

EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

VOLUNTEER WELLINGTON ■ TE PUNA TAUTOKO ■ YOUR COMMUNITY CONNECTOR



ISSUE 41 ■ DECEMBER 2020

Miracles can happen

Miracles can happen – you just need somebody like Steve Wilson to manifest them.

Steve is the kaitiaki – come wizard – come grand meister – come ‘how does this guy do it’ – driving force behind Te Tito Gardens in Porirua. Te Rito Organics asert – Tātou Development Trust is part community project and part social enterprise.

Their mission statement is: “Manaaki Tangata, Manaaki Whenua, Haere Whakamua – Care for the People, Care for the Land, Go Forward.”

And their purpose is to facilitate a training and work environment in which tātou (all people) are given an opportunity to learn the life skills of growing food and acquiring an income in a sustainable way. To empower people with the skills, knowledge and the confidence to “go forward” into

a career in the organic horticultural sector.

What they have achieved is truly remarkable considering that the last couple of years have been hugely challenging. Many of us have witnessed the slow transformation of the Kenepuru area as Transmission Gully takes shape and the massive push to build housing in the area.

Porirua has become a major work zone with enormous concrete structures turning into access ramps for the new road and earthworks and monstrous machinery laying the earth bare as it is resculpted.

In the midst of all this mayhem Te Rito Gardens has continued to function even though the encroachment has come closer and closer. Literally a little shrinking oasis of calm.

The good news is that they have a new site for the gardens further south, near Kenepuru Hospital. I have visited Steve many times over the past few months, sometimes he was utterly stretched to the limit and at one point said ‘I’m not sure if I can pull this off’.

When I visited just after lockdown I was blown away by how much Steve and his regular staff and volunteers have achieved – my jaw was almost dragging on the ground.

I have to admit that I couldn’t see how the vision for the new site could be achieved, when Steve first took me on a tour: creating new structures, levelling ground, planting and conservation

Meri Kirihimete me te Hape Nū Ia. Wishing you a peaceful and restorative festive season.

Lyne Pringle, EV Coordinator



STEVE WILSON

efforts around the nearby stream to beautify what is an exposed site, re-establishing the vegetable gardens that supply places like Common Sense Organics, setting up the systems to support the propagation and growing of native plants that are sold to the regional council, re-establishing the woodworking facilities to make wooden spoons for sale and many many more systems and processes that have been built up at the old site over several years – let alone rehusing the beloved chickens!

But I was wrong. The new site has been completely transformed and is on track to be an astounding new Te Rito Gardens.

I cannot express enough the respect and admiration I have for Steve, his team and his board.

As I said when I caught up with him recently ‘How’s Superman?’ and really really meant it. In typical fashion he shrugged it off and said ‘We’re getting there’.

We have sent a lot of teams through the Employee Volunteering programme to Te Rito, including an epic effort by 40 volunteers from Z Energy across one day to help with clearing and sorting the new site as well as the installation of drainage system for the soon to be planted orchard.

Employee Volunteer Programme 2020/21

Despite the challenges of Covid-19, by the end of the year, we will have completed close to **65** projects involving **693** volunteers from **23** businesses and government departments with **25** of Volunteer Wellington's community member organisations.

Bookings are strong for the New Year. Watch this space for information about our awards event for 2021 to celebrate volunteering – we are working on a new format for this.

Going forward we continue to work with our Employee Volunteering Partners who are making valuable connections in their communities through volunteering. We always welcome new partners to join our programme.

To the Island

The rangers on **Matiu/Somes Island** are passionate about their conservation work and they are excellent hosts passing on their knowledge to volunteers. **The Treasury** and **AsureQuality** recently volunteering there.



Taking care of the stream

ACC did some valuable volunteering at **Waiwhetu Stream**.



Recycle Recycle Recycle

Kiwi Community Assistance in Grenada hosted teams from **AJ Park**, **Vocus** and **GNS Science**. They helped to bring order to their phenomenal warehouse where goods are disseminated widely into the community.



Planting the Peak

Friends of Makara Peak – For every metre of bike track a native is planted, to restore the podocarp canopy. **Z Energy**, **AsureQuality** and **Victoria University staff** recently contributed.



Fabulous Zealandia

ANZ, NZ Post and AsureQuality spent an energetic day in the field doing valuable maintenance work.



Hanging with the oldies

A crew from **AsureQuality** had a wonderful day with **Huntleigh Home** residents.



“ Thank you for yesterday, Lyne. We had a blast! ”

ASUREQUALITY ON THEIR VOLUNTEERING AT HUNTLEIGH HOME

Resewing

AJ Park sorting fabrics for the **St Vincent de Paul** re sew project.



“ We had a great morning at KCA on Wednesday. We were very tired afterwards. What a fantastic opportunity for us to help KCA again. ”

AJ PARK ON THEIR VOLUNTEER DAY WITH KIWI COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE

Oasis in the city

Z Energy and AJ Park at **Upstream** in Central Park.



Bring Back the Natives

The Treasury were introduced to restoration efforts at the **Bring Back the Natives** site.



Island Bay magic

Manawa Karioi is another great conservation project that hosted **The Treasury**.



5 MINUTES WITH ADELLE NANCEKIVELL

Scientist at AsureQuality

How long have you been in your current role?

I have been with AsureQuality for seven years

Tell us a fun fact about yourself?

I built a mountain bike from scratch by myself and I also ride motorbikes.

What is your background?

My background is in the science and food-testing industry. AsureQuality was my first job out of Uni and I'm still there!

What is your take on the interface between businesses and the community?

My take on the interface between businesses and the community is that it's a growing area with a lot of potential. Since signing up with Volunteer Wellington I feel like AsureQuality has gained stronger ties to the community and I feel like those ties are going to continue to strengthen.

Why do you think volunteering is important?

I think volunteering is important because there are a lot of things that need doing in the community that don't necessarily have funding.

What other volunteering do you do?

I also volunteer at the Forest and Bird Plant Nursery in Highbury and at Makara Peak.



MBIE – BRM AT BRING BACK THE NATIVES

Government departments ‘walking the talk’

Through these turbulent times I have been grateful for the steady rudder of our government.

Despite the challenges of the times there has been a steady flow of government departments booking projects, so that their people can get out of the office to experience a connection with their communities.

Many civil servants have been under the pump over the last few months as Covid-19 has demanded new and nimble responses to a dynamic national and international landscape.

‘Pivot’ has become the go to verb of

2020 and there are a lot of people who have certainly been doing just this.

Lately when I have been greeting the teams on site, I make a point of telling them that, as much as their day is about helping out a community group, it is also about taking care of themselves. The going has been tough for people and I am aware that many are exhausted and fragile. So it is important that they enjoy the day, breath deeply and use the opportunity, away from the office with their colleagues, to share a laugh and find nourishment in whatever activity they are doing.

This is one of the things I value about our Employee Volunteering programme – it’s a two way street where everybody wins – to mix a couple of metaphors. Volunteering in the community ticks all of the boxes in the Mental Health Foundations framework for well-being: Connect, me whakawhanaunga; Give, tukua; Take Notice, me aro tonu; Keep Learning, me ako tonu and Be Active, me kori tonu.

When we connect this with the four pillars of good citizenship that the current government espouses: earning, learning, caring and volunteering



MBIE – BRM AT ST VINCENT DE PAUL

and we have public servants, from management right through, willing to embrace the concept of Mahi Aroha, the future feels positive.

There is great uncertainty in our world at present, no doubt, but I am heartened by the people I have met recently and the willingness to reach out and connect.

We can make it through. Thank you so much to all the people, especially the hard working government employees, who have put their hands up to volunteer in recent months – you give me great pleasure in my work.



ACC AT WAIWHETU STREAM

Employee Volunteering Partners: ACC; AJ Park Ltd; ANZ National Bank; AsureQuality; GNS Science; IAG New Zealand; IBM New Zealand; Jarden Group; KPMG; Massey University College of Creative Arts, Mercer Ltd; Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment-Legal; Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment – Capability Services; Ministry for the Environment; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Ministry of Justice, NZ Post Group; Parliamentary Counsel Office; Parliamentary Service; Pynenberg & Collins Architects; Te Tumu Paeroa; Todd Foundation; The Treasury; Victoria University of Wellington; Vocus Group; Wellington Electricity Corporation; Z Energy



Volunteer Wellington

Level 7, 186 Willis Street, Wellington
Tel 499 4572

Email ev@volunteerwellington.nz
Website www.volunteerwellington.nz