

## 2 MINUTES WITH ..... FIEZA IBRAHIM



Fieza Ibrahim took on the role of coordinator at the WCC-managed Linden Community Centre two years ago. In the time since, the Centre has gone ahead in leaps and bounds. It is best known for its weekly Kai Kitchen when a team of volunteers help Fieza prepare a free lunch (there is such a thing!) for the local community every Friday – other than the Christmas break and during lockdowns!

*Where were you born?*

South of Malaysia, Johor.

*Where did you grow up?*

Kota Tinggi, Johor, Malaysia.

Also known as a historical tourism town of Malaysia.

*Were were you educated?*

All my education was in Malaysia – MARA University of Technology:

- i. Master's of Science (MSc) in Information Management
- ii. Bachelor of Science (BSc Honors) in Information & Records Management
- iii. Diploma in Information Management (Community Centre and Library)

*How long have you lived in Tawa?*

I've lived in Tawa from 2017 and before that in Johnsonville from 2012.

*What do you like about Tawa?*

Lovely people, yummy food from cafes and restaurants, amazing public facilities, wide range of free activities for the community and lots of green surroundings.

*What would you like to see improved in Tawa?*

A mall with food court area – great for mums with bubs, seniors and kids to hang out in any kind of weather.

*What about family?*

Married to Fahimi Ali. He completed his PhD at Victoria University focusing on information sharing and decision-making during disasters. He is also a member of the Red Hackle Pipe Band as the drummer (snare and bass drum). His fondest memory as a pipe band member was when he performed at the New Zealand Edinburgh Military Tattoo in 2016 at Westpac Stadium.

We are blessed with one son – Daem. He is 7 years old and goes to Redwood School. He is so proud to mention that Dr Ashley Bloomfield is from that school too. Daem is a very busy boy. He learns language classes for Malay and Arabic languages. He also enjoys a horseriding class, karate class and archery class. He has started to follow his dad's interest in learning to play the bagpipes with Dave Welsh, a world-class bagpipes player from the Red Hackle Pipe Band. He is progressing well and at a basic version of bagpipes called the 'Goose'. Hopefully he will be able to join the Tawa Christmas Parade this year or next year on his bagpipes.

*Work experience over the years?*

I was a Radio Announcer with Radio TV Malaysia. I was also a Radio Programme Producer for many community development related programmes. I also did lots of reporter work and news reading. My first job in New Zealand was the facilitator for Mothers Network Wellington where I facilitated discussions on important topics with diverse groups of new mothers.

In September 2019 I joined Wellington City Council working under Library and Community Spaces, managing the Linden Community Centre where I have really enjoyed working. In my current job I not only manage venue bookings but also do community reachout and organise free community programmes and events. Some big annual events which the Linden community looks forward to joining each year include school holiday programmes, kids' festival and kids' costume party."

*What are your interests and hobbies?*

I love to cook a wide range of Malaysian dishes for friends. Singing is my therapy from stress. Photography is my interest too.

*Favourite sports team and/or sports person?*

I was a state level high-jumper at school but after leaving school, sports were not on my list. But of course, who doesn't love the All Blacks!

*Favourite musical group and/or individual singer(s)?*

Of course, the Red Hackle Pipe Band, LOL, and the legendary entertainer P Ramlee from Malaysia, Mariah Carey and Celine Dion.

*What is your favourite holiday destination in New Zealand?*

Depends on the season.

For summer it is just the other side of Wellington – Cape Palliser, Castle Point and Martinborough.

For spring it's Hamilton and Palmerston North for cherry blossom.

For winter it's always been Ohakune and Ruapehu.

For autumn, which is my favourite season, I always choose the South Island, and the favourites are Arrowtown, Cromwell and Twizel.

*What accomplishments/achievements in your life give you much satisfaction/pride?*

Of many, this has always stuck in my head and made me smile whenever I think about it. There was one refugee in Tawa who stayed at home for about almost 20 years not interacting with anyone because she felt not good in English. I managed to convince her that we can always be part of the community even if we don't speak good English. Interestingly, I managed to change her perception and now she is one of the strongest contributors to the community in every community programme in Linden.

Another achievement is when I changed Linden Social Centre – which was run only for bookable events – to Linden Community Centre, a vibrant community hub where people can drop in and connect with each other.

*What are some interesting things about you that local people may not know?*

I really like to sing. I always wish there was a small karaoke outlet somewhere in Wellington where I can sing without any audience and disturbing neighbours, LOL.

*What are three things you would like to do before you die?*

1. Travel the world
2. To master Te Reo and Japanese language
3. Say sorry to everyone for anything that I have ever said and did that has offended them

*(Compiled September 2021)*