

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.

Notable Tree 6+
"BICYCLE KAURI" p31

NATIVE TREE: 6+
SPECIES: *Agathis australis*.
COMMON NAME(S): Kauri.

+The "bicycle kauri" is near the Children's Playground area, beside the path leading to the waterwheel, Pukekura Park. Classic young kauri with fastigiate form (ricker), well sited and having the potential to become a monster in the future. It has a fascinating history.

Soon after J. W. Goodwin took charge of the park in 1949 he undertook a massive purge of undesirable tree species and removed several stands of inappropriate trees such as *Cupressus macrocarpa*. In areas like the Goodwin Dell and Children's Playground he refrained from replanting with species which would grow large, thus preserving precious open spaces. He did however more than anyone to expand the range of plant species in the park and is responsible for the magnificent stands of trees planted on the eastern and western hillsides of the Main Lake when blocks of pines were removed in the mid 1960's.

In 1949 he was offered a young kauri by a resident of N.P. who decided that the tree was misplaced. The transplanting procedure was unorthodox by any standards because of the height of the tree and absence of a vehicle to convey it. J. W. Goodwin's solution was to detail a member of staff named Lou Schonbachler to accompany him on bicycle to the site and lift the tree. Not surprisingly for a young kauri, all the soil fell from the roots, whereupon they were appropriately covered and the tree was lashed between the two cycles. The slow procession of two men, two cycles, two spades and one kauri ricker wending it's way through the town with Pukekura Park as the destination must have indeed been a strange spectacle.

Under J. W. Goodwin's expert skill the tree survived the ordeal and over 50 years later is a perfect specimen in an ideal site. He admires it with justifiable pride and a smile on his face.

31.8.01: Height = 17.7 m; dbh = 48.4 cm.
(Written by G. Fuller).

(*Medbury, 1984: Ht = 13.2 m; dbh = 35.3 cm.

Supplied by Park to Mr Norton, 89 Brougham St in 1943. Offered back to the Park in 1949, when it was relocated via bicycle at a height of 8 ft).