

SEPTEMBER 2016

Brought to you by the Newtown Community and Cultural Centre.

NEWTOWN NEWS





Kia ora Newtown,

Spring is upon us! This particular spring is heralding some significant changes here at the community centre (and in Wellington with the upcoming election!). Just as early lambs begin leaping, Anna Porter, epic Coordinator here at the Newtown Community Centre, will go on maternity leave. We're pretty sad to lose this incredible Coordinator, she's done a phenomenal job of caring for the Newtown Community Centre and its wider community for the last nine years. What will we do without her?! Anna has set aside her last week (19th - 23rd September) almost entirely for eating baking and sharing cups of tea with all of her fans. If not yet a fan, bring some baking into the community centre and share it with us over a cup of tea, you'll be a fan before you know it.

Also, it's election season! We've put together this Election Special issue within which we've printed the responses of the mayoral candidates to a couple of topical questions we thought you'd be interested to hear their opinions on. Regular writer Rose Sealy nails another gnarly piece of writing, appropriately on the theme of democracy this time round. And check out what's on in Newtown on the back page. Enjoy!

Oh, and of course don't forget to get your voting documents to the council by 12noon on 8 October to be sure your vote gets counted!

Ngā mihi nui,

Renee Rushton
newtowns.newsletter@gmail.com

Cover image by John Kerkmeester, Design by Olivia Richardson (thanks heaps!)
Thanks to the support of our amazing local businesses! Please support them back!



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



Renee Rushton has a chat with this month's Notorious Newtowner - Joel Teka from Ethio Café & Photography Studio on Riddiford Street.

As always, it was a pleasure to have an excuse to ask nosy questions of our latest Notorious Newtowner, and this month's personality, Joel Teka struck me as a real nice guy. I sat myself down at the little table in Joel's coffee shop and made myself comfortable. The space was decorated with Joel's photography and advertisements for genuine Ethiopian coffee ceremonies. I was lucky enough to go to Ethiopia a couple of years ago and remembered these ceremonies – the coffee beans are roasted, ground, brewed and poured in front of you. So delicious!

As we were chatting it became obvious that Joel's little business offering printing services, internet, photography and design services and of course Fairtrade, organic Ethiopian coffee and vegan food, was cranking along: within the hour I was there, Joel was up and down serving his customers for probably half of the time!

Joel's father came to New Zealand as a refugee in 1995, and brought Joel out in 1999. "My father told me it would be a great place to raise children, so I came." Joel then attended Wellington High School from 1999 to 2003,

where he "had a good experience." After High School, Joel studied graphic design, digital media, business and communications at Weltec. As is the case with many graduates, Joel found it hard to get work without having any experience in his field. "So in 2014 I started up my own home studio so I could build my profile as a graphic designer and photographer." His plan clearly worked a treat, because in early 2015 Joel moved to the Riddiford Street location and added the internet café and print service, with the cafe being a more recent addition.

Joel struck me as totally passionate about Ethiopian coffee. "Coffee is part of the vision. You know Peoples Coffee around the corner? I am the people they are talking about." Coffee is roasted in the pan onsite in the traditional Ethiopian way. "It's slowly growing, people are noticing that we have something unique to offer."

Joel has a wife and two sons (a two year old and a one year old) and lives with his family in Mt Cook. "For me home is here, New Zealand is my home." Seeing as this is an election special, I tried to grill Joel on who he would be voting for in the up-coming mayoral race. He said he wasn't sure yet, but hinted that it would likely be a candidate aiming to support small businesses.

I'd highly recommend heading on down to the Ethio Café & Photography Studio, Joel is a super nice guy and makes a mean brew too.



It's time to vote for a new mayor! With Celia out of the race who knows what will happen?! Around Newtown, we've been hearing a lot of chat (and cyber yelling) about homeless, begging and hustling. We've taken the opportunity to check in with the candidates on that topic, in addition to what they've got to offer Newtown in general.

Questions

1. If you win the mayoral race, how will you support those struggling with homelessness and the challenges associated with living on the street?
2. What else can you offer Newtown in general?

Helene Ritchie

1. The position of mayor in the Capital requires sound governance, extensive experience, wisdom and leadership, not just billboards and silly promises. I have the requisite experience to take this boutique City into the future, a public leadership record and significant achievements for the City. Experience counts! Wellington (Newtown!)- born and bred, I will as mayor and Health Board member, bring together the two entities to better utilise their resources, focus on those most vulnerable; address health inequalities; pursue warm dry housing through a focussed Housing committee and advocacy to Government; ensure Council works closely with NGO's and government to effect Te Mahana- Ending Wellington Homelessness strategy.
2. The Newtown Festival deserves accolades and continuing support. I want to protect the diverse vibrancy of Newtown from gentrification, promote affordable warm housing, strong communities and neighbourhoods, and a living wage - Newtown families deserve it.

Jo Coughlan

1. Homelessness is a complex issue that requires cross-agency support and of course compassion. There are many reasons why people find themselves in this situation and we cannot impose a one-size-fits-all-solution. We are a diverse and inclusive city. I will work with all agencies and NGOs to ensure the Council plays its part in addressing homelessness, because I strongly believe everyone must be treated with dignity irrespective of their living situation.
2. I will continue to promote attracting and retaining businesses to Wellington to create more jobs for all. I will double-tunnel the Mt Victoria and Terrace tunnels to ensure better access to the hospital, reduced congestion, faster public transport and less non-local traffic in Newtown. Through an Urban Development Authority I will promote investment in commercial and residential development in Adelaide Road. And of course I will continue to actively support the much-loved Newtown Festival.

Justin Lester

1. I'm committed to reducing and ultimately eradicating homelessness in Wellington. I'll be understanding and will prioritise funding for our NGO partners. I'll ensure people living on the streets are cared for, housed, provided with income and, most importantly, hope. I know first-hand what it's like to be down on your luck and in need of support. I'll be there for others like the community was for my family when needed.

2. Newtown is funky, richly diverse and has a strong sense of community, virtues I want to extol. I'm committed to upgrading the Newtown community centre, and will support the Newtown Festival to be one of NZ's best. I want Newtown to be clean, graffiti-free and to exhibit a sense of pride. As the home of the Zoo and Wellington hospital, transport connections are important and public transport must be affordable.

Keith Johnson

1. I will work with HNZ to make up for the 110 or so homes that were lost when HNZ closed the Gordon Wilson Flats due to earthquake risk. I will try to ensure that all major developments [e.g. the Shelly Bay – Mt Crawford and Erskine College sites] make some provision for Affordable and / or Social Housing as development contributions.
2. I see enormous potential in Newtown and will actively encourage its future development [for example, by laying the groundwork for a rapid transit link] running between the central city and the airport through Newtown. Dealing with graffiti and vandalism will also be approached with greater determination and commitment.

Nicola M J Young

1. WCC, the second-largest provider of social housing in New Zealand, can be proud of its achievements especially the recent upgrades. But local government cannot do everything, so WCC needs to work with central government and charities to get increased wrap-around social services (health, welfare, housing, etc) to help the homeless.
2. I have already been working with local business owners and Council officers to get Newtown additional support because of its unique concentration of psychiatric services, Salvation Army's Hope centre, and social housing. We need to help the increasing numbers of beggars who are deterring people from Newtown's shops, and the aggressive beggars who are targeting vulnerable residents. I am also campaigning to freeze the rates while protecting core services, by freezing the rates at inflation; this will help keep Newtown affordable.

Andy Foster

1. Fundamentally we need more good quality housing. I'll continue our award winning housing upgrade programme, and seek more Government assistance especially for making Council tenants eligible for income related rentals. Our new Urban Development Agency will help urban renewal and delivery of quality housing especially targeted at first home buyers and older people, also freeing up rental space. I'll work closely with community organisations like DCM person by person to provide support and accommodation to those struggling.
2. I'll start rejuvenation of Adelaide Road including delivering a tree-lined boulevard and transport improvements. I'll work to strengthen Newtown heritage buildings. I brought in protection for pre 1930s character housing. I'll work with Newtown and other communities to help them develop their own long term suburban plans. I'll support Newtown Festival and expanded car share schemes and bikes in schools (St Anne's).

Nick Leggett

- 1. Homelessness is a nasty symptom of the growing inequality in our country. Lack of access to employment, poor funding of mental health services, unaffordable or inadequate housing and low wages. The council’s key role is that of an advocate and co-ordination for discussion and social services. WCC is also a housing provider and it needs to ensure there is open access to affordable public housing for homeless Wellingtonians.
- 2. I can offer Newtown an open and available Mayor with a strong record of handing over planning and resources so communities can take charge of their own realities. There is too much “central control” from the Town Hall and it’s time to devolve decision making to neighbourhoods so they have a greater ability to influence public safety, events and community planning and amenities.

Johnny Overton

- 1. Thirty years of neo-liberalism & globalisation have had a devastating effect on our society & nation. The best way out of this downward spiral would be to embrace radical localisation & create conditions that will foster cooperation, community & maturation. Only then, will finding long lasting solutions to things like homelessness be possible. If miraculously elected, I would develop a trail blazing future proofing vision, & launch a localisation revolution.
- 2. The future proofing vision would include plans for: reducing frivolous council spending: assisting the less well off: devolving council & strengthening local community governance & resilience: improving our water, energy & locally grown food security: an innovative waste reduction & recycling system: an integrated, more environmentally friendly transportation system: fostering grass-roots initiative: creating affordable multi-purpose built environments: regaining control over essential resources, infra-structure & services: curbing population growth & expansion.



Farewell from Mayor Celia Wade-Brown

I’ve really enjoyed being on Council. Since first elected in 1994, I’ve served the city for twenty years. In that time lots has happened in Newtown. One of my early projects was Newtown Safer Roads and now it will be new hands working with you.

We’ve achieved much with the Newtown Park and Regent Street flats; and Special Housing Areas have helped HousingNZ and others build much-needed housing in Adelaide Road, Mansfield St, Princess St, Owen Street and Mein Street. There’s been amazing improvements to the Wellington Zoo in Newtown, including the much-loved Neighbours’ evening.

Berhampore and Newtown school pools are open and improved thanks to new funds from Council; Hockey has a third turf on Mt Albert; several buildings have been strengthened thanks to the Built Heritage Fund; and we’ve increased our commitment to the marvellous Newtown Festival. Smart Newtown and the many programmes at the Newtown Community Centre, Hall and Library continue to flourish.

Importantly, we’ve begun a Living Wage for Council staff and contractors. Now it’s time for the public transport and cycling corridors to the south to be improved – vote for a Mayoral candidate you trust to keep Newtown’s character. Council makes a big difference: vote!



My earliest memory of history was the rising, rock solid stone citadel of Athens. The birthplace? of Democracy. The fair ideals of the people. My most recent lesson in history is that if you have money, you have power enough to buy people’s lives and votes. This metamorphosis of democracy is still an ideal, but a mere allusion when it comes to people power.

Here is the allusion. Just recently with the Brexit debacle in England and Europe everybody had the right to vote on the matter, but not the same right to fair, and unbiased awareness of what it really meant to leave Europe. According to studies post-Brexit, the majority of voters who wanted to leave the European Union benefitted most from being a part of the European Union. Is that democracy?

Money buys power; power buys headlines. Daily knowledge of the world, especially politics, is from the media. We believe in media institutions such as the BBC; but is such news a reliable source? Politicians with vast wads of money make headlines to suit their agendas; the news is mere clay in their manipulating hands. So if they say it is democracy, so many bow down and say Amen! However we know information control is not democratic!

Beyond media there is corporate control. Just recently after questioning Pepsi Co on their ethics I was told, by them, that Pepsi was a ‘nutritious, wholesome and safe’ drink that met global food standards. Pepsi Co happens to be one of the top ten food conglomerates of the world; they have a monopoly on our food. They buy governments around the world to suit their own cause thus leading to the continuing dictatorship of the one

ideal; capitalism. Real democracy gives more than one ideal.

Of course with the rise of the Capitalist Right we have the antithesis. We have mentors of people power squeezing through the real story. Noam Chomsky, Naomi Klein, Russell Brand. They all tell the same story. We must reclaim our rights as voters, suffocate capitalist profiteering, approaching the future with critical thinking that goes beyond the headlines of your local paper, or website. A return to the real democracy with empowered masses, and not a minority controlling the wealth and decisions of the world. Arundhati Roy best summarizes how a democracy could become:

“Our strategy should be not only to confront empire, but to lay siege to it. To deprive it of oxygen. To shame it. To mock it. With our art, our music, our literature, our stubbornness, our joy, our brilliance, our sheer relentlessness – and our ability to tell our own stories. Stories that are different from the ones we’re being brainwashed to believe. The corporate revolution will collapse if we refuse to buy what they are selling – their ideas, their version of history, their wars, their weapons, their notion of inevitability. Remember this: We be many and they be few. They need us more than we need them. Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.”

So go lay siege to this empire of one ideal. Change the narratives. Include everybody wherever in the world. Celebrate them, yourselves and the chance to feel empowered by a vote that is based on fair knowledge, and fair voting rights. Democracy can be in our hands, as it should have always been.



The Newtown Weekly

The Newtown Weekly flea market has arrived! Come along to the grand opening on Saturday 10th Sept, 9am to 1pm, at the Newtown Community Centre. Stalls by Uearthed, Sassy Monkey Lamps, Raukawa Prints, Ferret Books, Opportunity for Animals Vintage Stall, Flowers, Metro retro, Origami earrings, beautiful art, music, scones and jam and more! Running every Saturday morning, so email Kate if you're keen to hold a stall: thenewtown-weekly@gmail.com

Meet the Candidates meetings

Got questions for the people wanting to represent you in local government? Grill them at any of the upcoming Meet the Candidates meetings being hosted in various spots around the Southern suburbs: Tuesday 13 Sept, 7pm, St Annes Hall Newtown for Meet the Southern Ward Candidates meeting; Wednesday 14 Sept, 7pm, 284 The Parade (Baptist Church) for Meet the WCC Southern Ward and GWRC Candidates meeting; Tuesday 20 Sept, 7pm, 284 The Parade (Baptist Church) for Meet the WCC Mayoral and C&CDHB Candidates meeting.

Āwherika Live!

Showcasing the very finest performers of West African music & dance from around NZ at the Newtown Community Centre, 17 Sept, 7.30pm. Āwherika reshapes traditional West African material with their own unique Aotearoa flavour. A powerful, high energy show with drumming, dancing, singing, a variety of authentic West African instruments and featuring Robert Fugah from Ghana, an extraordinary master drummer and dancer. Also take the opportunity to get a taste of Africa and pre-order an amazing meal! Find the event on facebook for more details and place your meal order via play@jennifersmusic.co.nz

Friday nights at Baobab

Head down to Baobab on Friday nights to check some original tunes and a few favourites: Sept 2, Cypher Night with Iron lung Panda, live improvised hip hop; Sept 9, Jhan Lindsay with Winston Te Aui Ti and Jacqui Nyman; Sept 16, Fraser Ross and Friends; Sept 23, Ras Judah, African folk and reggae; Sept 30, Renny M.

Keep Newtown Clean

Help out with painting out graffiti, cleaning and gardening, to spruce up our neighbourhood, Saturday September 3rd, 9am - 12noon. Free BBQ sausages for all volunteers! Meet outside Newtown Mall, and come along between 9 and 12 wearing old clothes - all equipment provided. KNC is run by Newtown Residents' Association, with support from Amadeus Hair Salon, Wellington City Council, SB Maintenance, and Newtown New World.

Looking for heritage fruit trees

Do you have or know of a heritage fruit tree – that's a tree that is over 60-years-old? WCC would love to hear about it! They are currently looking for trees to take cuttings from, to graft and share around the city as part of their Heritage Fruit Tree programme. Ideally the trees we graft will come with a short story about the family or site or origin of the tree. To find out more, head to www.wellington.govt.nz/heritage-fruit-trees

Do at the Zoo

Come along to Wellington Zoo on Sunday 18 Sept to celebrate New Zealand's unique native wildlife. Children can enter the Zoo for \$2 and visitors will have the opportunity to become Rock Star Vets, learn how to monitor Kororā Little Blue Penguins, make puzzles for Kea to solve, plus many more activities! There will be live entertainment and opportunities to meet native animals like Wētā, Tuatara and Forest Geckos.

Bee Awareness

On Saturday 24 Sept Wellington Zoo is hosting a series of activities to celebrate Bee conservation in Meet the Locals He Tuku Aroha, their New Zealand walk-through experience. Visitors will have the opportunity to participate in activities such as beeswax candle-making, making take-home planters, honey tasting and seed bomb-making.

Fall back, Spring forward...

Don't forget to turn your clock forward one hour on 24th September as we enter into daylight savings! (Whoop!) While you're at it, change your batteries in your fire alarms, throw out and replace any expired food in your earthquake kits, change your toothbrush (you can find bamboo biodegradable toothbrushes at The Sust Trust ecoshop), flip your mattress and just generally revel in the fact that summer is on it's way...