

# LLOYD ELSMORE PARK OPENING

Pakuranga Athletic Club moved to Lloyd Elsmore Park in 1980, the year before the official opening. We had no clubrooms, just a metal shed which was provided by the council for us to store our track and field equipment. It was another four years before our clubrooms were built and many more before our carpark was sealed. It was wonderful to have our own grounds at last and not have to share facilities. The storage shed became the venue for much socialising after athletic meetings.

Lloyd Elsmore Park was initiated in 1967 when Manukau City Council approved the purchase of 53 hectares of land. Subsequently a further 16 hectares, owned by the Auckland Regional Authority, was included, giving a total of 69 hectares. Pakuranga Rugby Club built on land donated by Duffy Bell and known as Bell Park was opened in 1975. Howick Colonial Village was established in 1967 and opened to the public in 1972.

Pakuranga Councillor Frank Malcolm felt it would be a fitting tribute to the mayor if the proposed reserve was named Lloyd Elsmore Park. Lloyd Elsmore (later to be knighted) had a long affiliation with our club. Lloyd's daughter Isabel Millett was an early committee member serving 7 years with Children's Track & Field. Her husband Jack was also actively involved and their children were competitors. Our club was honoured to have Lloyd as our Patron for many years. Between the years 1977 – 1993 we held an open day each year for Children's Track & Field. Known as Lloyd Elsmore Day, it attracted over 1,500 children with an aggregate points trophy contested by Auckland clubs. Sadly, 1993 was the last time this event was held. The committee at the time decided to hold a joint open day with the Howick club. For many years this trend continued, however, we now have our own open day restored. Maybe one day the Lloyd Elsmore trophy will be reinstated.

Development of the park began in 1973 and it was officially opened on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1981. To mark the occasion, a week of celebrations was proposed. Pakuranga Jaycees offered their services to make it a large scale affair and were backed by the whole community. A committee was formed called the Lloyd Elsmore Park Opening Society (LEPOS) and under the Chairmanship of Peter Anderson, a wonderful week long gala programme was organised. Most of the local schools, many societies, businesses and sports clubs took part, including the Pakuranga Athletic Club.

Visiting Manukau City, under sponsorship by the Pakuranga Jaycees, four Fijian schoolboy athletes and their coach were jointly billeted by our club members and the Jaycees. These athletes took part in many of the opening events as well as participating in the Round the Bays Fun Run held the same weekend.

On opening day Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March, the Prime Minister the Right Honourable Robert Muldoon, accompanied by His Worship the Mayor, Lloyd Elsmore, arrived in the athletic oval by horse and trap, loaned by the Howick Colonial Village.



*Photo supplied by Isabel Millett*

When the formalities were over and the park had been opened, the Prime Minister fired the starting gun for the feature 200m event, the first race of our club's Open Handicap Track Meeting. All participants were issued with a commemorative ribbon to mark the occasion. During the week many events were held at different venues throughout the park.

On Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April, HRH Charles, the Prince of Wales, paid a visit after expressing an interest to meet local schoolchildren. Eight thousand schoolchildren and parents crowded the arena to take part in welcoming the Prince and the Mayor to our stadium. The crowd were delighted when Prince Charles rode on a BMX bike which belonged to one of the children.

On Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April, the Lloyd Elsmore Park Opening Society organized some games called the LEPOS Top Team Competition. These were held in the athletic oval and attracted a large number of entrants with 40 teams taking part. The competition was based on a variety of games such as team members carrying pails of water while being showered with water balloons, catching a ball while sliding into a pool, stilt games, sack race games and sprinting on barrels. Teams worked their way around the different games, scoring points for each game whilst being loudly encouraged by their own cheer leaders.



## Charles, they loved you!

April 6, 1981

for the royal visit.

It was the day the schoolchildren would remember when the Prince of Wales, Prince Charles, visited Pakuranga on Friday.

Lloyd Elsmore Park came alive, with nearly 7000 schoolchildren putting on all kinds of displays

They filled the centre with haka parties, athletic troupes, choirs, BMX bike displays, maypole dances and Polynesian poi dances, while on the banks stood school groups and members of the public from throughout South Auckland. - Full story online

SUNFRESH  
PAKURANGA  
R.R. & H.C.  
*Lloyd Elsmore*  
PARK  
OPENING  
1981  
COMMEMORATOR  
McCRATH  
REAL  
ESTATE

**Sunfresh**

PAKURANGA  
Amateur Athletic  
& Harrier Club Inc.

**FUN RUN**

- SUNDAY 5th APRIL 1981
- Starting 10:30am Lloyd Elsmore Park Athletic Oval Bell Rd Pakuranga as part of Gala Weekend to commemorate the opening of Lloyd Elsmore Park
- Runners must report by 10 am to collect race numbers
- FOOD & REFRESHMENTS will be available after the run

8km  
(5miles)

**\$1**  
ENTRY  
SPOT  
PRIZES

**FUN RUN ENTRY FORM**  
Post with \$1 Entry Fee to  
PAKURANGA AMATEUR ATHLETIC & HARRIER CLUB  
P.O. BOX 51-090 PAKURANGA

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
phone \_\_\_\_\_

On Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April our club organised another event to wind up the week of celebrations. This was an Open Invitation Harrier meet named The Courier Canter, a Fun Run which attracted 1,200 entrants.



**City of Manukau**

**LOYD ELSMORE  
PARK**

**COMMUNITY FESTIVAL**  
29 MARCH TO 5 APRIL, 1981

**PROGRAMME**

Lloyd Elsmore Park today is a wonderful asset, not only to the sporting community but to the public with its many walkways, playgrounds and paths. Members of our club use it regularly and in the words of former mayor Sir Barry Curtis, it is the Jewel in the Crown of Manukau.

