

Newtown News

STOLEN
LAND

People Power

NEVER BE DECEIVED
THAT THE RICH
WILL PERMIT YOU
TO VOTE AWAY
THEIR WEALTH

- LUCY PARSONS

PROTECT SACRED

WHENUA

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NOT
BOMBS

YOUR LIFE

**Your free community zine, for Newtown by Newtowners:
Brought to you by the Newtown Community Centre.**

Mahuru / September 2020

Kia ora Newtown

Kia ora e hoa mā!

We planned this issue in the good ol' days of early Hereturikōkā / August - back when the election was due on Mahuru / September 19th, and we were still at level one. So this edition is pretty focused on the election / people power. We hope this will help ya fix up your decisions, in time for the Whiringa-ā-nuku / October 17th election.

People power changes the world - like the people who stood up against arms dealers in our city and got the annual Weapons Expo cancelled, the land protectors at Ihumātao who got development halted (though this is a ongoing struggle), everyone who has ever stood up to a racist in the street, or walked with a person to the bus stop if they've seen them being yelled at. Elections are a part of that, but I strongly believe we shouldn't leave the mahi of making the world better just to politicians!

When I think about laws and politics, I always try to remember that abominations like slavery were once legal, and normal things like being gay, or safely accessing abortions, have until VERY recently been illegal. I think things can get pretty stale in the Beehive (and in government around the world), and people power - the marches, the occupations, the letters - makes those changes happen. So don't think you're done after Oct 17th!!

A beautiful moment for people power recently was the decolonisation of a local street name! Until very recently, 'Te Wharepouri Street' - on the border of Newtown and Berhampore - was mislabelled as 'Waripori Street' - a corruption of the name of a leading rangatira / chief of the local iwi, Te Ati Awa. Mana whenua & residents of the street called for the change and the Council listened! I see this decolonisation of names as a (very) small step along the street to a decolonised Aotearoa.

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



'People Power' cover art by the amazing Laura Biding
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

Ellie and Mire met in Mire's art, embroidery and bunting filled studio at the Community Centre!

Mire is originally from Lima, the capital of Peru, where she has spent 32 of her 33 years so far. She left it all behind to come to Aotearoa, and has been thriving here in Newtown. She is the community centre Artist-in residence, bringing big smiles, energy, art and brightly coloured hats to the NCCC most days!

She has been interested in art forever - "my games as a kid were always creating things...my grandmother had a huge tower of old school women's magazines with clothes patterns in them. It I was amazed to find out that you could just make stuff yourself - I knitted my own dolls, sewed jeans by hand - that's pretty painful!"

Mire started out working for a gallery, but found herself drawn towards street art more than galleries. "At first it was just a hobby I loved, but I ended up producing 3 street art festivals and planning new murals across the country!" Mire sees a connection between street art and people power "street makes a neighbourhood our space, not just the government's space - the artists invest their time, money and passion to empower themselves and others. We live in a world where companies putting huge ads are totally accepted, but putting a person who lives in the neighbourhood putting a sticker up is illegal. They're our places and we should be a part of creating them."

Newtown reminds Mire of her old neighbourhood in Lima. "It's full of diversity, people expressing themselves - it motivates creativity and gives you ideas. Newtown is alive, it has its own personality." Mire is happy to have a space to work here in the Community Centre "I've learnt a lot from the people and space, and now I'm trying to use embroidery to make political things - it's an awesome way to work, because I can put myself into the work." If you've read the Newtown News recently you would have seen Mire's beautiful political embroidery featured!

Next for Mire is combining her love of street art and embroidery with a patchworked embroidery mural: "The idea of fabric street art is to make real the concept of ownership of the place - I expect we'll put it up and then people will take parts of it away with them. People can change the shape of their place." She's also involved in screening some Latin American political films (check out What's the Happs on the back page for more details!)

Mire's fave spots are Moon, the Ramen Shop, the Latin Collective Mural and (yay!) the Community Centre. But basically she just loves Newtown - her message to Newtowners is: "keep doing what you're doing, your community is great and people are inspired here! Be open and share with others who want to do the same." Mire is usually at the Community Centre in the afternoons, drop in and say hola!



Four Tips to Survive the Election

By Kassie Hartendorp

1) Remember that for every annoying politician, there are 1000s of incredible people who care about the world

Election season is the time of drama in the news and big blaring billboards around Newtown and the city. Sometimes it seems like parliament politics is a whole other world. The fighting, takedowns and cheap shots in the media often make my eyes roll into the back of my head. It can help to turn down the noise of the election media, and remember that this is just one face of politics. The political work I know of is made up of lots of little and big acts from many different people who want to make our country a better place. It can look like the local Mosque having an open day, school kids planting native trees, or a beach clean up day. If the party politics get too much, have a media detox and reach out to the people who inspire you.

2) Go and do the vote thing

Voting can sometimes feel small or even pointless. Politicians don't seem to care about you until this time every three years. Suddenly your local Member of Parliament is showing up as a fridge magnet in your mail and political parties start competing for your attention in all areas of your life. But, if voting can get someone like Donald Trump in, then there must be an inch of power in it - and we need to use every tool in the toolkit. Have a good think about what your tūpuna (ancestors) and mokopuna (grandchildren) would have you do - then take it to the ballot box.

3) Get involved in your local community

Now that the box has been ticked, head over to your local community centre, marae, op shop, church, residents association or activist group and help out. Long term change starts with finding a group of people, committing to learning and growing together, building community and being willing to work towards social and economic justice wherever you can. Take a risk and get involved! You never know the people you will meet and the skills you will learn. Every small action helps, and you will inspire others as well.

4) Build power around the issues you care about

The truth is, politicians don't create change. People do. (Not saying politicians aren't people, but you get me right?) Parliament is there to respond and legislate the changes that society thinks is important. Without the input of ordinary, compassionate people, these changes can go in harmful directions. And while there are some great politicians, they can do their job even better when there is mass public support on an issue. It's easy to think that Parliament will deliver us a fairer, thriving country - but what we really need is you! Vibrant, active and passionate communities are the key to big change. Nothing can replace it.

Anything is possible when we build the collective power to create a better world, and we keep going beyond the ballot box. See you on the other side. Xox



Decisions, decisions



We can't and won't tell you how to vote! But when you're deciding, here are some things to consider. You can use impartial website **policy.nz** to find out about the policies of different parties!

How would your mokopuna (grandkids), nibblings (gender neutral term for neices/nephews), kids of friends or unknown future humans want you to vote in 2020? Who will make their future better?

Who in Newtown is doing it hard? Who would they have you vote for?

What is one thing (other than voting) that you will commit to doing to make the world a better place? Write it down, then DO IT!

Volunteer in Newtown!

By Volunteer Wellington

Do you have a hankering to try something different? Want to put your skills into action? Need a chance to get work-ready? Just really love Newtown and want to sprinkle that love around a little? If you answered 'yes' to any or all of the above, then how about trying volunteering?!

'Volunteering' is choosing to do something that makes a positive impact on society and not expecting any kind of payment for it. Every year, over a million New Zealanders from every age, ethnicity and walk of life spend time volunteering; that's nearly ¼ of our entire population.

Not only do volunteers literally keep many of our community organisations alive, volunteering is as rewarding, exciting and career-enhancing as you make it, and it also has a positive effect on our sense of well-being. It equips us with skills, increases our confidence and helps us feel like we belong.

Volunteer Wellington has heaps of Newtown-based roles available - from supporting young Newtowners at the community centre, to welcoming people at the hospital, to working the desk at one of our many op-shops! Contact us on 499 4570 or info@volunteerwellington.nz to chat about getting involved!

People Power!

By Srishti Moudgil

A group of common people
Kept alive spirit of Swaraj
Amidst a 200-year old foreign rule
Revolutionising minds and souls
Breaking backbone
Of colonialism

In other part of the world
Where intelligent capitalists
Tried converting forests into
Grazing lands
Manipulating cultures and languages
A bunch of kaitiaki
Reminded importance of
Papatūānuku
Inspiring conservation campaigns of
Kauri
And endangered birds

And yet there was a world
Where slavery was normal
Until they raised their voices
And uprooted monarchy
Preserving their folklore and faith

In another part of the world
School children went down to streets
To save their future homes from plastic
Reminding governments
To start treating the planet
More than just an economy

And
And...

Remember those women from
Aotearoa who signed
voting petition in impossible times?
Don't you doubt women power!

Reflections on Carrara Park

By Katia Guiloff

nb. this was written at Level 1

Ever since lockdown finished and this little human being and I were ready to roam the streets I've been walking the same path four days per week. I walk from my home at the top of Adelaide road to Owen street to pick up a slightly bigger other little one.

I love the repetitive nature of these walks, the toddler pace which allows for full presence and observation. This new repetitive habit has awakened my desire to write and connect these walks to other places, memories and reflections. This is one of them: Carrara Park.

Suddenly Carrara Park has exploded with people. After months of a silence punctuated by machines and men in bright gear. Whenever I walked through it I would either be alone (with the baby in the front pack), or cross paths with a man I don't know but who would always say hello and ask about my day, or a flurry of children rushing by in their scooters. Only once I stayed and played with a group of other mums and kids, slightly cramped by the high gates enclosing the playground ominously taking shape.

Yesterday I turned the corner after the walkway surrounded by children's drawings of animals, to a whirlwind of life. Children & mothers & fathers & grandparents (but mostly mothers and children). Eyes wide open, flashes of teeth and tongues rapidly moving to laugh and talk and scream. Life as it can only be on this island right now.

Like all social spaces, for me it brings up questions about processes, laws and exclusion. Why are we not inviting the community to participate and co-create these spaces instead of establishing pre-made ideas and structures of what a playground should be? Why are there no standards to ensure the inclusion of a diversity of bodies? Those with short legs, the adults, the ones with no legs, the ones who think about a swing from a different perspective. And why are we scared to create facilities that would make the park a more live-able space? Like a toilet.

The gust of questions is one more swivel and spiral in the experience of this new park. It is diffused and vaporised amongst the sounds of children sliding, running, laughing and crying. It disappears to the edges once I look down and am drawn towards the immediate needs of the little humans. Perhaps this is the why of many questions, the dictatorship of what seem to be immediate needs.



Editor's note:

Newtown Community Centre totally supports installation of a wharepaku / toilet at Carrara Park and have advocated for this many times!

If you'd like to put some people power behind this call-out, email us!

info@newtowncommunity.org.nz

What's the Happs?

Covid update. We are open at level 2, with extra precautions! **But** as we know now, a change in levels could mean cancellations! Call us to check - 04 389 4786.

At Newtown Community & Cultural Centre Corner Rintoul & Colombo Sts

Cinema Golondrina presents: Soy Cuba - Sun 6th September, 5pm

Political Latin American films for the Newtown community! 'Soy Cuba' is the first movie in a series. Films in Spanish w/English subtitles, convo after the film in English. Koha entry. bit.ly/3jfESCO

Contribute to the Newtown News! Got something you wanna share with Newtown? A story or artwork? An article? ellie@newtowncommunity.org.nz

Help! Tag & Tester volunteer wanted!

Newtown Tool Library needs a volunteer who has skill/certification to tag and test our electrical tools! bit.ly/31rhtlw

Quick Kai Come to the NCCC (9-4.30pm M-F) & grab a heat-and-eat healthy meal from our freezer for just \$2! Give us a call first on 3894786 to check we're in.

DIY Drop-In: Make a Mask! M-F 9am-4.30pm, Weds 9am-7pm

NCCC is keen no one gets caught without a mask. If you have some sewing skills, book a time to use our sewing machine, fabric and templates! info@newtowncommunity.org.nz / 04 389 4786

At SMART Newtown & Network Newtown 9 Constable Street

How to use Zoom! Zoom is a free popular video chat/conference software for cellphones /computers/ laptops. It can help you to stay connected with friends, family, work or events! SMART Newtown offers one-on-one help to download & use this popular software, during opening hours: bit.ly/3aUJTxx

Free 3 week meditation course: 6-8pm, 15th, 22nd & 29th Sept. Registration essential, call/text Muslim on 0212168343 www.wellingtonmeditation.org

Happening elsewhere:

Planning for growth: Draft Spatial Plan. Consultation event - Sat 19th Sept, 9-1pm (ONLY if at Covid-19 level 1). At Newtown Veggie Market. Have your say on this important issue for Newtown. Consultation until Oct 5th. planningforgrowth.wellington.govt.nz or event: bit.ly/3gvC9mW

My walk in wardrobe - Sat 12th September: Te Whaea (11 Hutchinson Rd)

A pop-up, sustainable fashion market for new & preloved clothing, shoes, jewellery, accessories. bit.ly/31vs4T4

Vinnies Book and Fabric Fair - Saturday 19 September, 8am - 5pm -St Anne's Hall, 22 Emmett St. All books \$2 /less, recycled fabric/haberdashery from Vinnies Re Sew. All proceeds to Vinnies Welfare services. bit.ly/34zkSqE

Meet the Candidates Rongotai Electorate - Thursday, September 24th, 7.30pm-9.30pm - St Anne's Hall, 22 Emmett Street. Come and hear from all the Rongotai electorate candidates about why you should give them your vote! Doors open 7pm, promptly starting at 7.30pm. bit.ly/3jfMPba

Trace: From then to Now. 24-27th Sept, 4-7pm. A unique look into how the psyche is formed through the lens of childhood experiences. Combining textiles, sound, projection & sculpture, this immersive installation explores our inner and outer selves through the stories of others. \$5 or unwaged concession. bit.ly/2EGOh7K

Get in touch

www.newtowncommunity.org.nz

www.facebook.com/Newtown.Community.Centre

04 389 4786 / ellie@newtowncommunity.org.nz

