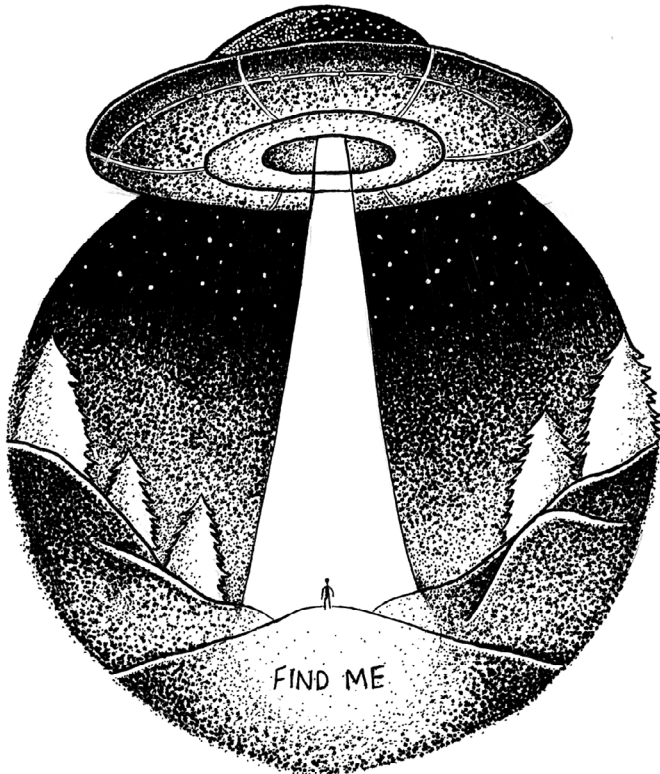


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# Newtown News

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— April 2016 —

Brought to you by the Newtown  
Community and Cultural Centre



## NOTORIOUS NEWTOWNER

### Kia ora Newtown

Well, folks. April has arrived. It's the start of the downward spiral for the nine month Wellington winter. All you tourists who've fallen in love with Wellington this Indian summer, you'll soon see what all the well-meaning, but slightly irritating warnings from nearly everyone were all about. Some of you will stick it out, knowing that this little gem of a place is golden through and through, no matter what the weather is doing. Others won't last the winter. That's ok, too.

Others, like me and Timebank coordinator Hannah Mackintosh, will disappear to warmer climes for a couple of months to avoid the encroaching reality of winter. So if anyone has any advice for me on places to go in Argentina, Bolivia and Mexico, I'd love to hear them! Don't worry though, the Newtown News will still be pumped out while I'm gone! We've got the fantastic Kayte and Olivia on board to keep the issues comin' and (hopefully) make some seriously good coffee to cheer Anna up in the community centre office while her workmates swan off on adventures overseas.

Anywho, this issue has some great stuff in it for your reading delight! We've got Ravi from the local lotto shop as the Notorious Newtowner overleaf, some great articles on Earth Day on the double page spread, a brief history of jazz music and a delicious feijoa chutney recipe to warm your winter cockles. As always, check out what's happening in Newtown on the What's the Happs page on the back cover.

Ngā mihi nui,  
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**Ra-iwi Smith has a chat with this month's Notorious Newtowner, Ravi Maisuria. You might recognise this chipper guy as the person who sold you your lucky lotto ticket or your fav mag at Mall Books & Lotto (in the New World Newtown foyer).**

If there was a competition for most enthusiastically smiley voice then Ravi Maisuria would be a damn strong contender.

Beyond the bits of banter I've had with Ravi while scratching my instant-kiwi-itch I really knew nothing about this man! But his consistently happy go lucky demeanour always tipped a smile to my mouth.

Ravi was born and bred in Rongotai and has been front side of his family business for 10 or so years. Having been around this long, "... you can't help getting involved and building family like relationships with your customers" he says as we recline behind the shop with a cool glass of coconut water. "We are always welcoming, never narrow minded and love having a good laugh and a chat ..."

*"Our work ethic is treat people equally, help people and they will help you."*

Being the only son in the family, his father was dead keen to get him married off so he could carry on the family lineage. After many girls, many no's and much shunning of his father's protest's he graciously gave in when his father's brother's sister introduced him to Binita. "It was an arranged marriage and we didn't know each other from a bar of soap, but we have the same values and morals so that's good."

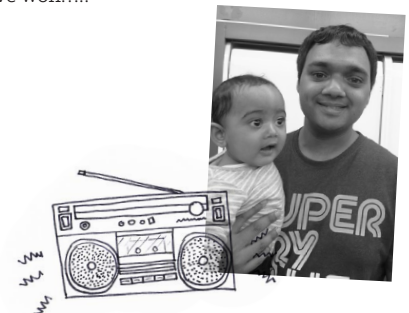
They were married in India within a month of meeting each other and four months later they were flying back to NZ to make a home and

kick off the good life. These days Binita works alongside Ravi while Ravi's dad gets to plush it up at home playing grandad to their seven month born beautiful baby boy Aarav.

Ravi casually remarks that the comfortable room we are in is also the space where Binita conducts her beauty business. However quality time is largely found at home with baby Aarav, wife Benita and her deliciously home cooked queezene with some classic 90s hip hop banging on the stereo. Wu-Tang Clan and KRS-One are regularly on the smash with a bit of Kool & The Gang to sugar the flavour.

"There is a vague pipedream to one day go back to India and live in Benita's home city" he says distantly. But right now New Zealand is a treasured home. "There is a lot more space, freedom and better living conditions to be had in New Zealand. And the people are top notch." As I down my beverage and I shake hands with Ravi I feel glad I've been able to sit and chat, and find out just a bit more about this man who I regularly encounter but have only ever scratched the surface with.

And I look forward to the day when his happy countenance exclaims with wild abandonment that I have won...!!



# INTERNATIONAL EARTH DAY

22<sup>nd</sup> APRIL 2016

## Get that plastic off your plate!

Peer into any storm water drain in this fair windy city of ours, and you will be faced with a small mountain of plastic waste. This is the same plastic that we've all watched blow down Adelaide Road and circle around the Basin in a southerly. Why is this a problem? It's a problem because when rainwater flows through those drains this same plastic ends up in our oceans. It may sound like a small thing, but in fact this is a very big deal indeed.

Here's a fun challenge: take yourself wandering in the fresh air, out to the most isolated beach you can find. Look down at what's around you: rocks, driftwood, seaweed, and probably a scattering of large plastic waste. Look closer in amongst the sand, and you will likely see fragments of broken plastic, or the tiny balls called nurdles that escape into the environment from the plastic manufacturing process. These are a small part of the epidemic of plastic debris that is fast filling up the oceans. Scientists are now observing how this is contaminating marine ecosystems and disturbing some of the fundamental processes that keep us alive and happy on this planet. There is so much plastic in the sea that it's starting to interfere with important ocean critters like plankton, which give us oxygen to breathe and help regulate the global climate. Woah!

I've been to New Zealand's most outlying islands looking for these same things, and I've seen that from Antarctica to the tropics our plastic waste is starting to be found everywhere. Last year in the Kermadec Islands, a remote and beautiful island chain halfway between Aotearoa and Tonga, I came across an adult humpback whale with a mooring line made from plastic fibre looped tightly and painfully around its body. I've caught fish far out to sea with their stomachs

bulging with plastic fragments – a major problem for us humans, as increasingly the toxic chemicals carried by marine plastics are being passed up food chains into the food that we eat. Don't know about you, but this makes me angry. When I go to get kai moana to feed my friends and family I want it to nourish them, not poison them.

Bringing this all back to Newtown – what exactly is in those storm water drains, you ask? Overwhelmingly, what we see flowing out of cities like Wellington is food packaging, water bottles, cigarette butts and other forms of single-use plastic. The problem isn't necessarily plastic itself, which when designed well can be a useful and durable material. The problem is the way we've learnt to use it only once and then toss it – and it's this that we need to change. Many of you will have seen the dedicated recycling volunteers at the Newtown Festival in March, helping to share this message as Wellington converged on our community.

So take care to pick up any plastic you see on a street or beach, and make sure to recycle your own. Better still, search for creative ways to minimise your plastic usage, so that there's less of it around to worry about. Look for clothes made from natural fibres, and avoid products covered in plastic packaging, especially food (or try your hand at growing your own!). You could even contact your local MP or councillor to find out what they're doing to reduce plastic pollution in your area. It's one of the best things you can do for our oceans, and one of the most powerful ways to express your care for this place we call home. Have a wonderful plastic-reducing autumn!

– Captain Gingerbeard  
Newtown resident & ocean enthusiast

## It's a mess, love it anyway

Earth Day; depressing, but necessary. The holiday was established to promote environmental protection, and is celebrated around the world every 22<sup>nd</sup> of April. We can all agree that the planet is a pretty sweet place to live (also the only place to live), so we should conserve it.

Earth Day is supposed to be a time for us to remember the importance of nature, but it has some undesirable qualities.

Like other well-meaning holidays, Earth Day suffers from commercialisation and misappropriation. Big companies love to use the day to improve their environmental image. You'll see car and oil companies suddenly become tree-huggers as Earth Day approaches; touting their investments in renewable energy and fuel efficiency. Commercial uses of Earth Day are typical marketing – style over substance.

## *It allows agencies who are part of the problem to present themselves as the solution.*

Earth Day has also suffered from cringe-worthy attempts at heart-felt tributes. In 1990, country singer Kix Brooks (half of Brooks & Dunne), wrote a largely forgotten ballad called, 'Tomorrow's World'. It features a children's choir singing the chorus, "Tomorrow's world, is our world, it's the future of, each boy and girl." All these crass marketing ploys annoy and confuse environmentally conscious consumers – it's all enough to make you gag as you cross 22 April off your calendar.

Earth Day has emotional down-sides as well. Much like Mother's Day, it asks you to do something you really should have been remembering to do all year. Namely, show your

mother (earth) that you love her. This can induce a fair amount of guilt. Surely whatever you have done for the environment this year, you could have done more. Cyclists could also be vegetarians. Cycling-vegetarians could also have a garden. Cycling-vegetarian-gardeners really should have remembered reusable bags that one time they went to the supermarket. And the list goes on.

Earth Day isn't perfect. It suffers from empty marketing tricks, sappy creative gestures, and causes dark imposing feelings of inadequacy. But taking a day to acknowledge the earth is a great concept – and this is the best day we've got. The annual observance of Earth Day helps to preserve the value of environmental connections that can easily be lost in modern life. Earth Day allows us to look outside of ourselves, and acknowledge the things we love that don't have an instagram, or a facebook group. Like the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the green spaces we retreat to.

Let's not confuse the issue, Earth is awesome! You can celebrate it with a purchase, a song, or a personal resolution if you like. Just spare an extra moment to think about the planet on Earth Day.

– Laura Keown





## JAZZ MA TAZZ

**Rose Sealy takes us through a smash tour of the history of Jazz in aid of World Jazz Day, April 30<sup>th</sup>.**

When I first heard Jazz I thought somebody was tuning their piano. It was Keith Jarretts' Koln Concert. For many, as Sonny Rollins satirically writes in the New Yorker, Jazz is when the – *'band starts a song, but then everything falls apart and the musicians just play whatever they want for as long they can stand it. People take turns noodling around, and once they run out of ideas and have to stop, the audience claps.'*

I have since meandered through 20th century music history. Jazz and its history was everywhere, even when I was not looking.

Here is how it goes. In mid-1800s America, a simple melody was recurring amongst West African slave communities. It was homophonic singing, a survival mechanism when their traditional rhythms and drumming were outlawed as 'primitive'.

*This singing instead was timed rhythmically by the land; in tune with the toiling of fields, the repetitive cutting of harvesting.*

Spontaneous, repetitive; with recurring musical matrices.

The field singing picked up the Church hymnal music flow. Non-instrumental; just deep, bass voices in chorus sending shivers up the congregational spines. Reverent, and sincere. Then with the freeing of slave communities in the late 1800s, more Black Americans had access to an education.

European instruments were introduced, initially strings, then musical theory; fertilizing the seeds of Jazz.

The songs of the land and church were now abstracted. Layered from homophonic survival singing to hetero-phonc melodies using rhythms from three core musical bases: Latin American swing, West African rhythm and European traditional Classical music. This combinational phenomenon was gathering pace ready to migrate from secret musical societies to the public. Jazz was born; exploding on to the scene, first in New Orleans; now everywhere.

This Jazz seed became a rapacious, verdant vine always seeking more influences from local musical traditions; localizing it globally. As Allen Ginsberg famously wrote in his epic poem Howl (1956) Jazz musicians, *'bared their brains to Heaven under the El and saw Mohammedan angels staggering on tenement roofs illuminated, who passed through universities with radiant cool eyes hallucinating Arkansas and Blake-light tragedy among the scholars of war, who were expelled from the academies for crazy & publishing obscene odes on the windows of the skull, who cowered in unshaven rooms in underwear, burning their money in wastebaskets and listening to the Terror through the wall.'*

From the tuning of a piano, Jazz is now an emotionally charged prophet unifying time with global musical minorities? Now with my re-discovery of Keith Jarrett I hear composure, concentration; the sharing of one pulse with his piano. Jazz is a deep, deep understanding of music for music, not for the rehearsal of theory. It is an art that was borne out of the ship to survival.

So this World Jazz Day (30th April) listen to some Jazz and pick up that guide to the Wellington Jazz festival. Book yourself some culture!

## FEIJOA SEASON!

As we come to terms with the end of summer and the re-appearance of woolley jumpers and hot water bottles, we at least have the on-coming feijoa season to look forward to.

Like many kiwis, I share a love for this crazy little fruit; a fruit that I've heard more than one non-kiwi describe as having a taste reminiscent of some childhood medicine. And again like many kiwis, I always hit that point at the height of the season where the thought of eating *just one more*

makes me want to cry, and yet there are still so many sitting and taunting me from the kitchen fruit bowl.

Luckily enough for us, one of Timebank Coordinator Hannah Mackintosh's leaving gifts to us is her famous feijoa chutney recipe, ideal for those wanting to smash through the last of their massive feijoa haul. It's so easy and so delicious!

### Feijoa Chutney

Makes about 4 litres

3kg feijoas  
1kg red onions  
5 large sweet lemons  
8 large green chillis  
2kg white sugar  
5 tsp salt  
300ml cider vinegar  
1 cinnamon quill  
6 green & 6 black  
cardamon pods  
2 tsp dried chilli flakes



### Preparation

1. *Put the unpeeled feijoas through the mincer, or whiz them in batches in the food processor. You don't want a complete puree, just a lumpy sludge. If you like a lumpier texture, chop everything fairly finely with a knife.*
2. *Do the same with the red onions and the whole lemons. It's a good idea to cut the lemons into quarters and flick out any pips first.*
3. *Remove the stems from the green chillies, cut them in half and flick out the seeds. If you do this under a running cold tap you will avoid chilli burns on your fingers.*
4. *Put the prepared fruit, onions and chillies into a large bowl with the salt and vinegar and pour over the sugar. Cover the bowl and leave on the bench overnight.*

### Cooking

5. *Preheat the oven to 180C.*
6. *Give the mixture in the bowl a good stir, add the cinnamon, cardamoms and the chillies and pour it carefully into a roasting dish. The mixture will reduce in volume as it cooks.*
7. *Put it in the oven and cook for 2-3 hours. Give it a stir with a wooden spoon every half hour or so. It's cooked when the mixture is a reddish brown and most of the moisture has evaporated.*
8. *Put it into sterilised jars, seal and leave for at least a week before eating. This allows the flavours to mellow a little. It will keep for at least a year in a cool, dark place.*

Enjoy!



## WHAT'S THE HAPS?



### **Newtown School Holiday Programme**

18-29 April, Newtown Hall, \$10-\$25 (p. child p. day)

Only just getting used to having the kids back at school and not ready to have them home yet? Send them along to the cheap-as-chips Newtown School Holiday Programme. Enrolment forms can be picked up from the Newtown Community Centre. Call Renee on 389 4786 for more details.

### **Narukami Taiko Japanese Drumming**

9<sup>th</sup> April, 1.30-3.30pm, Newtown Hall

Japanese Taiko Drumming is a dynamic art form that combines movement and rhythm to create music as a group. The Narukami Taiko group have recently started holding classes in Newtown, and will be holding an Open Day before starting a new term of classes soon. If you're interested to give Taiko a go, or would like to discuss showcasing taiko to your school, kindergarten or community group please contact [narukamitaiko@gmail.com](mailto:narukamitaiko@gmail.com)

### **Family War-time Story Collection**

4-10 April, 10am-4pm, 15 Buckle Street, Free

Do you or a loved one have any stories from conflict or war years you'd like to share? In honour of Anzac Day, WCC will be setting up a recording caravan at the Great War Exhibition and are inviting Wellingtonians to share their stories concerning conflict or war. They are seeking personal accounts as well as stories passed down through the family; either combat recollections or family home-front experiences. Anyone can book a space to interview friends and family or alternatively there will be staff on hand capable to conduct interviews. For more info or to make a booking, visit [wellynextdoor.co.nz](http://wellynextdoor.co.nz)

### **Art & Creativity Classes**

Fortnightly from 13 April, 6.30-8.30pm, Newtown Community Centre, Koha entry

Drop-in to the art and creativity classes and have a play with these guided open studio sessions. All materials provided.

### **NZ School of Dance Insight Studio Performances**

14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> April, 6 - 7pm, NZSD studios at Te Whaea (Hutchinson Rd, Newtown), Koha

NZSD students and tutors are proud to present a showcase of short works, comprising both classical and contemporary performances. The eclectic programme will include a preview of performances the students are currently working on and highlights from the School's Choreographic Season in May. No booking is required (but seating is limited!). For more info head to [nzschooldofdance.ac.nz](http://nzschooldofdance.ac.nz)

### **Skymning Album Release**

1<sup>st</sup> April, 8pm, Newtown Community Centre, \$10

Come along to local musician Skymning's first album release gig. The gig will kick off with a live ambient set from band Totem, followed by Skymning performing the new album in full. To get your ticket as well as unreleased work from 2015, check out [skymning.bandcamp.com](http://skymning.bandcamp.com)

### **Berhampore Nursery Open Day**

9 April, 10am-2pm, 32 Emerson St Berhampore, Free

Come along for the only day of the year Wellington City Council's nursery is open to the public. Take a look at behind-the-scenes where they grow the native plants for the city's revegetation programmes, as well as the plants for gardens, parks and reserves. Find out about biodiversity in your own backyard and what you can plant to encourage native birds and bees or for wind protection, get advice on which plants survive and thrive in our harsh coastal environment. There will be plants for sale, guided tours, expert talks and demonstrations, and more!

### **Living With Squatter Communities**

3<sup>rd</sup> April, 9am & 10:30am, St Thomas Church on Riddiford Street (next to McDonald's), Free

Former Community Centre youth worker Manu Ward and his wife Anna are back in Aotearoa for a few months following the birth of their third child. They will be talking about their life in solidarity with a squatter community in Jakarta.