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Newtown News



The
Beast



Brought to you
by the Newtown
Community and
Cultural Centre.





Kia ora Newtown,

Here at the the Newtown Community & Cultural Centre headquarters, we've got change on the horizon. We're in the process of hiring a coordinator to cover for one of the coordinators as they go on maternity leave in mid September. I'm finding it both exciting because new blood will mean new energy for exciting new projects, but also a little daunting as this particular coordinator has been on the job for nine years and will be sorely missed! Watch this space to see who will be the next coordinator at the Newtown Community & Cultural Centre.

The sun is shining on through this beautiful winter and on the 12th August it's International Youth Day so we've put together an issue to celebrate the goodness out of young people everywhere (but particularly in Newtown). Isaiah Johnson, aged eight, is this month's Notorious Newtowner. You may have spotted him hanging around Baobab, because his parents own the place. You also might have encountered this young entrepreneur at the Newtown Festival as he sold you an ice-block from his ice-block stand in front of Baobab. What a dude! Across the double page spread we've got an exposé of some of the awesome and super generous young people and volunteers from the Newtown Youth Programme. Overleaf, nevermind thinking of youth as wayward, Rose tells us a story about another generous young person and their antics abroad.

The Newtown Community & Cultural Centre would like to extend a massive high five to all the young people in Newtown, you are all rockers! Thanks for being you.

Ngā mihi nui,

Renee Rushton
newtowns.newsletter@gmail.com

Cover image by Newtown Youth, Design by Olivia Richardson (thanks heaps!)
Thanks to the support of our amazing local businesses! Please support them back!



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Ra-iwi Smith has a chat with this month's Notorious Newtowner, eight year old Isaiah Johnson.



A restless wriggle of eight year old awesome with an artful imagination, Isaiah Johnson has futuristic brightness. Sitting in sunshine in the backyard of Baobab café, owned by Rach and Gabe, Isaiah's parents, I jokingly ask: "What changes might you make to Baobab when you own it?"

Without hesitation, he replies: "Me and my friends have set up a company called Spiral Studios and we will use this [gestures at the outside area around us] as a space to make games and books." Isaiah's entrepreneurialism is also exercised every Newtown Festival when he sets up his ice-block stand in front

of Baobab, selling quench loads of ice-blocks to parched lipped festival goers. An idea astutely organised by himself to turn a tidy profit.

"What kind of music are you into?" I ask Isaiah. "Well if my dad's band was still around then it would be Beasts and Birds but right now I like Newtown Rocksteady and Swampthing." Isaiah wants to have his own band one day. When I asked him what kind of music he would like to make, he replied "I'm not sure, I haven't met the rest of my band yet." With an aspiration to learn the guitar and currently receiving drum lessons from former Trinity Roots member Ricky Gooch, his musical path sounds pretty wicked.

So holidays are almost finished. Are you looking forward to going back to school? "Yep" he replies with perk. Isaiah's favourite subjects are maths and reading. "I'm the smartest in my class's math group, the Dodecahedrons, and I'm level four for age but I'm at level 5/6 for maths in the whole Whaanau" he says, referring to his Newtown school.

Isaiah's interest in books are also something of remark. He's been slowly and systematically collecting Roald Dahls books, getting one every year around his birthday, the latest being *Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator*. Both Isaiah and his sister are also world books and atlas enthusiasts. They have been studiously learning the names of every country and their capitals in the world, using his prized book *Lonely Planet* not for Parents which gives him each capital, currency, population and languages for each country.

"Have you got much exciting stuff planned for the last of your holidays?" I ask. "Yep, my friend Soul is coming over to my place and we are going to play with Starwars lego," he says enthusiastically. And I'm suddenly reminded I'm chatting to an eight year old kid who has the radness of a rock star and the brain of a businessman but will still put the work aside for a play date with a good mate and some lego! So much more to expand upon about this clear eyed character, but we will hear from him again. For sure.



Newtown Citizens is a collection of local young people (Henri, Zane, Khalid and TTA) who embarked on a project with one of our youth workers, Chris, earlier this year. The aim of the project was for some young people to come together to do something generous for someone or something in the community. It has given these young people an opportunity to contribute to the community, and for the community to see and recognise the place of young people as contributors and participants in building our community.



The group chose to focus on helping homeless people. In their times together they have researched homelessness and visited various local organisations who are helping homeless people to volunteer and to find out about what they do. Visits have included the Zeal Street Team, the Free Store and the Wellington City Mission for Independence.

On Sunday 19th June, the group held a fundraising BBQ outside Newtown Mall, raising over \$100 for the Wellington City Mission. They loved running the BBQ and look forward to doing more

fundraisers in the future. The *Newtown Citizens* would like to thank all of the generous Newtowners who donated money or bought a sausage and also Newtown New World for the use of their BBQ!

Newtown News salutes the *Newtown Citizens* for their generous contribution to making Newtown a better place for homeless people and for showing us what a gift our young people are to us!



*Newtown Mentors is a mentoring programme run by the Newtown Community and Cultural Centre. We match up local young people (9-16) of all backgrounds with local mentors (18+). They become great friends and do fun and challenging things together. We believe that it takes a village to raise a child, and that mentors become a part of the 'village' of the young people. Mentors learn heaps in the process too! If you're interested in becoming a mentor or you know a young person who could benefit from having a mentor, please get in touch with Olivia Richardson (olivia.nccc@gmail.com).

THE ADVENTURES OF *antidisestablishmentarianism* ELLA and supercalifragilisticexpialidocious SOPHIE



Ella and Sophie are one of the mentoring partnerships of Newtown Mentors* this year. They wrote this story whilst up a tree eating apples on one of their afternoons together.

Once upon a time, Ella and Sophie walked to Carrara Park. On the way, they came across a tree. Most people come across trees, but this tree had magic apples. If you ate green ones, you could only use long words. If you ate glittery ones, you spoke only in rhyme, all of the time. The only cure for a glittery green one was to eat a glittery red apple – cure by sparkling.

Ella and Sophie loved to climb trees and eat apples. Little did they know that their afternoon tea would change their identity!

They were picking their snack from the tree, when all of a sudden, a grumpy fairy who had just woken up on the wrong side of the fruit yelled out: "Hey, you just picked my home right out of the tree!" And she began to wave her short wand (which strangely resembled an apple stem) and...Ella and Sophie didn't wait to see what happened next. They took off like Sophie on her bike, late to pick up Ella. They completely missed the sign warning about the magical properties of their delicious snacks.

Safely perched in a tree at Carrara Park, Ella and Sophie ate glittery green fruits and, looking at the roots, watching the birds doing their poops, Ella said to Sophie, "Oh deary me, I feel like Mr. Smee, and I think it's the result of our afternoon tea! Whatever shall we do? Maybe try something new? This green apple might do?"

Attacked by sudden magniloquence, afflicted by grandiloquence, feeling like delinquents, they realised they needed new nomenclature. Sophie said to Ella, "I cannot address you any longer by a name so much shorter. Antidisestablishmentarianism Ella you will now be, and Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious Sophie, that's me.

Antidisestablishmentarianism Ella, took a bite of a glittery red gala... and suddenly went back to speaking as usual. "Sophie, try this!" she cried. "And look at all the sparkles!"

Soon, the two were speaking normally, but they decided to keep their new names, and that's how they became known as Antidisestablishmentarianism Ella and Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious Sophie.



By Linnea Lindstroem

Light is coming back! Reflected in the splendid camellia flowers, bright yellow lemons and calendulas, nasturtiums and violets, the sun is blessing us again. It's time to get organised.



First off, if you already have a greenhouse or space where you sow seeds and keep seedlings, get it clean and orderly so it's easy to manage. If not, set one up: you need a space for actually doing the work (I use a garden table with an old tarp to protect it), some 5cm deep trays with drainage holes in the bottom, seed raising mix, a shaded but warm space to put them for germination, and one really sunny spot to let them grow. Both spaces need something under the trays to collect excess water.

Temperatures are still low, but a lot of seeds can finally go in now: lettuce, rocket, mizuna, radish, carrot, beetroot, peas and broad beans can go straight in the ground, while early tomatoes, zucchini, cucumber and dwarf beans absolutely need the shelter and warmth of trays inside.



Second, you can help the soil make the most of the returning sun: cover it with cloches using clear plastic or microklima cloth – be sure to weigh it down well so it doesn't blow away! It will warm up quicker and you can plant out earlier.

Third, prepare beds: when the soil is a bit warmer, and before any weeds or cover crops have gone to seed, clear the bed of old vegetation, use a fork to poke holes as deep as possible and wriggle it around to put air in there, then add 5cm of well made compost, some agricultural lime and if you have access, some good fertiliser (recommendations on my blog). Either fork it into the top 10 cm, or chop it in with a rake. Try to make it even over the whole bed.



Linnea Lindstroem is a permaculture designer and teacher based in Newtown where she also runs workerBe oasis' urban farm. She's training future urban farmers in bio-intensive methods and runs regular workshops. www.EdibleOasis.net



By Rose Sealy

We often we hear of the wayward young. Technology smitten, couch potatoes who disrespect adults and the rules that have preceded them for generations. Well I have news for you.

There's this group of people. They're into vegan potlucks, soaking the earth through bare feet, discovering the world through travel but *only* after doing their parents' bidding at university. They initially read the DomPost because that's what Victoria University is plied with, then they read the New Yorker, the Guardian and discerning left wing literature. Cynical, worldly and alive. And they're only 20 years old!

One's in Nepal having meandered through Papua New Guinea, South East Asia and Myanmar. He finished his Honours with honorable mentions, he gave away his possessions except his books and took off with a 14kg ruck sack last May.

So now it's January and after some carefree tropical months interspersed with Buddha like musings, and pained loneliness he's in the midst of the *real* thing. It's winter. There's desperation. There's very little change since the Nepal earthquakes last year. It's hit him hard and fast.

Within a few days of arriving in Nepal he signed up to volunteer at an orphanage (this was not initially on the travel cards). Orphaned children from parents killed in earthquakes, no food supplies, very little funding arriving in the right place at the right time. No gas for cooking the little food. Not to mention the long lost joys of play and stability gone in the rubble dust; evaporated childhoods. And yes, now it's cold and wet.

What does one do? This 20 year old took to Facebook, took to his friends and asked humbly for any donations which would go *straight* to the orphanage via his bank account. He was asking for \$5, perhaps \$10 if you could *really* afford it. In return you would get drawings of deities or the Himalayas; all drawn by the children of course.

So it's day two of the plea for small donations. And thus far there is \$1200, and it's still climbing. So these are 20-something year olds who have lived in privilege and security in New Zealand middle class families. Who have enjoyed the fruits of their families and who have with their young thinking added some joy back to some childhoods a hemisphere away.

I am grateful for this; grateful to know such youth. Not wayward, if anything they're bearing the burden of a heavier world with easily available information about opposing realities. If anything they have to carry more responsibility, albeit differently to previous generations, about the shockwaves of the future merging with the ripples of the past.



WHAT'S THE HAPS AUGUST



80s-Inspired Aerobics

Queer Friendly 80s inspired aerobics is hitting the dance floor at the Newtown Community Centre on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month! Kicking off at 8pm and open to everyone (especially those keen on leotards and leg-warmers from the 80s). Koha only!

Box Of Budgies at Baobab

Head down to Baobab cafe in August to check out Box Of Budgies, an exhibition of illustrated typography by Jessica Newton. Celebrating a choice mixture of vernacular, sayings, and words with alluring typography. Make sure you make it for the opening night on Thursday 4th August from 6pm, with tunes from DJ Eclectica!

Law For Lunch

Community Law Wellington and Hutt Valley will be hosting another series of Law for Lunch seminars at public libraries around Wellington on Wednesdays 12noon to 1pm. Topics include: Tenancy, 3 Aug Wellington City Library; Home Ownership, 10 Aug Wellington City Library; Homelessness, 17 Aug Wellington City Library; Social Housing, 24 Aug Kilbirnie Library; Transition to Care Facilities, 31 Aug Karori Library.

Friday nights at Baobab

Head down to Baobab on Friday nights to check some original tunes and a few favourites: Fri 5th, Ol King Cole, playing Nat King Cole and other classics; Fri 12th, Serendipity Duo featuring Mike Duffy and Jeremy Desmond; Fri 19th, The Overdogs playing old time folk; Fri 26th, Musica Ricercata, southern Italian inspired string music.

Je t'aime François

The world is ending in two hours, what do you do? In this original play - Je t'aime François - a group of friends struggle against such a dilemma. Written by the wonderful Aurore d'Hondt and co-directed with Justine Bouchard, this Wellington based amateur production brings together local and international talent to present to you, an utterly hilarious critique on some very serious topics. (With English subtitles for those not fluent in French!)

At the Newtown Community Centre, August 25th and 26th at 6pm, August 28th at 3pm. Koha entry!

Plant & Ceramic Pop Up

For one day only, check out some of the some of the best plants and ceramics in Wellington! Featuring plants and ceramics from Lush Lane, Wundaire, Tamago Ceramics, The Tailors Wife, Paige Jarman, Of Noble Nature, Flora Waycott Design, Mayan Man, The Chocolate Bar and Rich Coffee Roasters. Get your ceramic and plant fix and a tasty beverage while you're at it. Cash and Eftpos accepted. Aug 7, 11am - 3pm, Unit 28, 369 Adelaide Road.

Newtown Residents' Association

The Newtown Residents Association is a group of residents, business owners and people who live, work, play or are just interested in issues relating to Newtown and the surrounding suburbs. They respond to local issues, making submissions to Wellington City Council and other bodies when these are called for and being a hub for community consultation, providing support for many local initiatives. Drop in to their next meeting on Monday 15th August 7.30pm at Newtown Hall, 71 Daniell Street. Everyone welcome!

Early Years Parenting

Learn how to lay the building blocks for a great future for your kids! Toolbox Parenting is hosting a 6 week course for parents of children up to 6 years of age. Running on Monday nights from 8 Aug to 12 Sept at Island Bay Community Centre. \$75 individual, \$110 couple (subsidies are available, and free for grandparents raising grandchildren, foster carers, whanau caregivers, home for life and adoptive parents) For more info, contact Liz on 022 185 5357, or visit theparentingplace.com.