

# NEWTOWN NEWS

Tō koutou makahīni hapori: mō Newtown, nā ngā  
tāngata o Newtown / Your community zine: for  
Newtown, by Newtowners



Nā Te Whare Hapori o Newtown / Brought to you by the  
Newtown Community & Cultural Centre

**HUI-TANGURU /  
FEBRUARY 2022**

# KIA ORA NEWTOWN

Kia ora tātou / hey everyone!

I'm writing this from home instead of the community centre, because I woke up with a sniffle and a sore throat yesterday, and although it felt a bit ridiculous, I knew I had to go and get a Covid test (spoiler alert, I have since received my result and I don't have Covid!). The words "Newtown Community Centre cluster" haunt my dreams and the idea of being responsible for others getting this disease, if I could have done anything to prevent it, is pretty scary.

Especially scary now that we have Covid in Wellington for what really is the first time ever - to keep our community safe, I'm keen to be super cautious, even if it sometimes feels a bit embarrassing cause truly you probably are just a bit overtired and hayfever-y and you opened that dusty box and maybe swimming in the ocean liiiike 5 times in one day and never really drying off is not super smart??? But hey, it might also have been Covid from that person who coughed near you in the supermarket - so better safe than sorry.

We're lucky at the centre that we require Vaccine Passes, because it means that 1. we can all be safer (as you're less likely to catch Covid, as well as less likely to get seriously ill) and 2. it means we can safely keep running events and classes. I'm particularly looking forward to our Free Soup Fridays re-starting in February! (see What's the Happs for more details).

Remember to keep an eye on the Locations of Interest ([bitly.com/locationsofinterest](https://bitly.com/locationsofinterest)), keep scanning in, get boosted, wear a mask whenever you can & get tested if you're sick. Take care out there!

Ngā mihi,  
Ellie

Cover by Don Newt McDonald (see artist statement in the Creative Corner.)  
Thanks for the support of our amazing local businesses! Please support 'em back!



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

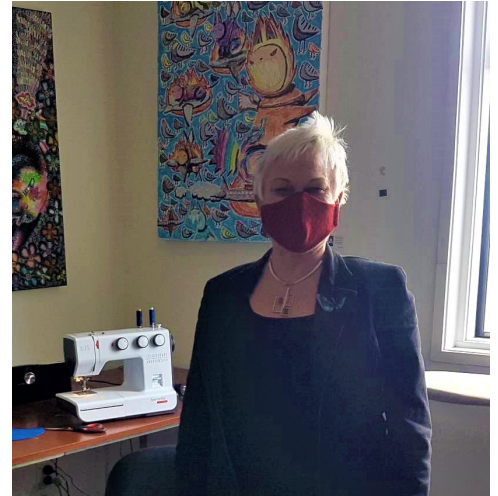
# Notorious NEWTowner

*Mari and Ellie kōrero yarn bombing, mask making and queer community at the community centre's sewing machine*

Originally from a farm in the Waikato, crafter-extraordinaire Mari has lived on the border of Newtown and Berhampore for the last 6 years-ish. She's often in the community centre, using our mask making station to sew fabric masks. Even if you don't know Mari, it's quite possible you've seen some of her creations - maybe a brightly coloured mask on someone's face, or some of her famous 'yarn-bombing' creations!

Making masks was (as you'd expect) born out of Covid, "It was devastating and shocking, but I had sewing skills and masks are keeping us alive."

She sews masks from brightly patterned op-shopped or gifted fabric for friends, family and the community - "I give some to Aunty Dana's, [the Gender Minorities Aotearoa op shop]. It's good to give back to my queer community. I've given some to people here at the Community Centre. Reusable masks help the environment as well which is important."



Yarn bombing, (less expectedly!) also came out of Covid "I didn't know what to do with myself during lockdown!" Yarn bombing is "a craft placed on a piece of civic architecture - think seats, lampposts, telephone poles... a tube gets sewn around a pole, then I add a knitted faces, eyes, feet etc...I've done a lot on the waterfront recently and some kids have decided that they are taniwha guardians of the harbour - I was delighted!" This beautiful, fun, free public art lasts between weeks and months.

Mari learnt to sew back on the farm - "there weren't many clothes in shops, so we made our own." Although Mari learned useful skills and enjoyed the outdoor vibes of farm life, where she grew up wasn't always a safe place. "It was never okay to be queer...I've been hit and smacked in the head. It was the most dangerous thing in the world to hold my girlfriend's hand." That's something Mari loves about Newtown "I'm always safe. Nobody bats an eyelid at how queer I am."

Because of this, Mari takes joy in walking around Newtown. "I've got 3 friends - I call them friends - who I only see at around 9pm in Newtown. We always say hello. I love that feeling of being known. It makes Newtown feel like home." Mari is also known by the staff at Baobab - why becomes clear as she raves about the fruit muffin "it's like a whole meal, and they change the fruit regularly so it's always exciting!") "I'm white and I'm just one of the many colours and types of people here. My life is richer because of the diversity of Newtown."

Mari's also a fan of the community centre, admitting that although she first came in because her sewing machine was broken, she's still here now, even though her own sewing machine is now fixed - "the centre is a treasure and I've felt so welcome here".

So say kia ora to Mari if you see her walking Newtown and make sure to check out her creations on the waterfront (plus I challenged her to yarn bomb Newtown, so fingers crossed for that)! And if you'd like to sew your own mask, get in touch with us!



# DID YOU KNOW ABOUT DID?

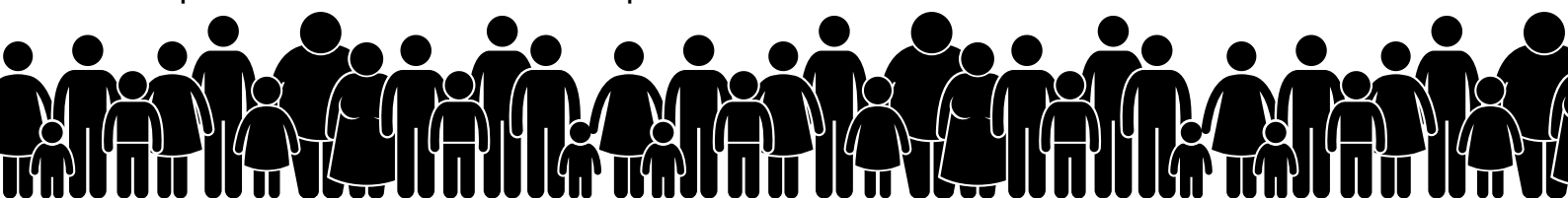
**By Te Kāhui.** *DID* you know that Feb 23rd is System Pride Day? To celebrate, here is a bit of info about DID (Dissociative Identity Disorder)!

As Child Psychologists understand it, until about the age of 9yo, children are actively forming a sense of self and personal identity. If that process of integrating their various interests, personality responses, skills etc is interrupted by severe or ongoing trauma, sometimes instead of consolidating into one 'self', a child's multiple variations might solidify separately instead. This results in the experience of living as a system of partitioned selves, usually with strong dissociative barriers and possible symptoms such as amnesia, derealisation and depersonalisation. 'Systems' (diagnosed with DID or other dissociative disorders) are conservatively estimated to make up a huge 1-3% of the total population, but it is inherently a covert disorder (designed to be hidden) so even though you have almost certainly crossed paths with one, there's a good chance you'd never know.

Kia ora! Maisy here, on behalf of Te kāhui, a system of 70+ individuals of different ages, genders, sexualities, preferences, opinions, and skillsets. Our hope is that in sharing this article we might contribute to breaking down the massive stigma associated with these disorders, and wave a wee 'hello!' to any other systems who might be reading this!

It's only pretty recently that we discovered we're not in fact the singular person we have been masquerading as. That's pretty common - many systems are only uncovered well into adulthood, although the fracturing that causes it can only occur during childhood. As a process this has meant joining together lots of dots traced across our body's lifespan, a lot of 'ohhhhh!' moments. Even though we were mostly unaware of one another, there were tonnes of clues once we knew what we were looking at.

And now, a shoutout to our amazing therapist! We've been in therapy for about 15 years, and really credit the (relative!) smoothness of transitioning into living comfortably together as the rather-large-and-dysfunctional-but-loving whānau that is te kāhui, to this privilege. If I could offer any advice to someone suspecting that they might be experiencing multiplicity (or honestly, anyone ever, including you!) I'd say seek out a good therapist. There are loads of great low-income options around Pōneke! Super worth it.





Benson (8yo boy, loves data, lists, musicals) wants to include a very short, non-comprehensive cross-section of our crew ("how else will they feel like we've met?"), so here we go:

- Cat: a cat. Minding their own business, likes sunshine and non-interactive company.
- A: 70yo man, a worrier, loves flowers and watercolours.
- Meg: 26yo, Scottish, likes David Bowie, previously a bartender
- Violet: 38, hardcase, smoker, married to Iris
- Percy: loves gardening, Spring is her favourite time of year

Wishing you a very happy System Pride Day!

Find out more about Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) at the Mental Health Foundation: [bit.ly/3H6Zz0j](https://bit.ly/3H6Zz0j)

# HISTORY FILES

**By Chris Rabey.** Did you know, in the 1920's there was a Newtown West School, at the bottom of Hutchison Road, and a Newtown East School, located in Douro Avenue, adjacent to the Town Belt. Both had playgrounds reserved for them from January 1927. Check out the newspaper cutting!

## Playground on Town Belt.

A request made to the City Council some little time ago by a deputation representing the Education Board, for a portion of the Town Belt adjacent to Douro avenue to be reserved as a children's playground for the Newtown East School, has been granted, and the arrangements made between the board and the Winter Show authorities in connection with the use of a play area for the Newtown West School, near Hutcheson road, have been approved by the council.

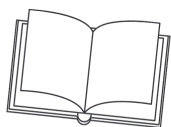


Someone sent in a picture of this awesome homemade birdfeeder - an old plastic bottle with a hole cut in it and a stick for the bird to sit on while they eat. It's hung up high on a power pole and is full of birdseed.

Check out this info from DOC for some tips on attracting native birds back into the 'burb! They're more fans of fruit  
[bit.ly/3rE0gZV](https://bit.ly/3rE0gZV)



# FIND YOUR NEXT READ



WITH TE WHARE PUKAPUKA O OMĀRŌRŌ /  
NEWTOWN LIBRARY



**Phosphorescence** By Julia Baird.

Library link: [bit.ly/3q6057c](https://bit.ly/3q6057c)

Review by Sarita Christensen

Illustration by Milly Hampton

If you have felt comforted by the quote "take time to smell the roses", then this is one for you. This memoir is a cleverly crafted mix between memoir and science, reminding us that we can always find light in the dark.



Phosphorescence is the awe-inspiring glow that nature gives us, found within the water, sand, bugs, plants, and rocks. Baird reminds us that although sighting phosphorescence in our natural world is perhaps a once-in-a-lifetime experience, we can find moments of joy and light within our every day.

Experiencing wonder and awe can contribute to better mental health as we take time to appreciate what connects us to each other and what grounds us to our natural world. When we are present and live consciously, we are more able to flourish in our day-to-day lives because we have chosen to make life happen with us, not just to us.

Baird takes us on a journey of raising children, surviving cancer, her academic pursuits, reconciling religion with feminism, and life in Australia and New York City. Through her experience we are offered a commentary about looking up and outside of ourselves to attune into the things that really matter and discovering reasons to LIVE the life we all deserve. Big rec!!!

# CREATIVE CORNER

## COVER ARTIST STATEMENT

Don Newt McDonald: "I take about 200 pictures a day – of the good and the bad. Anything of note! I like to take them to prove it wasn't my imagination or my dreams."

Here's another of Don's photos from Newtown, entitled 'End of kōwhai season'.



## RHYMING ADVICE



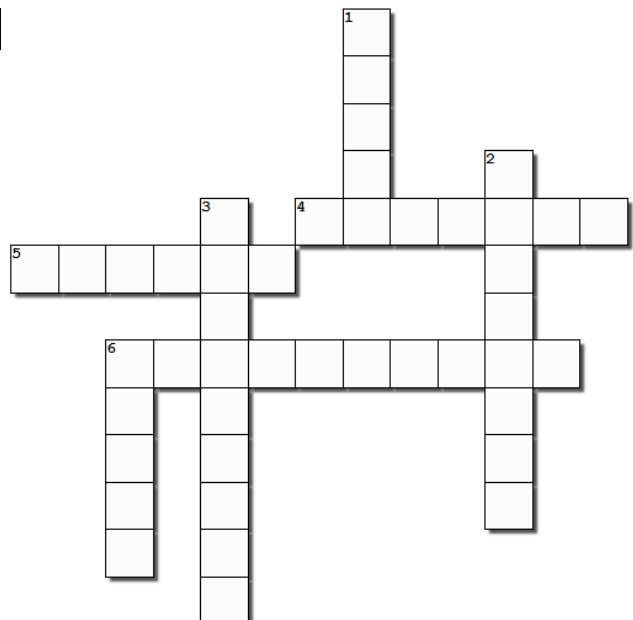
A limerick by Michael Dunningham

There once was an old poet from Italy  
Whose writing had vexed him so bitterly,  
That he paid quite a price  
To get rhyming advice  
Which was tipple and whittle away wittily.

## TE REO MĀORI CROSSWORD

Do you know the Te Reo  
Māori for these kupu / words?

1. Ocean (5)
2. Tramp (5)
3. New year (3,3)
4. February (3-7)
5. Māori new year (in June) (8)
6. January
7. Summer (7)





# WHAT'S THE HAPPS?

**Please note:** You need a Vaccine Pass for all listings.

## **AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, 2A GREEN ST**

**Hang out/Hot desk at the centre!** Been to our new(ish) space yet? We've got a mean as drop-in room with free internet, a legit espresso machine (BYO coffee!), great vibes & friendly people. BYO device & park up for the day to work "from home" from here! Open during office hours. Koha accepted!

**Community Law drop in – First & Third Wednesday of the month (2nd & 16th Feb).** Free confidential legal advice with a rōia / lawyer from Community Law. No appointment necessary [bit.ly/3G7KM3Z](https://bit.ly/3G7KM3Z)

**Co-dependents Anonymous, Thursdays, 7-8pm.** For anyone with a desire for healthy loving relationships [www.coda.org](http://www.coda.org)

**Paul Eagle MP Electorate Clinic - Weekly on Wednesdays 1-3pm.** Do you have issues with housing, immigration or anything else you need to discuss with your local MP's office? Drop in to the clinic!

**Free Soup Fridays! Fridays 1-2pm.** All welcome for a free bowl of veggie soup with the community. You could even prevent food waste and grab some free kai from the Community Fridge while you're here.

**Be a part of Newtown's history!** We are putting together a time capsule to be placed under the floor of our newly renovated centre and we need your help to fill it with anything that is Newtown related! Got something to share? Get in touch!

## **GET IN TOUCH**

[www.newtowncommunity.org.nz](http://www.newtowncommunity.org.nz) /  
[www.facebook.com/Newtown.Community.Centre](https://www.facebook.com/Newtown.Community.Centre)  
04 389 4786 / [info@newtowncommunity.org.nz](mailto:info@newtowncommunity.org.nz)

## **AT NEWTOWN HALL, 71 DANIELL STREET**

**Fringe Festival: Community, 19th, 20th, 26th & 27th Feb, 7pm – 8pm.** A delightful poignant comedy drama about love, family, and embracing change. An entertaining and timely solo that explores the importance of community in all our lives. Koha entry! **Need to book at:** [fringe.co.nz/show/community](http://fringe.co.nz/show/community)

## **AT SMART NEWTOWN, 9-11 CONSTABLE STREET**

**Introduction to Computing Course.** Learn basic computer skills. Intended for people with little or no computer knowledge. (9.30-11.30am on Fridays, Feb 25 - April 8) [bit.ly/3H4Y02F](https://bit.ly/3H4Y02F)

**Microsoft Office Level 1 Course: Beginner.** Learn useful features of Microsoft Word, Excel, and Powerpoint. (9.30 - 11.30am on Wednesdays, Feb 23 - April 6) [bit.ly/33SdNDP](https://bit.ly/33SdNDP)

**Microsoft Office Level 2 Course: Intermediate.** For those who have some basic experience of using Microsoft Office, this class will help you improve your skills. (4pm - 6pm on Mondays, Feb 21 - April 4) [bit.ly/3rXkDQk](https://bit.ly/3rXkDQk)

**Staying Safe Online Workshop: Online Shopping, Thursday Feb 24th 3-6pm.** Learn how to stay safe when buying things on the web, how to identify threats, recognise scams & protect your information. [bit.ly/32yyxQe](https://bit.ly/32yyxQe)

**Staying Safe Online Workshop: Cyber Security, Thursday 17th Feb 3-6pm.** A wide overview of digital dangers (like viruses, trojans, and worms), how to identify them, avoid malicious activity, and secure your devices. [bit.ly/3H7UW5Z](https://bit.ly/3H7UW5Z)