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PLUS - send us your news! By the end of September for the next issue - to david.faulkner@newcastle.gov.uk

An "out-of-this-world" singing experience

May 6th was an exciting day at Newcastle Public School in Ontario, Canada. The school took part in "Music Monday" - and what an out of this world experience it was!

Students and teachers sang simultaneously with astronaut Commander Chris Hadfield - who was aboard the International Space Station orbiting around earth - and over 600,000 students across Canada

Chris, himself from Ontario, performed "Is Somebody Singing?" with hundreds of students at the Ontario Science Centre and nearly a million people, mostly students, from coast-to-coast Canada and around the world, performing the song in unison from their location.

This was his last downlink before returning to earth. At 12 pm Eastern Time and at the exact same time across Canada, schools and communities from coast to coast were united by the Music Monday theme song.



Music Monday is an annual event that brings together thousands of students, musicians, parents and community members across the country to celebrate on the same day at the same time, the gift of music in their lives, The Coalition for Music Education launched Music Monday in 2005.

At Newcastle School, local music teacher, Bev Meens-Jeeves joined in, and with the help of some of her music students, she introduced everyone to the fantastic song "Newcastle" - created for the Newcastles of the World summit last year.

"Europe my home - Neuburg my home"



Members of the Neuburg Dream Theatre chose the theme of migration and home for their work during Childrens Week 2013.

Using photography, design and collage, the young people conveyed a message that everyone should have the chance to develop their talents but the exhibition was an honest presentation of hopes and fears, and of the negative experiences that many from new communities sometimes have.

However, asylum seekers and refugees are also supported through language courses and vocational training as well as through involvement in drama and culture.

Newburg works hard to make newcomers feel that it is their home, as Neuburgers, Germans and Europeans.

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Lagenda Tunjong - Kota Bharu's New Landmark

The new CheSiti Village Mall in Kota Bharu represents the first phase of the huge Lagenda Tunjong development, a new urban lifestyle haven, providing a major force for economic growth and increased employment opportunities for the local population of Kota Bharu city and Kelantan state

Lagenda Tunjong is sited on 40 acres (16 hectares) of prime land in the Bandar Baru Tunjong township, within greater Kota Bharu, strategically located near the Kelantan state office buildings.

Village Mall marks the first parcel to be developed and will be one of the most unique shopping lifestyle centres in Northeast Malaysia. The mega development will be undertaken in 7 phases, spread over the next 5 years. Much of the development will exemplify the inspired nature of the community for which KB City and Kelantan State are renowned. With its striking architecture and stunning vistas of the area, there will be nothing like this stunning development.

The new open-air design will feature modern architecture with themed pedestrian streetscapes, like Kelantan Street, Malaysian Street, International St and Arabesque St. This first phase of the development comprises more than 200 stylish shops, designer boutiques, unique cafes, bistros and specialty stores ranging from fashion, health and beauty to toys, books, sports equipment, IT and related gadgets.

Located just 5 km from Kota Bharu, the new CheSiti Village Mall will present a whole new world experience for the community and families in and around Kota Bharu. Less than 10 kilometres from the KB airport and major north-south, east-west crossroads, CheSiti Village Mall and Lagenda Tunjong will be a popular destination for local and regional tourists. The Tourist Information Centre and Tourist Lounge will be conveniently located at the Sara-Timur Tower. The new urban haven will also offer the Prima Lifestyle Apartments, featuring more than 300 modern units.



275 years of history in Neuchâtel newspaper archive

The oldest French-language newspaper in Europe is published in Neuchâtel and celebrates its 275 anniversary this year. L'Express is a Swiss regional French-language daily founded in 1738.

Covering international, national and local issues, including local exhibitions, it is available online in both PDF format and as web articles in addition to the printed edition which has a daily circulation of over 20,000.

To celebrate the anniversary L'Express and L'Impartial (its sister newspaper in nearby La Chaux-de-Fonds), the publishers are making their full archive of stories and photographs available to the public free of charge, in conjunction with the public and university libraries of Neuchâtel. The archive contains the publications from October 1738 to today – and they include all four years of the First World War. This major project is costing the newspaper group over a million Swiss francs.



Oklahoma tornado started in Newcastle

Readers may recall the terrible tornado that destroyed communities and killed many people in the Oklahoma area in the USA in late May.

Well, it actually gathered force in Newcastle, just north of the city of Oklahoma (see photos from there). We have been in touch with Mayor Karl Nail and others there - 40 homes were destroyed in Newcastle but thankfully no-one died. Our contact Jennifer Chan says "We lost our iconic bridge, over 90 years old. But it's amazing from all the messages and help to see how people can care so much. We are so grateful."



An Age-Friendly City

Newcastle's upon Tyne's growing reputation as a place to live your life and grow old with dignity has been spotlighted at a major European conference on ageing. In June Councillor Ann Schofield hosted a breakfast meeting for politicians at the Dublin EU Summit on Active and Healthy Ageing. During the meeting she outlined how Newcastle is increasingly becoming age friendly and why the council believes an ageing population is not only a challenge but an opportunity.

Newcastle has embedded the needs of older people into a series of recent initiatives around housing and the economy. It also supports a range of organisations and websites that cater for the needs of older people.

Councillor Schofield was a signatory to a new declaration calling for European support for practical action in areas like transport, housing, respect and participation and employment. She said "The new declaration underlines the clear and strong commitment local political leaders can give to strengthen and champion action to make communities more age-friendly."



Preparing for next year's summit in Nové Hradý



Nové Hradý is host for 2014 Newcastle of the World summit and the project team (see above) is already in place and hard at work. Mayor Vladimir Hokr tells us that team members have been assigned responsibilities for registration, marketing, logistics and the culture programme and that a special website for the summit is being developed. The Czech tourist agency has agreed to be a partner for the summit, which is very good news. The final date for the week is still to be consulted upon and resolved - the date will be in our next Newcastle's newsletter, also the theme for the conference.

Nové Hradý is a small town in the beautiful South Bohemia area of the Czech republic, close to the Austrian border. Mayor Hokr and his team look forward to welcoming you!

Festival Newcastle's

In Nové Hradý, they're already looking forward to visitors from different Newcastle's next summer. So much that they've held a rock festival called "Festival Newcastle's" which took place at the end of June.



Another award for Newcastle SA

Newcastle Municipality does it again, receiving the Govan Mbeki Award for the best Level 2 Accredited municipality in South Africa. In a ceremony held in Johannesburg there to accept the award on behalf of the Municipality was the Mayor of Newcastle Cllr Afzul Rehman and the Municipal Manager Kbone Masange.

This accreditation means that Newcastle will be planning and delivering housing opportunities with direct funding from the National Department of Human Settlements.

“It is an absolute honour and privilege to be the Mayor of this outstanding municipality at a time when it scoops up every award it is ever nominated for.” said Mayor Afzul Rehman.



Mr. Masange was humbled by the whole experience. “Sometimes we do not realise the impact we have until we receive such awards. This is not only about housing but the creation of sustainable communities in terms of service infrastructure and provision of community facilities offered by the Municipalities. In addition only two Municipalities were accredited Newcastle and EThekweni which is a Metropolitan; this goes to show that we are competing with the best.”

The Municipality was previously accredited at Level 2 with six other municipalities in the province of KwaZulu Natal. In April 2013 the Municipality then took the Govan Mbeki award provincially as the best Level 2 accredited municipality, and now have been recognised at the national level.

Reciting the Municipal theme for 2013 ‘Taking Newcastle to the next level’, the Mayor emphasized that they have taken planning for human settlement as a priority, with continuous meetings with the department of KwaZulu Natal and the Minister to ensure that housing projects are taken seriously. “We have over a R1 billion rands of approved housing projects. We are going to ensure that there is decent housing in our communities, it’s vital to our ANC-led municipality” he said.

Govan Mbeki was a prominent ANC freedom fighter imprisoned with Nelson Mandela and others on Robben Island, who He served in the post-apartheid Senate from 1994-7 as Deputy President of the Senate, and its successor - the Council of Provinces - from 1997-9. His son Thabo Mbeki succeeded Nelson Mandela as President of South Africa.

Goodbye to Dorothy

Those who were in Newcastle upon Tyne at the summit last July will be sad to hear of the death of Dorothy Martin whose stamp exhibition of so many different Newcastles was a highlight. She passed away in April at the ripe old age of 98, a delightful lady who was a member of the Royal Philatelic Society and President of the Newcastle Philatelic Society.

Over many years she had built a wonderful collection of stamps, letters and postcards from nearly 30 Newcastles, with mounted photos and narrative descriptions of many places and the occasions behind the stamp issues. “She came to our attention through Alison Hamilton of Newcastle, Australia. Alison told us “It’s sad news indeed but what a long, full and generous life Dorothy had lived.

“When my husband John and I saw her at last year’s July Newcastles of the World meeting she was so well physically and mentally. It gave her much happiness that her incredible stamp collection should finally be displayed and on such a momentous occasion. She answered many questions and posed over and over again for photos by the delegates. I shall always remember her both at the garden party and at the final dinner - both times obviously enjoying herself.

“We met at a Rotary Club in Newcastle upon Tyne and later she came with her good friends Brenda and Doug Adams and John Nicolaou on a tour of Durham Cathedral. John and I also visited her at home and had a memorable showing of much more of her wonderful collection”



Dorothy (left) and (above) with Alison (far left) and John at the Mansion House last year

Neuchâtel’s Five Star hotel ON the Lake!

We’d recommend you to visit the lovely city of Neuchâtel, and if you do why not splash out on a very special hotel? Hotel Palafitte comprises a series of impressive pavilions, some built on stilts over the lake, unique in Europe and an architectural masterpiece. This modern 5-star hotel operates as a symbiosis between water and land, and each room has its own terrace, some with direct access to the lake.



Do you remember what you wanted to be when you were growing up? Footballer, doctor, pop star? Now think about the job you are in right now - did you even know it existed when you were 11 years old? In **Newcastle-under-Lyme** they’re using an innovative scheme to give local children an early taste of the wide range of opportunities available when they enter the world of work and so help them make informed choices about future study routes.

“Our ‘Job Carousels’ bring in employees from a wide range of local businesses to talk to primary school children (aged 10-11) about their jobs” says organiser Trudi Barnard. “The innovation is that we use a speed-dating format – a short period talking about your job, followed by a few questions and then it’s on to the next pair of students. It’s fast and fun for all concerned. The schools benefit on many levels but the adult participants learn too, finding that it builds confidence, communication skills and a better understanding of their job. For more information about introducing the ‘Job Carousel’ scheme into schools in your area, contact Trudi at trudi.barnard@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk.

Job carousels help local schoolchildren

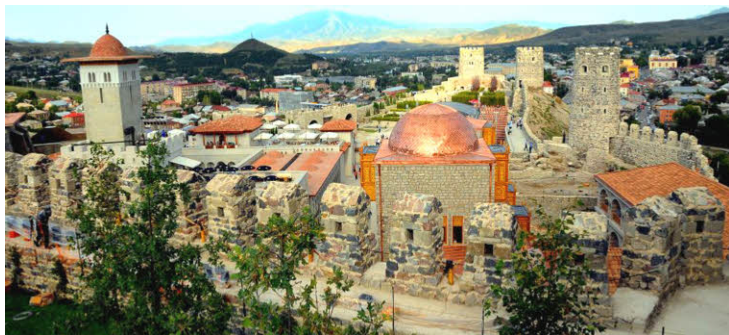


Pat Pimlott, local farmer, talks to children from The Coppice School about careers with animals

More images of the Rabat fortress restoration in Akhaltsikhe

Many of the “Newcastles” of the world are named after our castles of course. But the fortress featured in our last newspaper and its stunning restoration has created quite an interest elsewhere, and we’ve been asked to feature more photographs of the castle in the Georgian town of Akhaltsikhe.

An investment of over 30 million euros has created this wonderful restoration of the Rabat fortress, opened by the President of Georgia last year.



Historic Newcastle painting comes to UK from Australia

Ron Ramsey, director of the regional art gallery in Newcastle, Australia is visiting the UK in September for an exhibition of Australian Painting at the Royal Academy in London. This includes a very prestigious historical painting held by Ron’s gallery called An Inner View of Newcastle by Joseph Lysett, one of the exhibition highlights. Ron will take the opportunity to visit Newcastle upon Tyne, visit local galleries, meet staff and discuss possible future collaborations.



FLOODS HIT SEVERAL NEWCASTLES

Many parts of Bavaria were flooded because of the extensive rain in the first few days of June. The Danube rose to more than three times its normal height and Neuburg’s crisis team was mobilised.

The central area of the city proved to be well protected by the levees and the mobile flood barrier of the river but there was extensive flooding in other parts of **Neuburg**, including the ground of the local football team VfR Neuburg (see photo right). The Club’s chairman Walter Egen has a sense of humour. He said: “I find that such a flood is good for the quality of your lawn - afterwards the grass grows like the devil!”

Also as part of the terrible storms that affected much of central Europe, a violent storm with winds of up to 130 kilometres an hour, hail and heavy rain swept through western Switzerland uprooting trees, disrupting transport and sparking flash flooding. There was heavy damage in various parts of **Neuchâtel** from hailstones measuring up to five centimetres in diameter. Trains came to a standstill between Neuchâtel and Chaux-de-Fonds and Neuchâtel and Val-de-Travers following a mudslide.

Vehicle and building windows were smashed and vineyards were damaged. In some parts of the area much of the 2013 crop was destroyed and the 2014 harvest could also be smaller, with shoots that would normally carry next year’s grapes badly damaged. In Neuchatel the damage ranges from 30 to 100 percent depending on the vineyard, with Auvernier, Boudry and Cortailod suffering the greatest damage.

The southern hemisphere has not been spared. A few months earlier the area north of **Newcastle, New South Wales** was badly affected by storms and flooding, and the Hunter River burst its banks.



Call for runway extension at Kota Bharu airport

A total of 1,155,571 tourists were recorded in the Kota Bharu region of Malaysia in the first quarter of this year said state Chairman of the Committee on Culture, Tourism and Heritage Minister Datuk Md. Anizam Abdul Rahman.

He said the number of international tourists, currently at around a quarter of a million in the same period, would be enhanced significantly if the Sultan Ismail Petra Airport at Kota Bharu were upgraded to an international airport through a runway extension.

Universities working together on city centre development

Bob Giddings, Professor of Architecture at the University of Northumbria in Newcastle, recently visited the City of Newcastle in New South Wales, Australia. Marcus Jefferies and Jamie McKee from the School of Architecture and the Built Environment at the University there are enthused by the concept of a Newcastle-to-Newcastle architecture project.

“There are synergies between the two cities” says Bob “in particular future forms and uses, culture, heritage, and the local economy related to the city centres. The outcome of our meetings, which also included city officials was an agreement in principle for co-operation for the sharing of information and experience on designing city centres for the future” A particular focus could be the future of the city centre in the context of an aging population. A more detailed proposal is being worked up.

European Plaque of Honour for Neuchâtel

After the Diploma and the Flag of Honour, the City of Neuchâtel has now been awarded the Plaque of Honour, the third of four categories of awards granted by the Board of the Council of Europe. This award recognises their "efforts in favour of spread the ideal of European unity" It is designed for Europeans who promote twinning with foreign towns and who actively promote the establishment of better relations between the citizens of Europe.

The president of the Municipal Council, Pascal Sandoz received the prestigious award from Victor Ruffy, an honorary member of the Assembly of the Council of Europe and former president of the National Council. For the occasion, a large delegation of sister cities of Neuchâtel attended the ceremony at the city university - City of Aarau, Besançon (France) and Sansepolcro (Italy) - and Friendly Cities Guimaraes (Portugal) and Neuburg-an der Donau(Germany)

The ceremony also marked the closure of the session of the European Parliament that had taken place. Organised by the Youth Parliament of Neuchâtel, there had been a debate on the topic "What is missing in the public space in your city for young people? "

Councillor Eddie Boden

Newcastle's New mayor - a familiar face!

Newcastle-under-Lyme's new Mayor is a familiar face to regulars of Newcastles of the World summits. Eddie Boden has represented his town at several of them over the years. Eddie was born in Stoke on Trent in 1939 and educated at St Thomas' Roman Catholic School in Stoke. Eddie then went on to serve his apprenticeship before being employed in the building trade for half of his working life – the other half being in manufacture.

Eddie is married to Doris and they have five children. Eddie entered politics as a Labour Member of Newcastle Rural District Council and continued with Newcastle Borough Council where he has served as Leader of the Council. He has also been a Parish Councillor in Audley. In 1994 He became a County Councillor and has twice served as Chairman. Eddie finished on the County Council in 2009.

..... and a New Lord Mayor for Newcastle upon Tyne

Councillor Margaret Wood has been elected by the City Council to be Lord Mayor of Newcastle for the municipal year 2013-2014. She was born in Hong Kong, and works as a civil servant at the International Pension Centre in Newcastle. Margaret was first elected to Newcastle City Council in 1998 and re-elected in 2007. She is married to Councillor David Wood who was Lord Mayor himself in the year 2008-2009. David and Margaret led the Newcastle upon Tyne delegation to the Newcastles of the World summit in Neuburg-an-der-Donau in 2008.



Councillor Margaret Wood

LATVIA CELEBRATES MIDSUMMER

Festivity „Jâði” is a Latvian festival held in the night from 23 June to 24 June to celebrate the summer solstice (Midsummer), the shortest night and longest day of the year. The day of Lîgo (23 June) and the day of Jâði (24 June) are public holidays, and people usually spend them in the countryside. The festival's eve Jâðu vakars is held in the evening of 23 June and goes on all through the night Jâðu nakts where people Lîgo (sway) into the following day. The citizens of **Jaunpils** certainly enjoyed the festival!





Every two years the old part of Neuburg is closed off to make way for the wonderful castle festival (Schlossfest), with market stalls, food and drink, medieval sports and lots of music and dance.. The festival is spread over two weekends and attracts up to 100,000 people. This year it took place in the last weekend of June and the first weekend of July and, as always, most citizens of Neuburg enter the spirit by dressing up in Renaissance costumes. Here are some images from the 2013 festival, with Mayor Bernhard Gmehling leading by example (pictured left in the photo above left)

Making new connections - Nyborg, Denmark



We were delighted to learn of the interest of **Nyborg**, the Danish “Newcastle” in working with other Newcastles on the themes of heritage and culture promotion and tourism. Dr. Janus Møller Jensen, Head of department at Østfyns Museer/Nyborg Castle has published and lectured extensively on the medieval Nyborg castle and its history - and its potential as a driver of tourism as future stages of renovation take place there. We have visited and made initial contacts” said David Faulkner on behalf of Newcastles of the World. “We also have the opportunity of new school links”.

Newcastle South Africa hosts UK visitors and shows the way

In April, a study group from the UK organisation Local Authorities Action for Southern Africa (LAACTSA) visited South Africa at the invitation of the South African Local Government Association. The purpose was to share ideas and experiences on improving leadership in local government, engaging with the public and the role of municipalities in economic development. The study group comprised three councillors from London boroughs plus David Faulkner from Newcastle upon Tyne. Because of the strong connections through Newcastles of the World, David proposed - and **Newcastle KwaZulu Natal** agreed - that the group included the South African Newcastle in its itinerary.

“My colleagues were so impressed with Newcastle KZN and its strategic approach to economic regeneration - expertly presented by Ferdie Alberts - also the leadership of the Mayor in keeping in touch with local residents. They particularly appreciated the chance to attend one of the Mayor’s budget roadshows in a township and the frank way in which the problems of the municipality were recognised - and were being addressed with much success”.



Far left :the delegates with Mayor Rehman and Municipal Manager Masange at the roadshow; centre - Mayor Rehman addresses the crowd of around 500 people. Right: not everyone is paying attention!

Ligita Gintere continues to lead Jaunpils municipality

On June 1 elections took place in the nine cities and 110 municipalities of Latvia. In Jaunpils there was again a convincing victory for the Latvian Farmers' Union party (Latvijas Zemnieku savienība). At the first meeting of the new council Ligita Gintere was unanimously elected to continue as chairwoman of the municipality. Pictured are the new deputies, with Mrs Gintere fourth from the left.

Earlier in the year Mrs Gintere was one of the politicians representing Latvia at the Global Conference of Local Elected Women: "Gender Equality, a Priority for Global Development" in Paris, The Paris Local and Regional Governments' Global Agenda for Equality of Women and Men was adopted and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) launched an online tool to support European municipalities and regions working to promote the equality of women and men at the local level.



Newcastle-under-Lyme in the "Lymelight"

Earlier this year, the Newcastle-under-Lyme town centre was delighted when its newly formed town centre partnership was formally set up as a Community Interest Company. The Partnership is a private-sector led initiative to improve the vibrancy and performance of Newcastle town centre and brings together local businesses, the Borough Council, Keele University, Newcastle College, the New Vic Theatre and other stakeholders in the future prosperity of the town. Matt Taylor, the newly appointed Town Centre Manager said, "we've set out our goals for the next two years to help transform what is already an attractive market town into something which can survive the issues threatening the high street these days, and become something we can all be proud to be part of".



Some of the exciting initiatives planned by the Partnership include:

- * Encouraging university students to make more use of the town centre
- * The introduction of the 'Lymelight' festival in May, a three day celebration of local musical and creative talent to complement the well-established Jazz & Blues festival at the end of May
- * An international dance and food festival in July



Newcastle is also making the most of its 800 year old market. The town took part in the national 'Love Your Local Market' campaign in May with fun days organised by the traders and a scheme to encourage people to consider market trading as a way of starting their own business. Local schools were also given the opportunity to have a go at running a market stall at the 'Schools Market' in June – a popular event with the children, their teachers and shoppers! For more information on any of these activities, contact Trudi Barnard at Trudi.barnard@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

Shinshiro's "coming of age"

This summer Shinshiro city marks the 21st anniversary of its International Exchange Association. Its aim is for citizens of the city and visitors from elsewhere in Japan and other countries to develop friendship and understanding through exchanges in the fields of education, culture, sport and business. This promotes the welfare of humanity and peace in the world and contributes to international goodwill.

The programme of activities is very extensive, from language courses and cookery classes to business awareness and multi-cultural projects, and international visits and cooperation projects.

Dance and tea from around the world

A recent project that was greatly enjoyed was on the theme of "dance and world tea". Invitees came from many countries to enjoy dance from Uzbekistan and Peru, and the story of tea - with tasting of course - from around the world - China, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Mexico and Japan.



Shinshiro students to visit Newcastle UK

A party of 15 high school students from Shinshiro will be welcomed in Newcastle upon Tyne this August. There will be social activities, sightseeing and collaboration with Newcastle's Youth Council, building on the good links established last year. Shinshiro is keen to maintain a link with Grange First School in Newcastle. "We were really impressed by your school's warm welcome last year and students' wonderful Japanese dancing at the civic centre" Miho Ishino told Head Teacher Matthew Ward. Miho hopes to create links with a Shinshiro partner school very soon.

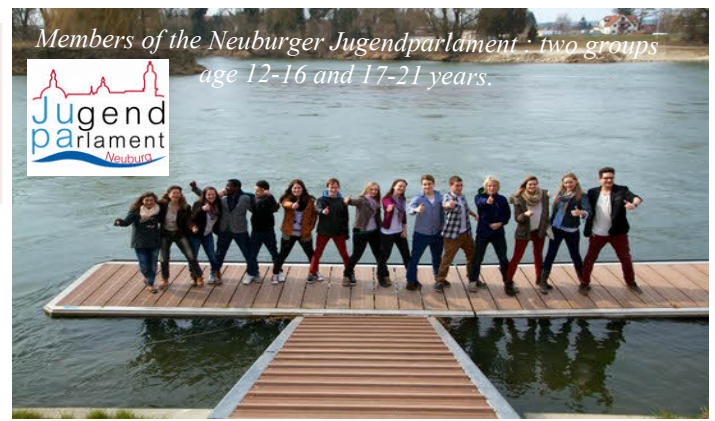
Our young people: the future of our Newcastle

Here are images of youth parliaments in some of our Newcastle - let us know what your young people are doing to make your town a better place in which to grow up.



Left: Marina Palma, Présidente (centre), Jillian Blandenier, Vice-Présidente & Christine Perrin, Trésorière of le Parlement des Jeunes of Neuchatel: representing young people aged 16-25 years.

Right: Newcastle upon Tyne Youth Council, from age 11-18



Rural broadband opportunities

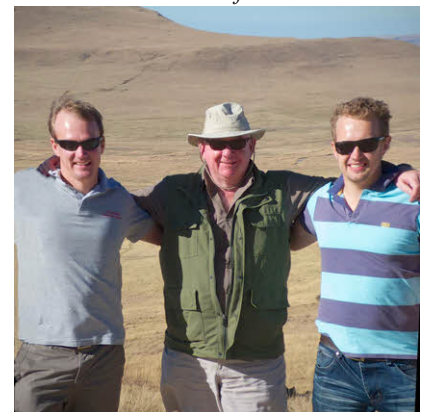
Marketing and customer service consultant Kevin Robson from **Newcastle upon Tyne** visited **Newcastle KZN** last autumn - a follow-up from the business presentation by Rolf Stucky of Jenny Internet at the Newcastle's of the world summit in Newcastle upon Tyne. Rolf says: "The reasons for the visit were to investigate the Jenny Internet networks in South Africa and plan a prototype network in the UK. Rural UK is still very unconnected. All current project are to lay fibre optic cable to the rural areas. This is very expensive and time consuming compared with our wireless solution."

Kevin says: "The visit was to explore the possibility of cross-fertilisation of trade between the two regions. I was astonished that we in this country don't seem to have latched on to how relatively easy it is to provide a fully provisioned broadband service to far flung and difficult to access rural areas (indeed all areas with similar issues of slow and 'not spots')".

"The technology they are using is world class, readily available and well proven. They handle everything from network feasibility and planning, commissioning, contracting for the actual installations (up to 70 kilometres point to point), and all aspects of commercialisation, such as subscriber sign-up, marketing roll-out to rural areas with a fully developed package of marketing materials and best methods of informing communities of the availability of service. The key advantage Jenny Internet has is its DFE (Dealer Front End), fully integrated network/consumer management system, which has been developed from scratch by Werner Stucky."

Werner then visited the UK in early 2013 for a range of meetings with technology contacts and with rural municipalities keen to roll out broadband as quickly as possible. Discussions continue says Kevin.

Werner, Kevin and Rolf in South Africa



Renovation of Neuburg Town Hall



After 18 months of intensive renovation work, the councillors and Mayor, together with part of administration, moved back into this impressive old building. The first town hall was built between 1603 and 1605 but burned down in 1945 when occupied by American forces. It was rebuilt by craftsmen of Neuburg's different trades and has since then served as main centre of the local administration. The costs of about 3.4 million Euros include the installation of a lift, new windows, and insulation of the roof. In March the public were invited to have a look at the renovated building and anyone who wanted to sit in the Mayor's chair was invited by the Mayor to do so.

Library hosts new business support centre

Newcastle upon Tyne created the first Business & Intellectual Property Centre outside London as a pilot in 2011 and has now secured over £1.3m to provide a full-scale operational service to businesses. The Centre is the first of a nationwide network developed with the British Library which will help businesses and entrepreneurs to grow their businesses, protect their ideas, and become commercially successful. The service, based in the flagship Newcastle City Library, offers free access to business and intellectual property (IP) databases and publications, support on commercialising IP, advice on start-up funding, market research, company data and information on patents, trademarks, design and copyright.

Newcastles of the World Alliance



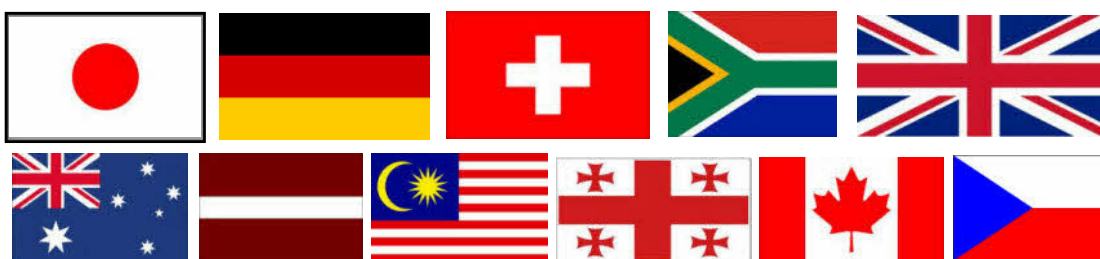
In 1998 the **Mayor of Shinshiro** in Japan took the initiative to invite representatives of seven Newcastles to his city. They have continued to meet every two years - in Neuchâtel, Switzerland in 2000, USA (Indiana/Pennsylvania) in 2002, South Africa 2004 & 2010, Newcastle-under-Lyme (UK) 2006, Neuburg an der Donau, Germany 2008 and most recently in Newcastle upon Tyne (UK) in 2012.



Newcastle upon Tyne-based John Nicolaou had come up with the idea in the mid-1990s to link those English-speaking communities who share the name “Newcastle”. He contacted writers and photographers in Newcastles around the world and compiled a book which was published in 2000.

The aim of the Newcastles alliance is to foster friendship and collaboration, and to share and enjoy each others’ heritage and culture. Each gathering has taken a discussion theme to ensure practical, usable outcomes, and there has been increasingly useful involvement of young people and of business representatives. Of all the possibilities for developing international associations, what more natural link is there than with the towns and cities that share the same name?

The Newcastles of the World network is expanding, and we welcomed several new guests in July. A website for the alliance is now live and will be the vehicle for drawing in people and groups in many more Newcastles via open access, Facebook groups and other social networking. The richness and depth of the Newcastles network does not just depend on the support of mayors and municipalities but instead on ordinary people across the world eager to learn about other Newcastles and how their citizens live, and to build their own contacts and projects.



Represented at the 2012 summit were Shinshiro City (Japan), Neuburg an der Donau (Germany), Neuchâtel (Switzerland), Kota Bharu (Malaysia), Akhaltsikhe (Georgia), Nové Hradý (Czech Republic), Jaunpils (Latvia) and Newcastles from South Africa, Australia, Canada and UK (under-Lyme and upon Tyne). The Newcastles alliance also has current or previous association and contacts with former summit attendees Newcastle Indiana and Pennsylvania (USA) and Neufchâteau France), and also with Nyborg (Denmark), Neufchâteau (Belgium), Savonlinna (Finland), Castelnuovo Berardenga (Italy) and Newcastle Oklahoma (USA)

Disabled get a chance of a better life

Newcastle Municipality in South Africa prides itself in empowering and improving the lives of all, as expressed by the Mayor Cllr Afzul Rehman at the launch of the CCTV cameras initiative. In believing that all citizens of Newcastle deserve a fair and equal chance at employment, eight CCTV assistant controllers have been appointed. “All of our operators have different disabilities which have made it difficult for them to get employment” said the Mayor; “therefore as one of the Municipality’s missions is to create employment it was important to include people with disabilities in work opportunities. The Municipality welcomes and congratulates the newly appointed CCTV assistant controllers”.



Featured Museum - Akhaltsikhe

The Ivane Javakhishvili Samtskhe-Javakheti History Museum in Akhaltsikhe houses the significant part of the region’s cultural heritage: old manuscripts, (notably Rustaveli’s *The Knight in the Tiger Skin*) epigraphic, archaeology, numismatic, ethnography materials, photo documentation and old printed books.

Collections of inscriptions on stone are of special importance, as well as unique collection of carpets and rugs (of the verge of XIX-XX c.c.). Apart from two main buildings that display permanent exhibitions, the Castle that surrounds it, the administrative building, a mosque built in 1752, the ruins of a medresa (Islamic school) - all belong to the Museum.

