Education was immediately involved with the establishment and funding of the orchestra. As Tom Cooper taught at both Te Aroha and Morrinsville Colleges, it meant that 'somehow we managed to get Morrinsville to come on board

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<sup>33</sup> 'Orchestra Looking Ahead to Winter', *Morrinsville Star*, 21 March 1976.

<sup>34</sup> Finn, J. 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher.

<sup>35</sup> 'Orchestra Now in Full Swing', *Te Aroha News*, 6 May 1975.

with Te Aroha College'.<sup>36</sup> The funding for Tom Cooper came from his itinerant teaching, with the hours he conducted being part of his teaching load.

Furthermore, Tom Cooper, Elaine Hills, and John Andrew had other connections outside of the Education Department. The deputy headmaster at Te Aroha College 'was our contact with Rotary', and John was on the board of the Northern Region Arts Council through his drama connections.<sup>37</sup> 'He knew what was out there and how we could get into it.'<sup>38</sup> He also knew that the Community Arts Council could be tapped by the orchestra: 'It was always a source of money to get instruments to get it going'.<sup>39</sup>

In 1976, it seems that the orchestra was helped greatly by the community with donations from concerts they gave and from a ball held in Morrinsville.<sup>40</sup> Also, they received a grant from the Dr W. R. Lawrence Memorial trust fund of \$100 to purchase instruments.<sup>41</sup> Interestingly, this was addressed to the Principal of Te Aroha College, Don Beard, who must therefore have been the instigator of the application, rather than the orchestra. He and John Andrew were great friends, and the latter 'was able to see what we needed and somehow twist the arms that were needed'. They 'had cupboards built and everything to store the instruments and music'.<sup>42</sup> 'It was a great set up, the right people in the right place.'<sup>43</sup>

However, there was another background factor enabling the decision to create an orchestra. Although it could not have happened without these three strong motivated and talented individuals, or without support from the Education Department, there was at the time a government sponsored initiative to encourage sport and recreation outside of the home. This was known as the Come Alive campaign.

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<sup>36</sup> Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

<sup>37</sup> Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

<sup>38</sup> Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

<sup>39</sup> Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

<sup>40</sup> Te Aroha Museum Archives, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Minutes 1 April 1976, Accession Number 2005.06.01; Te Aroha Museum Archives, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Letter 24 May 1976, Accession Number 2005.06.01; Te Aroha Museum Archives, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Financial Report July 1976, Accession Number 2005.06.01.

<sup>41</sup> Te Aroha Museum Archives, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Letter 6 December 1976. . 24 May 1976, Accession Number 2005.06.01.

<sup>42</sup> Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

<sup>43</sup> Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

The Come Alive campaign was a short-lived government initiative, seen also in Britain, Canada, Australia and many European countries. The aim 'was universally, to improve the health and wellbeing of the nations through purposeful, physical activity'. However, in New Zealand, as a product of the Labour Government term of 1972-5, it was "dumped" by the following National Government. It was intended to encourage New Zealanders to take part in any activity be it art, drama, games, sport or hobbies that encouraged social interaction and community awareness. As such the object was to gain 'physical, social and psychological benefits'.<sup>44</sup>

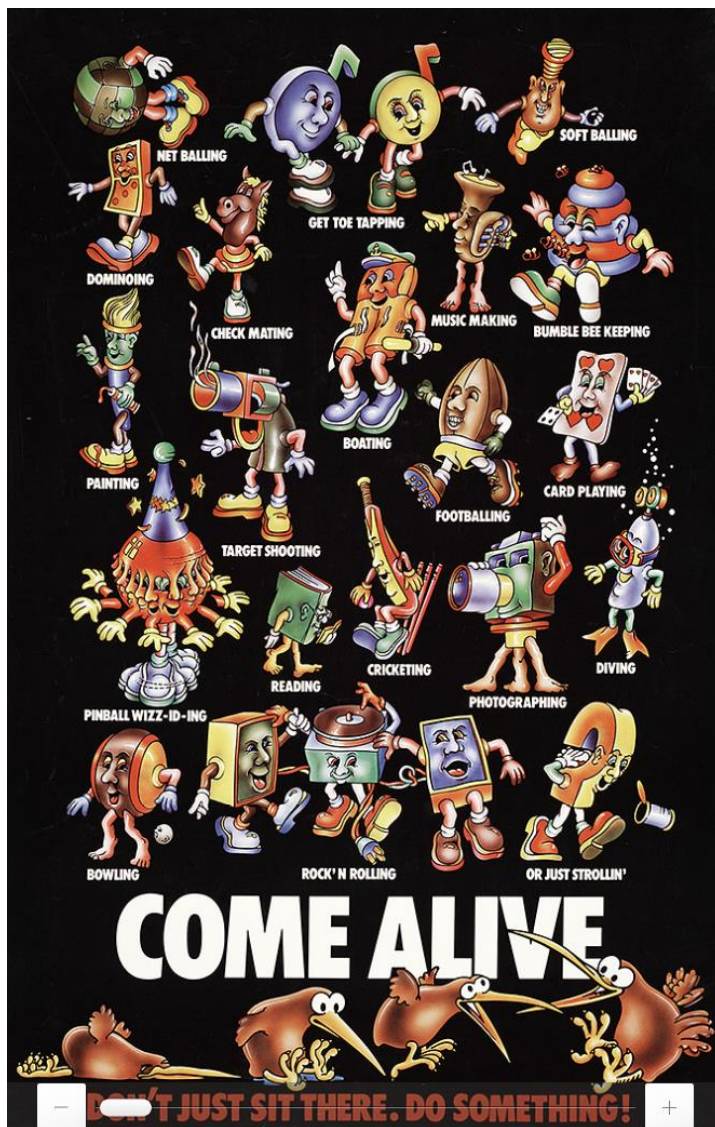


Figure 97 Come Alive Campaign Poster<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Bob Stothart, 'The Come Alive Campaign (1975)', *New Zealand Physical Educator*, 47.1 (2014), 24

<sup>45</sup> David Green, 'Government and Sport - Support for Adult Sport since 1973', *Te Ara - The Encyclopedia of New Zealand* <<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/zoomify/41706/come-alive-poster>>

A notice to the papers written by the committee in 1975, noted:

It is fitting that this orchestra should be launched at a time when the “Come Alive” campaign is being so widely publicised. Costs involved, apart from travelling expenses, are being borne by the Education Department.<sup>46</sup>

It may be considered that this was written to allay the fears of those less interested in the arts, that no public money was being spent on matters perceived unimportant. At the same time, it educated the readership that the orchestra existed and was backed by the Come Alive campaign, which would have suggested its value to the community.

As part of that campaign TAMCO was asked to perform at the Come Alive ‘promotion’ in Morrinsville on 7 September. All clubs in Morrinsville were asked to participate in stands or demonstrations showing their activities. TAMCO decided to work with the Drama Society and play ‘several pieces between one-act plays’.<sup>47</sup> Here we see the hand of John Andrew uniting his two main passions, music and drama.

### ***Community Support and Engagement***

Practical help was also volunteered by members of the orchestra. ‘We had different ones who would fix things ... Frank Finn, Mr Gillon’.<sup>48</sup> The latter is recorded as having made five new violin cases.<sup>49</sup> In his reminiscences, Frank Finn remembered fixing music stands and adapting one for a person in a wheelchair so that they could play.<sup>50</sup>

Frank was also the librarian. He ‘sat on the master copy’ and photocopied every piece of music for practice purposes because he could not rely on people to return the music or look after it properly.<sup>51</sup> This would have been a mammoth task with usually at least seven different pieces in the programme (at this stage, many more in later concerts) and approximately 50 players. He also transported the instruments when the rehearsal was held at Morrinsville – this included the

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<sup>46</sup> Te Aroha Museum Archives, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Reference Sheet sent to Newspapers by the Orchestral Committee 20 March 1975, Accession Number 2005.06.01.

<sup>47</sup> Minutes 26 June 1975

<sup>48</sup> Hills, ‘Interview with Olivia Fletcher’.

<sup>49</sup> Te Aroha Museum Archives, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Letter 8 December 1976, Accession Number 2005.06.01.

<sup>50</sup> Finn, F. ‘Interview with Olivia Fletcher’.

<sup>51</sup> Finn, F. ‘Interview with Olivia Fletcher’.

conductor's podium, tympani, and music stands. At first, they went in his van, later they were towed on his trailer, maybe not the safest form of transport! 'We just took it for granted; it was what we had to do.'<sup>52</sup>

Another aspect that showed strong leadership and forward planning on the part of the founders of this orchestra was its relationships both within and outside of the school and amateur music populations. They realised that to be successfully embedded in the community there had to be a reciprocal relationship. They made clever use of the newspapers to advertise their existence. As mentioned above, the first concert was at the Te Aroha College Parents' Teachers' Association General Meeting. The editor and photographer of the *Te Aroha News* were present and Tom Cooper

introduced the orchestra to the Te Aroha public who were present at the annual PTA meeting and gave a brief but detailed outline of the progress, hopes and ideals of the orchestra.<sup>53</sup>

This had several benefits. The approximately 200 parents present could see that learning an instrument could bring pleasure to not just the players but also the audience.<sup>54</sup> There must have been parental delight amongst some in the audience seeing their offspring performing in public to an appreciative audience.<sup>55</sup> Likewise, many would have seen their children's photographs in the newspapers – a source of pride to be shared within the family. They could also see a pathway for their children beyond school days, a hobby for life. Maybe some parents became a little more interested in supporting music lessons? The wider public learnt that there was now a local orchestra comprising string, woodwind, and, the following term, brass instruments. They also heard that its next performance was to be in August.<sup>56</sup> So, by being able to promote it, and in later years show its ongoing development, the orchestra could advertise to a wider audience, and especially the parents of children learning music, both its relevance and its plans. The minutes from the orchestra committee after this meeting note that

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<sup>52</sup> Finn, F. 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher.

<sup>53</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 17 April 1975, Accession Number 2005.06.01, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>54</sup> 'Orchestra Now in Full Swing', *Te Aroha News*, 6 May 1975.

<sup>55</sup> Minutes 13 March 1975

<sup>56</sup> 'Orchestra Now in Full Swing', *Te Aroha News*, 6 May 1975.

The audience were very interested and most appreciative of the work being done by the orchestra and the standard of performance they have reached in one year.<sup>57</sup>

The orchestra had support locally from other groups. Most notably, the Morrinsville Old Time Dance Club decided to 'donate a proportion of the proceeds' of a ball to the orchestra.<sup>58</sup> This was also noted in the local newspaper, another way of advertising that the two groups existed and enjoyed a positive relationship. It commented that the Dance Club 'has thrown its backing behind the orchestra and intends channelling some of the funds from its ball on April 24'.<sup>59</sup> TAMCO received \$50 from the ball which also raised money for medical research.<sup>60</sup>

As with the earlier period shown in Part One, TAMCO also formed relationships with other musical groups. Tom Cooper, as itinerant music teacher in the Thames Valley, knew Bob Lee who was the itinerant music teacher at Matamata. It was decided that Matamata would form their own community orchestra under the latter's leadership. TAMCO noted this and determined that 'a close liaison will be maintained with them and the common aim will be a combined concert at the end of the year'.<sup>61</sup>

Later in that year (1975) there were plans for the end of year combined concert to perform 'a series of three concerts to be held at Morrinsville, Te Aroha and Matamata' and the following month, 'it is hoped that the orchestra will combine with the Matamata Community Orchestra shortly for rehearsals for the end of year concerts'.<sup>62</sup> Despite all these good intentions the first notice of 1976 in the Te Aroha News, advising people that the orchestra was resuming for the year, said that 'the orchestra's first task this year is to present a programme in Matamata to assist with

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<sup>57</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 8 April 1976, Accession Number 2005.06.01, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>58</sup> Minutes 1 April 1976.

<sup>59</sup> 'Orchestra Looking Ahead to Winter', *Morrinsville Star*, 21 March 1976.

<sup>60</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter from Morrinsville Old Time Dance Club, 24 May 1976, Accession Number 2005.05.01, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter to Morrinsville Old Time Dance Club, 31 May 1976, Accession Number 2005.05.01, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>61</sup> Minutes 31 July 1975.

<sup>62</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 23 October 1975, Accession Number 2005.06.01, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Minutes 6 November 1975.

recruitment to establish an orchestra in that area'.<sup>63</sup> That concert was given in March and was well received. It was noted by the press that it was held to 'aid the local brass band' and 'to help foster the formation of a Matamata Community Orchestra'.<sup>64</sup> While it is unclear whether they were ultimately successful in this endeavour at that time, the relationship between the two towns' music activities remained active after the initial relationship between Bob Lee and Tom Cooper. The charity concert of June 1977 saw the Jaycees become involved. 'The Te Aroha Jaycees are giving their support and offering transport to and from the concert for those in need of it.'<sup>65</sup>

Moving outward from their immediate connections, the orchestra engaged with the community in a mutually beneficial way by using their concerts to raise money for selected local charities. In this way, the costs of the concerts were shared, and both benefitted financially, with the local profile of each being brought to the public eye. In their first three years with Tom Cooper, they gave six concerts which raised money for charity.<sup>66</sup> Their first such concert was in December 1975. In keeping with its name, the orchestra performed on two consecutive weeks, the first in Te Aroha, raising money for the Intellectually Handicapped Children's Society, and the second in Morrinsville, in aid of the Save the Children Fund. At this stage the orchestra numbered 44 players.<sup>67</sup> Furthermore, the orchestra shared its concert with the Morrinsville Combined Churches choir and two soloists. Thus, the orchestra became known to musicians outside of its immediate circle and to other members of the public who supported the charities. A good-sized audience and generous publicity were ensured.

The orchestra will also have benefitted in less tangible ways. Being part of the community and being supported by and supporting others will have served them well in terms of lessening the elitist tone that an orchestra can sometimes engender. By raising money and producing an entertaining concert that appealed to all tastes, it is possible that the level of support towards classical music from different parts of society was increased.

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<sup>63</sup> 'Orchestra to Resume', *Te Aroha News*, 12 February 1976.

<sup>64</sup> 'Orchestra Looking Ahead to Winter', *Morrinsville Star*, 21 March 1976; Minutes 1 April 1976.

<sup>65</sup> 'Benefit Concert', *Te Aroha News*, 21 June 1977.

<sup>66</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Financial Report November 1977, Accession Number 2005.06.02, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004

<sup>67</sup> 'Untitled', *Te Aroha News*, 27 November 1975.

## The End of this Era



Figure 98 Photograph of TAMCO conducted by Tom Cooper <sup>68</sup>

In 1977 the orchestra could have imagined that they were stable and moving forward smoothly. They had good numbers, had a conductor paid for by the Education Department, and had played several exciting concerts in their first few years. However, later in the year Tom Cooper gave notice that he might be moving away from the area.

This led to an urgent AGM. 'With the possible pending departure of Mr Tom Cooper, if the orchestra wished to continue it was imperative that another conductor be obtained.' It was then noted that if the Department of Education did not provide an itinerant teacher on the same terms, the orchestra would need to provide an honorarium and travelling expenses. This would have to be funded from subscriptions and an application for assistance from the Northern Regional Arts Council. Much discussion ensued determining the amount of subscription and the need for an assistant conductor appointed from members of the orchestra to allow

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<sup>68</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Photograph of TAMCO conducted by Tom Cooper, Accession Number 2005.06.02, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

continuity should the main conductor be absent. This was suggested by Frank Finn who also suggested other funds which could be approached for financial assistance.<sup>69</sup>

Sadly for the orchestra and wider music making in the area, Tom Cooper left New Zealand at the end of 1977 to take up a position as Australian Air Force music director at the Royal Australian Air Force Base at Richmond, NSW.<sup>70</sup> Farewell concerts were performed in Morrinsville and Te Aroha with the Combined Churches Choir. The full programme of this concert is reproduced on the following pages to show the relationship between orchestra and choir, the variety of the music, the significant membership and how they promoted their ensembles together with a phone number for potential members. Also, it shows how grassroots this orchestra was; it is a humble programme of two sides of A4 typed by the secretary.

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<sup>69</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 27 October 1977, Accession Number 2005.06.02, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>70</sup> Band Man taking Last Bow, Accession Number 2005.06.02.

- THE COMBINED CHURCHES CHOIR -

Conductor

David Qualtrough

AND

- THE MORRINSVILLE-TE AROHA COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA -

Conductor

Tom Cooper

P R E S E N T

-- A 'FAREWELL' CHRISTMAS CONCERT --

AT

MORRINSVILLE - 4TH DECEMBER 1977

AND

TE AROHA - 11TH DECEMBER 1977

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- P R O G R A M M E -

God Defend New Zealand

ORCHESTRA - Holiday on Ice  
Blue Nocturne

Soloist - LIBBY WELLS

ORCHESTRA - Heather's Theme

CHOIR - A New Zealand Xmas Carol  
Coventry Carol  
Angels from the Realms of Glory  
Sleep Holy Babe

Virtuoso Accordion Soloist - WINNIE SCHMITTS

ORCHESTRA - Tango for Orchestra

I N T E R V A L

ORCHESTRA - Tijuana Taxi  
Indian Dances

Virtuoso Cornet Soloist - ALLEN LEE  
'Hail Storm'

CHOIR - Te Harinui, Every Star, Poverty

LIBBY WELLS with CHOIR and ORCHESTRA -  
'Mary's Boy Child'

'O Come All Ye Faithful'

'Hark! The Herald Angels Sing'

The Queen

ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

Violin

Alan Scott (Leader)  
Margaret Abercrombie  
Barbara Griffiths  
Betty McLeod  
Hilary Smiley  
Marien Stokes  
Cheryl Wilton  
Hazel Wilton

Viola

John Andrew  
Lorraine Arnold  
Daisy Robertson

Cello

Phyllis Burt  
Ruth Forlong  
Kay Gillon

Double Bass

Derek Beard  
Avon Gillon

Flute

Anne Eastwood  
Helen Van Grootel  
Cerrine Mayer

Clarinet

Miranda Beale  
Colleen Berry  
Jillian Burt  
Naomi Scott  
Suzanne Wilton

Bassoon

Kaye Caldwell

Trumpet

George Jennings  
Jack Bennett

Horn

Rex Edge  
Leigh Pettigrew

Trombone

George Edmonds  
Albert Mailman

Saxophone

Frank Finn  
Karen Mann

Tuba

John Haddock

Percussion

Kay Cunningham  
Christine Barthow

Pianist

Bronwyn Barnett

CONDUCTOR -

Tom Cooper

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CHOIR MEMBERS

Soprano

Elsie Barber  
Lorraine Bunning  
Verna Chalmers  
Robyn Eagles  
Alma Fisher  
Joan Hodgson  
Kath Hope  
Pauline Hope  
Mary Gorge  
Elsie Griffith  
Lynne McInnes

Patricia Mellow

Amy Moon  
Sister Ursula  
Hazel Mundell

Alto

Marj. Adamson  
Julie Allen  
Marjorie Cameron  
Eunice Cooper  
Pat Elley  
Raewyn Hislop  
Beulah Knight  
Helga Le Gallais

Tenor

John W. Lochans  
Jock Crawford  
Peter Dons  
Don Hudson

Bass

Mick Elley  
Clive Fausett  
Gordon Rosser

CONDUCTOR -

David Qualtrough

### THE CHOIR

The Choir was first formed in 1971 under Merle Fausett, and performs mainly just at Easter and Christmas. Notable performances have been the presentation of 'Crucifixion' in April 1971 as part of the Morrinsville Borough Golden Jubilee and the highly successful 'Olivet to Calvary' at Easter this year.

### THE ORCHESTRA

Since its inception in March 1975 with a membership of 26 members, the Orchestra has grown and developed into a body of 40 enthusiastic members who meet weekly, alternately at Morrinsville and Te Aroha.

During this time, eight concerts have been given in Te Aroha, Morrinsville and Matamata. In each case we have been joined by other artists and the response and encouragement from the public has been most heartening. From these concerts a total sum of \$798.00 has been donated to charitable organisations in these areas.

If you are interested in joining either  
the choir or the orchestra  
please contact -

David Qualtrough - Elstow 813 - Choir  
Elaine Hills - 49785 - Orchestra

Figure 99 Programme for the last concert conducted by Tom Cooper<sup>71</sup>

Some things to note about this programme are that occasionally, and depending on which township they performed in, they are known as the Morrinsville Te Aroha

<sup>71</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme 4 and 12 December 1977, Accession Number 2005.06.02, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

Community Orchestra or the Te Aroha Morrinsville Community Orchestra. Like the concerts in Part One they also finished with 'God Save the Queen', although at this time God Defend New Zealand started the performance. The order of programming is also similar to many of the earlier concerts described in Part One in that the orchestral items are interspersed with individual instrumental items and the choir. It was an orchestra of 37 players, only missing an oboist as part of the normal symphony orchestra makeup. This is an extraordinary feat for a small settlement to have available such a variety of instruments at its disposal. In this concert Alan Scott is the leader of the orchestra and John Andrew is playing principal viola, both of whom are shown in the photograph above of Tom Cooper conducting the orchestra. The respect in which Tom Cooper was held is evident. Comments made about him included the reference to his departure as a 'great loss' and that he was 'a well-respected, devoted and talented man'.<sup>72</sup> One of the three people who were responsible for the start of TAMCO, Elaine Hills, gave a particularly glowing tribute:

He was brilliant and he was so enthusiastic, anyone could do anything. He was just wonderful. We were so lucky to have him. We were shattered when he went off to Australia because he had done so much. But from there we had the nucleus up and running.<sup>73</sup>

Tom Cooper could leave knowing he had been the catalyst for the development of a viable community orchestra.

## **Conclusion**

These first three years show much similarity to the earlier period discussed in Part One of the thesis. As with the more successful (or longer lasting) orchestras of the early years in the Waikato, TAMCO was a grassroots enterprise. It was totally embedded in the community it served. The conductor lived in Morrinsville, the initial protagonists were from Te Aroha and the players came mainly from those two towns, with a few from neighbouring settlements. It had the support of the local schools and eventually the local community, support fostered by both its charity work and the pleasure it gave to the proud parents of schoolchildren playing in the orchestra. This latter is a point of connection between the two eras as in both rural populations the

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<sup>72</sup> Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Musician will be Missed.

<sup>73</sup> Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

school was the heart of the community. There is a marked difference, however, as in the nineteenth century school instrumental lessons were not available.

The orchestras of both periods helped others in the community. From 1864 onwards, musicians raised money for each other's denomination's places of worship, they helped those struggling financially through no fault of their own, and they gave complimentary concerts for those who had helped the community but were now leaving it. In the same way, TAMCO helped raise money for local charitable societies and for local people needing help.

There are subtle differences in the aims of TAMCO and earlier orchestras. Clearly TAMCO intended to entertain its audiences and provide fun for its players. The programmes show that Tom Cooper interspersed light classical pieces with more easy listening music, and he was a showman, such as in the concert mentioned above that had a player walking up the aisle while playing. Although in the first half of the earlier period in Part One concerts showed a plethora of music hall type songs, as orchestral societies developed they sought to educate their populace and there was a strong desire to move towards the strictly classical over time.

One striking resemblance between the eras is the use of the newspapers to advertise the orchestra and its concerts. In Part One there were many articles about upcoming concerts, recommending the programme, the musicians, the price; and, following these concerts, reviews that commented on the performance, and the audience size. TAMCO did the same, often sending out notices to be put in the paper to avoid a reporter having to create an item. However, TAMCO had access to photographs which could be used and thus drew greater attention to themselves. The early papers used to write their pieces in a long column, surrounded by news of an accident, a horse race, or some other newsworthy event, with the potential for the item to be lost to all but the most assiduous reader. In contrast, the TAMCO articles were more readily accessible and identifiable with the orchestra because of their headings and the inclusion of photographs.

The next chapter continues the story of TAMCO emphasizing how with a lack of strong leadership rooted in the community, the importance of the support group surrounding the orchestra is paramount.

## Chapter 8: Plateau 1978 – 1988

This chapter focuses on the period from 1978 to 1988, a decade that I have termed 'Plateau' as this was a time of consolidation and some tensions. The previous era with Tom Cooper and the start of this orchestra shows enormous enthusiasm and growth both in the numbers involved and in the variety of concerts they gave. This part of the orchestra's history looks at the strength of the orchestra and the organisation, but also shows some weaknesses. These latter were occasioned by some conductors' shortcomings. Each of the conductors in this period had their own manner and interests that they espoused which led to a seeming lack of coherence in terms of the development of TAMCO. Numbers fluctuated greatly, at one point eventuating in a discussion about the closure of the orchestra. The orchestra appeared to lack a sense of direction perhaps occasioned by the changes in key personnel in this phase.

On the other hand, despite enormous challenges, the committee basically held the orchestra together and enabled it to go forward. The secretary, in particular, worked tirelessly for the orchestra, raising money from charitable sources, communicating between the committee and the orchestral members, as well as working with outside groups for joint concerts, locating halls, liaising with the newspapers. There were others who contributed no less. The librarian had a huge part to play in furnishing individuals with copies of music and locating sources for borrowing and buying, or indeed lending music to other organisations. The instruments had to be transported between centres each week and to concerts and music stands and other furnishings needed to be mended. So the background support was unwavering and outstanding in its effective work.

There were four different conductors during this period, the majority of whom came from Hamilton and thus were not part of the locality. Some did not understand a rural community orchestra and, unfortunately, possibly upset several people. Given that TAMCO was originally defined as a community orchestra and one to which the more advanced school players could aspire, there was a huge age range. The conductor needed to be aware of such distinctions and be able to reach out to young and old alike. Some managed to do this, others did not.

Furthermore, in the earlier years of this period there were two major blows to the administration. The first was that Elaine Hills was seconded to the Education Department and thus stepped down from her role, and the second, devastating to all, was that John Andrew was killed in a fire in 1982.<sup>1</sup> Thus, none of the original prime movers were able to continue their active roles in the orchestra. It was fortunate that there was a greater depth of talent in the Te Aroha area and various posts were taken up by other extremely able people.

The first two conductors were Reverend Errol Smith (1978-1981) and Basil Kirker (1981-1983). Many of the features already established, such as working with other groups, playing in different centres, and raising money for good causes, continued under both these men, but each added their own stamp, according to their backgrounds and musical interests, on the orchestra. The gradual changeover in management also altered the tenor of communication and relationships outside of the orchestra. Despite the loss of Elaine Hills in 1981 and John Andrew's death in 1982, the orchestra continued to perform concerts, raise money for charity, and was a strong presence in the community.

The last two conductors of this stage, David Fagan (1984-1987) and Stephen de Pledge (1988), a schoolboy appointed for musical potential rather than experience, continued with the orchestra. Numbers had fallen greatly during the previous years, to the point that the possibility of closing was discussed at the AGM of 1984.<sup>2</sup> Fortunately this did not occur, and almost as a counterbalance to this, their musical standards were raised, 'probably the standard of the orchestra was at its highest'.<sup>3</sup> It was in some senses a time of crisis. However, with the organisation and financial backing in place from the earlier years as well as an enormous amount of work by the volunteers, it survived what must have been its darkest moments.

This era showed the resilience of the orchestra, but also the enormous stresses involved for both orchestra and leadership. There were concerns at different times

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<sup>1</sup> Elaine Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Matamata, 2017).

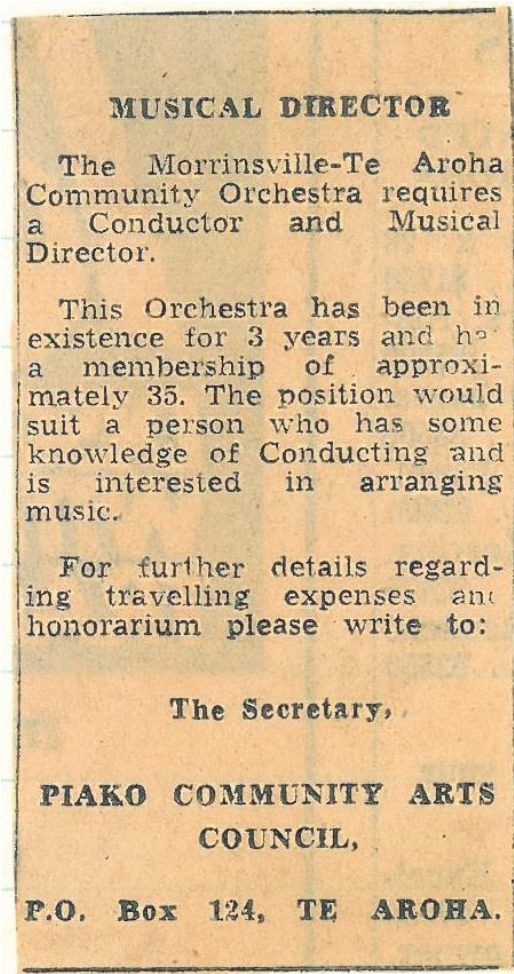
<sup>2</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes of AGM 26 April 1984, 26 April 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>3</sup> Frank Finn, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Te Aroha, 2017).

about player numbers and lax attitudes to punctuality and attendance, as well as successes in terms of the quality of some of the concerts given.

### **The Reverend Errol Smith, Conductor 1978 – 1981**

Following the departure of Tom Cooper, an advertisement was placed in newspapers towards the end of 1977:



*Figure 100 Advertisement for Conductor and Musical Director TAMCO 1977<sup>4</sup>*

It is noticeable that the application address is the Piako Community Arts Council, showing that the local region was supporting this project. This would have provided privacy for the secretary and given an applicant confidence that this was a genuine

<sup>4</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Musical Director, Accession Number 2005.06.02, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

enterprise with financial support. It is unknown how many applicants there were, but Reverend Errol Smith was welcomed at the orchestra's first meeting in 1978. Thirty players were present which, although down from the 56 of the preceding concert, showed a general determination that the orchestra should continue.<sup>5</sup>

The Reverend Errol Smith lived in Hamilton and conducted the 'Melville High School's symphonia orchestra and the Hamilton Music Club's orchestra'.<sup>6</sup> I have been unable to find out his religious affiliation, but he was always referred to in this way. Following Tom Cooper, he seemed to have faced several challenges, as well as providing the orchestra with different opportunities. With him there appeared to be problems of timekeeping and attendance at rehearsal, neither of which were apparent under Tom Cooper.

Smith was obviously irked by a lack of punctuality at rehearsal by some of the members and at the beginning of his second year with the orchestra, 'the chairman suggested to members that they endeavour to arrive on time at weekly meetings so that too much time is not wasted at the start of the evening'.<sup>7</sup> It was noted however, in the very first committee minutes of his conductorship, that 'a considerable amount of time was spent on tuning of instruments'.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps if every rehearsal followed this format several players may have felt there was little point in turning up on time.

It is apparent that Smith felt the orchestra had a casual approach to accurate tuning, and he set about immediately to alter that. However, it is also probable that this was the first time the instruments had been played since the preceding concert in December with Tom Cooper.<sup>9</sup> It takes a little while for instruments, fingers, and lips to find their way and maybe a better tactic would have been to let the orchestra 'blow off a

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<sup>5</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 9 February 1978, Accession Number 2005.06.03, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>6</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Orchestra to Play in Paeroa, June 1980, Accession Number 2005.06.05, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>7</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 8 February 1979, Accession Number 2005.06.04, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>8</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes, 9 February 1978, Accession Number 2005.06.03, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>9</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme: A Farewell Christmas Concert, 4 and 11 December 1977, Accession Number 2005.06.02, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

few cobwebs' first before berating their tuning.<sup>10</sup> It was probably a rather negative and fussy start and one can imagine some players grumbling under their breath. On the other hand, the sound of an amateur orchestra out of tune very likely was one the Reverend Smith was keen to forego, and from his point of view spending time on tuning was entirely understandable. Whether it was the wisest start to his conductorship is debatable.

Smith also had problems with player attendance, which was noted in 1978 and twice in 1979. In 1978 the committee 'decided that the Secretary should send out a newsletter to all members and thus help overcome the problem of communication'.<sup>11</sup> Thus the newsletter was born and continued through the rest of the orchestra's existence and was expanded to include the Friends of the Orchestra.

An example of just such an exhortation is shown in the 1979 newsletter of June which said:

We have become rather concerned about the apparent inability of all members of the Orchestra to attend rehearsals. In view of the forthcoming concerts, it is most desirable that there should be at least one rehearsal with a full attendance, because we do need to perform as creditably as possible at the concerts.<sup>12</sup>

A full quota at least once before a concert would seem to be an admirable and necessary aim!

Given the difficulties of ensuring full attendance at rehearsals, it may be that Errol Smith was oblivious to possible repercussions of his next move. He decided that the playing members should be auditioned 'to ascertain the playing strengths and any weaknesses of members'.<sup>13</sup> It is unknown how this affected attendance, but it is likely to have had a negative influence. Again, this shows that Errol Smith was concerned to raise standards and conduct an orchestra that was a credit to the area and himself. It is

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<sup>10</sup> Judy Finn, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher' ed by Olivia Fletcher (Te Aroha, 2017).

<sup>11</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 26 October 1978, Accession Number 2005.06.03, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>12</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter 27 June 1979, Accession Number 2005.06.04, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>13</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 13 April 1978, Accession Number 2005.06.03, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

unfortunate that his manner of so doing had the potential to rile those very people whose playing level he was trying to advance.

On the other hand, by living in Hamilton he had many new contacts for the orchestra and under him the concerts went further afield, for example to the Waikato Hospital and a church in Dinsdale.<sup>14</sup> An unusual concert was performed in 1978. TAMCO was contacted by the 'Con Brio Orchestra', an accordion orchestra, in Hamilton to perform in a concert later in the year.<sup>15</sup> The Variety Concert was being held 'to raise funds for the 1980 World Piano Accordion Championships being held in Auckland'.<sup>16</sup> The concert raised \$510 – 'the full amount raised has now gone towards the NEW ZEALAND World Piano Accordion Championships'.<sup>17</sup>

Musical connections between the local townships, already formed when Tom Cooper was conductor, were strengthened as well. A reciprocal relationship developed between the brass band in Matamata and the orchestra. In 1978, the Matamata Citizens' Band performed at the orchestral concert of 7 December in Te Aroha. In her letter of thanks to Bob Lee the Matamata conductor, Elaine Hills wrote, 'we look forward to further happy associations with your band. We will be pleased to reciprocate this visit by your band sometime in the future'.<sup>18</sup> The relationship between the two towns continued and in 1979 the orchestra performed with the Matamata Citizens' Band in October.<sup>19</sup>

There are few programmes still extant from this period with Errol Smith as conductor, but, using committee meeting notes to supplement, it is possible to glean some information about the repertoire he used. His first concerts included items of

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<sup>14</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 29 November 1979, Accession Number 2005.06.04, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Random Memories of TAMCO, Judy Finn

<sup>15</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 2 March 1978, Accession Number 2005.06.03, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>16</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter 30 April 1978, Accession Number 2005.06.03, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>17</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter of Thanks from Mr Lisignoli 19 October 1978, Accession Number 2005.06.03, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>18</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter 11 December 1978, Accession Number 2005.06.03, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>19</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 16 August 1979, Accession Number 2005.06.04, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter September 1979, Accession Number 2005.06.04, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.



The Weber and the Beethoven *Larghetto* were also played at the Christmas concert of 1980, showing a wise use of resources, both in terms of player knowledge and music availability in the orchestral library.<sup>21</sup>

His programmes tended to the easy listening classical choices, but it seems he always tempered that with something well known or fun. In the December concert of 1980 the newspaper article advertising this wrote:

The members of the percussion section of an Orchestra are often the forgotten musicians who seldom have the opportunity to play anything very interesting.

This year one piece of music gives one percussionist the chance to be a soloist.

Leroy Anderson's "Sandpaper Ballet" requires some skillful work by Graham Hills with wood blocks and pieces of sandpaper.<sup>22</sup>

The orchestra totalled 35 for this concert, showing the player numbers had risen slightly from the start of his tenure.

It was with the Reverend Smith that TAMCO played for the first time in Paeroa in 1980. This programme followed the format of orchestral items interspersed with solos, and the Paeroa and Districts adult choir presented several items.<sup>23</sup> The proceeds were to go to the Paeroa College Parent Teachers' Association. As can be seen from this newspaper advertisement they were very mindful of the cost for families with several children and enabled them all to be included at a sensible price and time.

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<sup>21</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives., Programme 21 December 1980, Accession Number 2005.06.05, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>22</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, An Orchestral Concert of Note, 1980, Accession Number 2005.06.05, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>23</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Concert 22 June 1980, Accession Number 2005.06.05, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.



*Figure 102 Advertisement Paeroa Concert 1980<sup>24</sup>*

The emphasis was on light classical and popular music, which together with the local choir being involved probably ensured a better audience. The following programme shows just this.

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<sup>24</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newspaper Advertisement n.d., Accession Number 2005.06.05, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

- P R O G R A M M E -

ORCHESTRA:

Air and March .. . . . H. Purcell  
Suite from 'The Beggar's Opera' .. . . . John Gay

PIANO SOLO .. . . . HELEN CROMPTON

First Movt. 'English' Sonata - J. Haydn

ORCHESTRA:

Air from 'The Peasant Cantata' .. . . . J. S. Bach  
Largo and Minuet .. . . . J. Haydn

CLARINET SOLO .. . . . NAOMI SCOTT

Second Movt. Concerto for Clarinet - Mozart

PAEROA AND DISTRICTS ADULT CHOIR

Bracket of Songs

ORCHESTRA:

Grand March From 'Aida' .. . . . G. Verdi  
Francaise Militaire .. . . . C. Saint-Saens

- I N T E R V A L -

ORCHESTRA:

Hungarian Dance No. 5 .. . . . J. Brahms  
Overture 'The Argonaut' .. . . . C. Franck

'In Old Vienna' - A selection of Viennese Waltzes

CHOIR:

Paeroa and Districts Adult Choir

Bracket of Songs

TE AROHA-MORRINSVILLE CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY:

Music for Brass and Woodwind

ORCHESTRA:

Three Hungarian Songs for Children .. . . . Bela Bartok  
Sleigh Ride .. . . . LeRoy Anderson  
Tijuana Taxi .. . . . Bud Coleman

- CONDUCTOR - ERROL SMITH -

---oooOooo---

Figure 103 Programme Paeroa concert 1980<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Programme Concert 22 June 1980, Accession Number 2005.06.05.

As these images show, Smith combined orchestral music of light classical and fun pieces with individual soloists, the Paeroa choir, and the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Chamber Music Society. There is no other mention of this society anywhere so it must have been a combination of players from the orchestra who had a chance to shine.

The programme of the previous Christmas concert in December 1979 was equally varied:

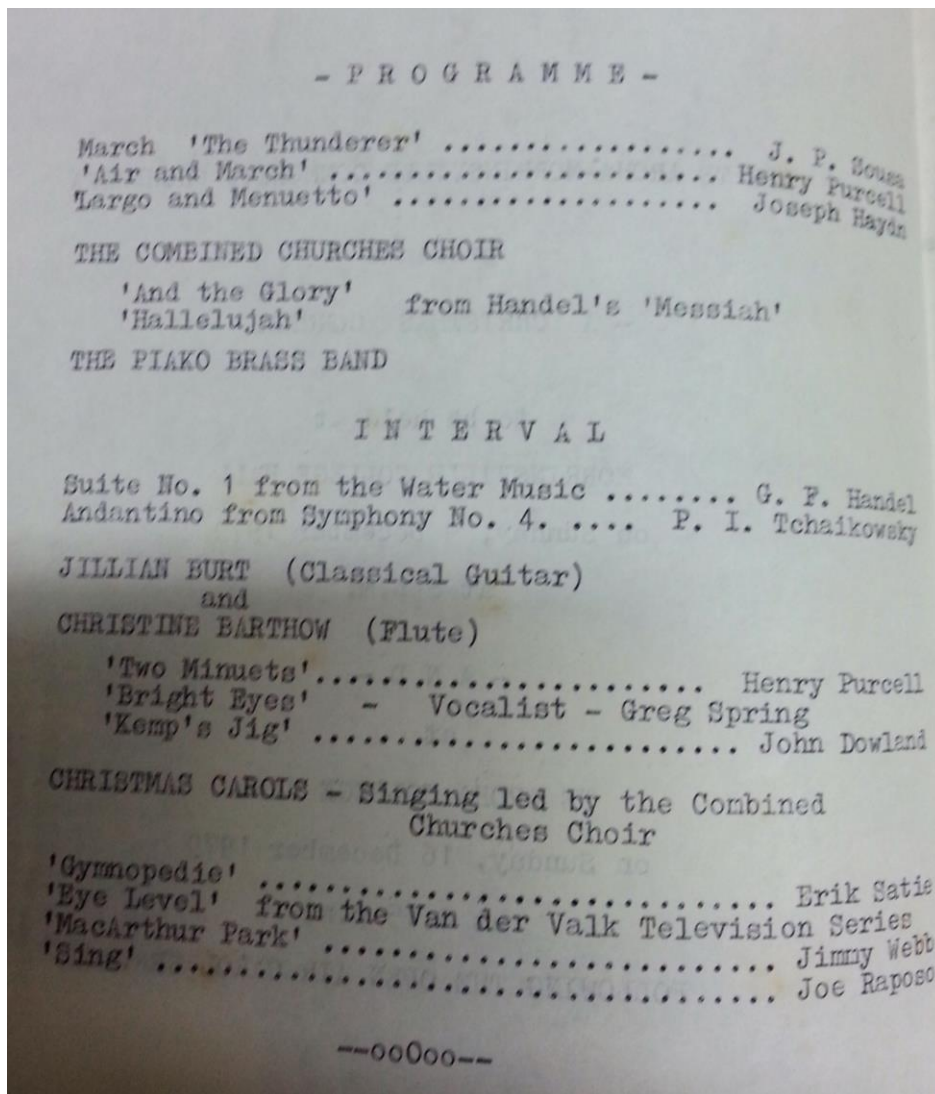


Figure 104 Programme December 1979<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme, 9 & 16 December 1979, Accession Number 2005.06.04, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

Again, there are light classical pieces as well as a Sousa March and television theme music. Combining with the Piako Brass Band, instrumental duets, solos by the Combined Churches Choir, and audience participation in carol singing, this must have been a concert enjoyed by all.

One archival find that is very special and gives a taste of the grassroots nature of the orchestra is a collection of photographs of the orchestra at rehearsal. The following two photographs show the orchestra sitting rather self-consciously for a group photo, and the second shows them in rehearsal with Smith.





*Figure 105 Photographs of Reverend Errol Smith and TAMCO 1979<sup>27</sup>*

(See [Appendix 7 Photographs of TAMCO rehearsing 1977](#) for further photographs of the orchestra rehearsing).

There were a number of developments in the years Errol Smith was conductor. Already mentioned is the newsletter, but new instruments were acquired, most notably the tympani.<sup>28</sup> He also asked for an assistant conductor, which, as he was living in Hamilton some distance away, seems a sensible request. There would have been some stressful drives for him from Hamilton at night as the road to Morrinsville and Te Aroha can be foggy. A journey of around 50 minutes each way through this would have been impossible for him on occasions and having someone ready to take up the baton would have lessened the feeling of disappointing the orchestra should he be unable to attend.

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<sup>27</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Photographs of Reverend Errol Smith and TAMCO, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>28</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Tympani Order, 3 August 1978, Accession Number 2005.06.03, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

As far as the orchestra itself was concerned there were two major organisational developments: Night School status (which meant that the Department of Education contributed towards the funding of the tutors involved, thus keeping the costs down for the participants), and becoming an Incorporated Society. Both were initiated because financial support for the conductor and for the development of the orchestra was needed. Under Tom Cooper the conductor had been paid as part of his itinerant work. After him no other conductors were related to the area in this way and therefore a method of funding Errol Smith and those after him was essential.

The first mention of Night Class status was in April 1978, a few months after Errol Smith began conducting the orchestra. It is to be assumed that conversations were held behind the scenes as the orchestra was told that month that the Department of Education had agreed to treat the orchestra as a 'Night School' and thus would pay the conductor for 26 nights of the year, and that the 'remainder of the nights will be paid for from the subscriptions received from members'. The orchestra met approximately 38 nights a year, so this was an enormous help. It meant also that a Department of Education Attendance Roll would be kept and marked nightly.<sup>29</sup>

However, as Errol Smith and later conductors were not local, their travelling expenses needed to be paid. In addition, music needed to be purchased, instruments to expand the orchestra's repertoire were sought, and capital expenditure for items such as music stands and cupboards was required. The subscriptions paid were not sufficient for an orchestra which at this stage was believed to be 'the largest orchestra in any rural area in the country'.<sup>30</sup> To cover these costs some money from outside was necessary. The very first newsletter in October that year addressed this issue, and I include a copy to give an idea of the newsletter format and how they communicated with the orchestra:

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<sup>29</sup> Minutes 13 April 1978, Accession Number 2005.06.03

<sup>30</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter 30 October 1978, Accession Number 2005.06.03, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.



MORRINSVILLE - TE AROHA COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA



NEWSLETTER

Dear Member,

This is a busy period of the year and consequently many people, for one reason or another, have to miss practices. For this reason communications become difficult. At the last practice it was decided that a Newsletter should be sent out to all members of the Community Orchestra to let them know of coming events, plans we have for the future and some of the important things that have happened this year.



We hope that this will be the first of many such newsletters to provide members and supporters with better information about matters concerning the Community Orchestra.

Since it was formed in 1974 the Community Orchestra has grown in strength. Those who gathered with Tom Cooper on the evening it first met could scarcely have imagined such progress would be possible. This Orchestra has now reached the stage where it has become the largest orchestra in any rural area in the country.



The stage has now been reached where some important decisions must be made. The first is whether, or not, to form the Orchestra into an Incorporated Society. This would have some very real advantages. Only incorporated cultural societies are eligible for grants from the Northern Regional Arts Council.

There are two types of grant available:

- (a) Assistance of a general nature for payment of tutors, and special projects.
- (b) A \$2 for \$1 subsidy for the purchase of equipment up to the value of \$1,500.

Our Community Orchestra could certainly use financial grants and the equipment grants are dispensed almost automatically. In case we decide to go ahead with incorporation a draft constitution is included in this newsletter for you to consider.

The second decision which must be made concerns auditions for new members. We are faced with a real possibility that the balance of some sections of the orchestra might suffer if we continue to permit any player who wishes to join. Some sections may become too large for the good of the orchestra as a whole.

Another innovation we are about to make is to form an interested group of supporters to be known as "Friends of the Orchestra". This might, of course, be a failure: we will not know that until we have tried it. It does appear that we have built up a considerable following of people who regularly attend our concerts and they might consider offering some token financial support on a regular basis.

This has been a busy and an interesting year. The rest of the newsletter is devoted to various snippets of information. I hope you enjoy reading it and that it helps overcome the problem of communication.

30 October 1978

Elaine Hills  
Secretary



Figure 106 First Newsletter 30 October 1978<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Newsletter 30 October 1978, Accession Number 2005.06.03.

Many topics are mentioned in this newsletter including the suggestion of auditions for new players, and the creation of the Friends of the Orchestra group. The main issue of relevance here is 'whether to form the orchestra into an Incorporated Society'. The advantages of being an Incorporated Society were very clear. 'Only incorporated cultural societies are eligible for grants from the Northern Regional Arts Council'. There were two types of grants available, one for assistance with paying tutors or for special projects, and the other a two for one equipment grant. The latter were 'dispensed almost automatically'. A draft constitution was included with the newsletter and as the secretary rightly said, 'our Community Orchestra could certainly use financial grants'. Both of these developments had long-lasting and positive impacts on the orchestra and enabled it to function for as long as it did.<sup>32</sup>



*Figure 107 Print of the Incorporated Society Seal<sup>33</sup>*

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<sup>32</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter 10 October 1981, Accession Number 2005.06.05, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004..

<sup>33</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Stamp of Seal of Incorporation, Accession Number 2005.06.03, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004..

Errol Smith conducted his last concert with TAMCO in July 1981.<sup>34</sup> The time between 1978 and mid-year 1981 under Errol Smith saw the start of a more solid basis for the orchestra. From an idea in 1974 to an Incorporated Society within five years was a tremendous achievement. New ideas included a newsletter, the Friends of the Orchestra support group, the assurance of Night School status, and the acquisition of more instruments. The orchestra played on many occasions in different venues averaging about six concerts a year, many more than previously. It was recognised locally and had good relationships with other musical groups. This could be considered a valuable and consolidating time, however, the one area where TAMCO did not build on its promising beginnings was in terms of membership, with numbers falling during the Reverend's tenure. Unfortunately, the numbers continued to fall after the advent of the next conductor, Basil Kirker.

### **Basil Kirker, Conductor 1981 – 1983**

Each conductor brought his personal interests to the orchestra. In the case of Basil Kirker, it was his background in church music.<sup>35</sup> In addition, as he lived in Matamata, that increased the connection between the towns and several concerts were performed there as well as in Te Aroha and Morrinsville. He was introduced to the orchestra by the president, John Andrew, in September and conducted his first concert at the end of the year.<sup>36</sup> Kirker was a keen proponent of classical music which was enjoyed by some but was vexing to others as there was little light relief. He also had a very casual attitude to preparation which could have been irritating to the more serious players. These aspects of his tenure probably led to a decline in numbers within the orchestra. However, there were more and devastating challenges during this time.

Barely a month after Basil Kirker had started conducting the orchestra Elaine Hills retired from her position as secretary, 'due to pressures from other commitments'.<sup>37</sup> Together with the arrival of a new conductor, this must have felt quite destabilising as

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<sup>34</sup> Te Aroha, Personal Papers Elaine Hill, Programme Concert 26 July 1981.

<sup>35</sup> Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Random Memories of TAMCO, Judy Finn.

<sup>36</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 17 September 1981, Accession Number 2005.06.05, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2005.

<sup>37</sup> Minutes 17 September 1981, Accession Number 2005.06.05; Newsletter 10 October 1981, Accession Number 2005.06.05.

she had had such a pivotal role in the creation of TAMCO. Fortunately, a relatively recent arrival in the orchestra, Dorothy Gatland, took up the mantle, and John Andrew continued as President and playing member.<sup>38</sup>

Basil Kirker's first concert with TAMCO was in aid of the charity 'Riding for the Disabled' and included many pieces by the orchestra as well as solos by one of the orchestral cellists and another orchestral clarinettist and the jazz group. It is noticeable that again he included pieces that the orchestra had already played, for example Haydn's *London Symphony*, Neil Diamond's *Song Sung Blue*, and *Elizabethan Serenade* by Ronald Binge. While not all the personnel may have already played those pieces, there would be some who had and thus the repertoire would not have been too demanding for the orchestra as a whole. Likewise, these pieces would have been in the orchestral library and thus costs for music hire lessened.

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<sup>38</sup> Newsletter 10 October 1981, Accession Number 2005.06.05.

December 1981

TE AROHA - MORRINSVILLE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA (INC)

Presents a Concert in aid of Riding for the Disabled.

Conductor: BASIL KIRKER

- Carol Medley.....arr Basil Kirker
- Song Sung Blue.....Neil Diamond
- Windy.....Ruthann Friedman
- Caravan.....Duke Ellington  
Juan Tizol  
Irving Mills
- Stardust.....Mitchell Parrish  
Hoagy Carmichael
- Elizabethan Serenade.....Ronald Binge

Items by the Jazz Group

Rosamunde Overture.....Franz Schubert

TRUMPETS: Rob Mullions, Jack Bennett, Kerry Jones

OBOE: John Henderson, BASSOON: Mark Gatland

HORN: Leigh Pettigrew TROMBONE: George Edmonds

SAXOPHONE: Frank Finn PERCUSSION: Graham Hills  
Judy Finn

CELLOS: Ruth Forlong, Phyllis Burt, Tim Stokes,  
Vicki Squibbs

FLUTES: Dorothy Gatland, Robyn Ward, Alan Matheson,  
Anita Verstraten

CLARINETS: Hans Zuur, Stephen Abbot, Susan Harris,  
Rosanne McCarthy

TE AROHA - MORRINSVILLE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA (INC)

Presents a Concert in aid of Riding for the Disabled.

Conductor: BASIL KIRKER

- War March of the Priests  
from "Athalia".....Mendelssohn
- Air and Rondo.....Henry Purcell
- In Old Vienna - Waltz Medley.....arr. Paul Herfurth
- Cello Solo by Mrs Ruth Forlong  
My Heart at thy Sweet Voice  
from "Samson and Delilah"....Saint Saens
- Ecossaises.....Franz Schubert

Clarinet Solo by Susan Harris

First Movement of "London Symphony"  
Franz Haydn

INTERVAL

Members of the Orchestra

VIOLINS: Marien Stokes (Leader), Brenda Morgan,  
Hazel Martin, Jan Ford, Beverly Nation,  
Howard Carmichael, Sheryl Kampenhout,  
Jane Stokes, Betty McLeod, Hazel Wilton,  
Hilary Smiley, Alan Scott, Vicki Williams

VIOLA: John Andrew

PIANO: Bronwyn Barnett

Figure 108 Programme Concert December 1981<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Concert December 1981, Accession Number 2005.06.05, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

The orchestral items reflected Kirker's love of classical music, comprising pieces by Mendelssohn, Purcell, Schubert, and Haydn. Surprisingly, given his passion for church music this did not translate to the orchestral works performed. Kirker, or members of the orchestra, also recognised the need to bring in an audience and so included lighter pieces such as Neil Diamond's *Song Sung Blue*, a Duke Ellington number and the *Elizabethan Serenade* by Ronald Binge. However, Kirker also arranged a carol medley, giving a nod to his religious music desires, which opened the second half. The insertion of other items by orchestral members gave variety to the programme and they and the jazz group probably assured a greater audience. As it was in aid of Riding for the Disabled there would have been people associated with the charity who may have balked at coming to a purely classical concert. It seems like the programme was designed to have classical pieces in the first half with much lighter music in the second half. Rather oddly the concert finished with Schubert's 'Rosamunde Overture'. It can only be imagined how the audience may have reacted to this piece following the jazz group which was described as 'stunning'.<sup>40</sup>

The following year, 1982, started with an enquiry from the Morrinsville Dramatic Society for several members of TAMCO to play in a musical production. In the previous chapter, in 1975, TAMCO had performed with the drama society. This evidence of the continuing close relations with other amateur performing organisations in the area is similar to the work of not only Mr Bell but also other concerts in the period 1864-1914.

'With Basil we had our only taste of playing for a show, South Pacific at Matamata College, quite an experience'. Judy Finn goes on to recount that, 'the first hurdle was that an arsonist tried to burn down the school hall, so we froze on rehearsal night'.<sup>41</sup> This is presumably why the performance date was delayed.

The leading lady nearly suffered from hypothermia, so we never actually had a full rehearsal before opening night. One of the cast's parents were killed

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<sup>40</sup> Dot Carter, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Waihi, 2018).

<sup>41</sup> Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Random Memories of TAMCO, Judy Finn.

accident the day before, but the show went on. I think we nearly got it right by the last night.<sup>42</sup>

It seems that the orchestra entered fully into the need for a performance and probably enjoyed the whole experience, in retrospect at least.

The major and tragic event for the orchestra that year was the sudden and untimely death of John Andrew in a house fire. As the last of the three founders and as tireless President of the orchestra, his death was devastating both within TAMCO, within Te Aroha College, and in the wider community. He had contributed immeasurably to all who knew him.



*Figure 109 Photograph John Andrew<sup>43</sup>*

Within Te Aroha College, John Andrew was responsible for establishing the 'pilot music programme in the College'. 'The music suite, the instruments held in store, the numbers receiving tuition, and the high standard achieved by college orchestras over past years is a tribute to his standing in the field.'<sup>44</sup> The following two photographs show the two orchestras at Te Aroha College in 1978. Mr Andrew and Mrs Hills are included in both, and in the second one John Andrew is holding his violin.

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<sup>42</sup> Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Random Memories of TAMCO, Judy Finn

<sup>43</sup> John Andrew Eulogy

<sup>44</sup> Te Aroha, Personal papers Elaine Hills, 'Assembly for John Andrew', Te Aroha College News.



Figure 110 Te Aroha College Junior Orchestra, 1978



Figure 111 Te Aroha College Senior Orchestra, 1978<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Te Aroha, Personal Papers Elaine Hills, Photographs of Junior and Senior Orchestras, Te Aroha College.

These photos show the astonishing number of players making up the two orchestras in Te Aroha College that were to provide the 'feed' into TAMCO. John Andrew is credited with providing 'constant encouragement' to help the children in the school orchestra and through his support 'pupils were able to make the transition from School to Community Orchestra in order to extend their talents'.<sup>46</sup>

TAMCO players knew him as one of their founders, as a violinist, and as an astute supporter of the performing arts. He was a founder member of the Te Aroha Arts Council, a chairman of Piako Community Arts Council representing Te Aroha Dramatic Society and was later elected to the Northern Regional Arts Council of which he later became president.<sup>47</sup> In fact, it was at his suggestion that TAMCO could make an application to the Northern Regional Arts Council 'for assistance with [the] purchase' of an electric piano.<sup>48</sup> The music suite was named 'The John Andrew Music Suite' and the orchestra donated a 'John Andrew Memorial Trophy' to the school in his memory.<sup>49</sup>

The orchestra held a Special General Meeting following Andrew's death in order to appoint a new chairman. There was only one nominee and 'Miss B. Morgan ... was duly elected president'.<sup>50</sup> This must have been a sombre meeting, and it is noteworthy that there was no competition for the position; it would have been almost impossibly hard to take on a role that was so associated with John Andrew. The meeting also discussed plans for the remainder of the year, and the concerts to be given in Matamata in October and the end of year concerts in Te Aroha and Morrinsville. Again, credit must be given to the organisation. The schoolchildren would have been very affected by losing someone who was a benign presence in their lives both in and out of school, and of course the adults would have lost a close friend. By finishing the meeting with discussions about the concerts, organisers will have hopefully raised the mood and left everyone feeling that the orchestra would continue. This echoed the experience with the departure of Tom Cooper; it proved that the orchestra was not dependent on one

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<sup>46</sup> 'Assembly for John Andrew', Te Aroha College News.

<sup>47</sup> 'Assembly for John Andrew', Te Aroha College News.

<sup>48</sup> Minutes 29 November 1979, Accession Number 2005.06.04

<sup>49</sup> 'Assembly for John Andrew', Te Aroha College News; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter from Te Aroha College 7 April 1983, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>50</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Special General Meeting 12 August 1982, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

person for its existence but with a strong supporting crew it could survive the recent tragedy and continue on to more concerts.

Fundraising continued throughout the two years with Basil Kirker as conductor. Money raised was used to buy more music, provide covers for the tympani to protect them when being transported, for the purchase of a saxophone, and to buy a 'drum set' which had previously been supplied by Te Aroha College but which the school was now requiring full time.<sup>51</sup>

What is noticeable is the positive response and unsolicited comments from the various organisations approached for money to help the orchestra continue to thrive. For example, as shown below, the Northern Regional Arts Council wrote that 'I have been asked to congratulate the orchestra on its playing which [a council member described] is of a very high standard and an encouragement to all players'.

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<sup>51</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Application to the Lawrence Trust 27 May 1982, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Application to the Nichol Trust 22 August 1983, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Application to the Piako Community Arts Council 30 September 1983, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Application to the Mackie Trust 6 December 1983, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Application to Morrinsville Borough Council, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.



NORTHERN REGIONAL ARTS COUNCIL

21 Princes Street AUCKLAND P.O. Box 1425  
Telephone 733 066

9 February 1982

Mrs G. Gatland  
Secretary  
Te Aroha/Morrinsville Community Orchestra  
\* 84 Stanley Avenue  
TE AROHA.

Dear Mrs Gatland,

The application made by you on behalf of the above Orchestra for a subsidy of \$200 towards the purchase of a Yamaha Bb Saxophone was approved at the last meeting of the Northern Regional Arts Council and a cheque will be forwarded to you upon receipt of confirmation of purchase.

I have been asked to congratulate the Orchestra on its playing which to quote one of our Council members who recently visited the area "is of a very high standard and an encouragement to all players."

Yours sincerely,

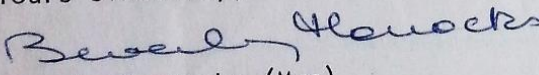
  
Beverly Horrocks (Mrs)  
Executive Officer.

Figure 112 Letter from Northern Regional Arts Council 1982<sup>52</sup>

That same year in November the JR McKenzie Trust Board wrote:

<sup>52</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter from Northern Regional Arts Council 9 February 1982, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

We commend you and your organisation for helping to make the lives of many in our community that much more worthwhile, and we trust our enclosed contribution will further assist your work in the New Year<sup>53</sup>

The number of concerts per year also increased under Basil Kirker. Apart from *South Pacific*, in Matamata College, the orchestra played its regular midyear and end of year concerts in Morrinsville and Te Aroha. Kirker's church music background seemed to dovetail quite well with the expansion that the Reverend Errol Smith had started; the orchestra played at St Mark's Anglican Church in Te Aroha in both years and in All Saints Anglican Church, Matamata, in 1982 and Matamata Catholic Church in 1983.<sup>54</sup> It also played in the Hocken Wing of the Waikato Hospital, for the Lions Club and for the Morrinsville Orphan's Club.<sup>55</sup>

The concert in St Mark's was a Festal Evensong held on 2 May 1982. TAMCO accompanied the hymns and played some orchestral items carefully chosen to be appropriate for the occasion. For example, works by Purcell, Haydn, Vaughan Williams and Beethoven were performed, not Leroy Anderson or *Little Brown Jug*. The programme shown below includes an organ solo and a recessional organ voluntary. It is not known if Basil Kirker, a capable organist, was the performer in either of these, or whether it was the local regular organist.

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<sup>53</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter from J.R. McKenzie Trust Board 30 November 1982, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>54</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme St Mark's Anglican Church, Te Aroha 2 May 1982, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme All Saints Church Matamata 10 October 1982, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme St Mark's Parish Hall, Te Aroha 3 November 1983, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Matamata Catholic Church 1 May 1983, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>55</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter 11 August 1983, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

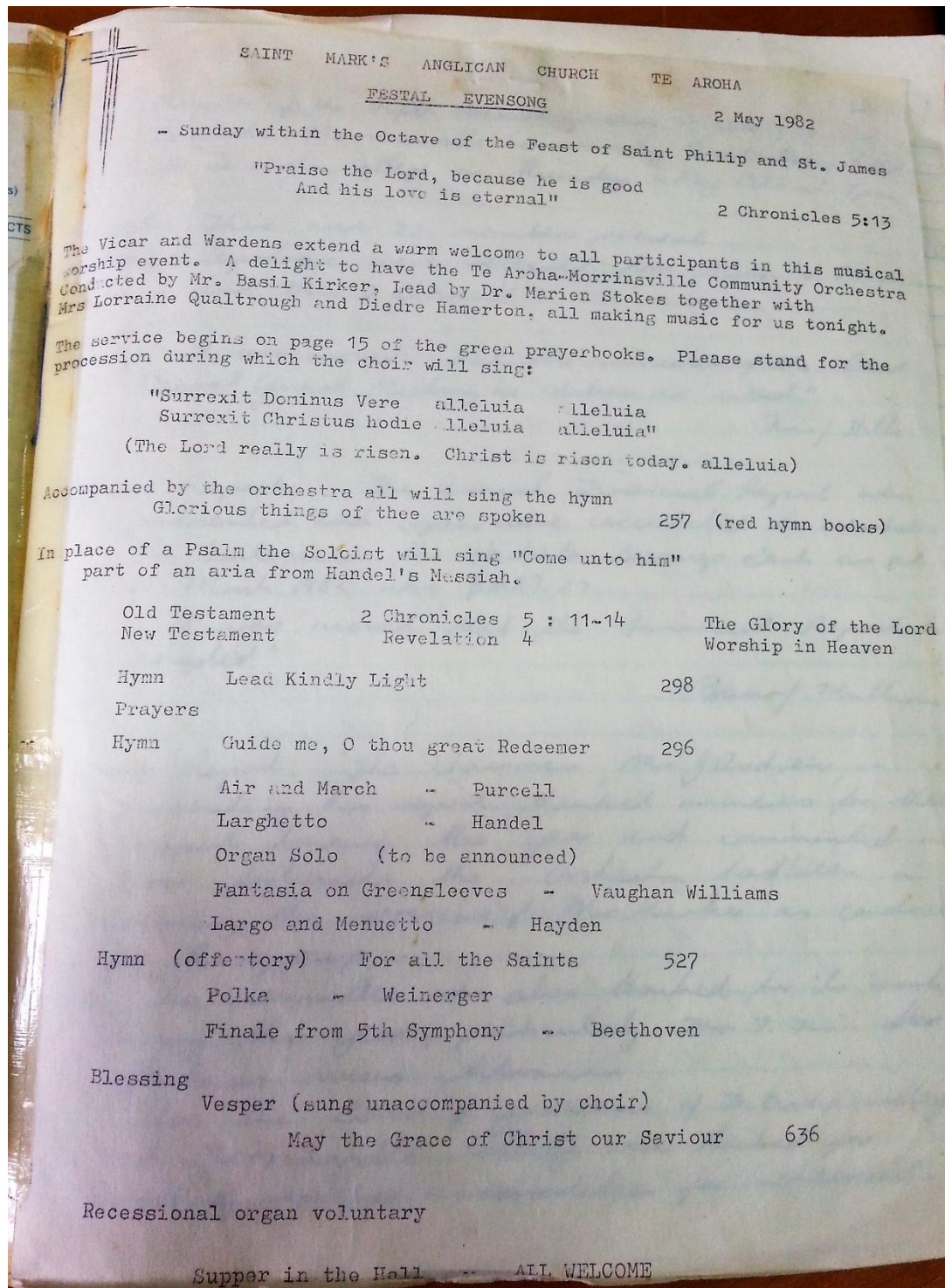


Figure 113 Programme Festal Evensong 1982<sup>56</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Festal Evensong 2 May 1982, Accession Number 2006.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

The following is a photograph of this event. The clothing is casual, rather than formal, much as if they were attending a church service rather than performing at Evensong. It is noticeable that the orchestra is not just providing a concert, but also accompanying the congregation in a hymn.



Figure 114 Photograph TAMCO Festal Evensong Te Aroha<sup>57</sup>

This variety of venue was partly because the orchestra was concerned about audience numbers. Most of the audience for their concerts were family members and friends of the orchestra, other participants, and the charity sponsors.<sup>58</sup> A newsletter to the Friends of the Orchestra explained that 'the members have decided that it is better to go out and meet people rather than to expect people to come to concerts solely to hear us'.<sup>59</sup> The following programme cover shows a trip to Matamata and joining with the Oxford Singers:

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<sup>57</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Photograph TAMCO Festal Evensong 2 May 1982, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>58</sup> Carter, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

<sup>59</sup> Newsletter 11 August 1983, Accession Number 2005.06.06.

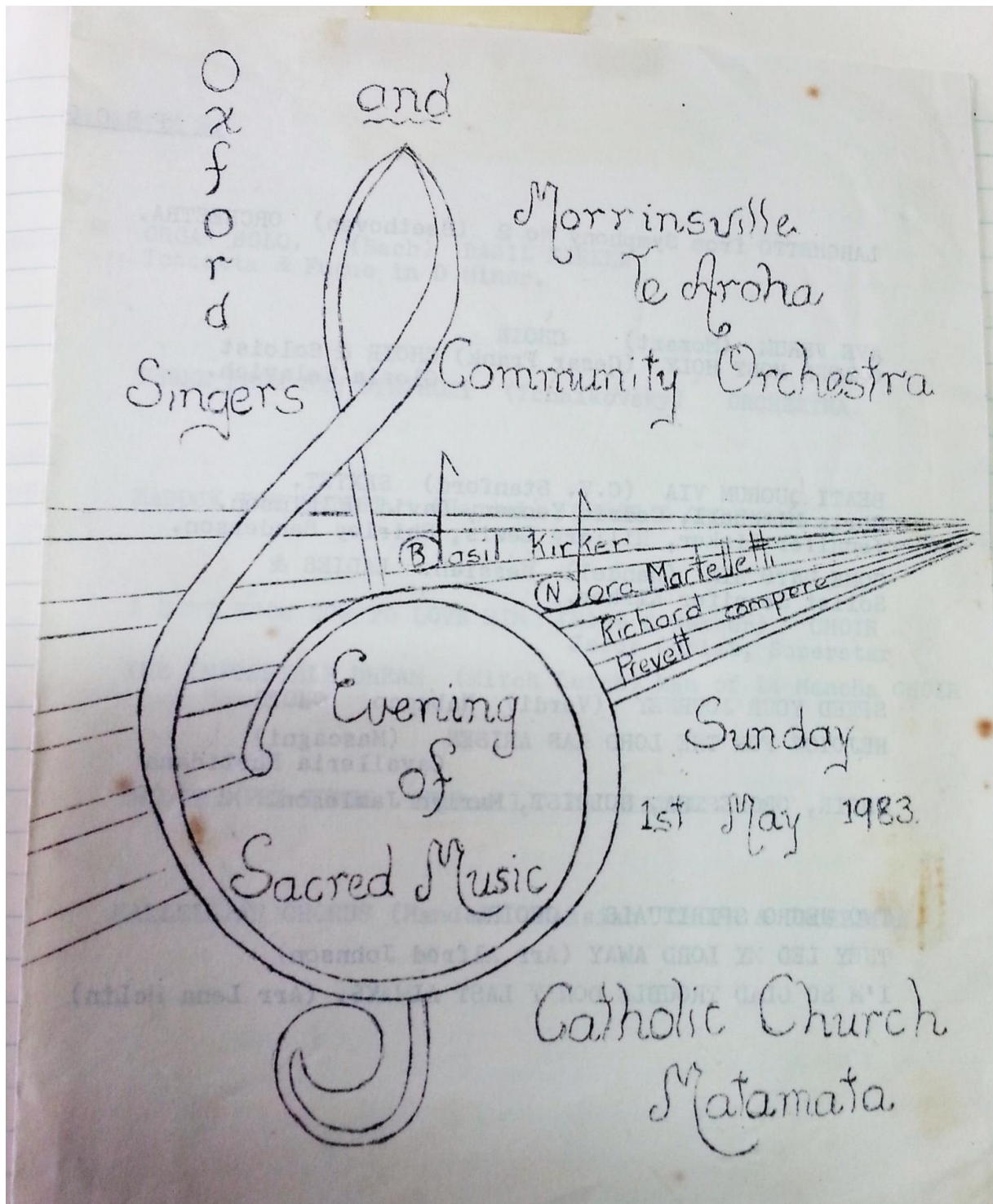


Figure 115 Programme Evening of Sacred Music 1983<sup>60</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Evening of Sacred Music, Matamata Catholic Church 1 May 1983, 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

In this spirit of going out to meet people, there was also a concert in Tirau, a repeat of the concert held at the Matamata Catholic Church, which combined with the Oxford Singers.<sup>61</sup> The programme for this could not be described as light music as far as the orchestra was concerned; they played the Larghetto from Beethoven's *Symphony No. 2*, themes from Beethoven's *Symphony no. 5* and accompanied the choir in arias and choruses from *Nabucco* and *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and *Zadok the Priest*, Purcell's *Trumpet Tunes* and Handel's '*Hallelujah Chorus*'. The concert was rounded out by the choir singing unaccompanied by orchestra, a sextet of singers and Basil Kirker playing Bach's *Toccatà and Fugue in D minor*.

It seems that all was going as well as it could under Basil Kirker, but player numbers were dropping. It had been noted that some members of the orchestra were not happy with the programming and wanted to play lighter music, and this may have been the reason why Basil Kirker handed in his resignation in September 1983.<sup>62</sup> He continued until the end of the year however, with a carol concert in All Saints' Church in Matamata, with the proceeds going to the Crippled Children's Association.<sup>63</sup> There could have been other reasons for his exit too. Declining numbers were noted from time to time throughout the period and while his programming did not appeal to all, his attitude to rehearsal preparation was also somewhat lax. He was 'noted for not doing any preparation and would wander into rehearsal and say, "What shall we play tonight?"'<sup>64</sup>

It is quite possible that while the programming did not appeal to some members, his attitude and lack of preparation would have annoyed others. With probably two groups disappointed in him it is no surprise that numbers fell. The orchestra did keep going under his watch despite the loss of both Elaine Hills and John Andrew, but it must have been an incredibly difficult time. However, Basil Kirker was unable to keep up the

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<sup>61</sup> Newsletter 11 August 1983, Accession Number 2005.06.06.

<sup>62</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes 29 September 1983, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>63</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Annual Carol Concert 1 & 3 December 1983, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>64</sup> Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Random Memories of TAMCO, Judy Finn.

momentum or increase numbers so that it appears that when he left TAMCO was in poor shape. The next year was to prove this point.

### **David Fagan, Conductor 1984 – 1987**

Following the departure of Basil Kirker, the orchestra appointed David Fagan to be their conductor from the beginning of 1984. The orchestra thus had not played together over the summer by the time of his arrival.



Figure 116 'Conductor Named'<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, 'Conductor Named' [clipping from unidentified newspaper], Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

As the clipping above shows, David Fagan had been a music teacher at Hillcrest High School and was at the time of appointment 'working with the Salvation Army in its "Steps" Programme'. Given his experience and, presumably, qualifications, the orchestra committee must have felt that he would be able to raise their playing standard, increase their membership and lead them back into a position of strength.

From the start Fagan showed he was quite exacting in his demands and his letter of acceptance dated 20 November 1984 requested a meeting a mere three days later, to look through the library. He wrote that he 'would appreciate if you could organise this'.<sup>66</sup> Fagan also wanted a complete 'list of items of performed ... over the last 3 years' and suggested a change to rehearsal times starting and finishing half an hour later. He asked to meet Judy Finn, secretary, at the High School or if more convenient at her home. The notion that short notice may not have been sufficient for her to organise the meeting, let alone compiling a list of performances, seems to have escaped him. He was however, pleased to accept the appointment, and looked 'forward keenly to leading [the orchestra] in 1984'.<sup>67</sup>

Presumably his desire for a later start and finish was because he was travelling from Hamilton after a day's work, but the orchestra was informed of the later time as if it were for their benefit: 'We have decided to try for a later start to make it easier for farmers and those who have to travel a distance.'<sup>68</sup> This was a tactful move as there may have been members who would protest about a later night and could have been indisposed towards their new conductor, if they had thought it was at his instigation.

Fagan was obviously surprised when he arrived to conduct the orchestra in February; the AGM conductor's report of two months later shows this:

It was with pleasure that I accepted the invitation to become the conductor of your Orchestra for 1984, and I looked forward in February to an exciting year of

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<sup>66</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter of Acceptance of Conductorship TAMCO 20 November 1983, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>67</sup> Letter of Acceptance of Conductorship TAMCO 20 November 1983, Accession Number 2005.06.06

<sup>68</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter 1 February 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

music making together. However, I have been disappointed over the last few weeks to be faced with declining numbers at rehearsals, although I appreciate only too well the many and valid reasons for absences on occasions.<sup>69</sup>

It is possible that the declining numbers were due to his method of trying to improve the orchestra. Tellingly, his report to the AGM the following year said,

... we have not had the same success with the number of players game, but the ones we do have I have very much enjoyed being party to the cajoling, coercing, and generally “beating into submission” the individual talents of the group to form a unified body which can function as an Orchestra.<sup>70</sup>

Unlike a professional orchestra, amateur players have the choice as to whether they wish to be “beaten into submission” by a conductor. They can leave or stay. Those in TAMCO that chose the latter either could see a valuable end result or could have taken a longer-term view that the fact of playing in the orchestra was worth enduring Fagan’s approach. It is likely that the older players continued and the younger players, who had much else to occupy them, departed. This is borne out by a comment made much later by the then secretary, Judy Finn, ‘unfortunately he did not seem to be able to relate to students well and did not encourage them so we lost many players while he was with us’.<sup>71</sup>

Fagan had high standards and intended that the orchestra should be a credit to the community: ‘I don’t believe we should be putting on a concert merely for the sake of doing so if the standard is not good enough’.<sup>72</sup> As a result, in the four years he was with TAMCO they gave very few concerts compared with previous years. For example, in the one year of 1983 with Basil Kirker, the orchestra gave eight concerts, whereas over the four years with David Fagan seven concerts are mentioned.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Conductor’s Report AGM 16 April 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>70</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Conductor’s Report AGM 2 May 1985, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>71</sup> Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Random Memories of TAMCO, Judy Finn

<sup>72</sup> Conductor’s Report AGM 16 April 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06.

<sup>73</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President’s Report AGM 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President’s Report AGM 1985, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President’s

Fagan's belief was that there should be a 'sense of cohesiveness if the audience (and indeed the group itself) is to receive any benefit and enjoyment in the activities'.<sup>74</sup> So they gave two concerts in 1984, one in Te Aroha in June and the other in Morrinsville in November. It appears that for the first one the audience was by invitation only.

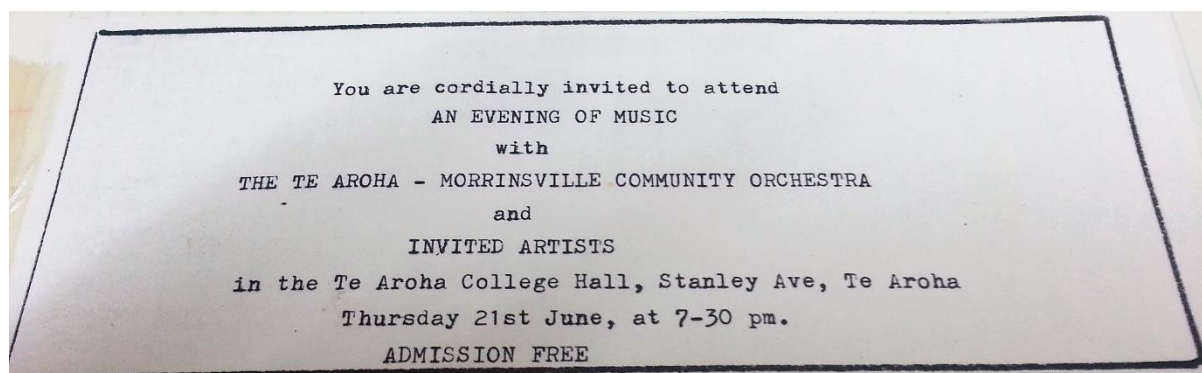


Figure 117 Invitation to Concert 1984<sup>75</sup>

Maybe David Fagan was concerned that the orchestra acquit itself adequately; he obviously believed that the performance standard needed to be raised. However, the audience was 'treated to a pleasant surprise'. The reviewer noted that the orchestra was smaller than the previous year but that they 'played with more expression and unity' and 'appeared to be more rehearsed and confident in their playing'.<sup>76</sup> It seems that David Fagan's approach did bear some musical fruit.

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Report AGM 1986, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 1987, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 1988, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>74</sup> Conductor's Report AGM 16 April 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06.

<sup>75</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter to Te Aroha College Board of Governors 28 May 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>76</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, 'Orchestra provides enjoyable evening.' Piako Post. 27 June 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

Concern with orchestral numbers, particularly in the strings, persisted throughout Fagan's tenure.<sup>77</sup> The newsletter sent out prior to the first AGM under his tutelage and only a few weeks after he started working with TAMCO is copied below. It was very blunt and there is a sense of despair in the writing. The stalwarts were enjoying their experience with David Fagan, they could see improvements in the quality of playing, and 'even the tympani had been tuned', but 'we need an orchestra, not a handful of players'.

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<sup>77</sup> Conductor's Report AGM 16 April 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06; Conductor's Report AGM 2 May 1985, Accession Number 2005.06.07; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Conductor's Report AGM 1986, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Conductor's Report AGM 1987, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

TE AROHA - MORRINSVILLE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
THURSDAY 26th APRIL , 8-30 p.m.  
MORRINSVILLE COLLEGE HALL

Hi, there, Members and Friends,

A note to tell you we need your presence at the A.G.M. at Morrinsville College Hall at 8-30pm on 26th April.

We really need you because it seems that the Orchestra is at a crossroads. We have got an excellent Conductor, David Fagan, and the difference he has made to the technique of the players in the few weeks he has been with us is very noticeable. Even the Timpani has been tuned. Those that are there are really enjoying his musical knowledge and his ability to get the sound he wants, BUT, and it is a big BUT, there are not enough of us. Last week was an alltime low- another two weeks like that and we are finished as a night class. Therefore, finished altogether unless players wish to fork out about\$3 each night. We should have everything going for us. We have a perfect set up under the umbrella of the College. A good library, we own a couple of thousand dollars worth of instruments, a healthy bank balance, but we haven't enough dedicated players.

Of course there are genuine reasons for occasional absences, but please, can you not forget about building houses, milking cows etc., for 2 hours a week to enjoy one of the best things in life, making music with others? We need an orchestra, not a handful of players. And when you come, bring the Kid from down the road who is learning an instrument. They won't come by themselves and Hazel has run out of grand children.

But enough of the stirring. Jack, enjoy your trip to South Africa and come back raring to go on your trumpet. Mellissa and Peter will hold the fort for you. Hans is off to Holland for 4 weeks to attend his Mother's 80th birthday, who will play clarinet? And Graham is off round the world in June. You will notice he has been coaching Leah to take over while he is away. All these travellers mean a further reduction in numbers so we do need to build up.

Friends of the Orchestra, Sorry about the grizzlies. Thank you for your support and if you wish to attend our A.G.M.youare most welcome.

See you all at Morrinsville on the 26th.

LONG LIVE THE ORCHESTRA

Judy Finn

Secretary

Figure 118 Newsletter prior to AGM 1984<sup>78</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter prior to AGM 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

And there is also frustration in that:

We should have everything going for us. We have a perfect set up under the umbrella of the College. A good library, we own a couple of thousand dollars' worth of instruments, a healthy bank balance, but we haven't enough dedicated players.

The newsletter pleads for people to 'forget about building houses, milking cows etc., for two hours to enjoy one of the best things in life, making music with others'. It finishes up with an exhortation and humour:

And when you come, bring the kid from down the road who is learning an instrument. They won't come by themselves, and Hazel has run out of grandchildren.<sup>79</sup>

The number of people present was at its lowest level at the rehearsal prior to this notice, 'another two weeks like that and we are finished as a night class'. As it was funded through the Education Department, it was essential that numbers stay above nine in order to maintain that status. If it were lost, 'this would be a financial strain on the group' and the players would have to 'fork out about \$3 each night'.<sup>80</sup> The newsletter obviously had some effect as there were 17 members at that AGM of 1984.<sup>81</sup>

However, the orchestra did see itself at a 'crossroads' and they debated at that AGM whether to continue. The president in her report in 1984 pointed out:

Although many may often feel like giving up the orchestra does provide a very valuable musical asset not only to your community but for the development of each one of us as individual musicians.<sup>82</sup>

Fortunately the decision was made to carry on, which David Fagan considered in 1985 'to have been the right one!' He felt that the orchestra had 'gone from strength to strength in its credibility with the audiences'. He also had some ideas about how to further improve the standard, debating whether to 'aim for a performance ... or merely work on through the rest of the year consolidating orchestral techniques and exploring a

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<sup>79</sup> Newsletter prior to AGM 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06.

<sup>80</sup> Conductor's Report AGM 16 April 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06; Newsletter prior to AGM 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06

<sup>81</sup> Minutes of AGM 26 April 1984, 26 April 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06 AGM 1984 Minutes. Te Aroha Museum Archives. Accession Number 2005.06.06.

<sup>82</sup> President's Report AGM 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06.

wider range of music'. He suggested that they could study 'theory; listening to and analysing form, content, orchestration; guest players (demonstrating or "Master-Class"): or perhaps a combination of all these things?'<sup>83</sup>

In this Fagan shows his background as a music teacher, but while this may possibly have appealed to some members, it seems unlikely that these ideas eventuated or received much support, as there is no record of them. Judy Finn noted that:

Musically, David Fagan offered much to the Orchestra. He was a very knowledgeable musician and could impart his knowledge to adults well. ... The standard of playing was very high when he was conducting.<sup>84</sup>

From 1984 to 1987 each end of year concert included another major partner. The concerts themselves proved to be popular. The one in 1984 joined with the David Qualtrough Singers and included a soloist who 'enchanted the audience with the gentle music of her Irish harp'.

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<sup>83</sup> Conductor's Report AGM 2 May 1985, Accession Number 2005.06.07.

<sup>84</sup> Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Random Memories of TAMCO, Judy Finn.



Figure 119 Newspaper Clipping 1984<sup>85</sup>

There was a slightly louder partner in 1985, the Piako Brass band. This was the first time that the orchestra and the Piako brass band would 'join forces', although both rehearsed under the auspices of the night school arrangement at Te Aroha and

<sup>85</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Clipping from unidentified newspaper, n.d., Accession Number 2005.06.06, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004..

Morrinsville Colleges. The newspaper article about the forthcoming concert noted that the band was well known for 'performances at market days, school gala days, shows etc. however the orchestra is not so well known, the concert being its only public performance this year'.<sup>86</sup> It seems that David Fagan's attempts to pull the orchestra forward through improving standards and exploring new repertoire may have backfired, in that it appears to have disappeared from public view. There were only 14 members at the 1985 AGM and only one more in 1986.<sup>87</sup>

One concert that certainly caught attention was the following one:

*Te Aroha ~ Morrinsville  
Community Orchestra*

*and*

*Tirau's Oxford Singers*

*in*

*Concert*

*with*

*Music from Stage and Screen*

*Morrinsville Intermediate School  
Thursday 21st August 1986, 8pm*

*Wine and cheese served at 7.30pm*

*Supper after the show*

*Admission by programme \$5 adults \$2 students*

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<sup>86</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Band and Orchestra to Combine For Concert, 16 October 1985, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>87</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes of AGM 2 May 1985, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes of AGM 17 April 1986, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

TE AROHA - MORRINSVILLE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTOR: David Fagan.  
VIOLINS: Marien Stokes, Lorraine Arnold,  
Jane Stokes.  
CELLOS: Dot Forsythe, Jennifer Stace.  
FLUTE: Tom Ensor.  
OBOE: John Henderson.  
CLARINETS: Hans Zurr, Mark Gatland.  
TRUMPETS: Kenneth Sutton, James Upton, Melisa  
Jones, Amanda Stace, Lynette Body.  
SAXOPHONE: Frank Finn.  
HORN: Jack Bennett.  
TROMBONE: Roy Upton.  
PERCUSSION: Graham Hills, Judy Finn.  
PIANO: Katherine Wade.

PROGRAMME

(Not in order of performance)

"OLIVER MEDLEY" Lionel Bart.  
Highlights from "THE SOUND OF MUSIC"  
Rogers and Hammerstein.  
Selections from "THE MUSIC MAN"  
Meredith Wilson.  
"SING", from Sesame Street, Joe Raposo.  
Highlights from "WEST SIDE STORY"  
Leonard Bernstein.  
"THE BUGLAR'S HOLIDAY" Le Roy Anderson  
"MARCH AND PROCESSION OF BACCHUS" Leo Delibes.

THE OXFORD SINGERS

LEADER: Nora Martelletti.

SOPRANOS: Chris Mc Lean, Maureen Wright,  
Peggy Mc Intyre, Jenny Van Den Berg,  
Pam Sinclair, Elsie Smith.

ALTOS: Shirley Sanderson, Joan Ward, Helen Putt,  
Ina Iremonger, Joy Mc Lennan.

TENORS: Maurice Vosper, Ewen Mc Lennan.

BASSES: Quentin Somerville, David Wilkinson,  
Inoke Buad, Tony Wilding.

PROGRAMME

1936-39 "THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT" from 'Springtime'  
by Jerome Kern.

"ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE" from 'Very Warm For May'  
by Jerome Kern.

"IN THE STILL OF THE NIGHT" and "ROSALIE"  
from 'Rosalie' by Cole Porter.

1945 "YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE" from 'Carousel'  
by Rogers and Hammerstein.

1946 "THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS"  
from 'Annie Get Your Gun' by Irving Berlin.

1957 "SEVENTY SIX TROMBONES" from 'Music Man',  
by Meridith Wilson.

1968 "RAINDROPS KEEP FALLING ON MY HEAD", from  
'Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid' by  
Burt Bacharach.

1981-82 "THE THEME SONG" from 'Arthur' by Burt Bacharach.

"RACE TO THE END" from 'Chariots of Fire'  
by Vangelis.

Figure 120 Programme August 1986<sup>88</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Concert 21 August 1986, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

This programme shows that equal honours were given to each group involved although both the order of programme and whether the choir was accompanied by the orchestra is unclear. However, what is clear is that the programme was intended to be accessible to all. It was a great occasion. In common with most of TAMCO's concerts, it was in aid of an external organisation, in this case the Morrinsville Lyceum Club. The provision of wine and cheese before the concert and a supper served afterwards turned this into a festive and social occasion, justifying the slightly higher ticket prices. As it was, the concert received \$760, of which \$400 went to the club, \$200 to the Oxford Singers and the balance to the orchestra. 'We decided to be generous as our funds are holding alright at the moment.' Comments from the newsletter after this concert are revealing:

The number of reports back from people who didn't know we existed and who thoroughly enjoyed the concert has been amazing. We obviously don't do enough P.R. work, or they don't read the papers when we do advertise our activities.<sup>89</sup>

Given that they only gave one concert in 1985, and this was apparently their first public performance in 1986, it is not too surprising that there was a lack of familiarity with TAMCO's existence. Equally, the audience, which must have numbered between 150 and 200, could have been made up of people associated with the Lyceum Club rather than just the families and friends of the orchestral members. It is particularly pleasing that the concert gave so much pleasure and it may be that the work done by David Fagan improved standards markedly.

The newsletter also indirectly addresses this. It appears that although numbers were lower than desired, these were dedicated players who attended regularly.

Maybe it's because we are such a small group, and absences are so noticeable that we feel guilty if we don't turn up. Whatever it is, do keep it up. It makes such a difference to David if we are all there and he can work on us as he wishes.

Whether he gets the results he hopes for, only he knows, but he has certainly been good for us over the past three years.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter 9 September 1986, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>90</sup> Newsletter 9 September 1986, Accession Number 2005.06.07.

This quote has some interesting points. One can probably deduce from the comment 'work on us' that it was not a team effort, I would have expected 'work with us' if it had been. The last sentence is also telling. 'Only he knows' suggests that praise was not given readily. It would have been helpful for the orchestra to know if they were doing what he wanted or at least improving. Without that knowledge they would not have been aware of what he wanted. It is easy enough to criticise but extremely important to give compliments when due, even if only for the smallest progress. At least then TAMCO would have felt appreciated. This quote suggests they were not.

At the AGM in 1987, David Fagan indicated that he would be stepping down as conductor at the end of the year. He gave one final public performance with the orchestra. This was in aid of the IHC and was held in Te Aroha - the first concert there in two years.<sup>91</sup> It followed the successful format of wine and cheese beforehand and supper afterwards.<sup>92</sup> On this occasion, there were 23 players in the orchestra, with guest artists String 3.<sup>93</sup> The latter played 'jazz standards from the 1930s and 40s'.<sup>94</sup> This would have ensured a wider appeal than just an orchestral concert.

David Fagan managed to raise playing standards, but both the attendance and numbers in his four years with the orchestra could only be achieved by the ceaseless work of the Secretary, Judy Finn. It was not easy. His detailed and planned approach to his work was in complete contrast to that of his predecessor, for example, David Fagan gave a list to Judy Finn of the pieces that he would be working on from the first rehearsal with the orchestra:

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<sup>91</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter 9 September 1987, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>92</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter to Friends of the Orchestra 13 October 1987, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>93</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Concert 29 October 1987, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>94</sup> 'Farewell Concert for Orchestra Conductor', *Piako Post*, 20 October 1987.

Our new Conductor, David Fagan of Hamilton has been over and looked through the library and taken quite a few scores to study. He has chosen to start with

- Francaie militaire
- Grand March from Aida
- In a Persian Market
- Ballet Egyptienne
- March from Riccardo
- March Slave
- Music Man
- Syncopated Clock

Figure 121 Newsletter 1 February 1984<sup>95</sup>

The attention to detail and determination to achieve a high standard could have been distressing for some members who conceivably were not aware of shortcomings and viewed the orchestra as a social rather than musical occasion. The lack of regular concerts may have also been a disincentive. Certainly, a number felt that it was not what they wanted to be doing in their spare time. Possibly the makeup of the orchestra changed during his time. Although it was intended initially as an orchestra for secondary students to aspire to and provided a musical outlet for adults in the area, it appears under his conductorship to have become a more serious enterprise with adults comprising the vast majority of the membership.

Fagan's departure coincided with some concern over the status of the orchestra as a Night Class. This led to an enormous amount of work for the committee, in particular the Secretary who was in regular contact with Max Stewart of Hamilton about finding a conductor, and with the Te Aroha College about their status. Trying to appoint a new conductor at a time when they were unsure if they could pay them was difficult. In fact, the greater problem turned out to be finding a conductor at all.

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<sup>95</sup> Newsletter 1 February 1984, Accession Number 2005.06.06.

## Stephen de Pledge, Conductor 1988



*Figure 122 Photograph Stephen de Pledge<sup>1</sup>*

The beginning of 1988 saw a major change in the way the orchestra was funded. The relief was that it would continue to be funded, but it was now going to cost considerably more. The Te Aroha College Continuing Education Committee explained that they would now have to pay \$10 per term per person, half the cost of other 'leisure/interest classes' as it was 'mindful of the tremendous contribution your organisation has made to both the College and the community'.<sup>2</sup> The orchestral committee had a meeting shortly

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<sup>1</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Photograph Stephen de Pledge, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>2</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter from Te Aroha College Continuing Education Committee 23 January 1988, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

after receiving this letter to discuss this, the decision was made that fees would have to be raised, and the continuing efforts to find a new conductor. They decided to 'ask Stephen de Pledge of Hamilton to conduct for two nights and then a firm decision would be made as to whether he would continue for 1988'.<sup>3</sup> The new conductor 'was a sixth former who was making music his career and wanted to experience conducting an orchestra'.<sup>4</sup>

Concerts this year, 1988, with Stephen de Pledge were smaller and less public and included those in rest homes in Hamilton, a geriatric hospital in Morrinsville and an end of year house concert.<sup>5</sup> Although less important in terms of size and venue than previous years, the orchestra at least played more often. The end of year concert of 1988 had 23 TAMCO members playing three brackets of orchestral music interspersed with items from a clarinet consort, a jazz group and individual soloists from the orchestra. The following programme shows the popular nature of the music chosen, light classical or arrangements of earlier jazz and popular melodies. The first orchestral bracket included Kabalevsky and Schubert dance music, the second, more current, section was popular music such as the theme from Coronation Street, and finally the orchestra played some jazz and the rousing tune of *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*.

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<sup>3</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes of Committee Meeting 28 January 1988, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>4</sup> Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Random Memories of TAMCO, Judy Finn.

<sup>5</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Concerts 3 July 1988, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Concert 30 October 1988, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

TE AROHA - MORRINSVILLE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA

PROGRAMME FOR END OF YEAR CONCERTS AT RHODA READ HOSPITAL AND HOUSE  
CONCERT AT JOHN HENDERSON'S HOME, SUNDAY 30TH OCTOBER 1988

KABALEVSKY POLKA  
FIVE WALTZES BY SCHUBERT  
TANGO FOR ORCHESTRA  
Item by Adrian Gatland

EMPOROR WALTZ

Clarinet consort  
Jazz Group

CORONATION STREET  
LITTLE BROWN JUG  
THEME AND VARIATIONS

Item by Kerry Jones

CHRISTMAS EVERYWHERE  
HEATHERS THEME  
TRIBUTE TO LOUIS ARMSTRONG  
WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME

*Conductor; Stephen Depledge*

Figure 123 Programme Concert 30 October 1988<sup>6</sup>

The young man is to be congratulated on choosing and performing this music with players that in the main were considerably older than him and probably more experienced musically. The art of being a good conductor is not just being a musician; it also includes the ability to connect with people. Obviously, Stephen had both. It was remarked that he was 'very competent and very good looking. We had an influx of young girls into the orchestra the year he was with us.'<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Programme concert 30 October 1988. Te Aroha Museum Archives. Accession Number 2005.06.08.

<sup>7</sup> Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004, Random Memories of TAMCO, Judy Finn.

A well-known pianist nowadays, he spent this last year of his school days learning about orchestral conducting, how to balance a programme and some of the difficulties of working with amateur players. He was mature enough to accept help and support from the orchestral stalwarts, in particular Judy and Frank Finn, who kept the orchestra moving forward.<sup>8</sup> And it is to his credit that the orchestra playing numbers slightly increased while he had this position prior to his move to Auckland University.

## **Conclusion**

These ten years in the history of TAMCO were a time of consolidation and upset. That the orchestra continued after Tom Cooper, Elaine Hills, and John Andrew left is a tribute to their legacy. However, the very different experiences, expectations, and expertise of the four conductors of the period meant that there were times of instability, the most extreme being in 1984 when they even considered ending the orchestra.

It is noticeable that there was always a continuum in some respect throughout this period. When the Reverend Errol Smith took over, TAMCO had consolidated from an idea to a valued part of their community, and while they lost their conductor, Elaine Hills and John Andrew continued in their positions as Secretary and Chair of the orchestral committee. While both departed during Basil Kirker's stint as conductor, he continued, and Judy Finn became Secretary of the orchestral committee. An extremely proficient and enthusiastic team, driven largely by Judy Finn, were capable of bringing in a new conductor, David Fagan, and weathering the difficulties engendered by his distinctive approach to the job. Following him, the same personnel helped support Stephen de Pledge.

While TAMCO expanded its concerts to include Hamilton and Tirau, they also changed the locations of some of their performance venues to hospitals, churches, retirement homes, and house concerts. This increased their presence in, and value to, the community and was recognised by the local Continuing Education Committee, as mentioned above, enabling lower fees to be charged to the players. The orchestra showed an ability to play a wide range of repertoire from completely classical to screen

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<sup>8</sup> Finn, F. 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

and light show music. They were able to adapt to the different demands of the conductors and their various personal interests, and while some left others continued.

In keeping with Part One of the thesis, then, this chapter has supported some of my conclusions drawn from the earlier period. This analysis of TAMCO from 1978-88 reinforces the absolute need for a charismatic leader to enable an orchestra to progress musically. Of particular note with TAMCO is the vital importance for a strong backup committee without which neither the conductor nor orchestra thrive. It is testimony to the strong community support through these challenging years that the orchestra continued, a little battered and bruised, but ready for the next chapter of its existence.

## Chapter 9: Stability - The Avis Years 1989 – 2001



*Figure 124 Photograph of Avis Pennell, 2017, taken by the author*

The period of greatest stability and growth for TAMCO was from 1989 until 2001 when the orchestra was directed and nurtured by conductor Avis Pennell. To have been not just a stalwart but an inspiring musician to the orchestra over such a long period is a testament to her versatility, patience, and thorough understanding of what the orchestra needed, and the orchestra's appreciation of what she had to offer. Just as the section on Mr Bell in Part One of this thesis highlighted, this chapter on Avis advances one of the main contentions of this thesis: the way in which a key individual can shape the growth, musicality, and popularity of an orchestra. Avis's strong links to the region were also an important factor in her significant success.

Avis was an extraordinary leader. Born into a musical family as the youngest of three boys and two girls, she would have had to be strong to have been heard amongst her siblings. This early grounding enabled her to be a powerful musical force. Her convent school education encouraged her ability, but once she had

reached Grade VIII on the piano, she left school and became a pupil teacher at the age of 13.



Figure 125 Photograph of Avis Pennell in her last year of school<sup>1</sup>

Self-taught from then on, she studied conducting with Juan Matteucci, and orchestration with Larry Pruden, the former privately, and the latter at the Cambridge Music School.<sup>2</sup> She also had a beautiful voice and sang lead roles with the Hamilton Operatic Society. The following photograph shows her in the lead role of Josepha in the opera *'The White Horse Inn'*:

<sup>1</sup> Personal papers Avis Pennell (now in Turnbull Library).

<sup>2</sup> Avis Pennell, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Matamata, 2017).



Figure 126 Photograph of Avis Pennell in lead role of Josepha, 'White Horse Inn', Hamilton Orchestral Society, 1959<sup>3</sup>

Avis stayed in her birth town of Matamata for several years after World War II and took over the conductorship of the Matamata Community Orchestra in the 1950s. Towards the end of the 1950s Avis was approached by the Matamata Returned Services' Association welfare committee to raise money for a memorial arch to be put in at the cemetery, and so began a series of ANZAC night concerts for this purpose.<sup>4</sup> The 1950s in rural New Zealand were not renowned for their appreciation of women in leadership roles and it is to her credit that she was able to inspire admiration amongst the players there, demonstrating the reciprocal relationship between conductor and musicians. The photograph below shows her as conductor with that orchestra and the over 20 musicians, the majority men, on the stage are evidence of the respect in which she was held.

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<sup>3</sup> Personal papers of Avis Pennell (now in Turnbull Library).

<sup>4</sup> Pennell, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.



Figure 127 Photograph of Avis Pennell, conductor of Matamata Orchestra 1958<sup>5</sup>

It was Avis's move to Morrinsville in 1989, where she set up a piano and voice teaching studio, that led to the invitation to conduct TAMCO. The deputy conductor of TAMCO, John Henderson, who filled that role after Stephen de Pledge left, knew Avis because she taught his children. Once he heard that she had conducted the Matamata Community Orchestra earlier in her life, he asked her to work for them. Avis agreed to 'fill in for a short time (I wanted to see what they were like)!!' and ended up staying for 13 years.<sup>6</sup>

In contrast to several of the conductors of the previous years, she had a longstanding regional connection. While TAMCO had played with other groups locally she brought in artists from her hometown of Matamata, soloists that she had taught, and even took TAMCO to Matamata to give Proms concerts. I had the privilege of not only interviewing her but developing a deep friendship with her. I had been warned that she did not suffer fools gladly and so was quite nervous making my first approach, but I need not have worried. She was a woman of extremely strong principles and great warmth, which factors alone would have made her an extremely effective conductor for the orchestra.

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<sup>5</sup> Personal papers of Avis Pennell (now in Turnbull Library).

<sup>6</sup> Avis Pennell, 'Message to Olivia Fletcher', in *Facebook* (Wellington: Olivia Fletcher, 2017).

This chapter discusses Avis's role with TAMCO and the myriad talents she brought to them. It recognises the extraordinary amount of work done by the volunteers, without whom the orchestra could not have existed, and profiles TAMCO's development with Avis at the helm. It shows how their playing was thereby enhanced and how the orchestra progressed beyond the players' own expectations, producing concerts that were considered highlights of TAMCO's existence.<sup>7</sup> The orchestra's engagement with the community is examined and the last two sections make special mention of the 20th Anniversary concert and the Proms concerts that were performed in Matamata towards the end of Avis's conductorship.

## **The First Concert**

TAMCO needed someone of Avis's vitality and experience to raise them from the doldrums of the previous years. They were essentially continuing to exist as a group only because of the determination and hard work of a few people who believed in TAMCO, not only for themselves but also for its contribution to the community. The first concert with Avis as conductor is examined in some detail as it encompasses many of the strands of this chapter. It shows her determination to build the orchestra's confidence and their playing ability, it showcases her musical gifts, and clearly demonstrates how TAMCO was an integral part of the local community.

Their first rehearsals together must have been a wonderful fillip to the orchestra and perhaps helped the people who tried so hard to keep it going feel justified in their faith. It seems that all went well from the beginning with the President remarking at the 1989 AGM in April:

Mrs. A. Ellison [née Pennell] from Matamata has been our conductor and brings with her a wealth of knowledge of the world of music. We thank her most sincerely for her efforts on our behalf.<sup>8</sup>

A few months after starting with TAMCO Avis conducted the Midwinter Musicale. The format was one of differing items to provide interest to the audience and to allow the orchestra to prepare well for a limited number of pieces. They opened both halves and closed the concert, providing a programme of light classical and popular items such as Mozart, Leroy Anderson, which featured a trumpet solo, Gilbert and

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<sup>7</sup> Judy Finn, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Te Aroha, 2017).

<sup>8</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 1989, 27 April 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

Sullivan, and Beethoven. Other groups involved in the concert included the Bell Tones, the Qualtrough singers, with whom TAMCO had already performed concerts, and soloists and groups of players from the orchestra. Avis accompanied John Henderson's oboe solo and Robin Jobe's trumpet solo. Very clearly Avis recognised the need for music that entertained but also was clearly classical, which would appeal to the players and the audience.

This first concert highlights the differing aspects of this chapter. First of all, it was a social event, 'the evening will begin with a happy half-hour before the concert ... Supper will be served after the concert'.<sup>9</sup> That it was a fundraiser for a local group (Te Aroha Pony Club) immediately shows the relevance of the orchestra to its community. While Te Aroha had a small population it is possible that members of the Pony Club and members of the orchestra did not know each other. By bringing players and listening community together in a social environment, new connections could be forged, possible perceptions amongst the community of the highbrow or forbidding nature of an orchestral concert would have been broken down, and having an evening of great variety and fun may have predisposed more people to TAMCO's local relevance.

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<sup>9</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Community Orchestra: Midwinter Musicale Performance, 21 June 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

**Te Aroha - Morrinsville  
Community Orchestra**

## **ITEMS**

**presents**

# **MIDWINTER MUSICALE**

**THURSDAY 22 JUNE 1989  
7-30 p.m**

**Te Aroha College Hall**

- 
- 1. ORCHESTRA**
- |                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Classical Overture  | Mozart         |
| Three Rustic Dances | von Weber      |
| Trumpeter's Lullaby | Leroy Anderson |
- SOLOIST \* Kerry Jones**
- 2. JOHN HENDERSON**
- |                |                          |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| Adagio by Bach | Oboe                     |
|                | ACCOMPANIST Avis Pennell |
- 3. BELLTONES**
- Esmee Erb, Allan Erb, Robyn Erb, David Erb, Janine Erb  
Richard Hampton
- Theme from Disneyland Series  
I Don't Know How to Love Him - Lloyd Weber  
Tristesse - Chopin
- 4. QUALTROUGH SINGERS**
- David Qualtrough, Brian Swney, Mick Elley, Cecil Grundy  
Tom Luxton, Pat Elley, Raewyn Hislop, Raewyn Luxton,  
Claire Mann, Lorraine Qualtrough
- ACCOMPANIST Myra Caldwell
- Hey Jude  
Teddy Bears' Picnic  
Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring
- 5. SANDRA van der STAY**
- Piano
- Toccata - Poulenc

**Interval**

# Te Aroha - Morrinsville Community Orchestra

CONDUCTOR	Avis Pennell
VIOLINS	Marlen Stokes, Edris Sorei, Lorraine Arnold, Jan Diaz, Donald Carter, Kirsten Carter
CELLOS	Dot Forsythe, Sandra van der Staay, Timothy Stokes, Morag Carter
FLUTES	Barbara Griffiths, Tom Ensor, Wendy van de Staay, Henry Stokes
OBOE	John Henderson
CLARINETS	Hans Zuur, Esmee Robinson, Karen Kivits
BASSOON	Mark Gatland
TRUMPETS	Kerry Jones, Amanda Stace
HORNS	Jack Bennett, Lynne Jones
TROMBONES	George Edmonds, Aubin Wenzlick
SAXAPHONES	Frank Finn, John Mace
PERCUSSION	Graham Hills, Judy Finn
PIANO	Bronwyn Mullions

6. ORCHESTRA	March and Procession of Bacchus	Delibes
	Blue Tango	Leroy Anderson
7. CLARINET QUARTET	John Henderson	Hans Zuur
	Karen Kivits	Esmee Robinson
8. ROBIN JOBE	Soprano Cornet	
	Song to the Moon	from Russalka - Dvorak
	3rd Movement Hayden's Trumpet Concerto	
	ACCOMPANIST	Avis Pennell
9. QUALTROUGH SINGERS	Look for the Silver Lining	
	Love Letters in the Sand	
	Sinner Man	
10. ORCHESTRA	Selection from Yeoman of the Guard	
	Finale from Symphony No 5 - Beethoven	

Figure 128 Programme for Midwinter Musicale 22 June, 1989<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Midwinter Musicale, 22 June 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

The format of the programme meant that musical connections were also strengthened or made between TAMCO and other musical groups who contributed to the concert; these groups were paid for their time, thus boosting their own coffers.<sup>11</sup> The programme in addition shows that the numbers of orchestral players had increased. With more advanced players in the orchestra having an opportunity to perform, there was a sense that they were valued by the conductor who was herself highly regarded, and who arranged the music for them. It also gave an opportunity for others in the orchestra to hear different instruments being played and a possible chance for themselves to perform. By accompanying some of the soloists Avis showcased another of her abilities, beyond arranging music and conducting the orchestra.

## **Development of the Orchestra**

The strong beginning of the first concert provided a good foundation for the development of the orchestra under Avis Pennell, with numbers increasing, performance standards improving, and repertoire chosen to both stretch the orchestra and appeal to audiences. With strong connections to the region and a willingness to contribute to community events and celebrations the orchestra enjoyed a period of strength.

Under Avis's conductorship numbers within the orchestra started to increase. A newsletter following a concert later in 1989 said:

Yes, I think we have been discovered! Yesterday I had 3 inquiries from people who would like to join the orchestra. Isn't it wonderful. A flute, a clarinet, and a violin. These plus the ones who joined last term mean that we are bigger than we have been for years. It's great to have the younger members join too.

That's what the Orchestra is all about.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter to Te Aroha Pony Club, 21 June 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter to Qualtrough Singers, 27 June 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter to the Bell Tones, 27 June 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter to Robin Jobe, 27 June 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>12</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter 9 September 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

In the space of a year the player numbers had doubled from 18 to 36. The continuation of this increase was noted by the president in her annual AGM reports of 1990, 1991 and, in 1992, the new president noted eight new members since the beginning of that year.<sup>13</sup> Of course, school members left at the end of each year, but what would have been exciting for the orchestra would have been the fact that others were coming in to replace them. Avis faced the same problem as all the conductors after Tom Cooper, that is, that she was not on the staff of any College so was unable to cajole, encourage or otherwise persuade musical young people in her purview to join the orchestra. She just arrived to conduct what was available. Obviously, her reputation was preceding her, and musicians were keen to join the evening class.

A benefit concert held in July 1990 in Matamata, Avis's hometown, was performed on consecutive days suggesting that a good-sized audience was expected, as was to be hoped for a benefit concert. The programme for this concert shows 48 players, amongst whom were a large number of woodwind players. Paul King in this concert was playing double bass but was actually the woodwind itinerant teacher for the Thames Valley. He was very supportive of the orchestra, bringing along several of his more advanced school pupils.<sup>14</sup> It is likely that the bulk of the woodwind were his students. What is also remarkable is that there were three horn players. This is a treacherous instrument, requiring no little skill. It is also very expensive. How remarkable that there were three players and three instruments to be found in this rural area! It is also a tribute to the orchestra's financial nous that not only did they own a horn but also had access to a glockenspiel.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 1990, 11 April 1990, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 1991, 11 April 1991, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 1992, 30 April 1992, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>14</sup> Paul King, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Hamilton, 2017).

<sup>15</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Invoice, Accession Number 2005.06.07, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004. The orchestra traded in a saxophone for the horn.

# TE AROHA-MORRINSVILLE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA

## VIOLINS

Sandra Thomson (Leader)  
Marien Stokes (Deputy Leader)  
Tim Williams  
Hillary Smiley & David Whyte  
Lorraine Arnold  
Edris Sorel  
Rebekah Whyte  
Adrienne Granich

## CELLOS

Tim Stokes  
Sandra van der Staay

## FLUTES

Henry Stokes  
Barbara Griffiths  
Erin Davis  
Rachel Nelson  
Dorrie Gommans  
Colleen Edgecombe  
Jocelyn Mohring  
Nicola Scott

## OBOE

John Henderson

## CLARINETS

John Henderson  
Hans Zuur  
Karen Kivits  
Graeme Porter  
Theresa Warren  
Bill Korver  
Nerida Bosch

## TRUMPETS

Kerry Jones  
Grant Mason  
Seager Mason  
Rob Mullions

## HORNS

Lyn Griffiths  
Jack Bennett

## TROMBONES

George Edmonds  
Aubin Wenzlick  
Jason Affleck

## SAXAPHONES (Alto)

Frank Finn  
La Verne Bosch

## SAXAPHONE (Tenor)

John Henderson

## PERCUSSION

Judy Finn  
Graham Hills

## GLOCKENSPIEL

Judy Finn

## D. BASS

Paul King

## PIANO

Bronwyn Mullions

## HARP

Cara Lowe

*CONDUCTOR: AVIS ELLISON-PENNELL*

Figure 129 Programme 26 May 1990<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, A Concert of Light Music, Daniel Drager Benefit Concert, 26 May 1990, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

In addition to the increased numbers an improvement in standard was noted from the beginning. Even in the first year, 1989, the September newsletter noted:

... I know Avis was happy with our efforts. We had so many nice things said about us, that it got quite embarrassing. Let's hope we can keep the standard up.<sup>17</sup>

This would undoubtedly have had an effect on numbers such as those in the concert mentioned above. It is also in stark contrast to their earlier conductor, David Fagan, who apparently did not give praise but "beat them into submission". Clearly the orchestra knew when Avis was happy with their efforts.

In order for an orchestra to improve in quality, the players themselves needed to be stretched and to develop. There were at least two workshops held in the 1990s, both of which were highly regarded.<sup>18</sup>

## Orchestra hosts workshop

**PLAYERS** of string, woodwind and brass musical instruments are invited to a one-day workshop at Te Aroha this Sunday, August 5.

The Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra is organising the day in conjunction with Te Aroha College Continuing Education.

To be held at the college, the workshop will begin at 10am and continue until 3pm.

The day will be overseen by Avis Ellison, conductor of the orchestra, with other special tutors in strings, woodwind and brass.

Grant Mason, conductor of the Hamilton Big Band and a New Zealand national champion, will be the tutor of the brass section while American Paul King is tutor of the woodwind instruments. Paul is currently an itinerant music teacher in local schools.

Looking after the string section is Sandra Thompson, leader of the Te Aroha-Morrinsville orchestra.

Sunday's workshop, which will include a session on orchestra interpretation, costs \$10 for adults and \$5 for students.

Enrolments for the one-day event should be directed to Judy Finn of Te Aroha by this Friday, August 3.

Mrs Finn says 48 people are required to make the day a success.

It is expected that participants will work on two or three pieces of music during the workshops.

And at the end of the day all sections of musical instruments will come together and play the finale.

The workshop is a first for the orchestra. Those involved are asked to take their lunch as well as their instruments.

Figure 130 Newspaper Item about upcoming Orchestral Workshop <sup>19</sup>

The first was held in August in 1990 'in conjunction with Te Aroha College Continuing Education'. It was 'overseen by Avis Ellison, conductor of the orchestra, with other special tutors in strings, woodwind and brass' - Grant Mason, conductor of the Hamilton Big Band, Paul King, itinerant woodwind music teacher and Sandra Thomson, the leader of TAMCO, were engaged for this. The workshop was open to the public, not just the orchestral players, and included a 'session on orchestra

<sup>17</sup> Newsletter 9 September 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08.

<sup>18</sup> Debbie Cotter, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Paeroa, 2016).

<sup>19</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Orchestra Hosts Workshop, 1 August 1990, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

interpretation' as well as working on 'two or three pieces of music during the workshop'. It cost \$10 for adults, \$5 for students and needed 48 people 'to make the day a success'.<sup>20</sup> It is not known if this number came, but it is likely given that a second workshop was held the following year and was described as 'very successful ... All present benefitted considerably from the day'.<sup>21</sup>

Those who went to the concerts were impressed and the reviewers noted not just the improvement in standards but the overall quality of ensemble playing. The *Te Aroha Chronicle* noted in 1993 that the 'Piako region is privileged to have the leadership of a musician as talented and versatile as Avis's with the orchestra responding 'well to the enthusiastic and artistic demands of the conductor'.<sup>22</sup> Referring to this same concert the reviewer in the *Piako Post* commented:

This orchestra has gone from strength to strength in quality and in numbers and is to be commended for its contribution to the arts in our area. A blending of youth and experience, they deserve support such as that received for this concert.<sup>23</sup>

Avis had a highly developed musical sensibility and skillfully devised programmes that were both interesting and varied for the orchestra and audience. On 12 November 1989 a concert at the Knox Presbyterian Church in Morrinsville included both classical items like a Handel *March*, romantic music from Tchaikovsky's *6<sup>th</sup> Symphony*, lighter items like 'selections from *Oliver*', and an arrangement by Avis of the *Phantom of the Opera*. Angela Taverner, soprano, whom Avis had taught, contributed two arias. Together with a clarinet solo, a flute solo, a piano solo, quite apart from the three orchestral brackets, the audience would have been absorbed by the variety of music on show, produced by its local community orchestra. Avis not only orchestrated for and conducted the orchestra, but also accompanied clarinettist John Henderson on the piano, thus immediately showing to the orchestra, and audience, her talents in different fields.<sup>24</sup>

It must have been a great joy to have someone who was so accomplished as their conductor and who so clearly worked hard on their behalf, her

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<sup>20</sup> Orchestra Hosts Workshop, 1 August 1990, Accession Number 2005.06.08.

<sup>21</sup> President's Report AGM 1992, 30 April 1992, Accession Number 2005.06.08.

<sup>22</sup> 'Classical Concert a Brilliant Success', *Te Aroha Chronicle*, 8 July 1993.

<sup>23</sup> 'Community Concert a Cracker', *Piako Post*, 28 July 1993.

<sup>24</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Concert Programme, 12 November 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

dedication and ability has been one of the mainstays in enabling the Orchestra to give a varied programme at each of our public performances. Also, her original arrangements of popular tunes from the shows has made it interesting for the players.<sup>25</sup>

The orchestra was stretched by the variety of music that Avis Pennell offered to them and, as she was able to 'zhuzh up' parts as well as simplify them, they were challenged as well.<sup>26</sup>

As with the previous successful concert in November 1989, the programme for the May 1990 concert showed an enormous variety of items in terms of groups and soloists playing. It was a benefit concert at which TAMCO played three brackets of music on its own, as well as accompanying the Oxford Singers, all of which pieces were carefully chosen to be accessible to the audience.

The programme below shows members of the orchestra performing solos, including Sandra Thomson, the leader, who performed a movement from a violin sonata accompanied by Avis Pennell, and two trumpeter brothers, Grant and Seager Mason who performed two brackets of items. This would also have encouraged the more advanced players to continue with the orchestra. There would not have been many opportunities to perform in public and by giving them this chance, Avis allowed them to demonstrate their skills and also gave the audience the opportunity of hearing individual instruments. She also thus ensured that these players had a sense that they were valued as musicians by her.

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<sup>25</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 1993, 29 April 1993, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>26</sup> Dot Carter, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Waihi, 2018).

*Judy*  
**Te Aroha - Morrinsville  
Community Orchestra**

(50 PLAYERS)

Conductor: Avis Pennell

PRESENT

# Concert of Light Music



WITH

- GUEST ARTISTS -

*Oxford Singers*

*Grant Mason*

*Seager Mason*

*Raylene Brown*

*Sandra Thomson*

## Baptist Church Centre

Cnr Rawhiti Ave - Tower Rd, Matamata

**SATURDAY, MAY 26, 8 PM**

**SUNDAY, MAY 27, 1.30 PM**

## DANIEL DRAGER BENEFIT CONCERT

### 1. Te Aroha - Morrinsville Community Orchestra

CONDUCTOR: AVIS PENNELL

ARIA from The Marriage of "Figaro" by MOZART  
by SATIE  
MY FAIR LADY SELECTION  
by LOEWE

### 2. Oxford Singers

CONDUCTOR: NORA MARTELLETTI

FOLK SONGS  
EVENING BELL RUSSIAN arr. A. S. LOAM  
PRETTY SARO APPALACIAN arr. M. S. VANCE  
HINE E HINE N.Z. arr. W. SOUTHGATE

### 3. Sandra Thomson Violin Avis Pennell Piano

SONATA 3rd MVT  
by RUBBRA

### 4. Raylene Brown Soprano

TWO SONGS

### 5. Grant & Seager Mason

TRUMPET SOLOS

### 6. Orchestra and Oxford Singers

PLAYING AND SINGING JEROME KERN

SMOKE GETS IN YOUR EYES arr. STICKLES  
MAKE BELIEVE arr. STICKLES  
OL' MAN RIVER arr. G. O'HARA  
JUST THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT arr. J. LALLY  
LONG AGO arr. J. MASON

INTERVAL - 10 MINUTES

### 7. Orchestra

CONDUCTOR: AVIS PENNELL

SLEIGH RIDE by Leroy Anderson  
NEIGHBOURS T.V. THEME T. Hatch & J. Trent  
GRAND MARCH from "AIDA" by Verdi arr. M. Isaac

### 8. Oxford Singers

CONDUCTOR: NORA MARTELLETTI

SPIRITUALS  
AMAZING GRACE arr. H. DEXTER  
PLENTY GOOD ROOM arr. H. SMITH

### 9. Grant Mason & Seager Mason

TRUMPETS

### 10. Raylene Brown

SOPRANO SOLOS

### 11. Oxford Singers

LOVE WALKED IN by GERSHWIN arr. W. STICKLES  
SUMMERTIME by GERSHWIN arr. W. STICKLES  
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO LOVE HIM by A. LLOYD-WEBBER

### 12. Orchestra

DON'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA

by A. LLOYD-WEBBER arr. COLIN McMILLAN

PHANTOM OF THE OPERA SELECTION

by A. LLOYD-WEBBER arr. AVIS PENNELL

*Thank you for supporting the Concert.*

*We wish you a safe journey home!*

Figure 109 Programme Concert 26 May 1990<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme, Concert of Light Music, 26/27 May 1990, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

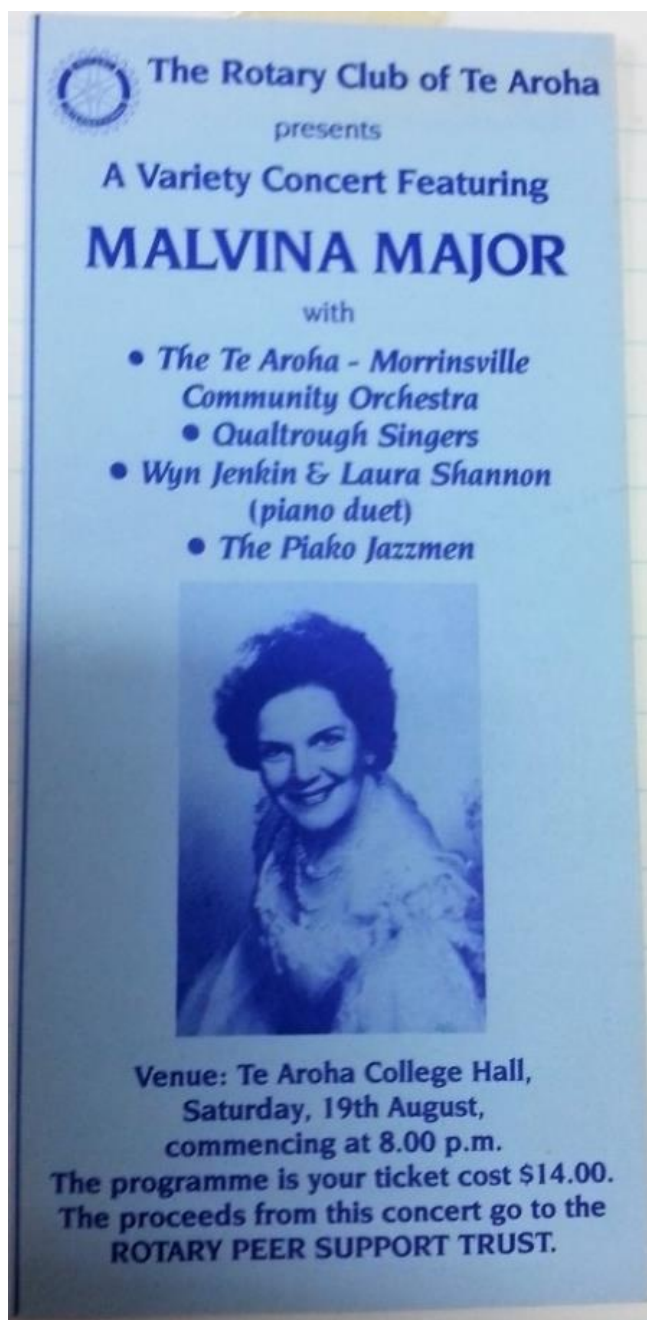
This successful programme format continued throughout the 1990s. There were always members of the orchestra willing to play solos and the orchestra contributed its usual three brackets of music. Sometimes supper was provided after the concert, a good way of ensuring parents and friends could socialise. This is an aspect much appreciated by musicians who enjoy relaxing together after their performance efforts.

Player numbers rose and fell during these years but never as low as the 1980s and rarely as high as this concert in 1990. Avis showed herself to be supportive of the orchestra in her conductor reports to the AGMs. From the beginning she was encouraging, speaking of 'her pleasure in conducting the Orchestra and her surprise at the standard of the playing'.<sup>28</sup> Her written conductor's reports at the AGMs over the years continued to show appreciation of the players: 'this year has started really well so let us keep it up with lots of your usual enthusiasm and motivation', 'musically last year was one of the Orchestra's best', 'last year was a bumper year for the Orchestra', 'another successful year', 'the members of the orchestra can be justifiably proud of their achievement'.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes of AGM 27 April 1989, 27 April 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>29</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Conductor's Report AGM, 28 April 1993, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Conductor's Report AGM 21 April 1994, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Conductor's Report AGM 9 May 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Conductor's Report AGM 7 May 1998, Accession Number 2005.06.10, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Conductor's Report AGM 26 April 2001, 26 April 2001, Accession Number 2005.06.11, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.



The community engagement that had long been a part of TAMCO continued during the Avis years. The concert with Malvina Major in August 1989 is fondly remembered.<sup>30</sup> The Rotary Club of Te Aroha wanted to raise money for its Peer Support Trust and Malvina Major featured, which was a coup for the rural community. It appears from the programme that TAMCO opened the concert, although further contribution is unclear. Perhaps, as Avis had sung with Malvina Major in the Hamilton Operatic Society, the orchestra accompanied some of her repertoire, but that is conjecture. A huge number of local businesses advertised in the programme and the fact that TAMCO was included shows that it was seen as a valued part of the locality.

Figure 131 Programme of Rotary Concert, 19 August 1989 <sup>31</sup>

TAMCO gave concerts in its two main centres of Te Aroha and Morrinsville, usually at Te Aroha College Hall and Morrinsville College, as well as various places

<sup>30</sup> Elaine Hills, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher', ed. by Olivia Fletcher (Matamata, 2017).

<sup>31</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme 'Variety Concert presented by Rotary Club of Te Aroha.', 8 August 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

in those towns such as St David's Cooperating Church in Te Aroha and Knox Presbyterian Church in Morrinsville.<sup>32</sup> Apart from its public performances, the orchestra also played at local retirement homes such as Kenwyn Old People's Home in Te Aroha in 1990, 1994 and 1996; Salvation Army Home for the Elderly in Paeroa in 1993; and at the Matamata Country Lodge Rest home in 1995.<sup>33</sup>

As has been seen, the orchestra assisted local worthy causes, for example, the Pony Club; individuals such as Daniel Drager and Angela Taverner; and other musical institutions including the Piako Brass Band.<sup>34</sup> In addition, the schools of Morrinsville College and Te Aroha College were supported when they needed funds. For example, the Te Aroha College was 'upgrading the grand piano' and putting it on a platform to 'avoid the shifting and abuse it gets'. The cost was going to be \$3000 and the school 'wanted help with the funding ... As we use the piano more than any other group in the community we should help'.<sup>35</sup>

The orchestra was also invited by others to join them in their concerts. One such was in 1996 with the Piako Concert Brass and the Morrinsville Lyceum Lyric Singers. The programme below shows that each group played consecutively, which

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<sup>32</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 2002, 2 May 2002, Accession Number 2005.06.11, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>33</sup> President's Report AGM 1991, 11 April 1991, Accession Number 2005.06.08; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 1995, 27 April 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 1997, 15 May 1997, Accession Number 2005.06.10, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; President's Report AGM 1993, 29 April 1993, Accession Number 2005.06.08; President's Report AGM 1995, 27 April 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.09.

<sup>34</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter 19 May 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Programme, Concert of Light Music, 26/27 May 1990, Accession Number 2005.06.08; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Angela Taverner in Concert, 14/15 July 1990, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; President's Report AGM 1992, 30 April 1992, Accession Number 2005.06.08.

<sup>35</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter 13 September 1991, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.



Figure 132 Programme Music for a Sunday Afternoon

would have helped in terms of the stage management. The numbers of TAMCO were lower at approximately 23, but that did not stop them from performing 10 items. Some of the players were also members of the Piako Concert Brass, showing that there was a variety of musical ensembles in this rural locality available for different players.

The programme is titled 'Music for a Sunday Afternoon' and it is noticeable that the music chosen by the different groups reflected just that. The music played by TAMCO was light music including Leroy Anderson's *The Syncopated Clock*, as well as the *Londonderry Air and Cheek to Cheek*. However, it also started with *Joshua Fought the Battle (of Jericho)* based on the biblical story of Jericho. This is an appropriate choice for a Sunday but is also classed as a traditional song, and thus

probably well known to the audience. One other fact that it is worth noting is that the compère for the concert was Elaine Hills. Although she had had to resign from her position as Secretary, she clearly maintained an interest and loyalty to the orchestra that she had helped establish. This is an example of another couple with immense pride in and fidelity to TAMCO, her husband on tympani was also President of the committee for a period.

The photographs which follow the programme show Avis Pennell conducting the orchestra and were taken at that concert. It is clear that TAMCO was an integral part of the region and showed a reciprocal relationship with its community.

**PIAKO CONCERT BRASS**

Conductor Yumm - Ya Chen

The Piakó Concert Brass will play a selection from the following

Swinging Safari  
 Granada - Soloist Colyn Smith  
 Instant Concert  
 Serenade from "The Student Prince"  
 Soloist Paul Ferguson  
 Can You Feel The Love Tonight  
 Theme from "The Lion King"  
 Lollipop  
 Hymn - It Is Well  
 Any Dream Will Do from "Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat"  
 It's A Small World

Players  
 Steffian Sinclair Colyn Smith  
 John Stoddart Alex Maroney  
 Aaron Price James Wiley  
 Richard Porter Coral Price  
 Robert Mathews Evan Squires  
 Sonia Ferguson Max Mehrtens  
 Aneurin Thomas Paul Ferguson  
 Alistair Porter Michael Lloyd  
 David Stewart

Guest Players  
 Adrian Kurmann Eugen Kurmann  
 Grahame Hills

Comper Elaine Hills

**MORRINSVILLE LYCEUM LYRIC SINGERS**

Conductor Anne Griffiths

Westring Home  
 Bendemeer's Stream  
 Andantino  
 The Bells of St. Mary's  
 O Lord Most Holy (Paniis Angelicus)  
 Bless This House

What A Wonderful World  
 Goodnight Ladies  
 Some Enchanted Evening  
 Sabbath Prayer  
 Matangi

Accompanists  
 EY Barnett  
 Julie Sherburd

**TE AROHA - MORRINSVILLE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA**

Conductor Avis Pennell

1. Joshua Fought the Battle
2. Mennet - Haydn
3. The Syncopated Clock
4. Caprice - William Himes
5. Texas Trail
6. Londonderry Air
7. Song Sung Blue
8. Middle East Mood
9. Cheek To Cheek
10. Rum-Bah - Brian West

Players  
 Debbie Cotter Lorraine Arnold  
 Sarah Walsh Brittany Hoskin  
 Dot Forsythe Luke Hoskin  
 Amy Walsh Derek Barclay  
 Suzanne Leighton-Anderson  
 Fiona Sinclair Jan Low  
 Hans Zuur Bill Korver  
 Fiona Nicol Karen Kivits  
 Belinda Miedema  
 Trevor Jury Jim Ritchie  
 Steffian Sinclair Frank Finn  
 John Henderson  
 Paul King Judy Finn  
 Grahame Hills Jeanette Nelson

Figure 133 Programme Concert 15 September 1996<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Music for a Sunday Afternoon 15 September 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.



Figure 134 Photographs from Concert 15 September 1996<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Photographs of Music for a Sunday Afternoon 15 September 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

## Administration

Behind the scenes, as is the case with any organisation, there was a lot of work in order for TAMCO to continue functioning. The volunteers who ran this orchestra are to be greatly commended as without their help there would have been no orchestra in the Te Aroha Morrinsville area. While this section is bounded by the time Avis Pennell was conductor, it is to their work that I now turn. Two people continued to be outstanding stalwarts of the orchestra, Frank and Judy Finn, librarian and general factotum, and secretary respectively. Their work was recognized with gratitude in Presidents' Reports over the years.<sup>38</sup>

Turning first to Judy Finn, her work encompassed the regular newsletters sent to players and Friends of the orchestra, liaison with other groups to organise concerts, as well as applications to various bodies for grants to help the orchestra buy instruments and music. At least \$6000 was garnered in the period of Avis's tenure as conductor. All grants had to be applied for using the strict criteria set out by the different agencies, and usually requiring a letter setting out in detail the amount asked for and the use to which it would be put. For example, the Roy and Enid Nicol Trust was approached for grants. In the earlier years this was to support the transport expenses of the conductor, but later for the purchase of music.<sup>39</sup> One letter

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<sup>38</sup> President's Report AGM 1990, 11 April 1990, Accession Number 2005.06.08; President's Report AGM 1991, 11 April 1991, Accession Number 2005.06.08; President's Report AGM 1993, 29 April 1993, Accession Number 2005.06.08; President's Report AGM 1995, 27 April 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.09; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 1996, 9 May 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; President's Report AGM 1997, 15 May 1997, Accession Number 2005.06.10; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 1999, 17 May 1999, Accession Number 2005.06.10, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; President's Report AGM 2002, 2 May 2002, Accession Number 2005.06.11.

<sup>39</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter of Application to Ray and Enid Nichol Trust, 19 September 1988, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter of Application to Ray and Enid Nichol Trust, 13 September 1991, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Response from Ray and Enid Nichol Trust, 25 November 1991, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004. (\$400 requested for conductor travel expenses and received); Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter of Application to Ray and Enid Nichol Trust, 7 October 1993, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Response from Ray and Enid Nichol Trust, 26 11 1993, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004. (Unspecified amount requested for help with conductor travel expenses, \$200 received). Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter of Application to Ray and Enid Nichol Trust, 29 September 1994, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Response from Ray and Enid Nichol Trust, 22 November 1994, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-

in 1989 explained that respect for their conductor ensured that the 'Orchestra has doubled in numbers', which outlined to the trustees the value of having Avis Pennell as conductor. This letter also foregrounded the purpose of the Orchestra, stating that 'one of the prime objects ...is giving students the opportunity to play with a group', thus demonstrating the relevance of the orchestra to the youth of the area.<sup>40</sup> This letter quoted the cost of \$330 for the transport of Avis to the orchestra rehearsals, and in this case the Ray and Enid Nicol Trust gave \$500.<sup>41</sup>

Many individual letters like this were typed by the secretary, and grants of between \$200 and \$500 were thus obtained. It can be appreciated what an enormous task this would have been in the days where there was no "cut and paste". However, without this extra support the orchestra could not have continued to run in the way it did at minimal cost to the players. It is doubtful in fact if the players would have been prepared to pay a much larger subscription, given that it was a discretionary expenditure, and this was a rural area without much spare cash.

Trusts and entities that supported the orchestra include the Ray and Enid Nichol Trust, Hillary Commission Sports and Recreation Fund, Piako Community Arts Council, Matamata-Piako District Council, Dr Lawrence Trust, Mackie Memorial Trust, and by the end of this period the Post Office was involved, providing stamped envelopes. The following figure is an example of the form filling required for this. Judy Finn was required to state the aims of the orchestra, how the stamps would be used, and explain who would benefit from this grant. This application was successful. The response indicated that the Hamilton Coromandel Community Post Board

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2004.(Request for \$400 for music, received \$300).Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter of Application to Ray and Enid Nichol Trust, 22 October 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Response from Ray and Enid Nichol Trust, 30 November 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004. (Requested \$300-\$400 for conductor travel expenses and received \$300).Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter of Application to Ray and Enid Nichol Trust, 22 October 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Response from Ray and Enid Nicol Trust, 3 December 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004. (Unspecified amount requested, \$300 given, with the requirement that receipts for music purchase are provided).

<sup>40</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter of Application to Ray and Enid Nichol Trust, 3 October 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>41</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Response from Ray and Enid Nicol Trust, 21 December 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

evaluated applications 'to ensure that Community Post adds value to the lives of people within the region'.<sup>42</sup>

**Application for Free Postage**

Please fill in this form and take a copy of both sides for your files, before sending it in.

**Information About Your Organisation**

Official name of organisation Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc)  
 Postal address 10 Clark Ave Te Aroha  
 Name of contact person Mrs Judy Finn  
 Role Secretary Daytime telephone number 07 884 7954  
 State briefly the aims and objectives of your organisation To rehearse and play orchestral music together - A venue for students of Orchestral instruments to play with experienced players.  
 Area or region your organisation serves Hamilton-Thames Valley + Coromandel.

Have you received Community Post support before? Yes  No   
 If yes, have you provided the one-page feedback report to New Zealand Post? Yes  No


**Information About Your Project**

Postage amount requested \$ 48.00 (= 120 envelopes x .40)  
 Describe the project for which the free postage is required (max 100 words) To send newsletters and rehearsal schedules to the 30 players in the orchestra 4 times a year.  
 Describe who will benefit from this project? Members of the orchestra and ultimately the public who attend concerts put on by the orchestra.  
 When will the project occur? Aug 2000 - July 2001  
 Total project cost \$48. Funds already raised \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicants Declaration**

I declare that:  
 This application has the formal approval of the organisation named above. To the best of my knowledge, all of the information provided in this application is true and correct. We agree to comply with the conditions under which the free postage is donated (as amended from time to time) and understand that use of envelopes in breach of these conditions may result in our organisation being asked to return un-used envelopes and may jeopardise future applications made by our organisation. We acknowledge that any decision made by the regional Community Post Board in our area is final and that no comparison to another organisation's application will be made.

Print name Mrs Judy Finn  
 Signature J.Finn Date 26-6-00

New Zealand Post 

ADN 909 (2)

Figure 135 Application to Post Office, 26 June 2000<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Response from Community Post, 18 August 2000, Accession Number 2005.06.10, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>43</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Application Form for Stamped Envelopes from the Post Office, 26 June 2000, Accession Number 2005.06.10, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004..

This extraordinary amount of work by Judy Finn on a totally voluntary basis was always recognised formally at every AGM. Without her efforts the orchestra would not have survived financially, and thus without a support team of dedicated individuals there would have been no orchestra.<sup>44</sup>

Frank Finn had 'at times a monumental and thankless task, but without his enthusiasm we would have no music to play'.<sup>45</sup> He was praised in one report for 'finding interesting music and producing parts like rabbits from a hat'.<sup>46</sup> Apart from their own library that the orchestra was building, he also sourced music from other orchestras and schools. It must be noted, however, that some, but not all, of the actual letters were written by Judy Finn as Secretary. These institutions included the Taupo Community Orchestra, Waihi College, North Shore music, and a Mr Warren connected with Hamilton Schools.<sup>47</sup> It is noticeable that with the advent of Avis Pennell and her ability to write, re-score and adapt music such overtures became much less frequent during her conductorship. Of course, Frank Finn still had the self-imposed, but prudent, job of photocopying all parts so that no originals were lost.

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<sup>44</sup> President's Report AGM 1992, 30 April 1992, Accession Number 2005.06.08.

<sup>45</sup> President's Report AGM 1992, 30 April 1992, Accession Number 2005.06.08.

<sup>46</sup> President's Report AGM 1996, 9 May 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09.

<sup>47</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter 7 January 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter to Waihi College, 3 February 1989, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter from Waihi College, n.d. 1990, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter from North Shore Music Council, n.d. 1990, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter to Russ Warren, 7 November 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.08, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

## 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



Figure 136 Programme Birthday Concert 1995

off, we made a profit of \$200 on the evening'.<sup>50</sup> As always, Avis 'carried the biggest load', conducting, accompanying soloists and also composing a *Birthday Fanfare* with which the concert opened.<sup>51</sup> Of the twelve brackets of items there were only four in which she was not involved. There was great variety in the concert with individual

During these years of stability, a landmark concert for the orchestra was its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert in 1995. Avis Pennell described this as 'a happy occasion'.<sup>48</sup> Previous conductors were invited, as were past players, and the opportunity to reminisce was provided by 'a lengthy supper' after the concert.<sup>49</sup> Elaine Hills, one of the initiators of TAMCO, welcomed everybody and provided a commentary which 'really added to the evening'. She must have felt so proud that the orchestra that had developed from an idea of three schoolteachers had come so far. 'It was a fitting climax to our 20<sup>th</sup> year. To cap it

<sup>48</sup> Conductor's Report AGM 9 May 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09.

<sup>49</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter to Tom Cooper, 16 August 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter to Reverend Errol Smith, 19 August 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004; President's Report AGM 1996, 9 May 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09

<sup>50</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter February 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>51</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme '20th Birthday Celebration Concert', 21 September 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

members and a vocal soloist performing items accompanied by Avis Pennell, a jazz trio and a clarinet quintet.

The orchestra mustered 36 players for this concert, including two oboists, two people playing bass clarinet and a bassoonist.<sup>52</sup> These instruments require people of ability to make a reasonable sound and are also costly, thus they are relatively uncommon instruments to find in the amateur world and are rarely taught, even nowadays, in schools in the Waikato. Again, it is a tribute to the orchestra, and its conductor, that they were able to find and attract these players.

TAMCO performed in what was by now a fairly regular format of opening both halves and closing the concert. This gave balance to the programme but also allowed for easier stage management, in that either the set up or put away was done when the audience was not waiting. To clear a stage of musicians, instruments, music stands, music and chairs is neither interesting to watch nor a quick process.

The different sections on the programme also meant that the orchestra was able to showcase a mix of musical genres. Verdi, Bizet and Offenbach shared the limelight with Leroy Anderson and Jerome Kern as well as *Russian Folk Dances* and *Rock around the Clock*.

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<sup>52</sup> President's Report AGM 1996, 9 May 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09. The orchestra bought a bass clarinet in 1995.

PROGRAMME

1. 7E AROHA MORRINSVILLE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA  
 Birthday Fanfare - A. Pennell  
 WELCOME Elaine Hills  
 Grand March from "Aida" - Vendi  
 Trumpeter's Lullaby - Leroy Anderson  
 Soloists- Jim Ritchie and Stefan Sinclair  
 Seventy-Six Trombones - M. Willson  
 Soloists- John Henderson and Frank Finn

2. Henry Stokes - Vocal Solo  
 Marian Stokes - Piano

3. Sandra Thomson - Violin  
 Paul King - Flute  
 Avis Pennell - Piano  
 Sonata 1st & 2nd Movements by J.B. Loellet

4. Jonathon Hoskin - Oboe  
 Avis Pennell - Piano

5. Libby Wells - Vocal Solo  
 Avis Pennell - Piano

6. "STRING THREE"  
 Tim Williams - Violin  
 Leo Dayton - Guitar  
 Jack Taylor - Double Bass

INTERVAL

7. 7E AROHA - MORRINSVILLE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA  
 Menuet from Two Classic Dances - J. L. Kneels  
 Gaslight Gaieties - Ann Ployhan  
 Russian Folk Dances - Ann H. A. Alsh  
 March of the Bowman - F. Cunzon  
 Rock Around The Clock - M. Freedmann

8. Sandra Thomson - Violin  
 Avis Pennell - Piano  
 Andante from Violin Concerto by Mendelssohn  
 Czardus By Monti

9. CLARINET QUINTET  
 John Henderson - Hans Zuur - Bill Korber  
 Coral Piece - Karen Kivits

10. Libby Wells - Vocal Solo  
 Avis Pennell - Piano

11. STRING THREE

12. 7E AROHA - MORRINSVILLE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA  
 March from "Carmen" - Bizet  
 When Johnny Comes Marching Home - Ann Matesky  
 Long Ago and Far Away - J. Kenn  
 Orpheus in the Underworld - Offenbach

SUPPER

Figure 137 Programme of 20th Anniversary Concert, 1995.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Programme '20th Birthday Celebration Concert', 21 September 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.09

## The Matamata Proms Concerts, 1995, 1997, 2000

Not only did the orchestra perform its anniversary concert in September 1995, but they had also committed to playing in their first (of three) Proms concerts in May in Matamata. This was described as the highlight of the year and required many hours of discussion between Avis Pennell and the proms committee in Matamata about the format of the concert, and then many hours work on her behalf 'arranging music to suit the format'.<sup>54</sup>



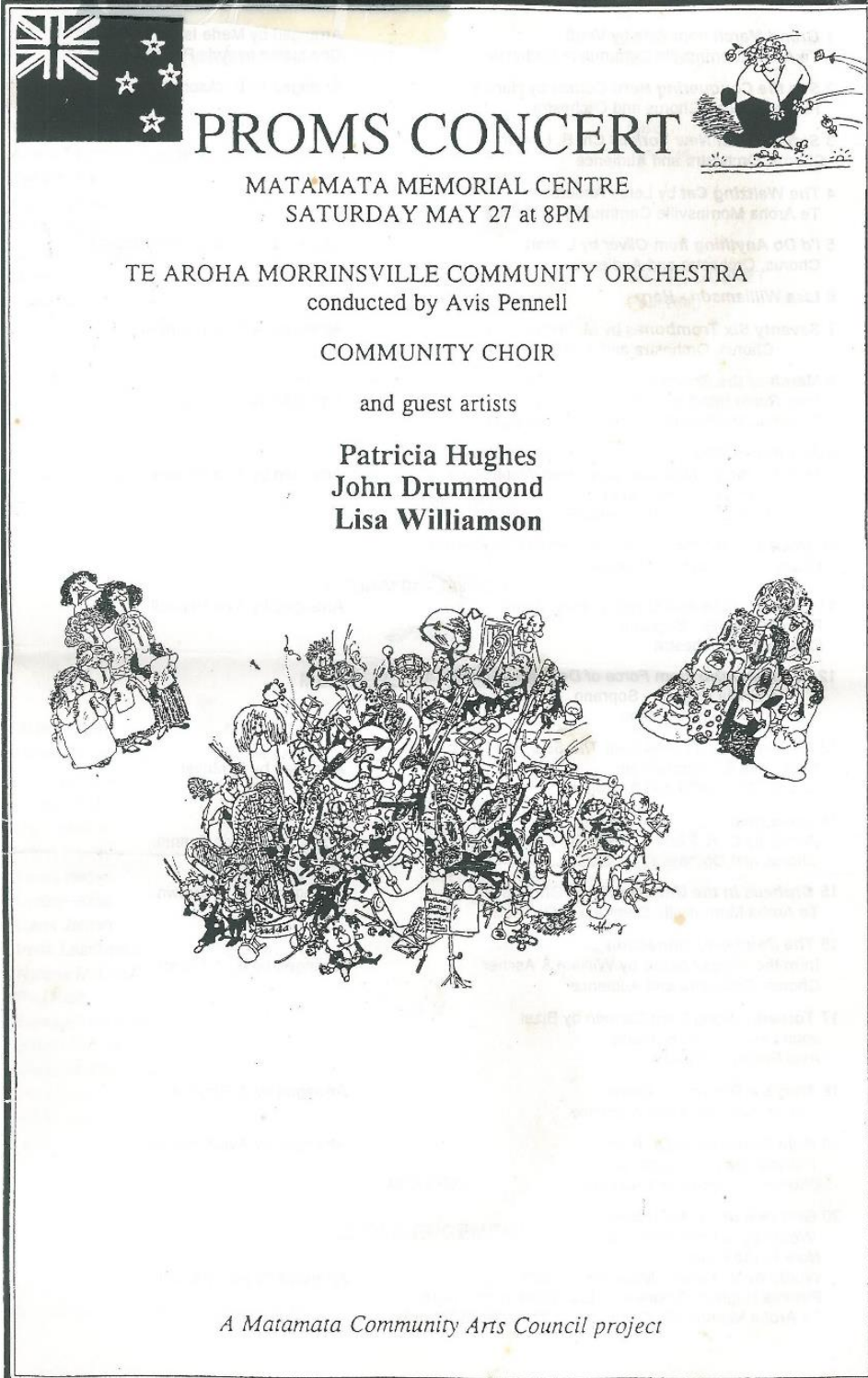
Figure 138 Newspaper Advertisement Matamata Proms Concert 1995<sup>55</sup>

This was a big shift from the types of concerts that TAMCO usually played and was a huge undertaking by Avis Pennell who rehearsed the choir of 38 as well as the orchestra. The audience was larger than usual too, 'over 500 exuberant patrons ... [who] welcomed the 20 musical items with enthusiasm'. The Memorial Hall had been decorated with red, white and blue flags and balloons and 'Queen Victoria (alias Gloria Yelovich) with her costumed retinue in long frocks or dark coats and bowler hats' graced the proceedings. The 'Grand March' from *Aida* started the

<sup>54</sup> President's Report AGM 1996, 9 May 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09

<sup>55</sup> Personal papers, Elaine Hills.

programme, and the guest artists contributed their items with Patricia Hughes singing the traditional proms songs. 'Audience participation was a feature of the evening's entertainment', singing songs from musicals such as *Oliver* and *The Sound of Music*, as well as the Prom regulars of *Land of Hope and Glory* and *Jerusalem*.<sup>56</sup>



**PROMS CONCERT**

MATAMATA MEMORIAL CENTRE  
SATURDAY MAY 27 at 8PM

TE AROHA MORRINSVILLE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA  
conducted by Avis Pennell

COMMUNITY CHOIR  
and guest artists

**Patricia Hughes  
John Drummond  
Lisa Williamson**

*A Matamata Community Arts Council project*

<sup>56</sup> 'Proms Resounding Success', *Matamata Chronicle*, 29 May 1995.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 <b>Grand March</b> from <i>Aida</i> by Verdi<br>Te Aroha Morrinsville Community Orchestra  | Arranged by Merle Isaac<br>Conducted by Avis Pennell |
| 2 <b>See the Conquering Hero Comes</b> by Handel<br>Proms Concert Chorus and Orchestra   | Arranged by Erickson-Jure                            |
| 3 <b>Sidewalks of New York</b> by Ch. B. Lawler<br>Chorus, Orchestra and Audience  |  |
| 4 <b>The Waltzing Cat</b> by Leroy Anderson<br>Te Aroha Morrinsville Community Orchestra   |  |
| 5 <b>I'd Do Anything</b> from <i>Oliver</i> by L. Bart<br>Chorus, Orchestra and Audience   | Arranged by A. & S. Frankenpohl                      |
| 6 <b>Lisa Williamson - Harp</b>  |  |
| 7 <b>Seventy Six Trombones</b> by M. Wilson<br>Chorus, Orchestra and Audience  | Arranged by Felton Rapley                            |
| 8 <b>March of the Bowmen</b><br>from <i>Robin Hood Suite</i> by F. Curzon<br>Te Aroha Morrinsville Community Orchestra   | Arranged by David Stone                              |
| 9 <b>All I Ask of You</b><br>from <i>Phantom of the Opera</i> by Lloyd Webber<br>Patricia Hughes - Soprano<br>John Drummond - Baritone Orchestra   | Arranged by Avis Pennell                             |
| 10 <b>Rock around the Clock</b> by Freedman-de Knight<br>Chorus, Orchestra and Audience  |  |
| INTERVAL - 10 MINUTES  |  |
| 11 <b>Land of Hope and Glory</b> by Edw. Elgar<br>Patricia Hughes - Soprano<br>Chorus and Orchestra  | Arranged by Avis Pennell                             |
| 12 <b>Pace, mio Dio</b> from <i>Force of Destiny</i> by Verdi<br>Patricia Hughes - Soprano<br>Avis Pennell - Piano   |  |
| 13 <b>My Favourite Things</b> from <i>The Sound of Music</i><br>by Rogers & Hammerstein<br>Chorus, Orchestra and Audience  | Arranged by F. Muller                                |
| 14 <b>Jerusalem</b><br>Music by C. H. Parry Poem by William Blake<br>Chorus and Orchestra  | Arranged by Avis Pennell                             |
| 15 <b>Orpheus in the Underworld</b> by Offenbach<br>Te Aroha Morrinsville Community Orchestra  | Arranged by R. B. Brown                              |
| 16 <b>The Rainbow Connection</b><br>from the <i>Muppet Movie</i> by William & Ascher<br>Chorus, Orchestra and Audience   | Arranged by G. J. Marsh                              |
| 17 <b>Toreador Song</b> from <i>Carmen</i> by Bizet<br>John Drummond - Baritone<br>Avis Pennell - Piano  |  |
| 18 <b>Mary's a Grand Old Name</b><br>Chorus, Orchestra and Audience  | Arranged by J. Ployhar                               |
| 19 <b>Rule Britannia</b> by Dr. Arne<br>Patricia Hughes - Soprano<br>Chorus, Orchestra and Audience  | Arranged by Avis Pennell                             |
| 20 <b>God Defend New Zealand</b><br>Words by Thomas Bracken<br><b>Now is the Hour</b><br>Words by M. Kaihau Music by C. Scott<br>Patricia Hughes - Soprano Lisa Williamson - Harp<br>Te Aroha Morrinsville Community Orchestra and chorus. | Arranged by Avis Pennell                             |

Figure 139 Proms Concert Programme, 1995<sup>57</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme Proms Concert, 27 May 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

The concert was an enormous success, but behind the scenes there was much work and not a little stress.

TAMCO players had become careless about attendance at rehearsals leading Avis Pennell to send a strong letter to them all, starting with, 'I am very concerned about the poor attendance at orchestra rehearsals'.<sup>58</sup> She explained that with 18 pieces for the orchestra to perform, many of which she had written or transcribed for the forces at her disposal, 'there [was] a lot of work to cover'. She then went on to say:

When the idea of a Proms Concert was first put forward, I was not all that enthused, but now that the Proms Choir is under way, and singing enthusiastically, things are taking shape. I am beginning to catch some of the enthusiasm and excitement that is being generated here in Matamata. It could be a great event – all we need is for the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra in top form for it to be a success. To do that we must have full attendances at the rehearsals left to us. ... So come on players, don't let me down. We are committed to this concert. Let's give the audience and ourselves a night to remember.<sup>59</sup>

It is quite possible that with the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary concert looming as well as this more immediate Proms concert the players felt a little overwhelmed, and maybe there was some grumbling at home about them being out so much. Given the generally amateur approach of the players where they felt their presence and practice was not always necessary, it was necessary to cajole but also encourage. The letter clearly had the desired effect judging by the photographs below:

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<sup>58</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter from Avis, 21 April 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>59</sup> Letter from Avis, 21 April 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.09.





Figure 140 Photographs from the rehearsals for the Proms Concert, 1995<sup>60</sup>

These photos show the players and choir rehearsing together for the Proms Concert, with approximately 30 members of the orchestra and 20 of the choir. Fortunately, Avis was 'able to call on past players to augment the numbers and to give a well-balanced sound to the orchestra, and this was certainly achieved to everyone's satisfaction'. This Proms concert was a triumph, and Avis was customarily generous with her praise of the orchestra in her conductor's report of the following year.

On the night it was a resounding success, the players rising to the occasion superbly and I thought played magnificently. The weeks (or rather months) of dedicated rehearsals paying off. ... I got tremendously favourable feedback from people who had attended the concert for weeks after the event.<sup>61</sup>

The Matamata Community Arts Council sponsored the three Proms concerts, providing decorations, front of house staff, and the finances to put on such a concert.<sup>62</sup> Obviously planning for such an event took a long time and, in the year

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<sup>60</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Photographs at Rehearsal, May 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>61</sup> Conductor's Report AGM 9 May 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09.

<sup>62</sup> 'Proms Resounding Success', *Matamata Chronicle*, 29 May 1995.

prior to the second Prom concert of 1997, Avis Pennell wrote a forthright and professional letter to the Matamata Community Arts Council setting out the conditions that needed to be met if the orchestra were to agree to perform, detailing fees, professional sound and lighting, and choir rehearsals. These were agreed to, having 'considered the proposals', and the Arts Council stated that they 'would be most happy to have the assistance of your Orchestra at the Proms concert to be held in 1997'.<sup>63</sup>

The last Proms concert was in 2000. Avis had already decided to step down as conductor so this would be her last major concert, 'hence, [she] went "all out" to make the Concert a memorable one ... and it will remain the highlight of the orchestra's many years of performances'.<sup>64</sup> The programme consisted of 20 pieces of which she arranged 11, and as before she conducted and accompanied the soloists. On this occasion there were approximately '90 people participating in a wonderfully balance programme of vocal and instrumental presentations'.<sup>65</sup> I enclose the following photographs which give some of the atmosphere of the concert:

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<sup>63</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter from Matamata Community Arts Council to Secretary TAMCO, 16 December 1996, Accession Number 2005.06.09, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>64</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Conductor's Report AGM 9 May 2001, Accession Number 2005.06.10, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>65</sup> 'Proms Resounding Success', *Matamata Chronicle*, 29 May 1995.



Figure 141 Photographs from Proms Concert 2000 <sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Photographs from Proms Concert 2000, 27 May 1995, Accession Number 2005.06.11, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

Avis Pennell retired from her role as conductor of TAMCO at the end of the following year. Her years with the orchestra had shown what a privilege it was for all to have had her astonishing talent and abilities available to the orchestra, as the reviewer of the Proms concert in 2000 had remarked, 'How lucky to have the services of Avis Pennell...'.<sup>67</sup>

## Conclusion

TAMCO had become an established part of the area before Avis's arrival but, given the turnover of conductors in the previous few years who seemed to follow their own interests rather than continuing with the work of previous conductors, and the occasional years with a paucity of concerts, it had become less present in the minds of some locals. Like Tom Cooper, she had a vision for TAMCO and a total commitment to its development and its place in the community as a force for good, both for the individuals playing in it and in terms of supporting the local population. What she brought was stability after the high replacement rate of the previous 10 years. She said of the orchestra,

They had potential, and they were great people to work with, we built up a great relationship and I built up a great rapport with all of them, was able to make a difference and to orchestrate some parts to suit those players with limited ability and make it more enjoyable for them and fulfilling.<sup>68</sup>

Avis was able to take advantage of all her previous experience and tuition – she conducted, composed, arranged, orchestrated, and accompanied soloists. This resourcefulness enabled her to write, arrange and orchestrate music appropriate for the forces at her disposal, bearing in mind the players' ability. As a pianist she could also accompany any soloists in her concerts and furthermore, as an established and well-respected voice teacher, she had access to up-and-coming vocalists. That she had taught all her life would also have given her the knowledge of how to improve the abilities of the players both instrumentally and orchestrally. She offered everything that the players in the orchestra at that time needed.

Respected by the orchestra as well as by the locality, during rehearsals Avis was encouraging.<sup>69</sup> If musicians were having difficulty in playing how she wanted,

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<sup>67</sup> 'Proms a Night to Remember', *Matamata Chronicle*, 14 June 2000.

<sup>68</sup> Pennell, 'Message to Olivia Fletcher'.

<sup>69</sup> Finn, J. 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'; Cotter, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'. Carter, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

she would then demonstrate the required phrase on the piano.<sup>70</sup> Once they succeeded in playing as she desired, she was always quick to praise.<sup>71</sup> The President's report of 1991 makes mention of Avis's talents in bringing out the best in her players: 'Our biggest thank you goes to Avis Pennell our conductor – who never singles us out for criticism but just charms us to do better.'<sup>72</sup> This is in such stark contrast to being "beaten into submission" that it is no wonder her manner enabled players to give of their best. Her generally positive attitude would have been noticed and perhaps mentioned by players to other potential and hesitant instrumentalists and may thus have also contributed to generally larger numbers during her conductorship.

This was backed up by a loyal and hardworking team who ensured financial support, located and organised the music, kept all (players and community) informed, and generally enabled the workings of an orchestra to go ahead. Avis obviously was held in high regard, both with respect and affection by all involved. In order to play orchestral music not only are instrumentalists required but also an effective conductor, who needs superior musical abilities and a 'strong will, tenacity, considerable powers of endurance, and the willingness to spend much time in arranging parts in order to overcome instrumental deficiencies'.<sup>73</sup> This is what TAMCO experienced with Avis Pennell. Together with the administration team the orchestra moved forward into the twenty-first century with extraordinarily high standards and player numbers from this rural area. Unfortunately, the next few years were to be less auspicious.

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<sup>70</sup> Carter, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

<sup>71</sup> Cotter, 'Interview with Olivia Fletcher'.

<sup>72</sup> President's Report AGM 1991, 11 April 1991, Accession Number 2005.06.08.

<sup>73</sup> Frederick John Erickson, 'The Bands and Orchestras of Colonial Brisbane' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Queensland, 1987)

## Chapter 10: Concluding Coda 2002 - 2004

The end of TAMCO was very swift and surprising after Avis Pennell's retirement. Given the brevity of this period in TAMCO's history it does not merit a separate chapter covering this era, rather, it is appropriate to use the demise of the orchestra as an opportunity to consider the key themes that this second case study reveals. This concluding coda therefore begins with a brief account of the final concerts before pivoting to a retrospective reflection on what made the orchestra so successful for so many years and what led to its eventual termination.

### Coda

This section deals with the last few years of the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra. Having had the stability of one gifted conductor for the previous 12 years, there is no doubt that any person following in the footsteps of Avis Pennell would have had an uphill battle to maintain the numbers, enthusiasm and standards that generally prevailed during her stewardship.<sup>1</sup> This was indeed the case. The new conductor, Pauline Atkinson-Rigby came with suitable credentials but faced an orchestra of dwindling numbers and a volunteer group in which older members were becoming fatigued and were not being replaced by younger ones.

In 2002, the first newsletter of the year introduced Pauline and as usual for this time of the year talked about the year's future concert dates and subscriptions. It appeared that all would continue well into the foreseeable future. Pauline certainly had an impressive musical background and on paper appears to have been the perfect successor to Avis Pennell. She had conducted the Taranaki Symphony Orchestra for nine years and, having moved to the Waikato, was at the time the conductor of Cantando Choir in Hamilton and was associate conductor of the Waikato Youth Orchestra. 'We are looking forward to a new era after the valuable service Avis gave us over the past 12 or so years.'<sup>2</sup>

There was a call for new players and an advertisement was placed in the *Piako Post*, which included a photograph of a 14-year-old boy who had been playing with the orchestra for a few years and had transferred from clarinet to bass clarinet.

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<sup>1</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 2002, 2 May 2002, Accession Number 2005.06.11, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>2</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Newsletter January 2002, Accession Number 2005.06.11, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

This photograph demonstrates the orchestra's desire to continue with the original intention of giving advanced students the opportunity of playing alongside more experienced musicians and probably was included to show school pupils that the orchestra included young people.

The advertisement also states that players came from Thames, Paeroa and Cambridge to join the local musicians from Te Aroha and Morrinsville. It presented Pauline's background experience, which would have assured potential members that the orchestra continued to be in good hands and outlined the type of music they played which included jazz and the classics. It was emphasized that the players were of all ages, with the article highlighting that 'as long as they have a good working knowledge of their instruments, [all] are made welcome.'



Figure 142 Newspaper advertisement *Piako Post*<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> 'Music for the Community', *Piako Post*, 15 February 2002.

2002 started as in previous years, with a focus on looking for more players and working towards a public concert. It seems that the orchestra was happy with their new conductor, Pauline Atkinson-Rigby, the president mentioning in his report at the AGM that ‘the rather small orchestra this year is progressing well under her guidance’.<sup>4</sup> Their first outing together was in August 2002 in the Knox Presbyterian Church in Morrinsville. This concert was given in conjunction with the Morrinsville Lyceum Singers, and, besides these two groups’ brackets of music, there were solo items as well, continuing the tradition of giving more advanced players the opportunity of shining. In this case, John Henderson, principal clarinet, performed



and was accompanied by none other than Avis Pennell. Her interest in the orchestra and its musicians obviously continued. The music played by the orchestra itself did not vary from previous years, following both the organisation of programme and types of music played. Their first bracket included Purcell and Handel, the second bracket that finished the first half showcased Leroy Anderson, and the programme concluded with Scott Joplin. In a sense, there was something for everyone.

Figure 143 Programme for Concert<sup>5</sup>

It was probably wise of Pauline Atkinson-Rigby to continue using music with which the orchestra was familiar. She almost certainly felt that to change a successful format was unnecessary and at the beginning she would not have wanted to antagonize any of the hard-working volunteers. On the other hand, by not putting her own stamp on the orchestra that could have shown a new and fresh direction, the possibility that the orchestra might have been re-energized was lost. This concert

<sup>4</sup> President's Report AGM 2002, 2 May 2002, Accession Number 2005.06.11.

<sup>5</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme: Music Music Music, 11 August 2002, Accession Number 2005.06.10, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

was financially successful. Door sales were \$393.00 but once the cost of the advertisement in the Piako Post - \$93, hall costs - \$70, posters, programmes and afternoon tea were paid, the orchestra and singers shared the profits, each organisation receiving \$93.50.<sup>6</sup>

Another concert followed in September, a mere five weeks later. It was a house concert for family and friends of the orchestra and was mainly an opportunity for orchestral members to play solos with six numbers performed by the orchestra as a group. The soloists included Luke, the clarinettist who featured in the advertisement above, as well as violin trios, various ensembles, piano solos, and jazz saxophone. Fourteen individuals are mentioned in the programme so it may be assumed there were more players in the orchestra as it is unlikely that all would have wanted to play a solo.

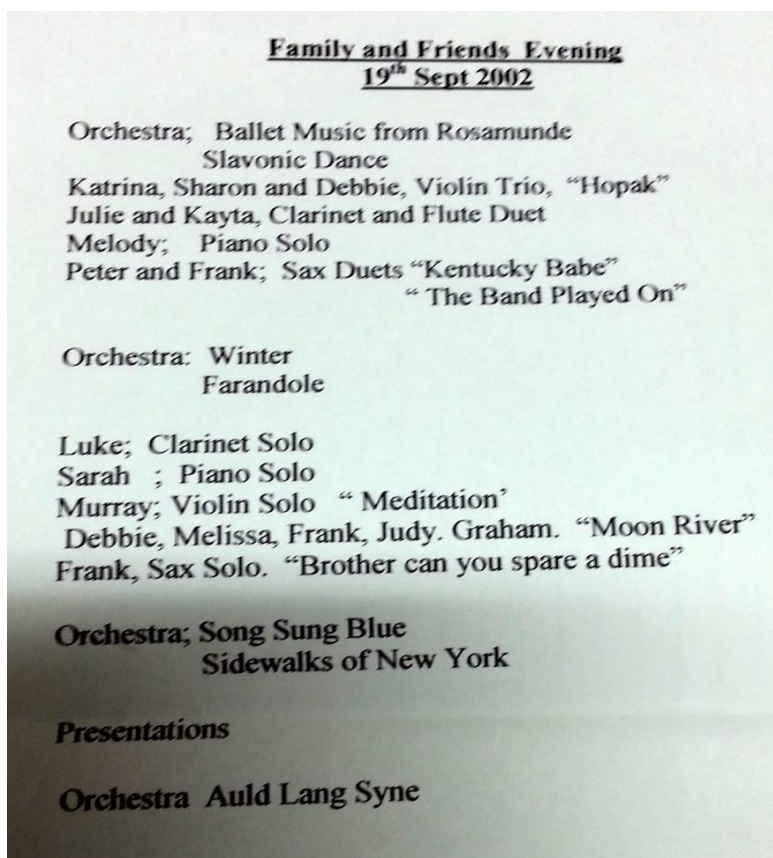


Figure 144 Programme for House Concert 19 September 2002<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Letter to Lyceum Singers, 12 August 2002, Accession Number 2005.06.11, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>7</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Programme: Family and Friends Evening, 19 September 2002, Accession Number 2005.06.11, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

This seems to have been a departure from previous years and is much to be commended. An orchestra based in the community gives many opportunities for local musicians to meet and play chamber music and here they were given the opportunity to share with others some of their joy in music making.

It came as something of a shock to discover in the archives that this was the last concert performed by the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra. At the 2003 AGM the president moved

that we stay in recess until the end of the year. At the start of the new year the executive may be able to do a phone survey to see if there is enough support to restart or look at other options.<sup>8</sup>

This motion was carried.<sup>9</sup> Financially the society was in good shape, even showing a slight increase in assets of \$53.69 to \$3028.65. It must have been a sad time for the eight people who attended the meeting.<sup>10</sup> Their stewardship had ensured that in all respects - musically, organisationally, and financially - the orchestra had a sound foundation. What it did not have were the player or volunteer numbers. They were the stalwarts, some of them being involved in the orchestra from its earliest days. But there had been ill health and 'the winter term is always a difficult one with colds and flu etc. ... The numbers are not available to continue rehearsing and performing'.<sup>11</sup>

The following year, 2004, in February there was a Special General Meeting at which, 'after discussion on the numbers available to play ... the Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) [went] into indefinite recess.'<sup>12</sup> The assets were sold, and the available funds were distributed in the community.

## Conclusion

The Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra started as an idea in 1974 between three people and continued for the next thirty years, going into permanent recess in 2004. This is an extraordinary feat by all concerned and it is unlikely that the three idealists at the heart of this could have foreseen its exceptional longevity, but one

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<sup>8</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, President's Report AGM 2003, 29 June 2003, Accession Number 2005.06.11, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>9</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Minutes of AGM 29 June 2003, Accession Number 2005.06.11, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

<sup>10</sup> Messrs Henderson, Muller, Finn, and Hills, and the Mrs Finn, Hills, Cotter, and Arnold.

<sup>11</sup> President's Report AGM 2003, 29 June 2003, Accession Number 2005.06.11.

<sup>12</sup> Te Aroha, Te Aroha Museum Archives, Special General Meeting, 5 February 2004, Accession Number 2005.06.11, Te Aroha-Morrinsville Community Orchestra (Inc) Minute Books 1975-2004.

that exemplifies what can be achieved when vision and realism are combined. Here I intend to examine how and why this remote, rural orchestra continued for such a long time. There are two factors I consider most important and without either of which there would be no orchestra, regardless of financial or other stability. These are the charismatic leader and a dedicated support group. Beyond this, to achieve the *raison d'être* of any orchestra, an audience, the orchestra had fundamental factors in place. It was totally embedded in its community, its programming was relevant to its community and the occasions where it performed, and it was financially viable. As to why it ended, I will conclude with a few speculations of my own.

I turn first to the question of the charismatic leader, which has already been explored in Part One of the thesis. It is very clear, looking at the stages in TAMCO's history, that it had two extraordinary leaders who were respected musically and by the local community. These were Tom Cooper and Avis Pennell. That is not to say that the four conductors in the Plateau era or Mrs Rigby lacked respect, but they were not universally praised, and each had different difficulties with the orchestra. With Tom and Avis there was a mutual relationship between conductor and players, with a sense of respect towards their leader, but also respect from their leader. This led to a rapport between orchestra and conductor, from which TAMCO benefitted enormously, and thus to many great concerts that were remembered for years after.

The period between Tom Cooper and Avis Pennell, Plateau 1978-1988, did not exhibit this type of relationship and it is here that the absolute necessity of the support group comes into play. The loss of Tom Cooper to Australia could have been the orchestra's downfall, however, while the next 10 years proved to be tricky, the committee kept it going. They did this by providing a sense of continuity. As noted earlier, the gap between one conductor and the next was always underpinned by the committee who not only found the next incumbent but kept everyone informed, so that there was no sense of the orchestra being dissolved at that time. This worked in the other direction as well; the losses of Elaine Hills and John Andrew, both stalwarts of the committee, were covered by the continuation of the conductor. In this sense, then, conductor and committee were an essential part of the whole.

The orchestra was totally embedded in its community, the players mainly coming from Te Aroha and Morrinsville, others from smaller outlying settlements. Thus, their families and friends probably provided the majority of the audience. When

the conductors lived locally, Tom Cooper, Avis Pennell, and Basil Kirker, then relationships with other musical groups were formed. The conductors who lived in Hamilton - Reverend Errol Smith, David Fagan, Stephen de Pledge and Pauline Atkinson-Rigby - were able to take advantage of these connections. TAMCO also helped other local community groups in fundraising for their needs. In this way, reciprocal relationships and stronger ties to the community were formed, especially when new audiences came to their own group's events and learned about the orchestra and met the players involved.

The programming was relevant to this local audience. While classical music was played that chosen was on the lighter side and much more accessible to an uninitiated listener. Any classical music that was played was also interspersed with television and film theme tunes, fun pieces by Leroy Anderson, and traditional melodies that would have been known and enjoyed. The Christmas concerts and Proms concerts have their own traditions that were followed and provided a lot of pleasure. The only surprise to the audience would have been discovering how much fun was possible at an orchestral concert.

Finally, the finances of the orchestra were looked after extremely efficiently. It was genius to have the orchestra based at two schools which provided the use of the halls for rehearsals for free. Immediately that reduced overheads. In addition, in the first three years, Tom Cooper's job with the Education Board financed his conductorship. These are brilliant examples of the pragmatism of the protagonists. As the orchestra continued, so more funding was required for music, for conductors, and for instruments. Then the advantages of being an Incorporated Society were accessed, allowing greater flexibility of access to funds. When TAMCO finally reached crunch point in 2003 and 2004, it still had a healthy bank balance as well as valuable assets.

TAMCO's last concert was in 2003, and the orchestra went into permanent recess in 2004. It would be easy to think there was but one cause. Clearly, the lack of new volunteers to take over from the exceptional work of Frank and Judy Finn was a major part of this decision, but what caused that dearth of volunteers and of players? Possibly it was the economic, personal, social and educational climate at the time.

A lack of enthusiastic players in the area could be ascribed to the different societal mores of the time. For example, where once there had probably been a family with one main breadwinner as the norm, by the 2000s it had become almost essential for both adults in the family to be working full time to support the household. Therefore, there was less discretionary time for personal interests outside of the home.

The diminishment of music as an integral part of education would have also played a part in the lack of student members in the orchestra; compare this to the time when TAMCO started and there were two orchestras in Te Aroha College! As successive governments' values have changed, so attitudes to music in schools have changed. This has affected funding for instruments and teachers.<sup>13</sup> If the only option is to pursue paid instrumental tuition outside of school, then only some families would be able to purchase an instrument and afford the lessons, let alone find the time required to transport children to lessons outside of school hours.

The rise of easy and instant social entertainment available on screen would have also contributed to a lack of enthusiasm to pursue the long-term goal of enjoying an instrument which requires regular practice and time. In the end, the 'dwindling number of players', which threatened the evening school status enjoyed by the orchestra, and a general lack of enthusiasm for the project, meant that TAMCO ceased to exist.<sup>14</sup> It had survived for 30 years and provided at that time an enormous contribution to the community, to the players themselves and to the general awareness that an orchestra can be a force for good and not just an elite pastime.

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<sup>13</sup> Susan P. Braatvedt, 'A History of Music Education in New Zealand State Primary and Intermediate Schools 1878-1989', University of Canterbury, 2002) <<https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/items/1aa23f2d-34a1-470b-8d1e-c840adafc172>>

<sup>14</sup> President's Report AGM 2002, 2 May 2002, Accession Number 2005.06.11.

## Conclusion

This thesis has examined the development of western orchestral music in the Waikato, focusing on the region around Hamilton, from Huntly to the north, Te Aroha in the east, to Raglan in the west and Te Awamutu and Cambridge in the south, an area where early settler music making has never previously been studied. The research was commenced with the aim of discovering why Hamilton and the surrounding areas, whose history of European settlement began as remote military outposts, have such a rich musical scene today. As a professional musician and amateur historian this had perplexed me since my arrival in the area in 1999. As I explained in the Introduction, there was so much material that I adapted my thesis to look at the first 50 years from 1864-1914 to discover what makes a musical endeavour a long-lasting success. This was then compared with a similarly isolated rural orchestra in the latter half of the twentieth century. Previous areas of musicological research include most of the settlements on the seaboard of both islands which date from the 1840s. In contrast, the hinterland was settled later when there were the same difficulties of building a township but with the added pressure of little easily accessible transport. Possibly for fear of finding very little information this has not been considered before.

I had surmised that there would have been band music accompanying the soldiers but was thrilled and astonished to find such a plethora of musical entertainment in the early period of 1864 to 1914. Music was not just for individual families or groups of friends playing at home; it provided social cohesion, comforted settlers with a nostalgic reminder of 'Home' culture, and was a fund raiser for the many projects undertaken in the building of new settlements. Over the early years it was wonderful to see the growth of instrumental music from concerts which relied on mainly vocal and piano abilities, along with occasional band instrument items, to those including string instruments which were gradually acquired and taught.

The starting point for any investigation for music history in New Zealand is John Mansfield Thompson's *The Oxford History of New Zealand Music*.<sup>1</sup> Research about European music making in New Zealand includes many coastal settlements

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<sup>1</sup> John Mansfield Thomson, *The Oxford History of New Zealand Music*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

including the thesis by Philip Jane on Christchurch, the work in Dunedin by Margaret Campbell, and several books on the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra in Wellington.<sup>2</sup> Hawera, Nelson, New Plymouth, and Whangarei have been mentioned in relation to the establishment of Philharmonic societies, but apart from the story of the Bohemian settlers in Puhoi these again are coastal settlements.<sup>3</sup>

I approached my topic from a blend of related musical and historical methodological tools, including ethnomusicology, microhistory, history from below, case study, and oral history. In so doing I also drew on international models of this kind of research, particularly Ruth Finnegan's work on Milton Keynes.<sup>4</sup> Ethnomusicology looks at the function of music in society, and this thesis has clearly demonstrated how the two are inextricably intertwined. Microhistory attempts to find general answers from specific research, in other words does the music history of the Waikato have a relevance to the history of society in Waikato, New Zealand? This has certainly been true in this thesis. The use of history from below is also involved in this thesis as it clearly shows the growth of concerts as an impulse from the people and not imposed from above. Clearly the "ordinary people" of the Waikato had control over their own lives.

Related to all of this is case study which looks at a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. This is the major approach I took for looking at the earlier period and at TAMCO. The distinctive feature of my research is that I contrasted the early days from a military outpost onwards, the absolute beginning of major European settlement in this region, with a similar, but more recent, isolated

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<sup>2</sup> Philip Jane, 'An Historical Survey of the Establishment of an Orchestral Tradition in Christchurch to 1939', in *School of Music* (Christchurch: University of Canterbury, 2009); Margaret Campbell, *Music in Dunedin: An Historical Account of Dunedin's Musicians and Musical Societies from the Founding of the Province in 1848* (Dunedin: Charles Begg and Co, 1945); Owen Jensen, *NEW ZEALANDBC Symphony Orchestra* (Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed, 1966); Ashley Heenan, *The NEW ZEALANDBC Symphony Orchestra of the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation* (Wellington: New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation, 1971); *Concord of Sweet Sounds: The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra at 30*, ed. by Keith Hambleton (Wellington: Concert Department Broadcasting Corporation of New Zealand, 1977); Joy Tonks, *The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra: The First Forty Years* (Auckland: Reed Methuen, 1986); Joy Tonks, *Bravo: The NEW ZEALANDSO at 50* (Auckland: Exisle, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> Allan Thomas, *Music is where you find it: Music in the Town of Hawera, 1946: An Historical Ethnography* (Wellington: Music Books in New Zealand, 2004); Shirley Tunnickliff, *Response to a Vision: The First Hundred Years of the Nelson School of Music* (Dunedin: The Nelson School of Music, 1994); Peter Walls, 'Orchestras – Nineteenth-century orchestras', in *Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/orchestras/page-1>; Roger Buckton, *Bohemian Journey: A Musical Heritage in Colonial New Zealand* (Wellington: Steele Roberts Publishers, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> Ruth Finnegan, *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

community orchestra. This juxtaposition allowed me to compare and refine answers to my fundamental questions of why and how orchestras form, and why and how they survive and continue beyond a few concerts. Again, this has never been attempted before and so adds to musicological scholarship in Aotearoa/New Zealand New Zealand.

My use of sources for this study was clearly very different in the two periods. For the first 50 years I was reliant on archival material, chiefly newspaper articles and museum records. The museum archives I examined were limited to details of facts, for example ship sailing timetables, employment and dismissal notices, births, and deaths, but, particularly in the Cambridge Museum, and online, I was also able to view some photographs. The newspapers contained advertisements, programmes, reviews, and editorials. These were written and therefore constrained by the perspective of the writer and literate readers, or were publicity material from the orchestras, which obviously framed the orchestra and its activities in a very positive light as a promotional and recruitment tool.

The TAMCO archive is much more varied and meant that, in addition, I could use oral history methodology. I have been able to interview people who played in the orchestra, I interviewed one of the people behind the start of the orchestra, Elaine Hills, and I have talked to the very important volunteers who kept the orchestra going for so long, Frank and Judy Finn. I interviewed and became friends with their conductor Avis Pennell before her death in 2022. I thus gained a very vivid idea of the orchestral culture and experiences. The magnificent archive I found in the Te Aroha Museum expanded exponentially what I had gleaned from these kind and impressive people. Colour photographs and even a CD recording of a concert only added to the plethora and variety of sources.

The two case studies at the heart of this thesis give insights into different orchestras in different historical moments but are interconnected in what they reveal about the conditions needed for an orchestra to succeed. My findings all lead to the conclusion that in order for an orchestra to develop and flourish over several years it requires a locally respected charismatic person as leader, generally but not always the conductor, supported by a team of volunteers convinced of the importance and value of the enterprise. Beyond this the orchestra needs to be relevant to its community, who then support it. This could be relevance in terms of fundraising for a

specific cause, or from programming music that is accessible to that local audience. In this way the orchestra becomes an integral part of the community.

There is a symbiotic relationship between a charismatic leader and the group of volunteers to support the orchestra. This is supported by the story of Mr Bell in the 1860s and the history of TAMCO in the later twentieth century. The former had a charismatic leader, but no extra support, while the latter had extraordinarily active supporters who kept the orchestra going even when they were considering disbanding in the 1980s. When these volunteers retired in 2004, with no one else ready to take their place, the orchestra went into permanent recess largely because there was no one to help recruit more players. It thus became apparent from my research that a leader without support led to the cessation of orchestras.

The most obvious and essential ingredient to a successful musical endeavour is a charismatic leader. What does this mean? In relation to this thesis, I contend that the person must have exceptional musical ability and accordingly be able to inspire musical confidence and respect from the players. Mr Bell from the 1860s amply exemplifies this and again it is echoed by the extraordinary work that Avis Pennell accomplished in the 1980s and 90s with TAMCO. These people were professional performing musicians and so were able to command respect from the musicians they conducted.

Aside from these unusually talented people, the orchestras at the centre of this study included many who gained musical respect from their peers: Mme Isherwood in Cambridge, Mr Bosworth in Cambridge and Hamilton, and Mr Riley in Hamilton, for example. These latter were involved in music teaching or the music business and so had an entrée into the amateur musical world of the time. In terms of TAMCO, Tom Cooper was a teacher who had a large outreach through his itinerant work in the Thames Valley, and obviously he had that extra spark to inspire both adults and children.

Furthermore, whether through their musicianship or community endeavours, the successful leader of an orchestra had to have social standing in their neighbourhood, thus allowing the work of the orchestra and its concerts to be valued by locals. Mr Tudehope, a draper, was a local councillor as well as being a keen amateur musician. He worked as a conductor briefly in Hamilton, and for a short time in Cambridge. Basil Kirker, who conducted TAMCO, was a church organist and as such would have been a respected member of that community. The people

mentioned in the previous paragraphs all gained respect in their community through their musical work. Both periods amply show the need for someone at the head of the organisation to have musical ability to gain the musicians' respect and to also be a valued part of their community, which, after all, was going to be supporting them.

The local community also needs to see the relevance of the performances for the group to survive. Looking at TAMCO first, from the very beginning the orchestra was determined to be a part of the community, helping raise money for other local groups, such as the Pony Club or Rotary. There was then a twofold advantage in that an audience could be gleaned from two social groups, increasing revenue, sharing costs and the labour of putting on a concert, and having the secondary effect of introducing others to the entertainment of light classical music. This is likely to have increased audience sizes for other concerts put on by TAMCO. Turning to the earlier period, the initial impetus was to raise money for the community to help build the public buildings so desperately needed, such as the schools, churches, and town halls. As such, musicians and orchestras were seen as deeply relevant to the locals; without their audience support new buildings would not get built.

These earlier concerts were more like the music halls of England in the late nineteenth century, with many different unrelated items performed on the same bill. There was a need to raise money, items were requested, and the concert was put on. Gradually these concerts became more organised, the second generation being more settled than the pioneers and able to look forward to a future in New Zealand. Still later, in the early twentieth century, if the editors of the newspapers are to be believed, the aim of concerts was less to raise money and more to educate the populace. Audience numbers declined and following the disastrous concert of 1909 this led to a subscription series and more planned concert programming.<sup>5</sup>

In contrast, TAMCO clearly had as its mission a desire to make western orchestral classical music accessible to all. From the march up the aisle between the audience seats with a drum, to the choice of light and engaging music, such as some Mozart, Leroy Anderson, and Gilbert and Sullivan, Tom Cooper and the later more successful conductors followed this path. The aim was entertainment, but by so doing this educated some people into the pleasure and accessibility of orchestral music.

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<sup>5</sup> 'Untitled', *Waikato Argus*, 2 April 1909.

A distinct feature of TAMCO was the close connection between the orchestra and local schools. The orchestra actively recruited talented students to be part of TAMCO and, particularly in the early years, the orchestra benefitted from government funding because of its education focus. This educational mission was central to the many grant applications submitted by the orchestra.

A major aspect of the musical development of an area is the ease of transport or communications. In the early period, concerts were advertised with 'full moon' to enable walking and riding to and from these concerts at night. Later, business opportunities presented themselves and carriages to the concert were advertised, and sometimes extra ferries were put on to allow the performers and audiences to be present. The weather was a major factor for attendance numbers. As communications improved, so did the area from which the players and audience could be drawn. TAMCO was not immune to these pressures either as when conductors or performers came from, for example, Hamilton, there was no public transport at night, and the fogs in the winter months can make the journey treacherous. For this reason, a deputy conductor position was established. The quality of the roads and the lack of lighting between Matamata and the two rehearsal centres was a major factor in Avis Pennell's decision to retire when she did.

The variety of music in concerts in both periods has been noted. In the earlier period it is likely that much of it was written out by, for example, Mr Bell, as there would have been a long delay between ordering and receiving music from overseas. Obviously, some settlers brought out some music with them, but I speculate that it was unlikely to include anything more than piano and voice, string quartets or band music. Lewis Eady in Auckland, which started in 1880, was initially a piano servicing and import business, only later developing into sheet music retail. Later in the earlier twentieth century in Hamilton Mr Riley became their agent and thus it is possible that music could have been sourced from his shop. In TAMCO, the orchestral librarian was at great pains to borrow music from other institutions which later became a two-way process amongst the amateur orchestras. In both cases I am sure that some programming was constrained by the real challenges and expense of sourcing sheet music.

Music was written by some of the settlers, for example Mr Hemus and Mr Gribble, and indeed by later musicians, and there could well be many others not in the records. The music written for orchestra by Mr Gribble, performed in 1895, was

named *Maoriland*. So far, I have been unable to find a copy but note that it shows a desire to recognise the Māori inhabitants of the region. It could also show the idea of assimilation and Mr Gribble's desire to become part of the locality. There are some records of Māori being part of the audiences where they showed great enthusiasm for the music. Their behaviour was contrasted favourably with some of the larrikins of the earlier concerts.

I had originally intended to write a history of amateur music making in the Waikato region from European settlement to the present day, but due to the plethora of information that I collected this was just not possible within the confines of a doctoral thesis. It is to be hoped that someone else may take up the mantle and continue the work. The history itself is of interest as it shows human endeavour in a backdrop of less-than-ideal circumstances, but it may also inspire people in the current situation in New Zealand where music is not even deemed worthy of inclusion in a school timetable.

There are many other areas in New Zealand that would respond well to this kind of detailed research. While access to the TAMCO archives was a gift, the newspapers of the earlier period give an insight and fairly comprehensive window into literate settler society, albeit through a potentially biased or partial lens. There are community orchestras throughout New Zealand allowing their locals a chance to enjoy playing together and entertaining the public. One such is the Manawatu Sinfonia, based in Palmerston North, another inland town that was settled in 1871.<sup>6</sup> It could be fruitful to examine this area, and maybe compare it with Hamilton's musical beginnings. Like Hamilton, Palmerston North was settled later than the seaboard townships, and it was not until 1886 that a railway was constructed to Wellington, making contact with the outside world easier.

A deep and persistent love of music has been shown throughout the activities of the orchestras discussed in this thesis, and I am confident from my research that performed orchestral music will survive in the amateur world. Its relevance today is as strong as it was all those years ago when people overcame incredible difficulties to make their way to the local school rooms and churches that were used as concert halls.

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<sup>6</sup> Malcolm McKinnon, 'Manawatū and Horowhenua places - Palmerston North', updated 2015), <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/manawatu-and-horowhenua-places/page-5>>

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 Reminiscences of Early Music Making<sup>7</sup>

'Today, we are uneasy unless bolstered by a perpetual noise about us and when the Radio is silent, and the meaning of life has been shattered or has disappeared, leaving a stark, drear, and unbearable silence in its place. Yesterday, not missing what we never knew, it was routine to accept the long day, followed by the quiet of the evening. Hence it was a very real pleasure to receive an invitation to a musical gathering perhaps at the house of a friend.

For those who could, here was an opportunity to perform, to listen to, and to appreciate the performances of other musical amateurs, all helping to keep music alive in the community, immediately to do some extra practice, or to work with singers and instrumentalists needing an accompanist. Sometimes it was necessary to make long walks to the friend's house on a wet day made disagreeable by the lack of a proper footpath, or if at night, even more so, because of the insufficient light of the old familiar lantern. Once safely arrived however, all these discomforts were soon put by in the pleasure of preparing for the coming performance.

#### The Musical Evening

So, the musical evening was a social occasion. If given in Winter a fire dispensed cheer, once lanterns, overshoes and coats had been safely deposited and the guests assembled. As a very small child at home and in bed at Wood Street, I would be awakened from sleep by sounds of music. After letting my presence be 'heard' I would be wrapped in a blanket, and carried into the drawing room where a Mr. Ernest Quick took charge of me on his knee.'

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<sup>7</sup> T.A. Moresby, 'Music in Paeroa 1908 to 1928', *Ohinemuri Regional History Journals*, 11 (1969) <<http://www.ohinemuri.org.nz/journals/journal-11-may-1969/611-music-in-paeroa-1908-to-1928>>

## Appendix 2 Mr Bell's Background and His Work in Thames

He was the only son of Thomas Aubrey Bell (whose name he shared), late captain of HM's 11th Regiment of Belmen, County Tyrone, Ireland, who, it is assumed, was discharged after the Waikato wars, and continued to live in New Zealand.<sup>8</sup> Little information of Mr Bell's early life has been found but he first came to prominence in the Thames area in his early twenties as a thespian and as a musician.<sup>9</sup> He was working at the time in government service and was married with a daughter born in 1877.<sup>10</sup> A second daughter was born in Hamilton in 1881.<sup>11</sup>

A newspaper record of 1875 refers to a concert given in the Good Templars' Hall in aid of the piano fund of the Northern Pioneer Lodge. It was a varied programme of songs, readings, and recitations:

We hear that a good deal of the success which now seems to follow the concerts given by the Good Templars is due to the unflagging energy and zeal displayed by Mr T. Bell, to whom as an accompanist, the members of the choir are largely indebted.<sup>12</sup>

He certainly displayed 'unflagging energy,' his concerts in the years in Thames were many and it seems that the preparation for these was also in his hands. So, for example, in 1876 Northern Pioneer Lodge hosted a concert where its 'splendid piano' was mentioned 'which, in the hands of the choir leader (Mr T. Bell), is a great attraction to the meeting'.<sup>13</sup> The advertisement for this concert shows that he was a member of the order.

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<sup>8</sup> *Inquest Proceedings on Thomas Aubrey Bell (R24530445)*, (Auckland: New Zealand Coroner, 1886, 14 August).

<sup>9</sup> "'The Heir At Law.'", *Thames Star*, 16 November 1875; 'Untitled', *Thames Advertiser*, 4 August 1876; 'Gas Accident Presentation', *Thames Advertiser*, 3 November 1877.

<sup>10</sup> 'Untitled', *Thames Advertiser*, 9 March 1878; 'Birth', *Thames Advertiser*, 8 March 1877.

<sup>11</sup> 'Births', *Waikato Times*, 8 December 1881.

<sup>12</sup> 'The Evening Star. Published Daily At Four P.M. Resurrexi', *Thames Star*, Tuesday, December 14, 1875.

<sup>13</sup> 'Untitled', *Thames Advertiser*, 27 March 1876.

## Entertainment.

I. O. G. T.

NORTHERN PIONEER LODGE,  
NO. 6.

THIRD ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION  
will be held in the Templars' Hall  
THIS (Monday) EVENING.

The chair will be taken at 7 o'clock by Bro.  
R. FRENCH, District Deputy, G. W. C. T.

The Choir, under the leadership of Bro. T.  
BELL, assisted by some of the leading Amateurs  
of the Thames, will give a selection of Solos and  
Choruses, Songs and Glees.

Readings and Recitations by several brethren,  
Fruit refreshments during the interval.

Tickets (1s 6d each) may be had from Bros.  
J. Nodder, J. Cocks, R. French, W. H. Crick,  
S. Wells, and at the door.

R. FRENCH,  
W. Secretary.

Figure 145 Advertisement Entertainment Northern Pioneer Lodge<sup>14</sup>

This concert in March was followed by others for the Templar societies/branches in the Thames area including another for the Northern Pioneer Lodge piano fund, and one for the building of the Temperance Hall.<sup>15</sup>

His performances and musical contributions also included celebrations such as the award of the NEW ZEALAND cross (the highest NEW ZEALAND award for

<sup>14</sup> 'Page 2 Advertisements Column 5', *Thames Advertiser*, 27 March 1876.

<sup>15</sup> 'Untitled', *Thames Advertiser*, 15 August 1876; 'Untitled', *Thames Advertiser*, 12 October 1876.

bravery at the time) to a Thames volunteer where a 'well selected and harmonious concert was given under the direction of ...Mr Bell'.<sup>16</sup>

He was appointed organist to the Grahamstown Wesleyan Church in 1876. It was remarked that the 'absence of an instrumentalist' had been inconvenient and it was hoped to avoid this situation again, 'Mr Bell's ability needs no recommendation'.<sup>17</sup> In this position he helped concerts in aid of the harmonium fund of the Wesleyan Church in Grahamstown; this latter showed he was master of that instrument too, 'Mr Bell presided at the piano, and also at the new harmonium, which gave evidence of its excellence under his able hand'.<sup>18</sup> A concert in aid of the Wesleyan choir funds showed that he was teaching in the area as the second part was 'opened with a piano duet from "Oberon " by Mr Bell and Miss Clarke (one of his pupils), who played with taste and execution'.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, he was conducting some concerts as seen in the anniversary soirée for the Thames Rifle Rangers.<sup>20</sup> At this concert he also was part of a duo that provided the music for the dance that followed.<sup>21</sup>

Mr Bell had built up a huge arsenal of capabilities before he reached his official position working for the Education Board, which will have stood him in good stead for the arduous nature of his new job and all that he undertook in the region.

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<sup>16</sup> 'TheThames Advertiser', *Thames Advertiser*, 25 October 1876.

<sup>17</sup> 'The Thames Advertiser. Saturday, October 1, 1876', *Thames Advertiser*, 7 October 1876.

<sup>18</sup> 'Grahamstown Wesleyan Church Concert', *Thames Advertiser*, 1 November 1877.

<sup>19</sup> 'Untitled', *Thames Advertiser*, 24 July 1878.

<sup>20</sup> 'The Thames Rifle Rangers', *Thames Advertiser*, 21 August 1878.

<sup>21</sup> 'Volunteer Anniversary', *Thames Star*, 21 August 1878.

### Appendix 3 Newspaper Response to news of Mr Bell's Dismissal

We have long since given up the task of looking for the causes which prompt the actions of the Auckland Board of Education. ... We cannot pretend to know in what respect Mr Bell has failed to come up to the required standard. ... we do take a little interest in the question of his capacity to impart a knowledge of singing to the children placed under his care. And here, on this point, we do not experience much difficulty in arriving at a conclusion. On high days and holidays, when the vocal abilities of the rising generation have been put to the test, the children have invariably acquitted themselves with credit.

The correspondent pointed out that not only had the parents been pleased with his teaching, but so had the Education Board:

... we have the opinions of the board's inspectors in black and white to the same effect. At the last examination Mr Bell presented ten pupil teachers, and they all passed. Results, if they count for anything at all, speak strongly in favour of the teacher, who has besides gained the approbation of the board's officials, and the esteem of the pupils' guardians. But Mr Bell has more than this in his favour; he has long service to show. He has been nearly five years in the board's employment before they discover that he is the wrong man in the right place. If he is unfit to teach after this term, an apprenticeship in itself, what are the qualifications of the board which appointed him, and the inspectors who, from time to time, approved of the appointment, and applauded the man's efforts?<sup>22</sup>

Another editor noted:

The charge of incompetence certainly cannot be brought against him, the proficiency of the children being a marked proof of his own abilities. His method of imparting instruction is excellent, and the children are always pleased to receive his lessons. Because he failed in some technical point is, I take it, no reason for his dismissal. ... The ways of the board are inscrutable. It is to be hoped the petition to retain Mr Bell's services will

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<sup>22</sup> 'Comments', *Waikato Times*, 30 October 1883.

have the desired effect. I would also suggest the advisability of sending it here for signatures.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> 'Te Awamutu', *Waikato Times*, 24 November 1883.

## Appendix 4 Table showing the date of first official European settlement in New Zealand contrasted with the first newspaper mention of an orchestral society

Settlement area	Date settled	1 <sup>st</sup> mention of Orchestral Society
Wellington	1840 <sup>24</sup>	1873 <sup>25</sup>
Auckland	1840 <sup>26</sup>	1878 <sup>27</sup>
New Plymouth	1840 <sup>28</sup>	1882 <sup>29</sup>
Whanganui	1840 <sup>30</sup>	1882 <sup>31</sup>
Nelson	1841 <sup>32</sup>	1868 <sup>33</sup>
Dunedin	1848 <sup>34</sup>	1867 <sup>35</sup>
Christchurch	1850 <sup>36</sup>	1872 <sup>37</sup>
Napier	1855 <sup>38</sup>	1883 <sup>39</sup>
Hamilton	1864	1889
Thames	1867 <sup>40</sup>	1883 <sup>41</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Wellington City Council, 'Pre-European Settlement - 1865', n.d.), <<https://wellington.govt.nz/wellington-city/about-wellington-city/history/history-of-wellington/pre-european-settlement-1865>>

<sup>25</sup> 'Untitled', *Evening Post*, 15 July 1873.

<sup>26</sup> Jock Phillips, 'History of immigration - The immigrants: 1840 to 1852', (2015), <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/history-of-immigration/page-4>>

<sup>27</sup> 'Untitled', *Auckland Star*, 2 August 1878.

<sup>28</sup> Jock Phillips, 'History of Immigration - British Immigration and the New Zealand Company', (2015), <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/history-of-immigration/page-3>>

<sup>29</sup> 'The Taranaki Herald. Published Daily. Monday, May 22, 1882', *Taranaki Herald*, 22 May 1882.

<sup>30</sup> Phillips, 'History of Immigration - British Immigration and the New Zealand Company',

<sup>31</sup> 'Untitled', *Wanganui Herald*, 2 September 1882.

<sup>32</sup> Carl Walrond, 'Nelson places - Nelson city', (2015), <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/nelson-places/page-1>>

<sup>33</sup> 'Untitled', *Nelson Evening Mail*, 14 May 1868.

<sup>34</sup> John Wilson, 'Scots - The Otago settlement', (2015), <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/scots/page-3>>

<sup>35</sup> 'Philharmonic Society', *Otago Witness*, 26 January 1867.

<sup>36</sup> John Wilson, 'Canterbury region - Overview', (2015), <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/canterbury-region/page-1>>

<sup>37</sup> 'Town And Country', *Lyttelton Times*, 12 March 1872.

<sup>38</sup> Kerryn Pollock, 'Hawke's Bay Places - Napier', (2015), <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/hawkes-bay-places/page-1>>

<sup>39</sup> 'Telegraphic', *Hawke's Bay Herald*, 18 October 1883.

<sup>40</sup> Phillips, 'History of immigration - The immigrants: 1840 to 1852',

<sup>41</sup> 'Special Telegrams', *Thames Advertiser*, 19 October 1883.

**THEATRE ROYAL**  
**FRIDAY, December 4th**  
**JAPANESE GRAND**  
**OPERA.**  
**PRINCESS CHRYSANTHE-**  
**MUM."**

**PROGRAMME**

Opening Overture "Zampa" Or-  
chestra

Act I—Scene I, "The Palace Gar-  
dens."

1. Overture, Orchestra
2. Chorus, "Strike the Gong and  
sound the Cymbals." Populace
3. Chorus, "Golden Butterfly," Top  
Not and Populace
4. Japanese Dance, Top-Not and  
Populace
5. March and Chorus, "Wave the  
Flags and Banners Gay," Popu-  
lace and Attendants
6. Song, "Which shall it be?"  
Princess Chrysanthemum
7. Chorus and Exit "Wave the  
Flags and Banners Gay,"
8. Descriptive Scena, Prince So-Sli  
and Saucer-Eyes
9. Entrance March of Emperor and  
Suite
10. Chorus, "Long Live the Em-  
peror." Populace
11. Song and Chorus. "I am the  
Emperor What-for-Whi" Em-  
peror What-for-Whi
12. Song. "Lullaby Land" Tu-Lip
13. Finale to Act I. Chorus "Haste  
Now Away," Populace

Intermezzo } "La Souveraine" Re  
                  } gina Orchestra

Act II—Scene II—The Cave of  
Inky Night

Orchestral Introduction, Orches-  
tra

Chorus, "Sprites of the Night"  
Sprites

Dance, Grotesque, Sprites

Song, "A Kitten's Tale." Saucer  
Eyes

"The Path of Love" Fairy  
Moonbeam

Song, "Love's Kingdom," Prince  
So-Tru

Dance and Chorus "Called by  
Magic Ring we Come" Moon-  
beam and Fairies

Finale to Act II., Chorus and  
Exit "Home Returning With  
Rage Burning," Emperor, Suite,  
and Populace

Intermezzo "Poet and Peasant"  
Orchestra

Act III—Scene III, "The Em-  
peror's Gardens"

Instrumental Prelude "Japanese  
Airs" Orchestra

2 Chorus of Maidens "Sad and  
Mournful"

3 March and Chorus "Swiftly  
Home Returning" Emperor,  
Suite, Princes, and Populace,

4 Song "Home of my Child-  
hood" Princess Chrysanthemum

5 Song "Whether you Like it or  
not" Emperor

- 6 Chorus " Japanese Sailor Man"  
Prince So-Sli and Guards.
- 7 Umbrella Dance—Saucer Eyes  
and Sprites
- 8 Vocal Duet " The Dawn of  
Love " Princess Chrysanthe-  
mum and Prince So-Tru
- 9 Grand Finale—All

**NATIONAL ANTHEM**

**PRICES, 3s, 2s and 1s**

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Figure 146 Programme Princess Chrysanthemum, Te Aroha, 1914<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> 'Page 3 Advertisements Column 1', *Te Aroha News*, 2 December 1914.

## Appendix 6 Mr Towsey

It should be noted that the photographs and programmes were found through email conversation with his grandson, Julian Towsey, who said there is no need to reference, but if I wanted to, to just put Julian J Towsey.<sup>43</sup>

A prodigiously talented pianist, Mr Towsey was sent to Germany at the age of 13 to further his music studies, returning after a year there to Auckland to finish his schooling. His father, Arthur Towsey, 'the well-known Auckland organist' was a professional musician and Cyril played with him in concerts, both before he left for Germany and after his return.<sup>44</sup>



Figure 147 Cyril Towsey aged 13 1892<sup>45</sup>

At the age of 20 Cyril performed Beethoven's third piano concerto with the Auckland Orchestral Union. This was highly praised, [it] was a treat to hear such a work played by such an artist, for Mr Cyril Towsey accomplished his arduous task in a quiet, unostentatious, though thoroughly musicianly manner. He has a neat, crisp touch, and his execution

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<sup>43</sup> Personal communication with Julian J Towsey, 20 November 2020.

<sup>44</sup> 'Alice's Letter to her Readers', *Otago Witness*, 9 July 1891; 'The Otago Daily Times Saturday, November 28, 1891.', *Otago Daily Times*, 28 November 1891; 'Town & Country', *Lyttelton Times*, 18 March 1892; 'Local And General', *Otago Witness*, 24 March 1892. 'Untitled', *Auckland Star*, 25 March 1892; 'Untitled', *Auckland Star*, 18 August 1894; 'Local and General News', *New Zealand Herald*, 23 January 1895; 'Untitled', *Auckland Star*, 23 November 1895; 'National And Patriotic Concerts', *New Zealand Herald*, 2 June 1896; 'Ladies' Liederkrantz Concert', *Auckland Star*, 29 September 1897; 'The Lorcnette', *Observer*, 28 May 1898. 'Entertainments, Etc. The Biograph', *Evening Post*, 23 November 1900.

<sup>45</sup> Julian J Towsey

was quite equal to the prodigious demands made upon it.... Would that he had had a better piano!<sup>46</sup>

That sentiment was expressed so often in those early days.

Within a few months he moved to Wellington to study for five years.<sup>47</sup> This move gave him many more opportunities to perform in public as an accompanist, and, at the same time, he also became known as a gifted organist.<sup>48</sup>



Figure 148 Photograph Cyril Towsey c. 1900<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> 'Orchestral Union Concert', *Auckland Star*, 24 June 1898.

<sup>47</sup> 'Orchestral Union Concert', *Auckland Star*, 24 June 1898; 'Untitled', *Auckland Star*, 6 September 1898; 'Departures', *Auckland Star*, 13 September 1898.

<sup>48</sup> 'Chamber Concert', *New Zealand Times*, 14 July 1899; 'Tee Barnett-Hoppe Concerts 18', *Evening Post*, 14 July 1899; 'Wellington Wing Whispers', *Otago Witness*, 10 August 1899. 'Orchestral Concert', *Evening Post*, 4 October 1899; 'Entertainments', *Evening Post*, 10 April 1900; 'Evening Entertainments', *New Zealand Times*, 26 April 1900; 'Entertainments, Etc.', *Evening Post*, 3 September 1900; 'Entertainments, Etc. Newbury Spada Company', *Evening Post*, 20 June 1901; 'Entertainments', *New Zealand Times*, 24 June 1901; 'Entertainments, Etc. The Cosgrove Company', *Evening Post*, 21 September 1901; 'Orpheus Liedertafel', *New Zealand Times*, 5 July 1902; 'Entertainments', *New Zealand Times*, 2 March 1905. 'Evening Entertainments', *New Zealand Times*, 20 November 1900. 'Entertainments, Etc. The Biograph', *Evening Post*, 23 November 1900; 'The Minister For Mines', *New Zealand Herald*, 19 January 1901; 'Entertainments And Meetings', *New Zealand Herald*, 25 January 1901; 'Local And General', *Evening Post*, 3 June 1901; 'Last Hours Of The President', *New Zealand Times*, 16 September 1901; 'Entertainments', *New Zealand Times*, 2 October 1901.

<sup>49</sup> Julian Towsey, 'Towsey Tales', (2013), <<https://caliendi.com/assets/media/downloads/towsey-tales/TT%201878%20Cyril%20Towsey%20PART%201.pdf>>

By 1905, he began giving solo piano recitals which were extremely well received:

A feature of the concert was the discovery of Mr Cyril Towsey as a solo player. Hitherto, he has hidden his light under a bushel, appearing only as an accompanist, but here he revealed himself as a pianist of parts. ... Mr Towsey should be heard more frequently as a soloist.<sup>50</sup>

He then continued on this pathway, leading to a performance at Government House, recitals in Wanganui, and elsewhere.<sup>51</sup> By 1906, he was referred to as 'a leading musician of this colony', and played in concerts with Hamilton Hodges and Te Rangi Pai.<sup>52</sup>

Not long after this Cyril Towsey left for England to further his studies and musical experience. This was reported in many papers in New Zealand, showing the widespread respect for him, and before he left a farewell concert was tendered to him, including a piece specially written by Alfred Hill.<sup>53</sup> This was even patronised by 'His Excellency the Governor'.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> 'Entertainments', *New Zealand Times*, 8 March 1905.

<sup>51</sup> 'Social Gossip', *Free Lance*, 15 April 1905; 'Vice-Regal "At Home"', *New Zealand Times*, 28 August 1905; 'St. Paul's Hall', *Wanganui Chronicle*, 2 November 1905.

<sup>52</sup> 'Entertainments', *New Zealand Times*, 11 April 1906; 'Te Rangi Pai', *Gisborne Times*, 4 May 1906. Te Rangi Pai', *Gisborne Times*, 4 May 1906; 'Entertainments', *New Zealand Times*, 8 June 1906.

<sup>53</sup> 'Miss Lillian Irvine's Concert', *Colonist*, 30 June 1906; 'Late Mining', *Evening Post*, 30 June 1906; 'Personal', *Wanganui Chronicle*, 2 July 1906; 'Farewell To Mr Towsey', *New Zealand Times*, 4 July 1906; 'All Sorts of People', *Free Lance*, 7 July 1906; 'Personal Items', *New Zealand Herald*, 9 July 1906; 'Wellington Wing Whispers', *Otago Witness*, 11 July 1906; 'American Pictures', *Wanganui Chronicle*, 11 July 1906; 'Pars About People', *Observer*, 14 July 1906.

<sup>54</sup> 'Personal', *New Zealand Times*, 1 August 1906.

TOWN HALL,  
WELLINGTON, N.Z.



WEDNESDAY,  
8th AUGUST, 1906.

Under the Patronage and in the Presence of His Excellency the Governor and Lady Plunket, Hon. Sir Joseph and Lady Ward, Members of the Ministry, the Bishop of Wellington, Archbishop Redwood, His Worship the Mayor (Hon. T. W. Hislop), and the Wellington Savage Club.

Farewell  
**Complimentary Concert**

.....TENDERED TO.....

**MR. CYRIL TOWSEY**

By Professional and Leading Amateur Musicians of Wellington.



COMMITTEE:

MESSRS. R. PARKER, L.T.C.L. (Chairman), A. I. GRABHAM (Treas.), A. J. WICKS (Sec.), M. J. BROOKES, J. F. CARR, E. C. CACHEMAILLE, JAS. DYKES, MORRIS FOX, W. GORHAM, ALFD. HILL, R.C.M.L., R. HERD, P. HOCKLEY, J. HILL, C. J. HILL, HERR MAX HOPPE, F. W. HAYBITTLE, H. HUNT, E. J. HILL, W. D. MURDOCH, C. D. MACKINTOSH, H. PLIMMER, J. STEADMAN, T. K. THOMSON, L. WATKINS, Mus. Bac., HANDLEY WELLS.

PRICES: 3/- (Reserved), 2/-, 1/-.

Doors open at 7.15 p.m. Concert at 8 p.m.

The Doors will be closed during the performance of each item.

Patrons wishing to leave early, kindly do so between Nos. 8 and 9, Second Part.

Post Print—15444

ARTHUR J. WICKS, Hon. Sec.

**TOWN**  **HALL**  
 WELLINGTON, N.Z.  
**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 8TH, 1906.**  
 At 8 p.m.

Under the Patronage and in the Presence of  
 His Excellency the Governor and Lady  
 Plunket, Members of the Ministry, Bishop  
 Wallis, Archbishop Redwood, His Wor-  
 ship the Mayor and the Wellington Sav-  
 age Club.

.. FAREWELL...  
**COMPLIMENTARY CONCERT**  
 TENDERED TO  
**MR. CYRIL TOWSEY**

ON HIS DEPARTURE FOR EUROPE,  
 BY

**THE PROFESSIONAL AND LEADING  
 AMATEUR MUSICIANS OF  
 WELLINGTON.**

COMMITTEE:—

Messrs. Robert Parker, L.T.C.L. (Chairman), M. J.  
 Brookes, J. F. Carr, E. C. Catchesdale, Jas. Dykes,  
 Montis Fox, A. I. Gabbam (Hon. Treas.), Gorham,  
 Alfred Hill, R.C.M.L., E. Herd, P. Hockley, J.  
 Hill, C. J. Hill, Max Hoppe, F. W. Haybittle, H.  
 Hunt, E. J. Hill, W. D. Murdoch, C. D. Mackin-  
 tosh, H. Phummer, Parkinson, Steadman, T. K.  
 Thompson, L. Watkins, Mus. Sec., Handley  
 Wells, A. J. Wicks (Hon. Sec.).

**PROGRAMME.**  
 PART I.

1. Overture—"Ruy Blas" .. Mendelssohn  
 (Conductor: Mr. R. Parker, L.T.C.L.)  
 ORCHESTRA.
  2. Song—"The Windmill" .. H. H. Nelson  
 MR. HANDLEY WELLS.
  3. Trio for Three Flutes (with  
 Piano accompaniment)  
 Alfred Hill, R.C.M.L.  
 (Specially composed for the occasion).  
 MISS SIMPSON, MESSRS. C. J. HILL  
 AND McDONALD.
  4. Song—"My Heart is Weary"  
 Goring Thomas  
 MISS MINA CALDOW.
  5. Duo for Violin and Piano—  
 "Swedish Dance" .. Max Bruch  
 HERR MAX HOPPE AND MISS  
 EDITH TAYLOR.
  6. Song (with Orchestral accom-  
 paniment) — "Se Saran  
 Rose" .. Ardest  
 MISS PHOEBE PARSONS, A.R.C.M.
  7. Concerto in C minor for Piano  
 and Orchestra (first move-  
 ment) .. Beethoven  
 MR. CYRIL TOWSEY.
  8. Song .. MR. E. J. HILL.
  9. Chorus (unaccompanied) —  
 "O Gladstone Light" .. Sullivan  
 WELLINGTON MUSICAL UNION.  
 (Conductor: Mr. R. Parker, L.T.C.L.)
- PART II.
1. Organ Solo—"Suite Goth-  
 ique" .. Boellmann  
 MR. CYRIL TOWSEY.

2. Song—"Summer is Com-  
 ing" .. Landon Ronald  
 MRS. F. P. WILSON.
  3. Tangi (for Baritone and Or-  
 chestra) — "A Maori Le-  
 gion" .. Alfred Hill, R.C.M.L.  
 (Conducted by the Composer)  
 MR. ARTHUR BALLANCE.
  4. Song—"Voices of the Storm"  
 Beatrice Atkinson  
 MISS LLOYD HASSELL.
  5. Quartet for Male Voices—  
 "When Evening's Light  
 light" .. Hatton  
 MESSRS. JAS. SEARLE, J. F. CARR,  
 P. HOCKLEY, A. EAST.
  6. Song—"Happy Bird" .. Zardo  
 MISS LILIAN IRVINE.
  7. Chorus for Male Voices—  
 "Comrades in Arms" .. Adolph Adam  
 WELLINGTON LIEDERTAFEL.  
 (Conductor: Mr. R. Parker, L.T.C.L.)
  8. Song—"Bianca" .. Tito Mattel  
 MR. LESLIE HILL.
  9. Choral Epilogue from "The  
 Banner of St. George" —  
 "It Comes from the Misty  
 Ages" .. Sir Edward Elgar  
 WELLINGTON MUSICAL UNION.  
 Conductor: Mr. R. Parker, L.T.C.L.)
- At the close of the Programme Mendell-  
 sohn's "Student's Parting Song" will be  
 sung by the Wellington Liedertafel as a  
 Public Farewell to Mr Cyril Towsey.
- Accompanists: Misses Ethel Wynne-Kirk,  
 K. Moloney, Messrs. Alfred Hill, R.C.M.L.,  
 D. Kenny, R. Parker, L.T.C.L., A. J. Wicks.
- PRICES—3/- (Reserved), 2/-, 1/-  
 Doors open at 7.15 p.m.
- ARTHUR J. WICKS,  
 Hon. Sec.

Figure 149 Concert Programme Mr Towsey Farewell Concert<sup>55</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Julian J Towsey.

Until 1910 he was based in London, with a burgeoning career. He played as soloist and accompanied first rank artists such as Ada Crossley, Szigeti, Backhaus, John McCormack, Melba, Clara Butt, Mark Hambourg, and Felix Salmond, in such venues as the Aolian Hall, the Bechstein Hall (now the Wigmore Hall), and the Albert Hall (now the Royal Albert Hall).<sup>56</sup> He was obviously well regarded, and certainly moving in first class circles:

Mr. Cyril Towsey has quite gained for himself a place in musical circles here as an accompanist. He [played] ... at the Royal Albert Hall last week, when the King and Queen were present.<sup>57</sup>

Mr Towsey wrote a telling letter to the Dominion in 1908 in which he described his musical life and the difficulties of living in London:

The musical world here is just awful. There are hundreds of artists waiting to pounce on your work if there occurs a chance. ... I have been lucky, very.<sup>58</sup>

After his engagement to Miss Marie O'Connor, he returned to New Zealand in 1910.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> 'Personal Items From London', *New Zealand Herald*, 10 June 1907; 'Personal Matters', *Wairarapa Daily Times*, 15 June 1907; 'Personal Matters', *Wairarapa Daily Times*, 17 August 1907; 'Dramatic and Musical', *Free Lance*, 24 August 1907; 'Personal Items', *Dominion*, 30 November 1907; 'Personal', *Otago*, 27 January 1908; 'Personal', *Otago Daily Times*, 27 January 1908; 'Personal Items', *Dominion*, 14 February 1908; 'Personal Items', *Dominion*, 7 March 1908; 'Musical And Dramatic', *New Zealand Herald*, 18 July 1908; 'Music in London', *Dominion*, 11 August 1908; 'Personal', *Wanganui Chronicle*, 14 December 1908; 'Personal Items From London', *New Zealand Herald*, 26 March 1909; 'About People', *Evening Post*, 19 January 1910; 'Welcoming the Premier', *Evening Star*, 8 September 1909.

<sup>57</sup> 'Personal Items From London', *New Zealand Herald*, 26 March 1909.

<sup>58</sup> 'Music in London', *Dominion*, 11 August 1908.

<sup>59</sup> 'Personal Items from London', 10 May 1910.

## Appendix 7 Photographs of TAMCO Rehearsing 1977

The following are photographs of TAMCO hard at work under the conductorship of Reverend Errol Smith<sup>60</sup>



<sup>60</sup> Photographs of Reverend Errol Smith and TAMCO, Accession Number 2005.06.08.



