

NYBORG LEADS THE WAY WITH NEW SCHOOLS VIDEO PROJECT



As part of the Newcastles of the World educational programme, we are delighted to launch the “Learning from other Newcastles” video project. Martin Stenmann, **Nyborg, Denmark**, is leading on this project, and pupils in Nyborg have created the first “Learning from other Newcastles” video, with Martin’s guidance - and with the endorsement of Mayor Kenneth Muhs and his fellow councillors. See page 7 for more information - we invite you to join us in this exciting initiative.



NOVÉ ZÁMKY LAUNCHES ITS BIG YEAR

This is a special time of celebration for **Nové Zámky** as it begins its year as **Slovakia’s** “City of Culture”. The theme is “Vzdušné Zámky” - castles of the air, flying high, taking culture to places and people that it doesn’t normally reach, showcasing the present and creating the new - and revitalising public spaces and regenerating the city through culture. The year started with a grand launch in the Imperial Riding Hall, with a multi-genre showcase of local art ensembles and soloists, together with music and dance performances from invited guests headed by Pavel Hammel and Katarína Málíková.

NOVÉ VZDUŠNÉ
Mesto kultúry ZÁMKY
Kultúra varosa

See page 11 for more about the year

The Newsletter of “Newcastles of the World” • March/April 2020

MARKING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY



Around much of the world, March 8th is celebrated as “International Women’s Day”, recognising the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women.

So we are featuring the stories of remarkable women born in different “Newcastles”, (left)

Lindiwe Mabuza from **Newcastle, South Africa**, and Dr Ng Yen Yen of **Kota Bharu, Malaysia**. Also Vera Brittain of **Newcastle-under-Lyme, United Kingdom** and Bodil Begtrup of **Nyborg, Denmark**, (right) - see

pages 2 & 3 for their achievements, and of others.



IT’S CARNIVAL TIME !

“Masopust” is the annual (noisy and colourful) festival at this time of year in **Nové Hradky**, our “Newcastle” in South Bohemia in the Czech Republic. The timing of the festival is associated with both the driving out of winter and the feasting that precedes the time of fasting and abstinence of Lent, which is also marked in **Nové Zámky (Slovakia)**. See page 10 for more.



Who’s that with Chris Frye, the Mayor of New Castle, Pennsylvania?

OK, it’s an old line, but Mayor Frye recently got the chance to meet the US President at The White House after just a few weeks in his new role. The Mayor was in Washington DC for a meeting with fellow mayors and other political leaders shortly after assuming office. He’s made a dynamic start in New Castle, instigating many changes, and being accessible as the new leader of his community. The Mayor said his visit was not about any particular political party but working the most effective way for your town or city.

EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN FROM MANY DIFFERENT NEWCASTLES OF THE WORLD



Bodil Gertrud Begtrup (1903 - 1987), born in **Nyborg** was a Danish women's rights activist and diplomat. In 1929, she became a member of the board of Kvinderådet (the National Womens Council), in 1931, she was elected vice-president, and in the period 1946-49 she was president. In 1939 she became Denmark's first female film censor. After the war she became a member of the Danish delegation to the UN General Assembly. In 1946 she became chairman of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. Begtrup was vice chair of the committee that negotiated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. She was appointed Envoy to Iceland in 1949, and became Denmark's first female ambassador, when in 1955 she was appointed ambassador to Iceland.



Lindiwe Mabuza was born in 1938 in **Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal**, South Africa. She is a prominent politician, diplomat, poet, academic and journalist. She was an anti-Apartheid activist who went on to serve her country as a Member of the first democratically elected parliament of South Africa. She then proceeded to serve as a distinguished diplomat, including as High Commissioner to the UK.

She serves on the Advisory Board of Elders of the Ifa Lethu Foundation repatriating lost South African artworks. She has also served as the Chairperson of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund UK. She was the winner of the 2017 South African Arts & Culture Trust Lifetime Achievement Award for Arts Advocacy, and her contributions in mobilising the use of arts for democracy confirm that cultural activism played a significant role in abolishing apartheid in South Africa.

Ng Yen Yen, who was born in 1946 in **Kota Bharu**, served in the Cabinet of Malaysia as Minister of Women, Family and Community Development from 2008 to 2009 and Minister of Tourism from 2009 to 2013. Before that she was Deputy Minister of Finance for five years. Her appointment as a full minister marked a milestone as the first Malaysian Chinese woman to hold a cabinet position. She has many awards in recognition of her public service, notably Commander of the Order of Loyalty to the Crown of Malaysia (PSM).



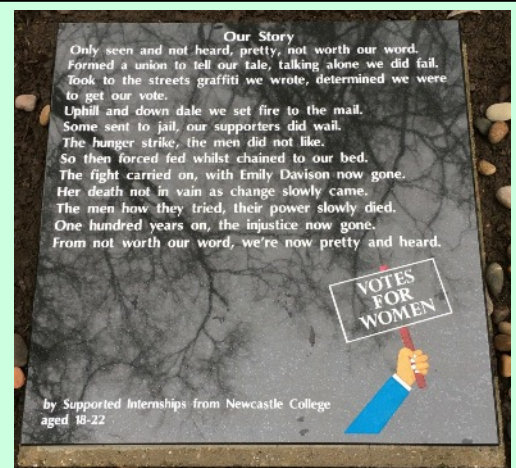
Vera Brittain (1893 – 1970) from **Newcastle-under-Lyme** was an English Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) nurse, writer, feminist, and pacifist through the League of Nations Union and the Peace Pledge Union. Her extraordinary life was featured in an award-winning BBC programme, and in a film named after her most famous book “Testament of Youth”, featuring Swedish actress Alicia Vikander as Vera, Game of Thrones’ Kit Harington her fiancée, and Emily Watson and Dominic West as her parents.

The book, over 600 pages long, was Vera’s vivid picture of the horror and futility of war based on her own experiences, and gives a voice to the wartime role of women. Vera’s daughter Shirley Williams is a very well-known politician (and former Cabinet member in the UK government).

YOUNG POETS HAVE THEIR TRIBUTE SET IN STONE

Young writers who penned a poignant poem about women’s suffrage have had their work recognised at an award winning park (Brampton Park) in **Newcastle-under-Lyme** (UK). Eleven learners from Newcastle College have had unveiled a plaque inscribed with their collaborative piece.

“Our Story”, written by a group of 18 to 22 year olds from the college’s supported internship, refers to the extreme lengths women went to in order to gain the right to vote. The plaque is positioned near a steel silhouette representing the journey of local legend Vera Brittain (see above) towards pacifism and the women’s suffrage movement following the First World War. The suffrage project, sponsored by local stonemason Wilf Burt, is part of this year’s gold standard “Britain in Bloom” entry for Newcastle.



NEWCASTLE AUSTRALIA'S CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

On each Australia Day (January 26) the **City of Newcastle** recognises contributions to the community made by special people. Michelle Faithfull, a dedicated and passionate community fundraiser, has been named the 2020 Citizen of the Year. Michelle coordinates the highly successful Hunter Homeless Connect Day, which links people experiencing homelessness and those at risk of it with essential services, helpful advice and other assistance. Over the past decade, she has raised \$180,000 (over 100,000 euros) for local charities, including for the Rescue Helicopter Service, the Hunter Breast Cancer Foundation and John Hunter Hospital’s neonatal intensive care unit. *See page 6 for the Young Citizen of the Year.*

PEOPLE

MORE WOMEN OF DISTINCTION FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Lusine Zakaryan (1937-1992) born Svetlana Zakaryan, in **Akhaltsikhe**, Georgia was a renowned classical singer. In 1952, she moved with her family to Yerevan (Armenia), where she attended music school and then the Yerevan State Musical Conservatory, where her singing talent became clear. From 1970 to 1983, she was a soloist with the symphony orchestra of Armenian TV and Radio. She also sang in the choir of the Armenian Apostolic Church's Holy See at the Echmiadzin Cathedral, and it is for her magnificent rendition of centuries-old Armenian spiritual hymns that she is most remembered, but she was also known for singing the full international opera repertoire.



Miriam Roth (1910-2005) was born in **Nové Zamky** (now Slovakia) and studied at Brno University. She emigrated to Palestine - pre-state Israel - in 1931, studied at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and was one of the founders of Kibbutz Sha'ar HaGolan. During the Holocaust, her parents, two sisters, and two young nieces, who were still in Europe, were sent to Auschwitz, and none survived. Miriam was a leading member of the Socialist-Zionist Hashomer Hatzair youth movement, taught preschool education and children's literature, and published 23 books for children during her lifetime, some of which became best sellers, and six books on education and children's literature. Roth received the Esther Rabinovich Award, the Ze'ev Prize for Lifetime Achievement and her work was recognised by UNICEF.



Calling bee-keepers in our different "Newcastles" ! What's the buzz?



Well, it's about connecting and learning from each other. Liga Eidmane-Kabaka is a beekeeper from **Jaunpils**, our Newcastle in **Latvia**. Her family began beekeeping nine years ago when she and her husband made the decision to move from the capital Riga to the countryside and set up their own business. Jaunpils is where her husband's family house was. It was a big surprise for relatives and friends when they decided to become beekeepers. The oldest (now 82) and the most experienced beekeeper in the village helped them get under way and still provides advice and inspiration. Liga gradually increased the number of bee colonies, and they are now confident beekeepers with 50 hives, regular customers and lots of ideas.

Liga says: "Last year with our designer we developed a brand for our honey – Muizas medus (Manor honey) as all our bee gardens are located in the historic manor area. Now we sell our products direct to our customers in Riga and in large cities around Jaunpils. Our customers are individuals, cafes, restaurants, hotels. As we like to learn and become inspired by other beekeepers, we think it would be interesting to find out how many beekeepers are in Newcastles around the world, how do they work, what kind of problems there are with beekeeping in their area and how they overcome them. It would be a pleasure for me to run Newcastles beekeepers facebook and instagram accounts if there is the interest to share information. As the bee populations are falling - with a negative societal effect - it's important to talk about this problem and for beekeepers to support each other."

You can find Liga on facebook: Liga Eidmane-Kabaka. The company is on facebook and instagram as Muizas medus. Liga will be happy to receive e-mails: newcastlesbees@gmail.com.

Going from success to success in **South Africa** is Ntombezinhle Jiyane - Dj, Producer, tv personality, coach and business woman who is better known by her stage name Dj Zinhle. She grew up in **Newcastle, Kwa-Zulu Natal** and studied at Siyamukela High school in Madadeni township there. Her interest in becoming a DJ started through her brother who owned a sound equipment rental company. Zinhle kicked off her career in 2006 as the resident DJ for local TV Show, Jika Majika - an opportunity that pushed her into the spotlight. Since her discovery, she has reached the attention of some of the country's most respected DJs and producers, has collaborated with renowned artists and released successful singles, such as "My Name Is" ft Busiswa.

Now with over a decade of experience in the entertainment industry, Zinhle is a household name in the South African music scene, nominated for - and winning - many award such as Metro FM Awards and South African Music Awards. 2017 saw many highlights in DJ Zinhle's career as she released her single "Colours" ft Tamara Dey as well as producing her woman empowerment TV show "It Takes A Village", which aired on SABC 1. Zinhle continued empowering females in 2018, through her book "Meeting Your Power", which was co-written by life coach, Nokubonga Mbanga. In October 2018, Zinhle became a judge on SABC 1's talent search show, 1's and 2's .

DJ ZINHLE HAS REACHED THE TOP



NEWS FROM AROUND THE "NEWCASTLES"

HERCEG NOVI CELEBRATES ITS MIMOSA FESTIVAL AGAIN

For four weeks, from mid-February, **Herceg Novi**, our Newcastle in Montenegro, celebrates its famous Mimosa Festival. The Mimosa Festival is a celebration of Mediterranean vegetation, culture, art, sports and gastronomic delights. When many parts of Europe are still deep in winter, people in Montenegro enjoy the season that marks the blossoming of the yellow mimosa flower.

Every year at this time since 1969, Montenegrin people (and others from beyond) come to Herceg Novi to celebrate it with dances, carnivals, and masquerades, with lots of fish, wine and beer to help it along.

Still to come in March are a concert with Aco Pejović, regional star from Serbia on the 7th, and on 14th March it's the closing carnival, and a concert with Željko Joksimović, one of the most popular stars from region.



NYBORG RECREATES HISTORIC ROAD

"The Kingdom's Main Road" is the historic medieval course that connected Eastern and Western Denmark and ran directly across the town square of **Nyborg**, down through the city to the harbour. During the current renovation of the square, this route is being marked diagonally across the square with a uniform cobblestone coating of worn, cut and flame-burnt stones, ensuring a beautiful, smooth and non-slip surface.



The central part of the Square is being laid out like a large Nordic granite floor and at the end of the square facing Nyborg Castle, there will be created a water art as a reference to the "princess mirror" in the garden, and also castle plants known from Renaissance times. During the archaeological excavations at the Square, a large number of the original cobblestones have been found, which may date back to the 16th century or maybe earlier. These old cobblestones will now be laid around a new oak tree in front of the town hall.

The finished Peat will be completed this November as a beautiful multifunctional urban space with paving in Nordic granite inspired by the original medieval tournament site that King Christian III established in the mid-1500s.

See -<https://schoenherr.dk/projekter/nyborg-slot-og-torv/>

IT'S A SMALL WORLD

Welcomed recently at **Newcastle upon Tyne Civic Centre** by Lord Mayor Councillor David Cook (left) were Councillor Declan Clausen, Deputy Lord Mayor of **Newcastle, Australia** (right) and Fumitoshi Yokoji from **Shinshiro City**, our Newcastle in Japan.

Newcastles of the World would like to thank Lord Mayor Cook for his support for our activities and events during his year of office.



ABOUT NEWCASTLES OF THE WORLD : There are more than 100 different "Newcastles" or "New Castles" around the globe, in many different countries and different languages. It was the mayor of one of them, in Shinshiro, Japan, who took the initiative to bring the Newcastles together via the Newcastles of the World summit in 1998 .

Subsequent gatherings were held in Neuchâtel, Switzerland in 2000, USA (New Castles of Indiana and Pennsylvania) 2002, South Africa 2004 and 2010, UK 2006 (Newcastle-under-Lyme) and 2012 (Newcastle upon Tyne), Germany (Neuburg) in 2008, Nové Hradky (Czech Republic) in 2014, Newcastle, Ontario, Canada in 2016 and in Shinshiro again in 2018. The aim of Newcastles of the World is to foster links of friendship, culture, education, business and tourism between us all.

COMMUNITY



On January 26 in **Neuburg, Germany**, 1837 swimmers took part in this year's winter swim to cover the 4.5-kilometre-stretch in the 3-degree cold water of the Danube. Because of the slow current it took 50 minutes before the first swimmers in their wet suits climbed out of the water at the local rowing club. 104 so-called "ice swimmers" dared to swim in their bathing trunks or bathing costumes to leave the Danube after about 5 minutes to enjoy a cup of soup. In the evening most of the swimmers took part in a fancy dress party with far more agreeable temperatures. There's more photos on page 9.



Good news for **Newcastle in Ontario, Canada**, as funding has been secured for additional beds for the new hospice that will be built there. Jill Richardson (pictured at the announcement)- an important member of our Newcastles of the World team - is also a key person in the team of residents that have been campaigning and fundraising for the hospice for the past six years. The hospice will provide much-needed palliative care in the region, one of the few in Ontario currently without a fully operational residential hospice care centre.

Clarington municipality donated the land in Newcastle. The additional rooms, which improves the viability of the entire project, will enable between 130 and 140 people to be supported with end-of-life care each year.

Hotel Maj ready to dance again

Participants in the Newcastles of the World Conference in **Nové Hradý, Czech Republic** in 2014 will remember our evening in Hotel Maj for the annual (and nationally-recognised) international dance competition **Novohradská číše**. NotW representatives presented some of the prizes to the winners. Since then, the communist-area budget hotel closed its doors and was offered for sale. The Town of Nové Hradý bought the hotel to ensure that the facility stays available for cultural events of the town. It was in dire need of modernisation and repair, and the first phase of the renovation has been completed well in time for the forthcoming Dance Festival in March (see poster). With the external and structural repairs completed, the next step will be to modernise the accommodation facilities. Once completed, Nové Hradý will have a valuable asset for developing cultural tourism and regional activities. Of course, the town hotel will start offering discounts to visitors from other Newcastles through the Newcastles Passport scheme as well!

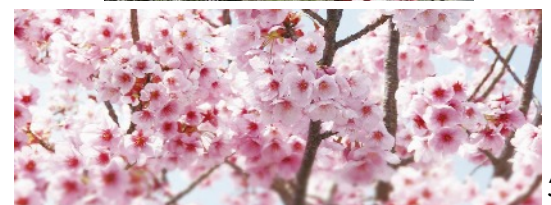
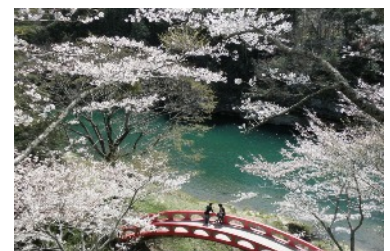


A CITY REMEMBERS At the end of last year, the people of **Newcastle, Australia** remembered the moment 30 years before (10.27 on 28 December 1989) when an earthquake devastated the city. The city recalled with pride the courage, resilience and community spirit that followed the quake by hosting and supporting a range of events to mark the anniversary. Christ Church Cathedral hosted a special commemorative service and there were several exhibitions that remember the event and its aftermath. As well as killing 13 and injuring 160, the quake caused around four billion dollars in damage. More than 5,000 homes were damaged (leaving 1,000 people homeless), as were 147 schools and 3,000 other buildings in what was one of Australia's worst-ever natural disasters.

SHINSHIRO IS BLOSSOMING AGAIN

Sakurabuchi Park in **Shinshiro, Japan** takes its name from its avenues lined with cherry blossoms ("sakura") and its deep pools of water (the "buchi" in the park's name), and features some of the most outstanding scenery in the Aichi prefecture.

The park is famed for its blooming cherry blossoms that seem to dye pink the banks of the Toyokawa river that meanders through the park. March sees the full splendour of the blossoms, with the annual Shinshiro Cherry Blossom Festival running through into early April. As a spectacle it's not to be missed, and there are lots of events and activities that are part of the festival.



YOUTH

“CITY OF LANGUAGES” AIM

A recent visit to **Newcastle upon Tyne** by Catherine Colonna, French Ambassador to the United Kingdom (pictured at Benton Park Primary School) has launched "Newcastle City of Languages", the first key initiative under the "Our Newcastle Our World" international city plan. This work is coordinated by Newcastle's international agency, International Newcastle. "Newcastle City of Languages" aims to expand international learning and experiences for Newcastle and its young people, The initiative is designed to support primary and secondary schools to deliver more modern language lessons, embrace and celebrate the diverse communities in Newcastle, and create opportunities to connect across the globe.



A head start for students in Newcastle, South Africa

Jubilation and excitement was the order of the day on 27 January when over 100 students from disadvantaged backgrounds received financial study assistance from the mayor of **Newcastle** (South Africa) Municipality Dr. Ntuthuko Mahlaba. The mayor encouraged the students to outclass their counterparts at university and other institutions of higher learning, urging them give it their all. He also committed to doubling the intake of applicants for next year. “The world is now your oyster. Go out there and shine, put Newcastle on the map for all the right reasons. We have a history and culture of producing intellectuals. Some of the country’s finest minds come from our municipality. In whatever you do, remain humble, and remember where you come from. We are a municipality that encourages learning at all times,” remarked Mayor Dr. Mahlaba.

More good news for Newcastle was in the latest school matriculation results for the Amajuba District, the 2nd best in the province with an 85% success rate and the best set of results for South Africa since democracy in 1994. Amajuba District (numerically, this is principally Newcastle) is way above the national average - well done!

ALEXA INSPIRES YOUNG PEOPLE IN NEWCASTLE, AUSTRALIA

Newcastle Australia’s 2020 Young Citizen of the Year (pictured with Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes) is 16 year old Alexa Stuart who has been instrumental in the national student campaign for climate action. “Alexa is an inspiring young person who has maintained excellent academic grades while leading her peers amid the climate emergency that the recent bushfires have brought to national and world prominence,” said the Lord Mayor.



Youngsters from JAUNPILS, LATVIA promote Sustainable Development Goals

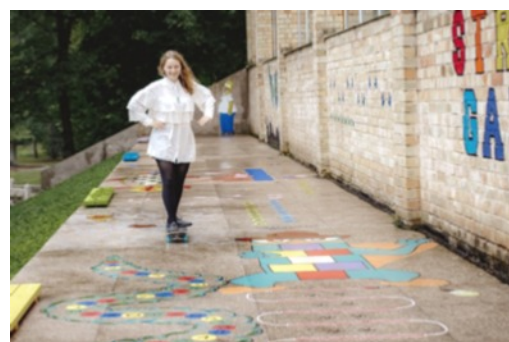
Young people in Jaunpils have been discussing how to make cities inclusive, safe, adaptable and sustainable. The starting point was to become familiar with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and the young people, together with a non-governmental organization, made their own wooden puzzle of the Sustainable Development Goals. They created one drawing for each goal and represented each goal in their own creative way. Over the years, the wooden puzzle has visited schools, kindergarten and events, and continues to bring knowledge, values and awareness to these important issues.

The second step was that, through an animation studio, children made a cartoon called "My Adventures in the World of Sustainable Development Goals." The cartoon is still available on YouTube, with English subtitles. This summer, young people carried out an initiative project - "Street Games" - with the use of environmentally friendly colors, brushes and creative ideas to revive the simple brick wall of the Sports House (*see photo below*) - making it alive, vibrant and accessible to the public.

These activities help change youth experience, values, knowledge, and their outlook on the world.

Young people from the area are genuinely interested in engaging in a variety of activities and, step by step, from the kindergarten age, they are opening the doors of knowledge to the wider world.

Ligita Gintere, Chairwoman of the City Council, actively shares her experience of the world and Europe with young people, saying that, from childhood on, we need to think about what everyone can do on a daily basis to change the situation for their place, county, country and our planet.



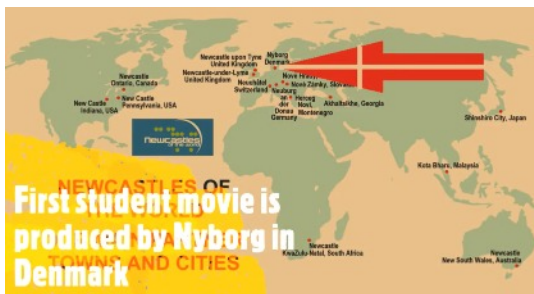
Jaunpils youth leader-Ieva Zāgmane

Calling Newcastles! Two tremendous education projects!

We are delighted to launch the “Learning from other Newcastles” video project. Martin Stenmann, **Nyborg, Denmark**, is leading on this project. Pupils in Nyborg have created the first “Learning from other Newcastles” video, with Martin’s guidance. We have created a Newcastles of the World YouTube channel for each Newcastle’s video to be stored on, enabling public viewing of the videos. Martin said:

“Schools will create a film, which tells a specific story of their country and city.

The purpose is to encourage learning about and between our Newcastles through the creation of movies by students (aged 12 to 16 years). The pupils decide on the content according to specific guidelines. The videos can contribute to building closer links between our cities by establishing new friendships between pupils/classes across the world. The videos is released on our new You Tube-channel “Learning from other Newcastles.” In the first movie you will learn about Nyborg: a city in the middle of Denmark with a great history. In the Middle Ages Nyborg was the first capital of Denmark. The first national constitution was signed at Nyborg Castle in 1282. In the video you will meet Twana, Lauge and Tristian, grade 9 pupils from Birkhovedskolen. You will meet Carsten, the principal at Birkhovedskolen, Mette the School librarian and Kenneth - the mayor in Nyborg Municipality with 32.000 inhabitants. Finally you will see a greeting from the city council members.”



Newcastles of the World Project Director Zélie Guérin says: “We invite each Newcastle to make your own video, to share across Newcastles on the Youtube channel. We need to hear from you next, letting us know when you can schedule your Newcastle’s video. Please reply to Martin and myself, using the Newcastles of the World online communication tool (Slack). If you have queries, please put them on the Slack channel. Even if you’re not directly involved in the world of education, please use your own contacts to encourage local schools to come on board - let’s give Martin and colleagues the support they deserve for all their work in getting us moving !

VIDEO LINK - YouTube channel “Learning from other Newcastles” link: https://youtu.be/iFmcC0u_SAo

Our Newcastles of the World “**SCHOOL EXCHANGES**” project is also now underway. This provides a tremendous opportunity for secondary level schools across Newcastles to develop links with each other via our online communications platform. The Secretariat provides an introduction service via the online platform - contact us on newcastlesoftheworld@gmail.com. It’s a very user-friendly platform! Participating schools can progress to create their joint projects, which could include e-projects, as well as the potential for teacher / pupil exchanges. **Calling secondary level schools across Newcastles to come and join us in making this project a great success!**

A new tourism adventure orienteering game from Latvia !

“Made in Jaunpils” have developed a car orienteering game organised by the association in cooperation with Jaunpils Municipality Council, within the framework of the project “Doing it yourself 2019”. The purpose of the game is to motivate and interest people to visit the most important places of Jaunpils county.

The game organisers, in cooperation with local producers, have created an exciting game card that will guide the participants through all the beautiful places of Jaunpils district. For more information [#raditsjaunpilsnovada2019](https://www.facebook.com/raditsjaunpilsnovada2019) - enjoy the treasures, senses and tastes!

Using a specially designed route, made by local children, participants will be able to tour the most scenic spots in the area, see the cultural and historical heritage, meet local craftsmen, and discover the most attractive recreational and entertainment opportunities. Every team get a prize from local tourism businesses and producers. This game was just the first step, and at the moment the team is working on other routes.



It’s an interesting adventure in the field of local tourism- just download the mobile app and get started!

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HOME TOWN TAKEOVER/MAKEOVER BIDS FOR INDIANA AND PENNSYLVANIA

Both our **New Castles** in **Indiana** and **Pennsylvania** have taken up the challenge and opportunity presented by television company HGTV to enter the "Home Town Takeover" competition. It's for U.S. towns of under 40,000 population with historic architecture and a classic main street that have a need - and a commitment - to revitalise their downtown areas. The winner will feature in a series of programmes for broadcast next year where Ben and Erin Napier and a team of renovation professionals will carry out a transforming, whole-town overhaul, supporting local ambitions and efforts. This will involve a rehab of multiple individual family homes and buildings, and the revitalization of public spaces, such as parks and recreation centres.

The publicity will be enormous - HGTV is a top 10 cable network, owned by Discovery Inc (which includes the Discovery Channel and the Oprah Winfrey Network) that is distributed to more than 88 million U.S.households, and it also has a website attracting 10m people each month, a social media footprint of 16.8m and a monthly magazine that reaches a million readers. Competing towns each make a short film about their community - you can view the **New Castle Pennsylvania** film here -

<https://www.facebook.com/THEBreakingNewsNC/videos/635788583841585/> and the film of **New Castle, Indiana** here - <https://youtu.be/J-ODJMbfolS?t=8> Best of luck to them both of course!

BOARDS SET UP TO LEAD TRANSFORMATION OF TOWNS

Ambitious plans to unlock millions of pounds of Government money to invest into **Newcastle-under-Lyme** (UK) and neighbouring **Kidsgrove** are moving forward. Two boards have now been set up to develop proposals for "Town Deals" which Government Ministers say will be supported by a £3.6 (4 million euros) billion fund. The boards are a partnership of public and private sector bodies and will lead the fight for Government support to breathe new life into both towns. Simon Tagg, Leader of the Borough Council, said: "Both towns have incredible potential and with further support and investment from the Government we are confident the boards can steer them on a path to prosperity. We have already received half a million pounds initial investment to progress work on the Town Deals as well as our Future High Streets Fund. Only a small number of districts have managed to get two town bids included in the Government process.



What a great idea (above) from Newcastle- under-Lyme. In the UK, as elsewhere, our shopping centres are under pressure from online sales and out of town megastores, Let's have more public campaigns like this to encourage people to spend locally and help sustain their local economies.

It's official, **Newcastle upon Tyne** is home to Britain's favourite market. The city's Grainger Market came in ahead of all others in the National Association of British Market Authorities' competition to be named Britain's Favourite Market at an awards ceremony held in Birmingham in February. The covered market won the prize thanks to votes from shoppers, before impressing in a 'mystery shopping' test where traders were marked for their levels of customer service, scoring 100%. Open since 1835, the Grainger Market has over 120 stalls, including Marks and Spencer's first ever shop -the "penny bazaar" -it's home to butchers, greengrocers, clothes and fabric stalls, also a mix of modern 'street food' traders serving world cuisine including Chinese dumplings, Turkish meze and Greek gyros.

BRITAIN'S FAVOURITE MARKET !



CONNECTED TO THE WORLD



The **New Castle-Henry County Economic Development Corporation** in **Indiana** is celebrating its 40th anniversary with a focus on international business. The area has resources to assist new and existing companies with international commerce. Several international companies have chosen Henry County as a place to grow their businesses: TS Tech, American Keeper, and KVK U.S. Technologies Inc. Area resources include the US Commercial Service, US Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, and the International Center.

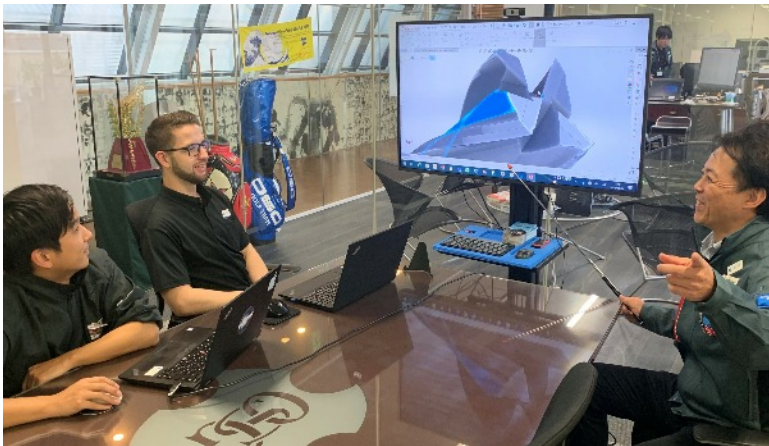
The **New Castle-Henry County Economic Development Corporation** is a member of the **Japan-American Society of Indiana**. Read more here - <https://growinhenry.com/about/>

CHRIS BROWNHILL, FROM NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE (UK) IS NOW WELL INTO HIS YEAR'S PLACEMENT WITH THE OSG COMPANY IN SHINSHIRO JAPAN - HERE ARE HIS LATEST REFLECTIONS OF LIVING AND WORKING IN JAPAN

With both the appearance and culture, Japan is a completely different world. People seem unified yet unique; they are very direct and to the point with an incredibly polite attitude. I was amazed when seeing the nightlife in different cities and how sophisticated everyone is here even after drinking all night. People are also a lot more expressive and expansive with their body language than anywhere I've seen.

Hobbies and Job seem like a very big part of who people are here, most people play some sport, even at an older age. It's amazing how people almost twice my age are sprinting around when we've done sports events with people from work. Along with this, most buildings look nothing alike, which sounds like a small thing but it really changes your perception of things especially in big cities. All this really adds up to mess with your head even if you're ready for it because fundamental things you've known all your life are completely different here!

Everyone here is incredibly helpful and friendly. I had not expected people to put so much into making me feel welcome and helping me out; it is still difficult but without the help it would have been near impossible.



Chris with staff at OSG - spot the Newcastle of the World conference banner by the window!

On a different note, a big skill you learn from being here is reading people. Because of the language barrier you have to guess a lot of things from the context, which gets much easier over time and it's a very useful skill, you start to understand people's deeper meanings behind what they say - which has been an amazing help with understanding tasks.

Depending on the place you go, the industrial placement itself may be one of the easiest parts, but the rest of it gives about an equal reward for the difficulty. The placement is still a good challenge, but things like getting around and buying things especially at first will be difficult.

Getting beyond that is a rewarding accomplishment and you learn a lot from it very fast. It's rare to be able to learn this much about how you naturally react to things - or strengths and weaknesses - this fast without doing something like an international placement to grow your personal skills. Along with this you get to learn about a completely different mindset and teach your own to people who want to learn, so that both sides can take the benefits from each. It's an amazing thing the Newcastle Alliance has opened the door for.



We don't need too much of an excuse to publish another photo of the dramatic castle, after which **Akhaltikhe** (Republic of Georgia) takes its name, especially when it is scenically enhanced even more by snowfall. Since its reopening after a huge renovation in 2012, the Rabati fortress has become one of the most significant tourism attractions in the country.



HERITAGE

KOTA BHARU'S DRESS INITIATIVE

Pride in the traditional Malay dress and culture is a prominent part of the “Visit Kelantan” programme. Recently, in **Kota Bharu**, our “Newcastle” in Malaysia, a new promotion took place to encourage all of the arts, culture and representatives of state agencies and tourism players to proudly wear and promote the wearing of Malay clothes as they did at the project’s ceremony. Though most Malays wear western dress, traditional dress remains an essential part of national history, heritage and identity.

It is also seen as a platform for foreign tourists to come to visit Malaysia, with tourists likely to be keen to find out more about the underlying tradition and culture of the skirts, blouses, tunics and the songket fabric, as they are in Japan with the kimono. Songket belongs to the brocade family of textiles of the Malay world, with garments hand-woven in silk or cotton, and intricately patterned with gold or silver threads.



.... continued below -
from the front page
MASOPUST !

Masopust in the Czech Republic is a carnival of music, marching, eating and drinking, and of wearing masks and costume.



... and *left* are photos from the launch of the 2020 “Visit Kelantan” tourism programme for the state of Kelantan, Malaysia took place in the state capital Kota Bharu.

The timing and form vary in different countries and cultures (many will know “Mardi Gras”) but the origin is common - from pre-Christian times in ancient Greece and Rome.

“**Newcastles of the Universe**” This year, for one day, Nové Hradý lived in another universe and Nové Hradýans were offered the chance to travel to faraway destinations, visiting other Newcastles in space.

Before they could do so, members of the Association Nové Hradý Masopust (Carnival Association) officially asked Mayor Vladimír Hokr permission to take over the town in a decades-old ritual.

With permission, the festivities started in full. Two young Martians from Travel Agency ET were selling tickets to far away planets, with their UFO on stand-by. The faint of heart were assessed by the mobile doctor team if they classified for the journey or the day’s festivities, and people could buy bitcoins to pay for the travel. After parading through the town square, the troupe split up in three groups roaming other parts of the town, each accompanied by musicians and numerous dressed up villagers.

On the day before the main event, children aged 6-10 from the School Association for after-school care performed as mini-members of the official Masopust troupe, paraded around the town square and danced with town people.



In Slovakia the more Germanic name “fašiangy” is used and the emphasis seems to be as much on the feasting (especially storing up your meat intake ..) as the photos from **Nové Zámky’s** celebrations here show.



ARTS AND CULTURE

The Temple du Bas, **Neuchâtel**'s salle de musique (classical, choral, jazz and rock) is under reconstruction and is currently adorned with an elegant artistic mantle. On its north and west facades, two large white canvases display the portraits of nearly 200 Neuchâteloises (people from the city). It's a project carried out by photographer Stefano Iori which embellishes a public building and illustrates, during the renovation, the diversity of the city.



KOTA BHARU SHOWCASES KELANTAN CULTURE

The annual Kelantan Art and Culture Festival takes place in the state capital Kota Bharu ("Newcastle") on 27-29 March. Kelantan, in the north east of the Malaysian peninsula, is known as the cradle of Malay culture based on the diverse cultural activities, among them Wayang Kulit Kelantan (shadow puppetry), Wau Bulan (kite-flying), Gasing (top-spinning), Silat (martial arts) and bird-singing competition and handicrafts.

The unique Kelantan culture, Mak Yong is recognized by UNESCO. This ancient theatre form created by Malaysia's Malay communities combines acting, vocal and instrumental music, gestures and elaborate costumes.

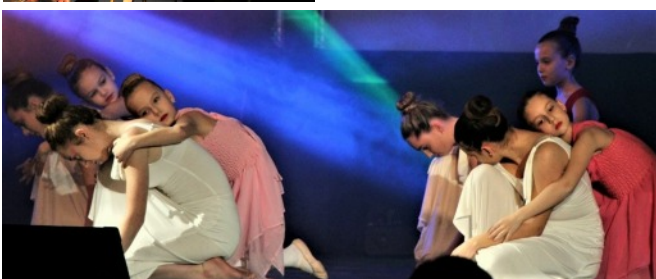
The City of **Neuburg an der Donau**, our Newcastle in Bavaria, Germany, recently marked the 120th anniversary of the birth of perhaps their most famous artist. Josy Meidinger is recognised as one of the most important silhouette artists in the country. There has been an exhibition of her life and works in the Neuburg city museum, and a special calendar has been produced. She left numerous works in her hometown, many of which are still privately owned, but the Historical Association of Neuburg and the City Archives also have many of her works. The celebration of her life and work was suggested by Alex Kalkoswki of the Neuburger Beautification Association - pictured right in the photo, with Oberbürgermeister Dr. Bernhard Gmehling and City Councillor for Culture and Tourism Bettina Häring.



...continued from front page - During the year, dozens of events await visitors to **Nové Zámky**'s City of Culture year, including concerts, lectures, exhibitions, screenings, presentations, discussions and much more. Below are more photos from the spectacular launch event at the end of January.

"We are looking forward to projects that are not held in the usual spaces but instead on the streets, in parks, and connected with sporting events" said the Mayor of Nové Zámky Otokar Klein (pictured *right* at the launch with fashion entrepreneur Maria Reháková. "We want to get culture to every corner of our city" said the Mayor.

"Many projects are focused on local ensembles but many come from outside, either from Slovakia or abroad. I believe that people who come to our town will experience something they have never seen before".



MORE NEWS

Europe is a state of mind !

The first International Meeting of EUism-Europe (Europe is a State of Mind) has just been held in **Herceg Novi**, our Newcastle in Montenegro. Delegations from Malta, Montenegro, Cyprus, Portugal, Hungary and Italy participated.

This is a two-year European Union Network of Towns project, through the Europe of Citizens programme, with a focus on promoting intercultural cooperation and exchange of good practices. At Herceg Novi, participants took part in a seminar on the subject of volunteering as an expression of democratic participation. Also, Dr Simonida Kordic, director of the Office for International Cooperation of Herceg Novi, and local coordinator of the International Meeting, spoke of the experience of the municipality of Herceg Novi in European collaboration and integration. Herceg Novi Mayor Stevan Katić is photographed with the Mayor of Qala, Malta, project coordinating city.



NEWCASTLE GETS CLOSER TO TORONTO !

Bringing commuters from Newcastle (Ontario, Canada) to Toronto much faster will be the outcome of the announcement that the "GO" Train will now come into Clarington Municipality from the terminus in Oshawa to Bowmanville. Metrolinx (the provincial agency that runs GO Transit) had been exploring potential extension route options. And now there will be four new GO stations including Bowmanville, which is only around 8km from Newcastle. So commuters to Toronto from Newcastle will be able to pick up a train at Bowmanville instead of Oshawa - almost a third of their current journey time and distance.

NEUBURG DECIDES



On March 15, the people of **Neuburg**, Germany will go to the polls to elect the new mayor, 30 members of the town council and 60 members of the district council. Beside Bernhard Gmehling (CSU, the conservative party in Bavaria), who has already served three terms (of six years each) as Mayor (pictured here), five others are candidates for the office: Gerhard Schoder (Green party), Florian Herold (Independent voters), Bernd Schneider (SPD), Michael Wittmair (The Left Party) and Frank Thonig (WIND, a new independent group).

Whereas people have one vote on the mayor's ballot paper to decide which candidate they favour, they have 30 votes which they can distribute among the candidates running as councillors and 60 votes to elect the members of the district council. To make things even more complicated the electoral system in Bavaria allows voters either to vote for one party, (which means that each candidate get one vote) OR they can give each individual contender up to three votes within one party or spread their votes among candidates of different parties.

On Sunday March 8 at noon, renowned chefs from the canton of **Neuchâtel** will help you discover, or rediscover, ingredients from the Neuchâtel region: fish from the lake, Neuchâtel sausage IGP, Gruyère AOP, Neuchâtel cheeses, but also the delicious Suchard chocolate and artisanal Neuchâtel bread. It's the annual Festi'neuch, or Neuchâtel Feast. And don't forget to taste the famous absinthe, Non Filtré, Partridge Eye and Pinot Noir. So it's time for a meal around a large table, sharing precious moments with family and friends or colleagues. Choose the restaurant that will give you an unforgettable gastronomic experience and why not in the company of a winemaker, a distiller, a cheese maker or a Neuchâtel master baker-confectioner.

It's Festi'neuch !



This new year's Clarington "Polar Bear Swim" in **Newcastle, Canada** was not for the faint of heart given the desperately low temperatures. Also known as the "Dash of Insanity", around 100 swimmers came out to brave the icy cold waters of Lake Ontario at Port Newcastle. Thanks to everyone who came out to "swim", donate, volunteer and cheer the participants on. The swim raises funds for a fund which provides support to students with autism from the area who are pursuing post secondary education.

Special thanks to the Clarington Fire Service without whom this event could not have gone forward in the circumstances (but they seem to have enjoyed it - see above).

COUNTING DOWN TO NEUCHÂTEL 2020

Next month (21-28 April), it's our biennial conference, this time in the beautiful Swiss city of Neuchâtel - and we'll have a record attendance! Over 100 people from 14 visiting "Newcastles" will take part in the conference - together with the delegates and citizens of our host city.

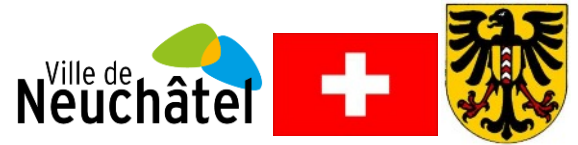
The main theme of the conference, chosen by our hosts, is "Smart City - Innovation for Cities and People" - how we collect data and use insights gained from that data - to manage resources and services efficiently to make lives better for our citizens; and how technology can help the Newcastles of the World to work together in a smarter, stronger way.



The keynote speaker is Professor Boyd Cohen, who is an internationally-renowned strategist working in the areas of urban innovation, environment, entrepreneurship and smart cities.

Individual workshop sessions will look at our own programmes - education, culture, tourism, business - and how we can connect and collaborate better.

We think that, in addition to productive discussions, there may be other things that feature in our programme in Neuchâtel - perhaps wine, chocolate and music being among them !



This will be the second time that Neuchâtel has hosted the conference of Newcastles of the World conference - l'Alliance des Neuchâtel du Monde - the last time being in 2000

The Newcastles of the World conference flag was passed over from Shinshiro to Neuchâtel when we last met in Japan in 2018. The photo shows Shinshiro Mayor Ryoji Hozumi and Fabio Bongiovanni, formerly Président du Conseil Communal (Cabinet) of Neuchâtel and currently Cabinet member for Economy, Finance and Human Resources.



SPORT



Over 30 countries were represented by 800 international surfers at the 35th Surfest **Newcastle Australia** event, running through from late January to 8 March. New South Wales is the home of world-class surfing in Australia, and Surfest is undoubtedly among the main events on the international calendar. "It's a great boost for Newcastle and New South Wales to see this many countries being represented" organiser Warren Smith said. "There is a growing sense of history around the biggest surf festival in the southern hemisphere that continues to draw national and international emerging and experienced competitors." he said.

Surfest 2020 attracts more than 1,600 visitors and generates over 2 million dollars (1.2m euros) in tourism-related expenditure for the region.

The 44th **Shinshiro** Marathon race was held on January 19th at prefectural general park with more than 2,400 participants, many from outside Shinshiro. Taiko (Japanese drum) and matchlock rifle performances excited those who had gathered for the race.



Participants ranged from elementary school children to over 60s, running on various courses. Among them, the 5 km and 10 km courses are not only in the park but also on prefectural roads, so it is one of the attractions that the runners can experience and enjoy the beautiful natural surroundings. Japan is currently in winter, but it was a race where everyone was able to participate comfortably under the clear blue sky.



More medals for Nové Hradý



Top Czech karate masters from Nové Hradý have won more medals in the national championships. The championship involved 602 competitors from 75 clubs from all regions of the country. Tomáš Hermann (pictured right) won the gold medal in kumite men +84 kg category and Martin Hermann (left, with Tomáš) took bronze in the kata category for +40 years. The semi-finals and final were on television for the first time.



After a narrow defeat by Montenegro, the Great Britain basketball team played an international game in **Newcastle upon Tyne** in February and won a tough fixture against Germany 81-73. The game was played at the new stadium of Newcastle Eagles, which is the most successful basketball club in Britain - and it was hosting its first international match.



A Swedish man has taken his love for English football team **Newcastle United** to a whole new level after changing his name to 'Newcastle'.

Rolf Corneliusson has supported the club for 50 years and has travelled to watch them more than 100 times. His love for the club began when he was a child and is because of his father Lennart, a fisherman who often worked off the east coast of England. He said "sometimes he and his fellow fishermen went ashore and saw Newcastle play". Rolf is a teacher and says his pupils After a long battle, Rolf has been given approval by the court in Sweden to add the extra name- he is now Rolf Lennart Newcastle Corneliusson!

To celebrate he came to England for the match on February 29th against Burnley - only a 0-0 draw, but at least Newcastle didn't lose!



The photo shows several generations of Corneliussons, - Rolf with son Mickey (named after former Newcastle United player Micky Quinn), and his wife holding grandson Tino - named after Faustino Asprilla, Newcastle star of 20 years ago. 14