

MOUNT WELLINGTON DOMAIN

The Mount Wellington Domain which gives its name to the Borough, encompasses Auckland's youngest volcano, with the exception of Rangitoto. The mountain which was formed by a series of eruptions approximately 9,000 years ago, stands 135 metres above sea level and is contained within a reserve of some 26.74 hectares.

Known in pre-European times as Maungarei, this has been translated as meaning either 'Mountain of watchfulness' or a variation on 'The treasured or wealthy mountain' 'maunga' meaning mountain and 'rei' meaning an item of value.

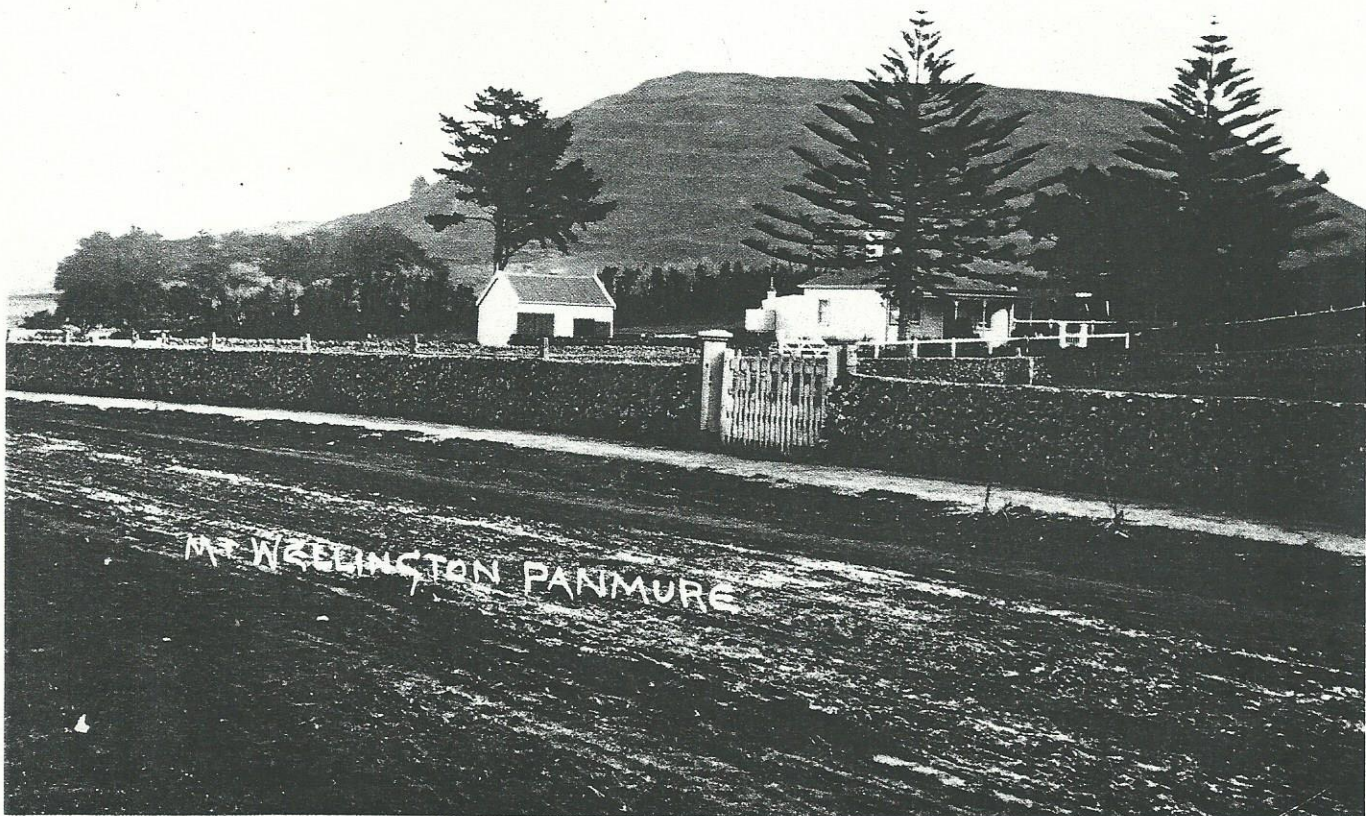
The mountain was given a new name by the surveyors and administrators in the early 1840s commemorating Britain's most famous general of the early nineteenth century and Prime Minister from 1828-30; Arthur Wellesly, Duke of Wellington (1769-1852). Appropriately, considering the nationality of the Pensioners that would live in the shadow of the mountain named in his honour, the Duke was also Irish, though his title refers to a small town in Somerset not far from Taunton, an area of England the other early settlers, Williams and Hamlin would have been familiar with.

According to a map of the district drawn in 1863, the mountain was included in an area of seventy-two acres marked Government Reserve. It was not to be until 1881 that the reserve was designated a Domain and a Board representing local interests appointed. This first Board consisted of Barton Ireland (Chairman), Thomas Cleary, John Donnelly, Joseph Banks, Arthur Wintle and Edward Pilkington. They were to serve seven years, and at the

end of that time a new Board would be appointed. When the second Board was appointed, three of the positions were assigned to the Chairmen of the neighbouring Roads Boards, Panmure, West Tamaki and Mount Wellington; the other three seats being filled by A.S. Thompson (who was usually chairman), John Donnelly and Henry Pilkington. Thomas Morrin later replaced Henry Pilkington on successive Boards until his timely departure, after which Pilkington resumed his seat. Both Thompson and Donnelly served on the Board until their deaths in 1925 and 1911 respectively. The three Roads Board seats were eventually abolished for lack of attendance. The Board's efforts just after the turn of the century were largely confined to getting a windmill for pumping water to work. The well had been sunk by Messrs. Lomb and Cleary but the machinery never worked very well. It was even proposed that if the source was strong enough it might supply Remuera's water, though nothing came of it.

Another development the Board undertook beginning in 1909, was a recreation ground on the property in Ireland Road the Board had received in exchange for the house site of Wellington Park in 1897. That same year of 1909, Selwyn Hamlin also became a member of the Board, beginning an association with the domain that would continue until 1933 as a member and secretary.

Not a great deal developed on either the mountain or the Ireland Road Reserve until after the First World War, when Mesdames Cahill and Wood and Misses Kay and Murray requested the Board to look into the forming of a lawn tennis court and a croquet green. The Board encouraged by this interest, decided to look at laying a



Mt Wellington looming over the intersection of Pilkington Road and Queens Road (c.1920)

Mt Wellington Public Library

bowling green as well. The green and the tennis courts were laid out over the next two years on the lower eastern slopes of the mountain, and a pavilion built alongside. The Mount Wellington Bowling, Croquet and Tennis Clubs were then asked if they would like to lease the ground for their games. Little seems to be known of these early clubs and it is likely they had previously either played on private grounds or travelled beyond the District for their facilities. At the time the Gatwood family was involved in running both the bowling club and the croquet club, other well known figures associated with the bowling club included Messrs. Arnaboldi, Taplin and William Gollan, while Messrs George Vause and Selwyn Hamlin ran the tennis club.

This sports area lasted for just ten years before the depression forced the various clubs' membership to decline to the extent that the fees for renting the ground that paid for its maintenance exceeded the depths of the members' pockets, and it was necessary for the clubs to disband and the grounds be abandoned. Surprisingly enough it was the croquet club that was the last to fold, a sport no longer played in the Borough.

The sport of pot-holing made a brief appearance on the mountain in 1927, with the exploration of the Fairy Hole or Ruapotaka on the western slope. The mountain contained a number of caves which children loved to explore and where they often found human remains, but the Fairy Hole held the greatest attraction and was believed to be bottomless. When explored it was found to contain a number of skeletons at the base of the shaft where it joined a large cave of some 60 feet in size. In 1932 the Domain Board decided to concrete over the hole to prevent loss of life to both stock and picnickers.

The Board's other concern with the mountain, was that of the quarry reserve which had been vested in the Roads

Board in 1909. The quarry had reached the extent that it was in danger of encroaching upon the reserve, and if it was not stabilized and secured with trees, the Board was prepared to take legal action to stop the quarrying; two years later in 1927 the quarry was closed down. The pit however was revived in the war years, and was greatly exploited by the Americans with bulldozers to supply the scoria for the construction of military installations. The exploitation continued until 1951 when it was closed again, only to be re-opened the following year for one last load of a 1,000 yards before it was finally closed for commercial sales, though the Borough continued to make small withdrawals.

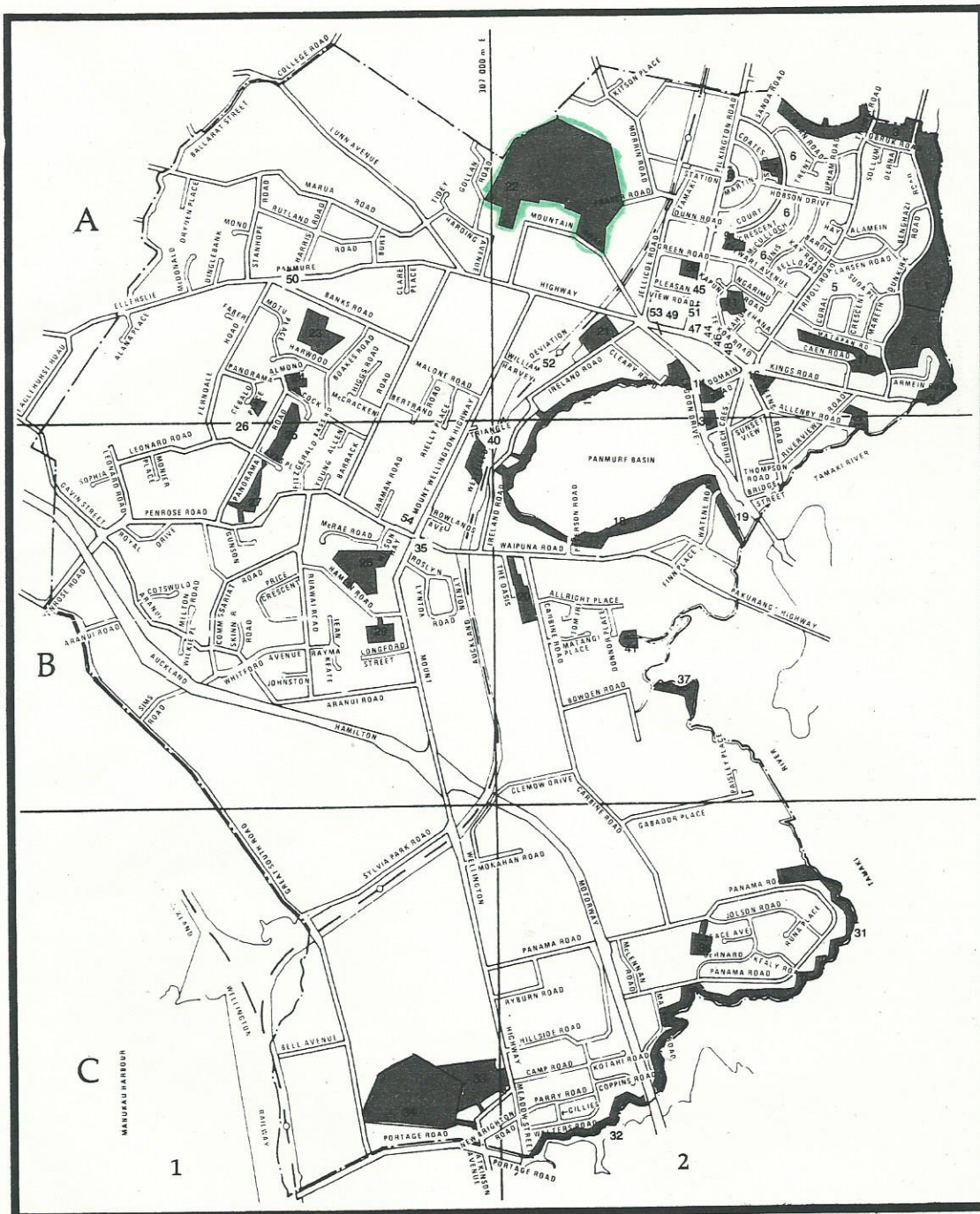
The mountain, after the collapse of the sports clubs, returned to its original function as a picnic site and rentable grazing property for the Board. The depression that ruined the clubs ironically made further development possible and provided jobs that would benefit the community. The Ireland Road reserve had been used since at least 1923 by the Mount Wellington Cricket Club, and since 1929 by the Panmure Rugby Club, although it was a poor venue. The 'Number five' scheme providing relief work, now made the development of Ireland Road possible as requested in a local petition to the Board. This by now consisted of local personalities Edward Pilkington, Arnold Peterson, George Kay, Theo Larsen, Alf Loomb and James Allen.

By 1939 Ireland Road was equipped with floodlights and a pavilion for changing in. The old bowling pavilion, once the meeting place of the Board, had been shifted there to serve as a shower bath and casualty shed for the St. John Ambulance.

The reserve was now the home ground for both the Panmure Rugby Football Club and the Ellerslie United League Football Club on alternative Saturdays, and in



THE BOROUGH'S RESERVES



Alcock Street Reserve, Map ref: A-1.24.
 Allenby Road Reserve, Map ref: B-2.13.
 Bert Henham Park, Map ref: C-1.33.
 Bill McKinlay Park, Map ref: A-2.21.
 Boundary Reserve, Map ref: A-2.3.
 Bowden Road Reserve, Map ref: B-2.37.
 Cebalo Place Reserve, Map ref: A-1.26.
 Court Crescent Reserve, Map ref: A-2.9.
 Domain Road Reserve, Map ref: A-2.14.
 Donnor Place Reserve, Map ref: B-2.41.
 Dunkirk Road Reserve, Map ref: A-2.1.
 Fencible Historic Reserve, Map ref: A-2.16.
 Fisher Park Reserve, Map ref: B-2.20.
 Flat Rock Reserve, Map ref: C-2.31.
 Garage Sites, Map ref: A-2.6.
 Hamlin Park, Map ref: B-1.28.
 Hobson Drive Reserve, Map ref: A-2.7.
 Ian Shaw Park, Map ref: C-2.31.
 Johnson Reserve, Map ref: A-2.5.
 Jolson Road Reserve, Map ref: C-2.36.

Lavus Place Reserve, Map ref: B-1.25.
 Martin Place Reserve, Map ref: A-2.8.
 Mauinaina Reserve, Map ref: A-2.11.
 Mt Wellington Domain, Map ref: A-2.22.
 Mt Wellington War Memorial Reserve, Map ref: A-2.2.
 Mt Richmond Domain, Map ref: C-1.34.
 Panmure Basin Recreation Reserve, Map ref: A-2 and B-2.17.
 Panmure Wharf Reserve, Map ref: A-2.12.
 Peterson Road Reserve, Map ref: B-2.18.
 Pleasant View Road Reserve, Map ref: A-2.38.
 Savage Park, Map ref: B-1.29.
 Sunset View Road, Map ref: B-2.39.
 Thompson Park, Map ref: A-1.23.
 Van Damm's Lagoon, Map ref: B-1.40.
 Vic Cowen Park, Map ref: B-1.27.
 Waipuna Road Reserve, Map ref: B-1.35.
 Walters Road Reserve, Map ref: C-2.32.
 Watene Road Reserve, Map ref: B-2.19.
 Watene-Waipuna Roads Reserve, Map ref: B-2.19.

over pale pink satin; Miss Alice
Cairson, floral georgette.

Mrs. Hamlin, the president of the Mount Wellington Croquet Club, held an At Home on the club's lawns on Thursday last, for the members of the One Tree Hill Croquet Club. Mrs. Hamlin received the visitors, and welcomed them to the green. A dainty afternoon tea was served in the pavilion, which was beautifully decorated. Mrs. Daniels, the president of the One Tree Hill Croquet Club, thanked Mrs. Hamlin for the pleasant afternoon given to the visitors. Progressive croquet was played, the winners being:—A Section: Mrs. Gillies, 1; consolation, Miss Wingate. B Section: Mrs. Brindle, 1; consolation, Mrs. McDonald. Among those present were: Mesdames Daniels, Somervell, Bregmen, E. Wilson, Smallbone, McDonald, Hamlin, Gatward, Hay, Anderson, Dunn, May, Gillies, Cummings, Brindle, Dr. Gladys Rawley, Misses Wingate and Urquhart.

Rees, Best, H. Dunn, Gay, Studman, Dowden, Emery. Parker, Green, Adolph, Edwards, Lamb, Figgins, Cameron, Tutchin, Barry; Misses E. Gay, G. Searles, I. Smith, D. Smith, J. Taylor, T. Green, E. Cameron, A. Cross, F. Penton, E. Morris, L. McLean, V. Smith, T. Pearce, M. Ironsides, Barry, Francis, R. Lamb, W. Lamb, I. Long, W. Katherns, J. Smith, J. Meighan, J. Magee, J. Andrews, R. Gay, G. Barker, A. Pennell, J. Peters.

An enjoyable afternoon was spent at the residence of Mrs. I. Kay, Penrose Road, Mount Wellington, when the following were present: Mesdames Somerville, Thompson, Butler, Dunn, Woodhead, Brendle, Wood, Misses Thompson, Anderson and Gatward. The occasion was the winding up of the Mount Wellington Croquet Club, after 12½ years, owing to the small membership. Mrs. Kay, president, made a presentation to Mrs. Gatward, secretary for the past eight years, of a tray, cup and saucer, and plate d'oyley, and crystal vase in recognition of services rendered to the club. In responding, Mrs. Gatward thanked the members for their gift and also Mrs. Kay for the afternoon. She said Mrs. Kay had been president for the past two years and that the good fellowship enjoyed amongst members would not be forgotten and that she hoped they would be able to form another club at some future date.



PROBABLE SITE OF MT. WELLINGTON
CROQUET CLUB
NOV. 2016