

Friends of PMM Newsletter

MAY 2020



The David Johnstone Pukemokemoke Bush Trust

Dear Friends

Hope the last six weeks has not been too traumatic for you in your bubbles. You may have already received an email from Chris who found out from Nick that Pukemokemoke is open to the public again providing social distancing is kept and no one touches hand rails....lovely to be able to go there again. Regarding working bees Warwick has advised that there will hopefully be one on 16th May, this of course depends on whether it will be allowed...we'll email you closer to the time. He has asked me to send out this newsletter to keep you up to date with everything and to ask for some help with the various projects....

To all PMM friends

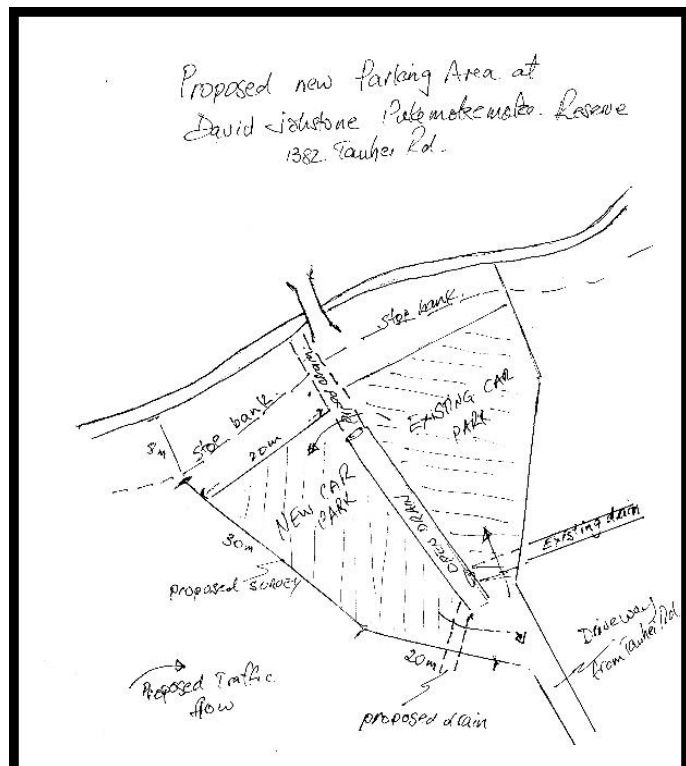
Seems like it is time to bring you up to date with progress at the bush and to start thinking about getting back into business. I was out at the bush checking things out and found George blading the driveway and getting rid of corrugations. Not sure you have noticed that since the bitumen at the entrance was extended, Fulton Hogan did a job on the drive, Des did his magic on the surface, and George does the grooming. Maintenance of the drive has been a major issue in the last few years, thankfully we now seem to be on top of this particular issue

But the drought continues to play havoc with our trees. There has been precious little rain for the last four months I estimate we have at least a 200mm moisture deficit that is now affecting mature trees. A number of tawa have succumbed and mahoe, kawakawa and tree ferns have been severely damaged.

Many of you joined in the bucket brigades to water the new plantings earlier in the year and looking at that area yesterday there's no doubt we have saved many plants. But we have great news on that front. As a result of our reporting on the death of so many young trees one of our PMM friends has donated \$10,000 for us to install a system that will serve both as irrigation and as fire control. Wow what a Godsend! This will likely consist of a pump on the stream, a large storage tank hidden up in the bush and a pipeline running along the access road. The drought has brought sharp focus both the need for irrigation and the very real fire danger that we present. Just need to mention in despatches and thank two PMM friends who have been so helpful in this effort. Firstly, to Nick Whitten for personally watering many plants prior to our working bee. The good health of the plantings at the eastern end is due to his efforts. Then also to trustee Des Hansen for obtaining the 1000L tanks, getting them into place and filling them. So over the winter will need to be a big working bee installing the irrigation system.



Parking. With the increasing popularity of the we are finding parking and bus turning becoming difficult. Fortunately we have been offered a free piece of land next door to our parking area (see map). The farmer Jim Anniss volunteered to give us the land when it is surveyed off. We now have a surveyor from Te willing to do the job and the quarry owners offered to bring in the metal and form the area. course need a fence and the cost of survey and fees will be substantial. However, we have an application in to WEL Energy Trust to help fund costs. Watch this space.



Toilets. Yes, we have been talking about this while, but we now have sufficient funds available to go ahead with a pair of composting toilets. But like so many of our projects, being a voluntary organisation progress will be determined by how many volunteers we can put onto this one.

Planting. The drought has decimated a portion of last year's planting. We have ordered another 400 trees to infill the lost trees and there is the possibility we may start planting one of the other grassed areas. Preparatory spraying should start very soon so I anticipate an early working bee as soon as the lockdown allows. It is most encouraging to know that future planting will be protected from drought by our irrigation system

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Tracks. Pressure on the track network calls for more maintenance and hopefully an addition to our boardwalk network. The kauri boardwalk has been a great success and has been commented on by many. I'm sure Noel would like to initiate a further development of boardwalk on parts of the main track.

News from the Trustees. The PMM trustees, Warwick Silvester Chair, Kevin Swney Secretary treasurer, Harpal Singh Thandi, David Lloyd, and Des Hansen, have now met twice under their new administration. Some of you will remember that we were previously administered by Perpetual Guardian Trust. Removing ourselves from that administration was not simple, resulting in significant financial savings but also a significant increase in administration by us. I was incredibly grateful that Kevin agreed to be secretary and also volunteered to take on treasurer, a great relief for me. We have friends who will help with financial matters and administration of our responsibilities as a charitable trust.

Now a word to all friends. Please read and respond.

PMM has developed enormously over its 25-year history. There have been developments in infrastructure and in the bush environment that attract more users and we continue to have this acknowledged. So as we continue to voluntarily offer this service to the community, thus honouring the will of David Johnstone, we are faced with increasing maintenance and capital costs. The burden has been willingly met by volunteers and we are very grateful for recent offers of specific help by people taking on particular tasks. To name some of these e.g. Kevin as Sec/Treasurer, Nick on keeping toilets spik and span, Gina and Rangers on container tidying, Noel on tracks, Jack on tractor, Des on irrigation, George on grading the drive. These tasks are willingly undertaken, and we are all incredibly grateful for that.

The tasks continue to grow and as you will see from the outline of current activities there is significant work to be doing this coming year. So what we foreshadow is an increase in involvement of The Friends . There will be many more working bees to get the planting, parking, irrigation and track work all completed. **What we would like is for some of you to volunteer to become more actively involved in planning, managing and implementing these large tasks.** To have a small management team operating on each project would help to spread the load enormously.

So please let me or Kevin know by email how you would like to become more involved.

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Kevin parugajake@xtra.co.nz

P.S. There are other portfolios that we have neglected e.g. Signs and interpretation which could be much better managed.

PPS. We are having to say goodbye to Vitus Acherman. Vitus has been a stalwart volunteer with us for many years now who helped enormously with the walkway and has visited the bush on many occasions outside working bees to do weeding and maintenance. Vitus, we will miss your cheerful presence and generous gift of your time. Go well on your translocation to Tauranga.