

# Newtown News

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



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

Whiringa-ā-Rangi / November 2021  
**The kindness edition**

# Kia ora Newtown

Kia ora tātou / hey everyone!

Just the other day, I texted a friend and said I was having a hard, busy day. Out of the blue, she came to meet me, bearing a cold fizzy drink and a bag of candies. I'd been running around like a headless chicken, but when she came to see me to share this kindness, it encouraged me to take a 10 minute break, drink that delicious cold drink and have a chat. It made all the difference to the rest of my day and I felt really cared for and lucky to have such a great friend. It's International Kindness Day on the 13th Whiringa-a-Rangi / November, so that's a good day to take YOUR friend a cold drink when they need it!

I think kindness is awesome, and I try to be kind, but it's just not enough on its own. I think a myth that is pretty perpetual in western culture is that if we're all just kind, the worlds' problems will all be solved. We hear things like 'kindness is free' and see hashtags like #BeKind, but being kind isn't enough if we ignore existing issues and our responsibilities. We can buy each other a coffee or smile at a stranger all we like, but it won't return Māori land, address racism or other discrimination and injustices. Kind people can still be racist, still discriminate and still stand on stolen land without doing anything about it. These issues are built into our society and individual kindnesses won't fix them.

So, while a cold drink brightened my day, and my friend's heart is kind, the thing I most admire about her is that she fights against injustice every day in big and small ways, and that she actively considers justice in her (many) kindnesses.

So, this International Kindness Day (and every day), I hope we can also consider the bigger picture. A great place to start would be to learn more about what happened in the invasion of the peace community at Parihaka on November 5th 1881 - there are a bunch of opportunities to learn about this and take action in this email from Oil Free Wellington: [bit.ly/3bpWFp6](https://bit.ly/3bpWFp6)

Ngā mihi,  
Ellie

Cover by Ellie (basically Canva lol)

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.*

Crossword answers: 1. āwhina 2. mahana 3. tautoko 4. atawhai 5. awhi 6. mahara 7. rawe

# Notorious NEWTowner

*Clare and Ellie had a cuppa and kōrero about music, animals and caring at the community centre*

Often bare footed, and usually with a smile, you've probably seen Clare around. She's a regular at a couple of Newtown institutions: working at Moon and volunteering at Opportunity for Animals! "They both hold a special place for Newtowners I think - it's nice getting to know people and feeling like I'm contributing to people's good experiences!" Newtown has been home for about 7 years, though Clare is originally from Tāmaki Makaurau. She describes her whakapapa as Ngāti Tiriti, meaning she is pākehā, living in Aotearoa as a treaty partner to tangata whenua.



Until last year, Clare was assistant manager at Moon bar on Riddiford Street. She still occasionally cameos behind the bar, and is also one of the organisers of the rad "Femme N Bass" nights hosted there ([facebook.com/femmenbass](https://facebook.com/femmenbass)). "We showcase established and up-and-coming femme and gender diverse DJs, producers and artists, in a safe and comfortable space, letting people have a really good boogie!" The nights have been a raging success, with every event well attended, which seems to be largely because of the respectful space that Clare and co have created "Someone came up to me at the end of a night and said they'd never stayed to end the of a gig before, because they'd never felt safe enough."

When she's not boogying, Clare's often helping take care of people who are! A big project of hers is as a coordinator with Psy-Care NZ, running caring spaces at music festivals in Te Waipounamu. "We're in a world where the reality is that people use drugs, and prohibition just doesn't work. So we want it to take place in the safest atmosphere possible, with knowledge about dosages, effects, and how people can keep themselves safe." Clare's excited to see changing attitudes and more kōrero about harm reduction.

She also loves her mahi with the Opportunity For Animals op-shop and the Black Sheep Animal Sanctuary in Ōtaki that it supports ([theblacksheep.org.nz](https://theblacksheep.org.nz)). "It's a great little community to be a part of and such a feature of Newtown!" She's sometimes doing a shift behind the counter, or any number of "bitsy piecey background jobs."

While Clare may seem like she's very busy with all of these projects, she also loves bushwalking around Wellington, jumping in the ocean "always rewarding even if it's not pleasant" and doing some mean vegan baking. She loves Newtown and that it "feels like a self-contained village - you see the same faces around and there's a lot of diverse communities existing and overlapping here."

If you think you see Clare, feel free to say kia ora, but first be sure it's her and not her doppelganger! Clare would like to take this opportunity to put on record that "There's more than one femme person with a beard in Newtown!"

# On Kindness

**By Anna Persson**

As I set out to document moments of kindness that I experienced over a fortnight for this article, I initially anticipated having a huge list of words, actions, moments, and feelings - of kindness that I showed others and that others showed me.

I had lofty visions, but what actually happened was that my list rapidly flew to the wayside as life, and of course, the busiest fortnight of my year unfolded. It was through this change in momentum, that I was forced to reflect on kindness under a new lens. A difficult, yet very important one. The lens of kindness when looking at yourself. Not just the way you treat others, but in the very way you treat yourself.

Whilst I have notes from Sunday, October 10th of, "Caught up with an old friend visiting from Christchurch. The restaurant we met at gave us free drinks because our food took a while" and, Monday, October 11th, "Was given a slice of homemade cake from a friend" The writing of these daily kindness musings fell to the wayside as I became busy beyond belief!

A large act of kindness on my part, in fact, was giving myself permission to step back from my initial writing intentions and prioritise my needs! Through the lens of kindness, it became clear when I was acting towards myself out of kindness than not. For me, this looked like maintaining the tools that ground me like morning walks and journaling and actions like staying home and having time to do nothing amidst the rushing.

I've not deeply considered kindness in a while and when I did, I began to notice the modest ways in which it was all around me, all the time. The way folks leave space for others to pass them, when someone actively listens in a conversation, the message out of the blue to an old friend, offering hot drinks to those we love. Kindness can be that simple. Furthermore, the kinder we are to ourselves, the kinder we are to others. And that's a win-win!

A friend of mine once said, “I’d rather be kind than be nice” and I agree, I feel there’s a certain warmth that comes with kindness. To quote the Dalai Lama (big move), “Whether one believes in a religion or not, and whether one believes in rebirth or not, there isn’t anyone who doesn’t appreciate kindness and compassion.”

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# FIND YOUR NEXT READ



WITH TE WHARE PUKAPUKA O OMĀRŌRŌ /  
NEWTOWN LIBRARY



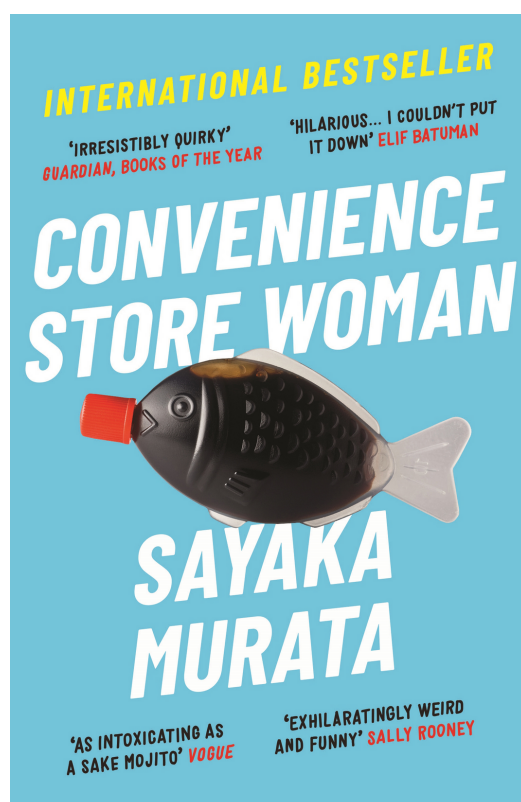
In this new Newtown News column, Newtown's awesome librarians will review books available at the library for us. Kicking us off is a review from Khadro Mohamed!

## **Convenience Store Woman: Sayaka Murata** **Wellington City Libraries listing: [bit.ly/3GpJLpf](https://bit.ly/3GpJLpf)**

Quirky Keiko Furukura has one purpose: to be the best convenience store worker on this side of Japan. Whether that means being at every customer’s beck and call or lining tin beans in perfect lines, Keiko believes it’s her duty to put a smile on everyone’s face as they walk through those double doors.

But when her small and purposeful world is shattered by the prying eyes and back breaking expectations of society, Keiko starts questioning everything she’s ever known.

Through her journey of self-discovery she quickly finds that one must carve out their own purpose in life. I thoroughly enjoyed this book, not only was it a quick read but it was fun, quirky and hilarious. “Convenience Store Woman” by Sayaka Murata is a book that will put a smile on anyone’s face.





# Building has started on the community centre!

People in hard hats have been wandering around... vans are pulling up... a contract has been signed... WHAT COULD IT ALL MEAN?!

YES. IT'S TRUE! THE COMMUNITY CENTRE RENOVATIONS HAVE STARTED! This has been a long time coming, but we're super excited that building started on 26th October 2021! We've been told that construction should be completed by August 2022 - but we're bearing in mind the issues that Covid-19 has brought for construction around the world and anticipating possible delays.

The Community Centre remains operating out of our temporary home at 2a Green Street which is pretty rad - feel free to come and visit us and say kia ora, or check out the awesome hireable spaces online at [bit.ly/3mdugIW](https://bit.ly/3mdugIW)  
For more about the renos head to: [bit.ly/OurTownNewtown](https://bit.ly/OurTownNewtown)



I was scrolling aimlessly through the cesspool that is Facebook one day, when I saw a glimmer of some unexpected Newtown Niceness!

A kind community member posted in some Newtown Facebook groups, offering to support people to get their Covid vaccine - offering to drive people there, be a calm and friendly support and even get them a sweet treat afterwards!

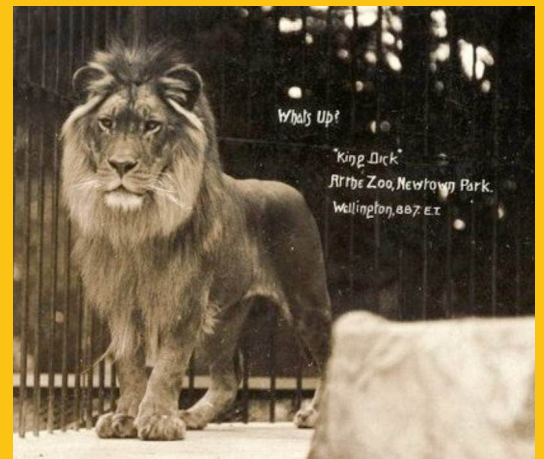
I thought that was really lovely - both for the individuals being helped, and for the whole community - the more of us who are vaccinated, the safer we all are. THANKS to this awesome Newtowner for their niceness! When I asked if I could write about this, they said yes, and made the offer again - if you're interested, email [info@newtowncommunity.org.nz](mailto:info@newtowncommunity.org.nz)

# Newtown zo-origins

By Chris Rabey

Before the advent of the zoo at Newtown Park they had a small flea-bitten collection of animals at the Botanic Gardens. There were a few monkeys, a kiwi or two and an emu. The garden was a wild and woolly place and in parts the bush was so dense you could swing over gullies on supplejack / kareao. The pond was a real pond with an umbrella of water lilies. When the trees were overhanging the pond, you could imagine fairies dancing on the leaves of the lilies. While it lasted the miniature zoo was popular. The emu had a varied diet, per kind favour of visitors. The custodian would keep an eye on what was being dished out to the animals and the emu, but all seemed to stay healthy.

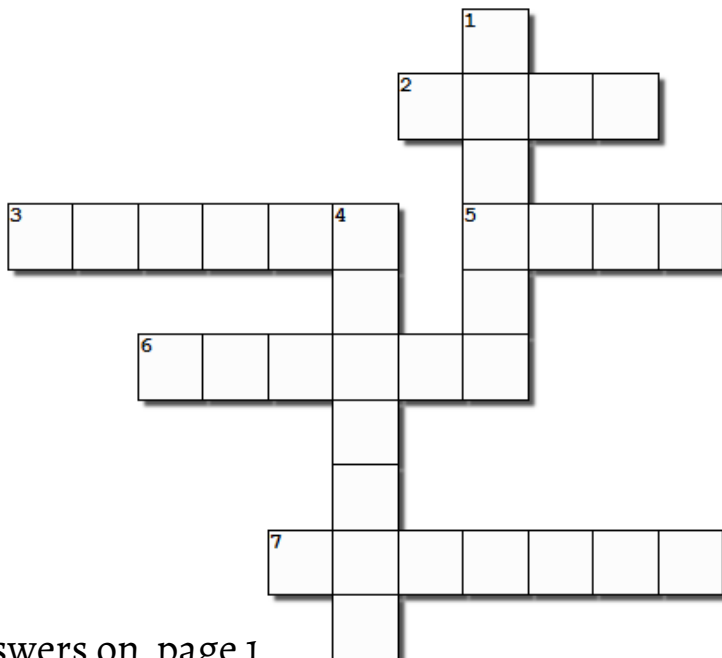
The real zoo at Newtown Park was commenced in 1906 following the presentation to the city by Bostock & Wombell's Circus of a real lion, "King Dick" (named after the PM, Richard "King Dick" Seddon). About this time there was a craze among the young folk for silkworms. These are prolific breeders and would be kept in a Cadbury's chocolate box, and you would feed them on mulberry leaves, watch them build their cocoons and hope they would make enough silk to make dresses for your siblings.



Picture credit: Alexander Turnbull Library

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## Te Reo Māori 'kindness' crossword



Find the te reo Māori words for these Pākehā clues! answers on page

### Down

- 1 - thoughtful
- 4 - kindness

### Across

- 2 - excellent/nice
- 3 - help
- 5 - hug
- 6 - warm
- 7 - support

Answers on page 1

# What's the Happs?

The Community Centre is open at Level 2 - but events below may change if Covid alert levels do! Our full timetable of regular events is online at: [bit.ly/nccctimetable](http://bit.ly/nccctimetable)

## At the NEW Community Centre, 2a Green Street

**Quick Kai - healthy ready to heat and eat meals for \$2!**

Did you know the Community Centre has a freezer full of healthy veggie kai that's ready to take home, heat and eat for just \$2? Well we do! Drop in between 9-4.30 Monday-Friday and see what's in the freezer.

**FREE make a mask drop-in - Mon-Fri 9-4.30pm, bookings essential**

Need some more masks now we're wearing them all the time?? If you have sewing skills, but just need the fabric, patterns, sewing machine, bits and bobs and the space to make a reusable mask- then book in a time to set up at our DIY mask sewing station and get to work! Email [info@newtowncommunity.org.nz](mailto:info@newtowncommunity.org.nz) or call 04 389 4786 to book a time.

**FREE legal drop in - Weds 3rd November, 11-12**

No appointment needed, see a rōia / lawyer from Community Law. Any questions call 04 389 4786.

**Social drama for 65+ year olds, Thursdays 10.30am-12pm**

We are a fun group using storytelling and drama to keep the mind active and creative! Our sessions are free and full of play, laughter and connection. For more info email [hilary.norris@xtra.co.nz](mailto:hilary.norris@xtra.co.nz) or call 021 306 413.

## 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 / [ellie@newtowncommunity.org.nz](mailto:ellie@newtowncommunity.org.nz)

## Elsewhere in Newtown

**Waka Ora - get vaxxed at the Mission - Weds 3rd November, 10am-3pm**

Get your Covid-19 vaccine at the Wellington City Mission, 19 Gordon Place. No appointments needed! For more info, call 0800 VAX NOW.

**Verb Festival - Newtown Sunday Stroll - Sunday 7th November, 12-4pm**

A series of awesome events at a variety of Newtown's bookish establishments, as part of the Verb literary festival. Stroll between drawing while listening to poetry, to a talk about creative non-fiction, to author talks from John Summers and Angelique Kasmara. Registration required, there is a cost. [bit.ly/3nDJZR4](http://bit.ly/3nDJZR4)

## Online & further afield

**Wellington Timebank Awards, 19th November, 6.30pm**

Timebank members are invited to an online soiree to celebrate members and that Timebank is turning 10!! Options to join an in person watch party or jump online - more info at [bit.ly/31dr3Br](http://bit.ly/31dr3Br) or email [info@wellingtontimebank.org.nz](mailto:info@wellingtontimebank.org.nz)

**Actions and learning around Parihaka Day, various dates and times**

Oil Free Wellington sent out a good summary email of events (online & in person) - check it out! [bit.ly/3bpWFp6](http://bit.ly/3bpWFp6)

**Parihaka Day Peace Picnic, November 5th 4.30pm**

At Behernpore Orchard, Adelaide Rd - more information at [bit.ly/3Ez4yFa](http://bit.ly/3Ez4yFa)