

## Excerpt from “The Notable Trees of New Plymouth”, 2002

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Based on a review of S.W. (Bob) Burstall's Mensuration Report # 19, 1973.

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Notable Tree N° NT 37

“Puriri” p75

NATIVE TREE: 37

SPECIES: *Vitex lucens*.

COMMON NAME(S): Puriri.

B.B CATEGORY: Native Historic Tree - Local Interest.

### ORIGINAL READINGS

LOCATION: Brooklands Park.

DATE MEASURED: 1969

HEIGHT: 75 ft (22.9 m), with a good trunk up to 34 ft (10.4 m)

CANOPY SPREAD: 70 ft (21.4 m)

DBH: 76 in (1.93 m)

BURSTALL'S NOTES: With the likely loss of the nearby giant chestnut this tree will become the most outstanding of all trees in New Plymouth, and of great historic interest. Being well sheltered it should hold this status for many years.

### CURRENT READINGS

UPDATED LOCATION: Brooklands Park, 81 m from the Kaimata Street entrance, main path, nature trail sign # 8.

DATE MEASURED: 4th September 2001.

HEIGHT: 24.8 m

CANOPY SPREAD: 18.75 m

DBH: 1.968 m

REMARKS: Public interest in this historic tree (**Fig. 62 and 63**) has increased in recent years so in May 1998 a boardwalk structure was built around the tree to protect the rooting system. The walkway is designed to extend the life of the tree as it stops excessive soil compaction caused by foot traffic. This proactive response was necessary; the only downfall being that the accumulation of debris now trapped by it at the base will slowly affect the soil level.

The clear trunk to approximately 10.5 m has dark basal scars, believed to be from Maori campfires. Storm damage to a heavy lower limb in 1977 required surgery in order to balance the weight of the tree. Possums have been seen sheltering in the cavities created by decay. For many years bees could be seen swarming in the hollow base of a branch high up on the main trunk

A Healthy tree with an upright habit. It is estimated at between 1000 to 2000 years old, an excellent remnant that is well sited with a great number of *Astelias* epiphytes.

(~Fuller, 1984: Dbh = 1.997 m).

(\*Medbury, 1986: Ht = 25.25 m.)

Also included is the 1941 measurements from the RNZIH list # 52: Ht = 19.8 m; dbh = 1.52 m. And 1950 measurements of J. W. Goodwin: (Ht = 21.9 m; dbh = 1.71 m).