

PRESTON PARK

Manager's Newsletter | Summer 2023



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CHRISTIAN
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TRUST



Dear Parents, Staff and Students,

Term 4 2023 – Yes Christmas is upon us. We have farewelled our Year 13 leavers as they ‘paraded through the gauntlet of 2000 BC students – friends and well-wishers, joyously wishing their senior colleagues: ‘God’s best for their future’. Some gave flowers, hugs and gifts – thanking and honouring them as their ‘heroes’ We pray that BC’s foundations of faith, moral fortitude and the ability to think logically will have prepared each of them well.

I had set up 200 small native trees onto tables. Students could select a native tree to plant and hopefully it will act as a living reminder to them of their ‘blessed’ years at BC and remind them that they ‘were born with divine purpose for service of their Creator and of others! They are each a special gift of life and hope!’ (based on Ephesians 2:10)

BC celebrated its 35th Birthday in July. The founders will have prayed almost daily, for their students, that they would rise to positions of influence and ‘make a difference for good in their day!’ It was great to see an ex-BC student, Tom Rutherford, win the BOP electorate seat in our recent General Elections. He is now an MP in Wellington, working hard for his constituents and the nation. Our congratulations to him – we pray that as was the case with Queen Esther that he is fulfilling God’s purpose for his life ‘for such a time as this!

Spring this year was a traditional one – sort of! For the past couple of years the seasons have NOT followed normal patterns as we have known them! This year our spring weather was changeable ie 4 seasons in a day! Windy, cool night, clear days, and some warming sun.

Plants have sprung into life, as have other living things in the park. I am staggered at how fast things change

and how quickly trees grow. In saying that, I am looking forward to 2024 and hopefully seeing ‘the fruit of the labour of love’ that will see everything flourishing in the valley we call Preston Park.

Storms this year have taken their toll, I eroding the northern side of the lake’s outlet stream. It took tonnes of very heavy rocks to be carefully laid to strengthen and create strong banks – some rocks were literally swallowed



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up and disappeared into the soft base. We also had to clear and reset swales that directed water into the lake or the stream.

The summer pruning has started and will be ongoing. We gained an ample supply of good mulch after 5 large Pin Oaks had to be removed from beside the outlet stream of the lake. A further 1000 wetland plants have now been planted beside the stream where the oaks were. They are still looking healthy!

We farewelled Emma who has worked part time in the Park for nearly a year. Her main task was to keep the new plantings alive, along with some weeding, retying, pruning, fertilising and mulching. Thank you Emma. You will be missed!

Our Stage 5 Application to the BOPRC EE Fund was declined. Officers popped out and were affirming of our work and encouraged us to re-apply but for a different project. We are waiting for the answer. The funding will allow us to clear the perimeter from the rugby field up to 10m into the Park, up to the college and eastward towards the first gateway near the maintenance sheds. Regardless of whether funding is received from that source, Bay Tree Tech will visit the Park over the Christmas holidays and prepare ground for re-planting in June and July 2024.

General Information:

Each newsletter I try to impart some useful information. You may have noticed a hawk flying in the vicinity of the park. I have noticed that this hawk flies into the park 240 days out of the 365 days of the year. It comes usually at about 10.00 am, flies around a few times and then leaves.

So - what kind of hawks do we have in NZ?

The 3 native birds of prey in NZ are the **Morepork**, the **Falcon**, and the **Hawk**.

The New Zealand Falcon is a magpie-sized raptor that feeds predominantly on live prey. Adapted to hunt within the dense New Zealand forests they are also found in more open habitats such as tussock lands and roughly grazed hill country. More recently they have been discovered breeding in exotic pine plantations. Laying their eggs in simple scrapes they can nest in a variety of locations, from within the epiphytes that grow in large trees, to on the ground under small rocky outcrops. Where they nest on the ground they are well known for attacking intruders, including humans, with aggressive dive-bombing strikes to the head.

The biggest NZ hawk is the 'kāhu' swamp harrier. This beautiful bird is most often seen lazily gliding over the open habitats that dominate modern day NZ. It is by far our most common bird of prey.

The Morepork, a small, owl-like bird is common living in or near bush. Its Māori name is Ruru. At night you can hear it repeatedly calling softly, 'more pork'. I still love hearing that faint sound at night as it reminds me of my 15 years of scouting and the many nights under canvas. It hunts large insects, small mammals, lizards and geckos.

HELP? I do really need volunteers or a Part Time employee

- a. To offer 3-4 hours per week to work in the park on a range of tasks.
- b. Financial support - to provide a pump to circulate the lake water through a fountain.
- c. Commit to serving on a task Committee to assist me with a range of areas: Master Planning in the Park, Trees both Native and Exotic, Habitats, Wetlands, Tree care and Lake management etc



'The Park exists to glorify God, by providing a place of natural beauty and meaningful education for everyone'.