

PRESTON PARK

Manager's Newsletter | Autumn 2026

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CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION
TRUST



Greetings everyone!

A particular welcome to new families and students who have arrived on BC campus in 2026.

We hope you've settled well! I invite you and your family take a picnic one weekend and wander around the park and enjoy its serenity and beauty. The park has and is, looking magnificent during this autumn period. The deciduous trees splash their colour across the south-facing slopes contrasting the evergreens of the natives on the north-facing escarpment. Preston Park is maturing — 40 years in the making. It is easier to manage these days as we executed a sustainable programme over the past seven years. Life in the BOP — everything grows well — particularly weeds. But most of the trees are looking healthy and growing quickly — thankfully!

*But like everything in LIFE
— you get what you work for!!*

I'm grateful to the CET Property staff now led by **Malcolm Rae**. He is picking his up his role magnificently and making his job his!! He has taken over the care of the Lake along with his other portfolios. We've been having problems with the water quality! Warm and windless autumn days that have allowed the Lake weed to prosper. So will need to bring 'in the swamp monster' again to harvest the weed. Then maintain a spraying programme more rigidly. Malcolm is thinking that our fountain needs to multiply in size and get jets attached to the stronger fountain stand to circulate the water.

My only paid staff member **Toby Tobak** who continues to serve me with a generous heart and with great skill and energy. His spraying regime and his line trimmer keep the

property under control. We are blessed to have visits from Rotary three times a year, a few volunteers from 'The Vines' crawl through the undergrowth to tender the trees and spread some mulch regularly; BC class teachers bring their class to do a rubbish round and help where required. All help is so appreciated — THANK YOU

This year I've appointed a voluntary 'Executive Team' to join me in the important role of strategic oversight. Toby and **Jane Hay**. Jane is **Elinor Elder's** 2nd daughter and carries some of Elinor's DNA. EE and I became acquainted in 1986 when I was searching for land for the vision of the school. That relationship led to the purchase of the initial 120 acres. EE was a CET member for 24+ years and her heart was centred on the vision and mission BUT the landscape empowered her. The P.P.E.T has joined in the important role of **strategic oversight**. We have developed an **'Annual Plan 2026-27'**; aligned to **PP's Strategic Plan 2026-2029**.



Improve the quality of the Lake:

- The water quality
- Plant a powerful fountain — to aerate the water
- Provide powerful jets to circulate the water
- Keep up the spraying around the Lake edge

General:

- Create Gardens Boxes near the orchard
- Plant several large natives south of the Wetland adjacent to the rugby field
- Create a small track and bridge from rugby field in PP
- Remove some of the Palms and replace them with Cabbage Trees
- Plant ground cover on the many slips once secured
- Remove and control: The moth plant, honey suckle; ginger; wild cherries; creepy ivy; privet; all noxious plants
- Thin flaxes/grasses and replant appropriately
- Remove Kahikatea beside the stream NE corner and replant appropriately
- Control weed growth in the wetland area near the Rugby field; the swales on the southern side; and so on.



I'd like to play tribute to **Caleb** from Bay Trees who continues to oversee the arborist responsibilities particularly after the frequent storms. Caleb is in there doing his best to tidy up the damage and get the mulching machine on the job. **Rob V** has been my heavy machinery man — who's been creating drains for the water to run in the appropriate direction; reshaped all of the tracks and re-metal them! Their contribution and heart have been appreciated!

We have missed **Stephen Te Whaiti**! He rings most Sundays and updates me of his role as Principal of his indigenous school community in 'the middle of nowhere' in Australia. He is loving the role and place! He's going well — 'thinner and bronze' and wears a large Ozzie felt hat! And is fighting fit. **David Elliott** has replaced him as BC teacher-in-charge of 'mission; and 'the Campus environment'. I'm getting to know him and his priorities. He has a heart for the park; I appreciate his work and those who serve under him including students.

We will soon merge into winter! Already we are experiencing the cooler nights and the need for winter clothes. The students are looking great in their winter uniform. The uniform committee developed it in 1987! I really do think BC students when wearing their

uniform properly look stunning. Midterm break is fast — approaching. The break will give you opportunity to spend some time in the park perhaps?

Poet **John Keats**' ode 'to the autumn season' is one of the great classics of the poetic movement of Romanticism of the early 19th Century. The poem is a rich description of the **beauty of autumn** that focuses on both its lush and sensual fruitfulness and the melancholy hint of shorter days. Keats ends his poem evoking the closing of the season and finding a parallel in the beauty of an early-evening sunset. His words depict the haunting beauty in the quiet winding down into winter.

*"Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, Close
bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless; With
fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees, And
fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells;
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees, Until they
think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells..."*

*Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are
they? Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn;
Among the river Sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies; And full-
grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft, The
red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies."*

Psalm 85:10-13 Love and faithfulness meet together; **righteousness and peace kiss each other.** ¹¹Faithfulness springs forth from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven. ¹²The **Lord will indeed give what is good**, and our land will yield its harvest. ¹³Righteousness goes before him and prepares the way for his steps.

Galatians 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time **we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.**

Shalom

Graham C Preston
Manager



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