

## THE GROWTH OF KAITIAKITANGA TRUST

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11 SEPTEMBER 2018

BY MURRAY GRANT

Stace Hammond has been supporting ecological projects for many years. Our founder Hubert Hammond was an early and significant supporter of Hamilton's now world famous gardens. Stace Hammond is still active in looking after our environment and we would like to share some of our activities with you.

In our 100 year anniversary year in 2012, 10 different schools received 10 large native plants each to enhance their environment and enable a discussion of how important it is for our children's future. The schools were chosen to represent an even cross section of urban, rural, co-ed, single sex, boarding, non-boarding primary, intermediate and college. The small Te Poi country school went on to receive another 50 plants from us to add to their already beautiful native bush. The added special part of that visit was the attendance of a long standing client of Stace Hammond, Mr David Morrison. David and his wife Nan have been engaged in wonderful work restoring Aotea's ancient Pohutukawa forest by fencing off 50 acres and allowing it to naturally regenerate .

Our website also features a very successful development by a generous Hamilton family who have financed the development of Tauwhare Wetlands. The work has been done with sound advice from Kuaka under the leadership of Doug Farr, an accomplished environmentalist . We have facilitated the project and taken an active role in planting, releasing and pest control. The next step in this ongoing work is in planting, releasing and progress toward building a raised path to allow year round access to this growing ecology. See the progress of earlier years in the video on this site.

As this voluntary community work progressed it has developed into a successful incorporation of youth working with the ecology and both gaining advantages. The youth have primarily come from the Melville area of Hamilton and have ranged in age from 16 to 20. A young man named Layton Gardner was the first of approximately 10 youths who have been involved so far. He was a young kitchen hand from Milton's Canteen who joined his boss and another worker with us one weekend filling bait stations in the Northern Pureora's. The goal is to save the Kokako and the campaign is ongoing. Layton has regularly bought other hard workers whenever another project needed action.

Another project these young men helped with was continuing the work at Okete Esplanade Reserve which already had years of Stace Hammond involvement in native planting, weed and pest control. Again this project is live and many more square meters of stream and estuary will be cleared of gorse, blackberry, convolvulus, privet and ragwort. Another 600 plants will be going in as weed removal progresses up to and including this planting season. This work started after Stace Hammond volunteered support for Ken and Julie Williamson who had financed the planting of 4,000 native plants in April of 2006 along the Esplanade bank. Today this site is a showpiece for what consistent effort and passion for our environment can achieve. We hope to bring you a drone video courtesy of Steve McLennan showing some of this area.

Gerry Kessels of Kessels Ecology was introduced to Layton and his boss Mikey Beere at the bait station work for saving the Kokako. Like us he appreciated seeing our youth involved in this work. Between us we decided there was an opportunity to foster this resource in a really positive way. Gerry then introduced us to a project being lead by Hayley and Tawera Nikau at the Matahuru Wetland on the southern end of Lake Waikare. The project is some two years in, with the goal of 3 million trees being planted in 20 years. From November 2017 to Christmas our young team planted 7,500 plants and then went on to release the previous year's planting . The really exciting part of this relationship is the team were able to change from being unpaid volunteers to being paid. Hayley Nikau and Allison Grant made sure they were fed and watered. With the upcoming opening of the new Matahuru Marae the team will be able to work longer hours and avoid the cost of the 1 hour 50 minute round trip as it will be available for them to live on the Marae within 4 minutes of the wetland.

A nice part of the team being paid is that their families benefitted from more money for Xmas and one well loved mother is being sent to Sydney to see family for the first time in many years. Because life needs a healthy mix of hard work and good fun, outings have been undertaken involving tramping, kayaking, camping, barbeques, target shooting and swimming. See the photos of Raglan kayaking attached. Several 16 year olds have been introduced to available polytechnic trades and now have chosen to stay another year at secondary school to enhance their grades. Another young woman has been introduced to a client of ours and she now has a stable job and is thrilling her employers with her initiative and energy. One young man was persuaded to get his restricted license and other family members are also showing interest. The team have all been provided with a work shirt and hat, some with boots

A recent chat, again at Milton's Canteen, has lead to a recycling opportunity being proposed to a major corporate. This should allow them to use their resources improving New Zealand's infrastructure while our team carry on important but more menial breakdown and reuse of redundant plant. If accepted this will allow work to be carried on during lulls in planting.

Another project is being undertaken at Rangitoto Lands in the Northern Pureoras. As a result of the team offering to help, we planted 500 native trees around a newly fenced dam with several hundred more to be planted this year. One of our goals is to make it easier for farmers to meet the increasing pressure to fence waterways and plant them. We believe the effort to "Make NZ Clean and Green" again is a societal responsibility, not one solely for farmers.

You are correct if you think our association with less privileged parts of our society is not without its complications. One young lad is facing a loss of license for repeated infringements. A successful application for him to attend the "Right Track Programme" run by John and Helen Finch has re-educated one of our partners who is attending with him as a supporter. This programme really should be compulsory for all drivers. It is hard hitting, blunt and honest. It has been running for 11 years and has amazing results for the lack of recidivism in offenders. There are volunteers from the judiciary, lawyers, court staff, police, corrections, probation and the public attending these sessions which last for 8 weeks of never to be forgotten lessons. Therefore we are actively involved in lobbying for funding with a goal of it being available NZ wide. See more about the programme on their website.

A few of the volunteers have been identified and many thanks go to them and the many others who have given time to help with these projects but who remain unnamed. As of 2018 a Charitable Trust will be formed to allow this ragtag (albeit significant) effort to become more formal to enable exploration of it growing and maybe/hopefully informing more of us of what we can achieve. Particularly if we plan, communicate and work as a team (courtesy The Right Track Saturday all day lesson in risk management). Essentially the goal is to;

"nurture nature so we can nurture ourselves".

From that and other good family and cultural principles we will improve our environment while growing great citizens and having a good time doing it.

If any of this resonates with you readers assistance with funding will be welcomed once the Trust is registered. Funding is currently being sought from two businesses closely associated with Stace Hammond and others who share our goals . ANZ Bank have offered to provide a bank account and Brown Pennell are to be the accountants, with Stace Hammond as the solicitors and provider of one of two trustees.



# STACE HAMMOND

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