



# NEWTOWN News



**NZ Music Month**  
May 2018

♪ BROUGHT TO YOU BY  
NEWTOWN COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CENTRE ♪



# Kia Ora Newtown



Welcome to the month of May and to this issue of your fav lil' community rag.

With May comes a lot of exciting things for me and my friends. For one, they are dribbling and drooling over feijoa season being in full swing. I've got flatmates cramming them into the nooks and crannies of our packed-full freezer, and friends making delightful relishes and jams. I heard a story about one feijoa fan who was allergic to the tasty green fruit, which made her lips swell up. To avoid this, but still be able to enjoy the tangy flesh, she would cut them into small cubes and place on the back of her tongue, avoiding her lips. That's what I call dedication!

I'm personally excited because 'Spaghetti Squash' is back in stores. It's a marrow/pumpkin that is a pretty funky substitute for pasta. You just cut them in half, drizzle some oil on top, then place in the oven for 30-odd minutes. Once they are cooked you then 'pull' the flesh with a fork and it will come away in perfect short strands, just like short spaghetti. I'm living a low-carb life at the moment, and it totally beats pasta! What's your favourite seasonal treat? Write in and tell us, or better yet, share a recipe with us at the email address below.

It's not just "nom nom" fruit and vegetables that May has to offer. It's also New Zealand Music Month, where we celebrate awesome local tunes. Turn to the middle page to check out our double feature on how this month came about. Recently, in early April, Homegrown took over the Wellington waterfront with 5 stages and 21,000 people all coming together to dance to a kiwi-music-only lineup! While it would make sense to hold this event during NZ Music Month, I'm guessing our weather by May has turned too grey and grim for that. This month we include a review of the inspiring set from Wellington's own Fat Freddy's Drop - check it out.

This year, Pink Shirt Day falls on May 18th. It's all about speaking up, standing up against and stopping bullying, including homophobic bullying. That's something I think we can all get behind. This month Georgiana Lupescu shares some thoughts on her personal experiences of bullying, and what we can do about it. Mhairi McGregor is back with May's Notorious Newtowner - she meets the fabulous Sophia Cooper from Constable Street's new boutique hair salon 'Coop'.

As always, you can turn to the back page to find out "What's the Happs?" in our community.

Until next time - be safe, be warm and wear a smile!

Ngā mihi,

Eryn Gribble  
newtowns.newsletter@gmail.com

Cover art by Merumo Mukaide. Design by Patches.

**Thanks to the support of our amazing local businesses! Please support them back!**



THE  
RAMEN  
SHOP



Baobab Cafe

**Peoples**

Organic & Fair Trade Supply  
Since 2004

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are solely those of the original authors and other contributors. These views and opinions do not necessarily reflect those of the Newtown Community & Cultural Centre

# Notorious NEWTowner

---

**Mhairi McGregor knocks on the door of 10 Constable Street to chat to Sophia Cooper, the brains and beauty behind new boutique hairdressing salon Coop...**

---

Sophia Cooper always knew that Wellington was home. That's why, despite two exciting stints in Melbourne, the vivacious 28-year old returned to set up shop in Newtown, the place where she first started her hairdressing career.

Sophia left high school at just 15. Her parents allowed her a few months off, then began encouraging her to find work.

"As a young girl there weren't many options for me except working in a supermarket or a fast food joint", she explains. "Then one day I walked past a salon advertising for an apprentice and I thought it might be something I could do until I sorted things out – and here I am still doing it!"

After finishing her apprenticeship at The Powder Room in Newtown, Sophia decided that Wellington was getting a bit small. At the same time, she had a few friends moving to Melbourne, so joining them was an easy choice.

"Being in a big city that never sleeps was an amazing experience", she says. "There was always something to do, be it a good gig, or a new restaurant or bar to try, or an amazing gallery".

After two stints in Melbourne over an eight-year period, the big city excitement wore off. It was during a visit home to Wellington that Sophia couldn't shake the idea of moving back and settling here, so in August 2016 she was back.



"I had been thinking of setting up my own salon for a long time, so I started trying to make it happen", she explains. At around the same time, Sophia visited Melbourne for the first time since moving home to Wellington. That's when fate took over.

"On the way to the airport I saw this shop on Constable Street with a "For lease" sign in the window and I thought it was meant to be!" she explains. "All weekend in Melbourne I couldn't stop thinking about coming home and checking out the shop."

Three weeks later she had the keys and four weeks later Coop was open. The salon is a dream come true for Sophia, who says the business is flourishing. Spacious with big windows, natural light and an industrial-style concrete floor, she hopes others will use the space for pop-up shops, openings and exhibitions.

"I really want the community to use this space to promote local products and projects, just like we did for the Newtown Festival", Sophia says. "And of course, if you want a haircut, pop in and say hello!"

# Let the music play

By Cait Lawrence

Here in Aotearoa, the month of May means a few things that are firmly entrenched in our calendrical landscape: winter is starting to try to break the door down, Daylight Savings has well and truly kicked in, but - much more interestingly - it's New Zealand Music Month! Since the beginning of this millennium - that's right, almost 20 years ago and for as long as I myself can remember - New Zealand Music Month has taken place during the month of May. It's happened every year for 17 years, and this year it is back for the 18th time.

New Zealand Music Month (NZMM) is an annual event, if you can call it an event. It's more of an explosive nationwide celebration running for 31 wild, exhilarating and inspiring days. It's managed by the New Zealand Music Commission (Te Reo Reka o Aotearoa) with the purpose of recognising and building awareness of homegrown music, along with the promotion and celebration of local artists.

Back at its launch in the year 2000, NZMM was simply a period of urging and encouraging our radio stations to blast more local tunes. Over the course of the last 17 years, it has matured into a month-long festivity of homegrown talent stretching the length and breadth of our country's diverse and vibrant cultural terrain.

NZMM is a massive promotion of our local talent supported not only by the NZ Music Commission, but in close association with organisations such as NZ on Air, Recorded Music New Zealand and the Radio Broadcasters Association, to name just a few. However, it couldn't succeed without the accordant interest and succour of the country's music labels, media, us as the general public and, most importantly, the extraordinarily dexterous artists themselves.

New Zealand has produced accomplished and committed musicians for decades. For years, there has been a plethora of splendacious and unique music being churned out by local talent, but not quite enough platforms of promotion for people to hear it all, or see it for themselves, let alone purchase, support and truly appreciate it.

The NZ Music Commission saw this problem back in the late 90's and decided to do something about it. Cue the birth of New Zealand Music Month, an event we all now take for granted on our cultural calendars. It started off so humbly and has grown into a huge celebration of local talent and uniquely kiwi tunes and, in the words of the NZMM headquarters, "It's bloody marvellous to see how far things have come".







Nowadays, there's heaps of New Zealand music surrounding us. It's blasting through our airwaves, soaring off our stages, booming out of our car stereos and streaming through our headphones from apps, websites, podcasts and personal music libraries. And that's not to mention that it's also recognised all over the world. It's hard to imagine that things were ever any different.

There's so many talented artists borne of Aotearoa who are responsible for the creation of great songs we all know and love. Along with the hardworking labels, producers, publicists, agents, friends, whanau and fans who support these artists all the way from jamming to recording and releasing their precious music, New Zealand Music Month has definitely played a part in the vast and dynamic growth of the New Zealand music industry.

New Zealand Music Month HQ, the group of people at the heart of the event, and here to foster celebration, festivity, appreciation and discovery, has expanded a whole heap over the past 17 years, and now spreads across the entire country. The hard-working team is dedicated to spreading the sounds coming from our country's

musicians: new and exciting, as well as old favourites, and everything in between.

From all reaches of the north, south, east and west, New Zealand Music Month is making a bigger impact every year. The organisers want to get us to mean gigs, help us make new musical discoveries, and rediscover our love for old favs. There's a bounty of new releases on the horizon, hundreds of gigs all over the country, and media platforms of all kinds are geared up behind this mission to promote our exquisite talent of all genres, ages and stages. You'd have to be hiding under a rock to miss it.

The media will be spreading the word about everything that's going on musically around Aotearoa this month, so stay tuned for top picks of emerging talent. You can find plenty of information on the New Zealand Music Month website where we are encouraged to "dig deep" into the gig guide found there, in search of anything that tickles our fancy. They want to see us all out there soaking up the energy and making the most of this opportunity to discover and support the amazing sounds coming out of our beautiful little country.

New Zealand Music Month is an event you don't want to miss. Music speaks to our minds and souls; it connects us with our emotions, as well as with other people. Discovery of a new artist that really gets my soul jumping is one of my favourite experiences - and what better than the opportunity to have a whole month dedicated to our growing and flourishing music industry?

I know I can't wait to tune in and find some kiwi jewels, and I hope the same can be said for all of us. We're a little country, but we do great things, and this event is one way of helping our musicians do even greater things.

***Let's all get amongst it and support our fellow kiwis and their talent, passion and dedication.***

# Fat Freddy's keep it local

By Greta Sutcliffe



The annual Homegrown music festival on the Wellington waterfront took place on April 7 this year. The festival supports local, homegrown talent, with a range of acts including New Zealand music stalwarts Dave Dobbyn, Stan Walker and Anika Moa.

Fat Freddy's Drop was also one of the headline acts and I was really excited to check out their show. The seven-piece band formed in Wellington thirteen years ago, making music that is influenced by reggae, club, jazz, soul and rhythm and blues.

Their set at Homegrown was a unique experience. Fat Freddy's live performances have always focused on improvisation, and they stuck to that formula on the night. As the sun faded over the Wellington waterfront and the band came onto the stage to perform, the excited crowd waited to hear something original.

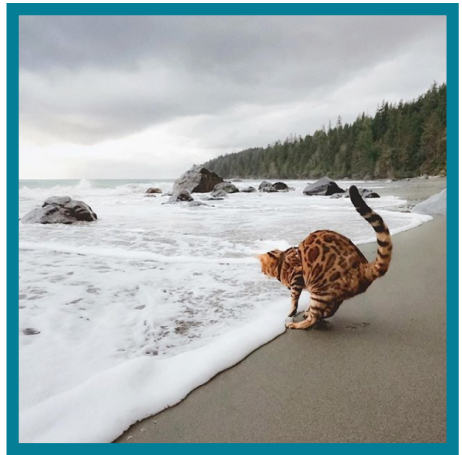
Fat Freddy's Drop did not disappoint. With a smooth, eclectic sound they delivered a one of a kind show that really captured the unique capital-city spirit of the band. As they played on into the night, the crowd was energetic, yet relaxed, and everyone was having a good time.

I think the performance really emphasised what Homegrown is all about: giving our local talent a platform to express their music and show what it means for them to be not only musicians but also New Zealanders.

Fat Freddy's style creates a perfect picture for New Zealand music. With a creative and improvised performance, they put on an excellent show for the home crowd.

Let's hope they will be back at Homegrown next year.

---



## Never stop learning

By Anka Robin

Just as any young adult should, I suffer from the affliction of being obsessed with kittens and puppies. Modern technology including social media only enables my desire to "uhh" and "aww" over the most adorable and heart-melting images. So generally, around morning tea time, my phone beckons me to indulge in the habit.

One of the recent pictures I discovered was of a little cat retreating from the waves on the shoreline after curiosity got the better of it. Instead of being purely amazed by the beauty of the photograph, my brain proceeded to suggest that the cat looked like a mini leopard due to the pattern of its fur. Little did I know that my oh-so-clever and witty little description is actually a thing. And by 'thing' I mean a living, breathing species.

The so-called 'ocelot', colloquially referred to as 'dwarf leopard', is a nocturnal feline native to the forests of South America. Growing up to a metre in size and weighing as much as 16 kilos, it is a definite step up from your average domesticated cat.

The irony of my little quip being reality was a reminder that you never fail to learn new things, in however roundabout a way it may be, so this month I encourage all of you to try and learn something new.

# Beating bullying

By Georgiana Lupescu

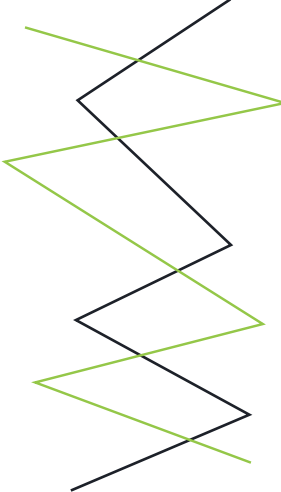


As a kid, I was different. Because I was different, I often became the target of bullying. The worst thing was that I couldn't escape the bullies. Most of my high school years I was at boarding school, so I was around the bullies 24/7.

I will never forget the end of my last year of high school, around exam time, when the bullying got really bad. I started receiving abusive comments on my Bebo and Facebook pages - even in the weekend when I was working on a farm. The bullying weighed me down to the point that I failed all my exams because I would see the bullies before we all went in to sit them.

Statistics show that the rates of bullying in New Zealand are very high compared to other countries. In a recent study, around 31% of New Zealand middle primary students surveyed said they experienced bullying almost weekly. Bullying can get to the point where nearly one in ten students is afraid that someone will be hurt verbally or even physically. Cruel taunts via social media are also becoming a widespread problem.

It is important to point out that bullying can seriously affect a student's identity and well-being, to the point that they are not doing as well as they could be, including skipping classes and failing exams. That is what happened to me.



I asked other people in my community what their thoughts were on bullying. One person agreed that bullying is "socially isolating". I also asked a male student what he would do if he saw a younger student being bullied. He said, "If someone was being verbally or physically bullied I would help and support them to stand up to the bullies".

So there is some light in the darkness, particularly this heartwarming story about how Pink Shirt Day started. Pink Shirt Day began in Canada in 2007 when a new year 10 student was harassed and threatened for wearing a pink shirt to school, also being called a homosexual. Two older students decided to stand up and support the new kid, saying "enough is enough".

They sent an email around to ask their peers to take a stand against homophobic bullying by coming to school the next day wearing the colour pink. To their surprise, all the other students supported the cause, wearing a sea of pink to school the following day.

This year, Pink Shirt Day in New Zealand takes place on Friday 18 May, so join me by wearing pink and taking a stand against bullying. If you yourself are being bullied, don't wait: you should tell an adult you trust.

**For other support networks and information head to**

<https://zeal.nz/livefortomorrow>

<https://www.pinkshirtday.org.nz>



## WHAT'S THE HAPPS?



### **At the Newtown Community Centre, 7 Colombo Street, Newtown**

#### **An Autumn Feast**

"All of us know how difficult it can sometimes be to strike up an interesting conversation with a stranger. But meeting strangers also offers an opportunity to engage with minds moulded by forces different to our own, and to see the world in a new light". Join us for a delightful evening of insightful conversation as you feast on delicious Asian Fusion cuisine. Saturday 5 May, 7pm. \$10. BYO. Registrations essential: <https://goo.gl/forms/WSphzJg7MaDUSkcD3>. For more info contact Renee on 04 389 4786 or [info@newtowncommunity.org.nz](mailto:info@newtowncommunity.org.nz).

#### **Newtown Crop Swap**

Come together to celebrate the abundance of our community. Bring surplus from your kitchen or garden, connect with others and share goodies. Welcome goods include but aren't limited to garden produce, seeds/seedlings, homemade sauces, jams, ferments, bread, baking, jars, unwanted garden resources etc - anything homemade or homegrown is great. Contact [saskiaw226@gmail.com](mailto:saskiaw226@gmail.com) or visit Newtown Crop Swap on Facebook for more details. Koha to cover room hire. Saturday 5 May, meet at 9.30, 10am start.

#### **Transforming Conflict 101**

Conflicts are an inevitable part of life, yet many of us avoid conflict as much as we can. In this workshop, you'll learn how to transform the way you see and experience conflict - to value conflicts as opportunities to learn, deepen relationships, identify risks, and make positive, constructive change. Join Tim Foote from [reframe.org.nz](http://reframe.org.nz), on Tuesday 15 May from 6.30-8pm.

#### **Walking Well, Feeling Well**

This six week set of gentle dance exercise classes are designed to help build strength, confidence and self-esteem. They will focus on posture, gentle movement to music, and how to feel great about yourself. \$5 unwaged, \$7 waged. Commencing Thursday 3 May from 1.30-2.30pm at the Newtown Community Centre. Contact Ishbel Clark to register on 04 389 1365.

### **At the Newtown Hall, 71 Daniell Street, Newtown**

#### **Gentle Movers Classes**

Are you looking for some gentle exercise? Kathy McConville is back with her Gentle Movers Class, a low impact, gentle paced circuit class for older adults. \$2 per class, held on Wednesdays, 11.45am-12.30pm.

### **At 199 Riddiford Street, Newtown**

#### **Newtown Repair Cafe**

Do you have something that needs fixing but you're not sure how to do it yourself? Bring it down to the next Newtown Tool Library Repair Cafe! There will be skilled volunteers on hand to show you how to mend your loved items. Items to bring include, but are not limited to: clothing, jewellery, electrical stuff, kitchenware, toys, accessories, furniture and musical instruments. Delicious snacks and coffee/tea will be available from the Koha Kitchen. Contact [newtown.tool.library@gmail.com](mailto:newtown.tool.library@gmail.com) to find out more. Saturday 12 May, 11am-2pm.

#### **The Newtown Vintage Market**

As a vibrant and thriving community event, this market is a space for not just vintage lovers, but Wellington creatives. That is why amongst the beautiful vintage stalls at our markets, you will also find fabulous arts and crafts. Saturday 5 May, 10am-2.30pm. See the Facebook page for more info: [www.facebook.com/events/1492510544204326](https://www.facebook.com/events/1492510544204326).