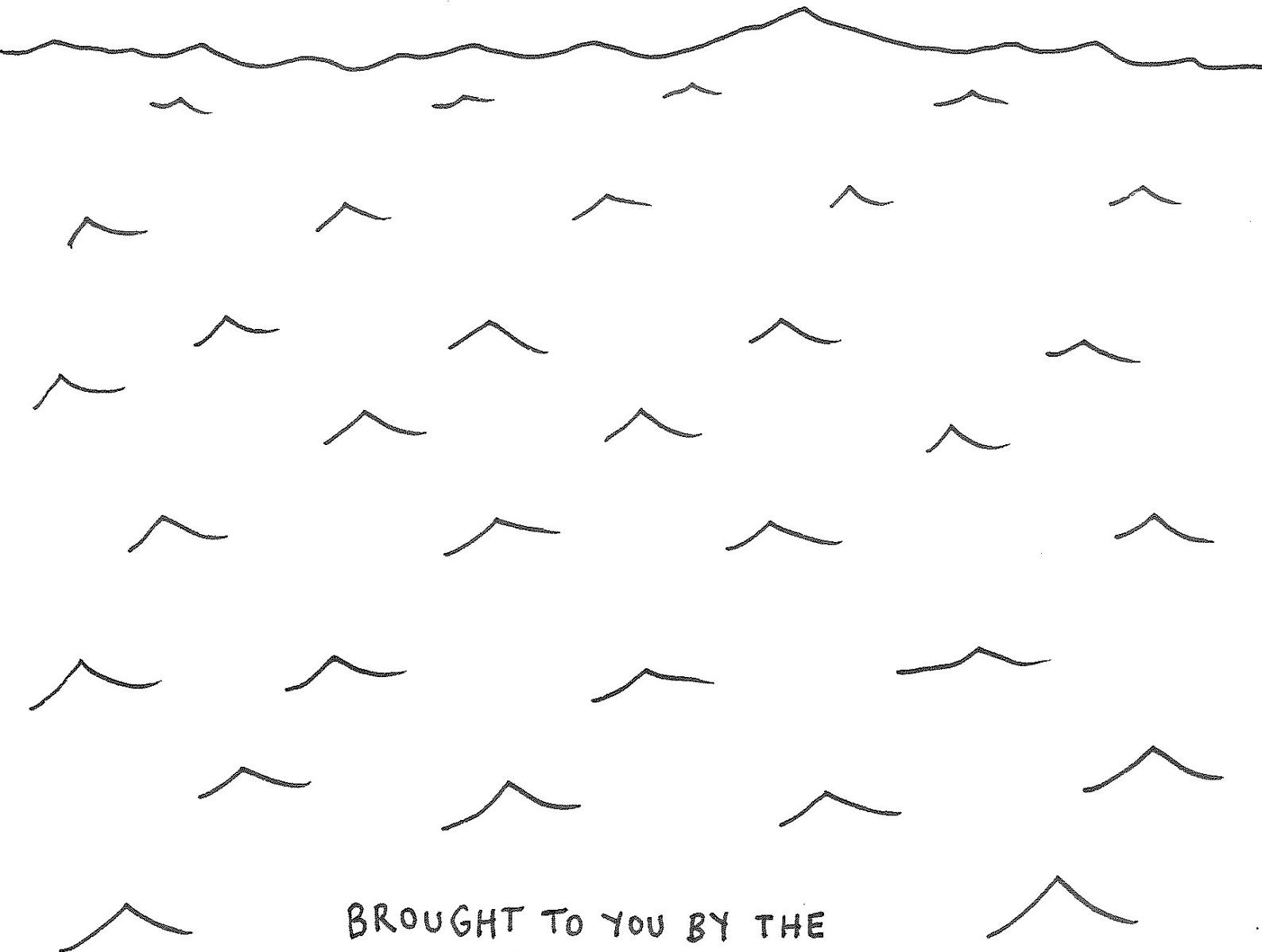


NEWTOWN NEWS

HUI-TANGURU/FEBRUARY 2021



BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE
NEWTOWN COMMUNITY CENTRE

Kia ora Newtown

Kia ora e hoa mā! Hello friends!

The kaupapa of this edition is te moana / the ocean! The ocean is basically my favourite thing and summer snorkels are something I look forward to all year. But oops, I went and broke my leg in two places on a solo-tramp back in December and have been in plaster ever since, ARGH!

The only highlight is that my cast is hot pink and has gold sparkles on it (yes, the hospital said the sparkles are usually reserved for children, and yes I am in my 30s, what about it?) The other highlight is that it should be coming off near the beginning of Hui-Tanguru / February, so I'll be back in the ocean soon I HOPE!

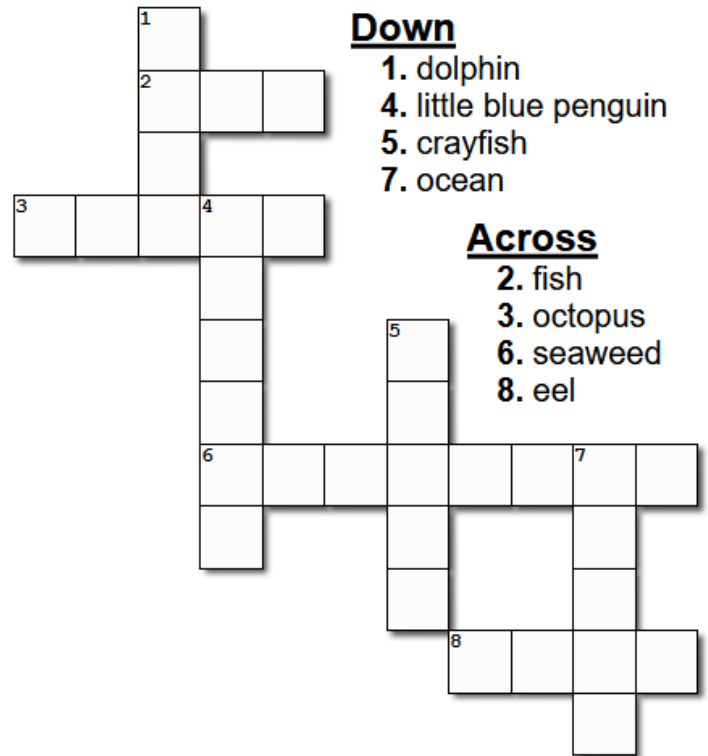
To tide me over (geddit?!) I've LOVED reading the contributions for this issue - from a short story, to poetry, to ocean-protecting knowledge from Te Kawa.

I reckon the ocean is so great for mental health - whether you're sitting on the beach, snorkelling or having a swim. Get in there, and PLEASE tell me all about it!

Ngā mihi,
Ellie Clayton
ellie@newtowncommunity.org.nz

Te Moana i te reo Māori

Do you know the Māori kupu
for these ocean related words?



Down

- 1. dolphin
- 4. little blue penguin
- 5. crayfish
- 7. ocean

Across

- 2. fish
- 3. octopus
- 6. seaweed
- 8. eel

ANSWERS:
Down: 1-Aihe 4-Kororā 5-Kōura 7-Moana
Across: 2-Ika 3-Whēke 6-Rimurimu 8-Tuna

Cover art by rad human & artist Lenny Zook!

Check out their work at:

[instagram.com/lenny.zook](https://www.instagram.com/lenny.zook)

Thanks for the support of
our amazing local businesses!
Please support 'em back!



Peoples

MOON

Notorious NEWTowner

Tina Wulsi and Ellie meet up at the Community Centre, after eating a delicious bowl of soup at our Free Soup Friday (12-1 at the Community Centre, every Friday!)

I see Tina every week, when she comes in to volunteer for our Free Soup Friday! She's a total hero, helping (with a crew of other lovely committed volunteers) with set-up and tidy-up and generally making things run smoothly so we can all have a delicious kai! So she's just finished the last of the washing up when she comes to join me in the office and we talk all things Newtown!

Tina's family connections to Newtown run deep. Her uncle ran a fruit shop here, and then a grocery store on Wilson Street (where Moshim's was until recently). Her cousins lived on Wilson Street and her grandmother lived up on the hill overlooking Newtown. Her sister washed dishes at the hospital, and Tina's mother sadly died there - "I hated the hospital after that" says Tina.

Little did she know, that later in her life, she would train to be a nurse and end up working in the very same ward, and in the hospital for 20 years! In fact, the hospital is now one of Tina's favourite things about Newtown "the atrium is pretty special and the outside spaces are nice as well." About the work, she says "Shifts are hard, but it was also exciting. You'd never know how your day was going to be - who you'd be working with, what patients you'd have. You met amazing people you never would otherwise and it was always a privilege to be a part of that person's life for a short while."

Engaging with people is a huge part of what Tina loves and what drives her to do things like volunteering at our community soup lunch and at the Citizen's Advice Bureau. "You learn a lot about the problems people are dealing with - it can be sad. And technology changes mean more and more people are being excluded." Tina now works at a retirement home in Newtown and says "unless you actively make a connection with the residents, you're just a part of the background". Tina brings her piano skills to the residents - getting the singers and music loving amongst them involved.

We get briefly interrupted at this point and Tina graciously leaves, so I can suss out a question from a member of the public. She goes to play the baby-grand piano in the Theatre (meaning I have a lovely musical accompaniment to my mahi!). When she returns, holding a piece of sheet music, she says "I played this exact piece on that same piano about 30 years ago!" the Orphans Club, a group of Wellington musicians used to play at the Centre. How cool!

Tina's message to Newtown is simple, but one that she clearly lives by: "Be kind, be safe." Come to Free Soup Friday one week, and you might even get the privilege of being a part of Tina's life for a while.



Portrait of Tina by Amanda Johnson

Te Moana *by Rosa Martelletti*

The fire was warm and provided a light for the people gathered around it. Gem held her hands out, smiling at the sense of cosiness it provided. But Pete just looked at his shoes.

"I'm bored," he groaned. "Can we do something?"

"We are doing something." Gem pointed out.

"I meant a better thing."

"Okay," Gem replied, trying not to look hurt. "Grandpa, why don't you tell us a story?" The old man looked up and thought about that request.

"A story? Well okay. Have you ever heard of a Toipahautea Waitaki?"

Pete replied, "No." at the same time Gem said earnestly, "Of course!"

"They were whales with a white diamond embedded on their forehead. They lived over 27 million years ago and are now extinct." she finished and smiled to herself.

"Well, I've met one." The grandpa said. The kids looked confused.

"How old are you?" Pete asked.

"Would you like the story or not?" They both nodded.

"It was when I was a little boy, but I still remember it like it was yesterday."

"It was late at night, and I was woken up by a morepork. I could hear the rushing of waves as I lay in bed, trying to sleep. Eventually a few hours went by and I knew I wasn't getting any sleepier. I heard a gull now, cawing very quietly in the distance. They must have had a late night as well. All those sounds enticed me. I got out of bed and slipped on my shoes."

"My dad's place is right next to the beach, so at 2am in the morning I went for a walk until my sneakers filled with sand. I kept going, to a log right in front of the sea. The water rushed past my shoes, and I smiled. I loved the beach. The feeling of the sand in your toes, the sound of the waves crashing, and the shimmer as the sun reflected across the water. The brightness of the stars managed to recreate that effect, but it was even more beautiful as thousands of little bright lights bounced off the waves and created a beautiful painting. I was drawn to the water's beauty. I kept going as it went up to my knees. I kept walking as it reached my thighs. I wandered in up to my chest and then I swam."

"At that moment I didn't care about anything. All I could feel was the water rushing past my face, the waves ringing in my ears, the brightness of the moon. I don't know how far out to sea I was when I opened my eyes. I couldn't see the coast. The cooling water was soothing me. But I didn't know which way was land, and I didn't know if I had the energy to make it. All I saw was water, then panic kicked in."

"I thought about what I could do. Not much. My thoughts became more and more panicked. I started crying. The tears stained my cheeks. The waves were no longer beautiful. The reflected light that I thought was so stunning now looked like evil spirits, floating on the sea towards me. Then I saw it."

A large shape under the water. It was coming towards me. I braced myself for injury or even worse, but then I saw it. Whether it was the moon or pure magic, the whale had some heavenly aura surrounding their body. Somehow I knew it was friendly. As it got closer, its face came into view. We locked eyes and I smiled. I felt a great warmth within me, and it is the best feeling I have ever felt. When I saw that whale, I knew everything would be okay."

"I couldn't mistake the diamond on its head, as it was directly in front of me as I sat down on its neck, laughing as we sped through the water. I put my hand in and watched the water dance around it. The coast came closer and closer until it was right at my feet. I slid off the whale and watched it swim towards the horizon. I smiled and waved, though it couldn't see me. That night when I went to sleep, I had dreams of a spirit whale with a white diamond on its forehead."

They sat silently and played through the story in their heads.

"Wow," breathed Pete. "That's amazing."

"Yes, it is," his grandpa agreed with a chuckle. "Now, you guys need to get some sleep."

The old man awoke and looked up to the night sky. The moon was shining brightly, and he could hear the moreporks calling. He got up and put on his shoes.

The beach was quiet, as it was that night all those years ago. As he walked to the water, he saw the shimmer of the reflecting stars. He could hear the water, beating against the shore. He walked down the beach and stood as the waves lapped at his feet. And with a final smile he slid into the water.



Back in Hakihea/December, a group of us from the Newtown Community and Cultural Centre strolled over to local fave Cafe Laz, for drinks and a feed for our end of year dinner. One human was still eating their kai as 20 of us poured into the room (we apologised for taking over!!) and tolerated our yammering, pulling crackers and making speeches to thank outgoing board member Rick for his mahi (You rock Rick). After the person left, one of the Cafe Laz staff came and told us that this mysterious stranger had paid for all of our drinks, just leaving the words 'Merry Christmas and thanks for the mahi!' to pass on to us. We were overwhelmed and delighted by the incredibly generous act of Newtown Niceness, and wish we could have thanked them in person! But for now we will just write about it. Thank you, kind human!

'Rukua te ruku i ta te kawau e ruku ai'

by Te Kawa Robb

Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāi Te Rangi

Mai te Moananui a Kiwa, ki Te Moana a Toi, he uri tēnei ō ngā wai tai, ngā au moana, ngā wekeweke e whiriwhiriā tātou o ngāi moana. From the Pacific Ocean to The Bay of Plenty, I am a descendant of the ocean waters, the currents, the tentacles that bind us as peoples of the ocean.

Some of my earliest memories were of the ocean. Both parents were ocean people - dad is an avid fisher, and mum spent much of her childhood on the ocean with her adoptive father, a fisher by trade. My mother used to call me 'the smallest turtle', because like the turtle in Lynley Dodd's book, I was always trying to get to the ocean - I still have 'to the sea, to the sea' calling in my head. While I can still remember the sting of chlorine in the old concrete pool at Newtown School, learning to swim built my confidence to be in the moana.



Growing up in rentals close to the wild south coast, the sound, the smell, the taste, and the wairua of the moana was forever embracing my younger sisters and me. Most weekends we could be found exploring the coastline around Kirikiri-tatangi (area near Seatoun), or in the shallows of the reef in what is now Taputeranga Marine Reserve.

These experiences in the ocean, exploring the rockpools, diving the reefs, experiencing the power of the swell and currents but feeling completely at home and safe, formed the foundation for my life now - working as a scientist and a student, weaver, and sharer of traditional knowledge connected to the ocean. It was an opportunity to sail aboard waka hourua, Ngahiraka Mai Tawhiti, from Rēkohu (Chatham Is.) to Tūranganui-a-Kiwa (Gisborne) in 2016 that solidified my focus on creating opportunities for our younger generations to learn ocean-based knowledge and skills.

We create opportunities to learn how to harvest sustainably from the coastline and the ocean, how to monitor environmental changes and inform responses, how to sail, dive and swim, learn about the various atua and their whakapapa to build deeper personal connections, and research historic Māori place names to inform restoration and resilience actions.

All of these are critical tools to have as we face an uncertain future with a changing climate, and important in understanding our role and inherited responsibilities as Māori to protect and remain connected to the moana. This is the knowledge I want our daughter, Te Taiawatea (the tides of a new dawn) and her generation to grow up knowing and being nourished by.

‘Rukua te ruku i ta te kawau e ruku ai’

Dive [for knowledge] as the Kawau [shag] would dive.

A whakataukī from our people that speaks of diving deep to seek out knowledge, looking where others can't, to attain that which is there but may be hidden from the surface.

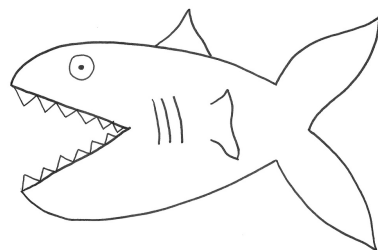
Connect to Te Kawa Robb through Twitter and Instagram @tekawa_robb, and through his consulting company, Mauri Ora Consulting, www.mauriora.org

Ocean

What do you seek from this
magnificence?
Settle for fancy pebbles
Beauty of sun and skies
Or view from beach
Touch of sand on your skin
Or adrenaline of waves
Tides which can take you to Moon
Diving for corals
Or pearls?
Quest of answers of choices
Or destination
What do you seek from this
magnificence?
Who longs for stories, hustle
Of rivers and Himalayas
What do you call this longing?
Beyond age and hour
With a little mind
Illusioned by choices
What do you seek from this
magnificence?

Srishti Moudgil
srishtimoudgil.com

Jill



I wish I could like our Jill bake
Especially her carrot cake
The recipe she said was easy
Left us all a little queszy
Likewise notes for soups and stews
I gave my poor old dog the spews!
Made up with these hands of mine
Tasted more like turpentine
the fairy cakes glossy domes
we used the lot as paving stones
and as my creamy porridge went
looks a lot like wet cement
I never can just get it right
Is it Celsius or farenheight?
The fire alarm works too well
we use it as the dinner bell
I should advice from my Mum take
just get the lot from Muffin Bake!

Michelle Rose

What's the Happs?

At Newtown Community & Cultural Centre (corner of Colombo & Rintoul)

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) are relocating!

Due to the upcoming renovations at the Newtown Community Centre, the Citizens Advice Bureau is moving out – for just over one year! From the 15/2/2021 you'll find them at their new location, the old 'Kia Ora Newtown' space at 6 Constable Street. You can still reach Newtown CAB at 04 389 3813 and newtown@cab.org.nz - Other classes and services will remain at the Community Centre, (including Justice of the Peace services) until April 11th. Find out more about the renovations at bit.ly/OurTownNewtown

Newtown Craftivism Collective Wednesdays in February, 5.30pm-8pm

Through craftivism (craft+activism) we can speak up about issues that are important to us – using our art, hands, craft and love! Bring your own fabric/stitching-based projects to work on. bit.ly/3a6VM3w

Free Legal Advice Clinic, Wednesday 3rd February, 11am-12noon

No appointment necessary, just drop in with your legal questions and get help from a qualified lawyer thanks to Community Law Wellington & Hutt Valley. Every month on the first Wednesday!

How Does it Make You Feel? Feb 13th 1.30-2.30pm

Come and talk about mental health and what's on your mind, with Shakti Youth. More details here: bit.ly/3ojdRRh

At Smart Newtown (9/11 Constable St)

Free Computer Classes, various dates/times

Smart Newtown provides free computing classes for community members. Various day/time and course options - starting the week of Feb 8th. For more info and to register contact : www.smartnewtown.org.nz / 04 3800 143 / smartnewtown@gmail.com

At Newtown Hall (71 Daniell Street)

Interoceptive Yoga Thursdays Feb 4th - Feb 25th, 9-10am

Trauma informed slow-paced yoga classes with a focus on functional movement, choice making and interoceptive embodiment. \$12 casual/\$40 for the course. Contact: hollysandra@hotmail.com bit.ly/3ooHZe8

Newtown Residents Association Meeting, Monday February 15th, 7.30pm-9pm

Join this group of residents, business owners and people who work & play in Newtown, who care about the community and local issues. All are welcome at the meetings! More info at: newtown.org.nz

Elsewhere in Newtown

Scottish Country Dancing, Thursdays, 7.30pm Feb-Nov @ Newtown School, Mein St

Scottish Country dancing is a fun social activity that improves your fitness. No partner required. BYO shoes. \$6/session. Contact: Margaret 021 267 0975 / capitalcityscdc@gmail.com

Newtown Vintage, Craft and Art market, Sat 6th February, 9am-2pm, Newtown School, Mein St

Specialising in vintage, preloved and thrift goods. Locally made arts, crafts and sustainable items. Ditch fast fashion and mass-produced items and support local! bit.ly/2KN8Suh

Capital Classic Track & Field Meeting, Saturday Feb 20th 4-6.45pm, Newtown Stadium

26 events. See top National and local athletes in action in this (hopefully) Olympic year! Adults \$10, Students/Children \$5.

In the ocean

Free Community Snorkel days - 7th Feb but weather dependent!

Mountains to Sea Wellington run free guided community snorkel days around Wellington! The next one is Saturday 7th Feb. No equipment needed, come down to try it out and see the ocean from a different perspective! Keep an eye on the event for changes bit.ly/39xPJGe

Get in touch

www.newtowncommunity.org.nz
www.facebook.com/Newtown.Community.Centre
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