

Newcastles News

NEUCHÂTEL CONFERENCE WILL NOW TAKE PLACE IN 2022

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was unfortunately necessary to cancel our biennial conference which would have been taking place in the last week of April in Neuchâtel. Around 100 delegates from many Newcastles were intending to come to Switzerland, and Neuchâtel city council had worked very hard to build an interesting and attractive programme. We thank them for their commitment to our alliance, and for their willingness to continue as hosts for our next conference.

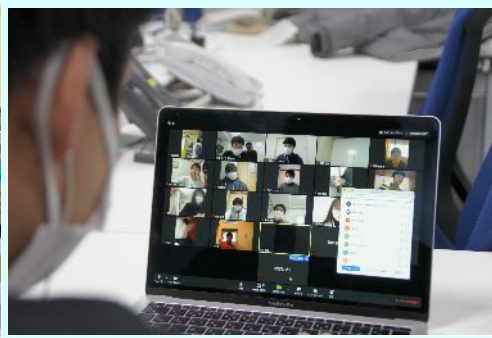
Conseiller Communal de **Neuchâtel**, Fabio Bongiovanni said – “While we should be fully engaged in preparing to welcome you to our City in the best possible way, building on all the work already done, we are spending our days fighting the horrific global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Aware that the situation is the same in most of our member cities, we would like first to express our solidarity with you in your fight for the health of your fellow citizens. Our Council considered the issue of our 12th Conference at length before deciding to cancel it. The enthusiasm to welcome you, and the importance of the work already done, leads us to propose that you come to Switzerland in 2022.” See pages 13/14 for a letter from Neuchâtel to others in our alliance.

The Executive Board of Mayors of Newcastles of the World, which guides us between conferences, has agreed to this proposal for the next conference. Since our first conference in 1998, this will be the first time that we have been unable to meet together every two years. There is likely to be continued uncertainty about prospects for international travel for some time, perhaps into next year. After Neuchâtel in 2022, **Nyborg** (Denmark) will host the subsequent conference in 2024.

The Newsletter of “Newcastles of the World” • May - June 2020

Mayor Ryoji Hozumi of **Shinshiro** wrote to us all to say: “Despite the cancellation of the conference, the solidarity of our alliance is something that will not change, and as cities confront the same concerns, we believe that our bond will become stronger. We also express our wish to provide mutual support and cooperation to the cities of the alliance if the virus has the possibility of further risk in our cities.”

And Councillor Nick Forbes, Leader of **Newcastle upon Tyne** City Council, where our Secretariat is based, sent a message to all other Newcastles and to twin cities – “I want to reach out to embrace our global family at this incredibly difficult time; we are all experiencing the devastating impact of coronavirus and it is important that we take a one-world view to overcoming this hidden enemy”.



A TIME WE WILL NEVER FORGET

Here are some images from different Newcastles that will long remind us of these difficult times.



From top left, then clockwise - **Newcastle, South Africa; Shinshiro, Japan; Neuburg an der Donau, Germany; Herceg Novi, Montenegro; Nyborg, Denmark; Neuchâtel, Switzerland.**

See pages 2 and 3 inside to read the stories behind the photos, and for other stories about how our Newcastles are responding to the challenge of the virus on behalf of their communities.

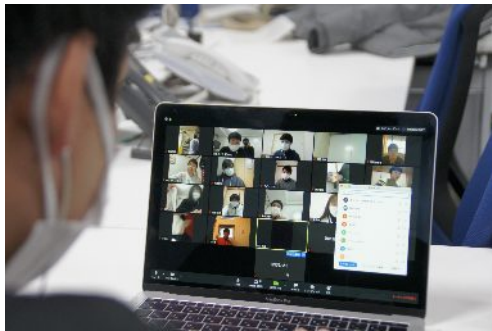
RISING TO THE CHALLENGE



The Mayor of **Newcastle South Africa**, Dr Ntuthuko Mahlaba, hung up his mayoral chains to join the frontline battle against Covid-19 in his city. He is a medical doctor and has substituted his chains for his stethoscope, as he is helping out at Newcastle Provincial Hospital. Thanks to the Newcastle Advertiser for the photo. The Mayor of Amajuba District, in which Newcastle is located, is also a medical professional and he too is helping out the hard-pressed local hospital services as Covid-19 infections appeared in the province.

The challenges of combating the COVID-19 pandemic are difficult for citizens both individually and collectively. On the front line, along with medical staff, are humanitarian workers - in Herceg Novi, our Newcastle in Montenegro, one such group is the Red Cross Municipal Organisation.

In gratitude, and as his personal contribution, **Herceg Novi** Mayor Stevan Katić (left in photo) visited to say thank you, and donated his monthly earnings to the Red Cross. His message to health workers and to the volunteers was that to give time for the needs of the socially disadvantaged, the elderly and the infirm, at the time of the pandemic, is an act of humanity for which we should all be grateful. We all agree with those sentiments.



Left - Shinshiro youth council meetings, which have an important role in creating a new point of view for community development, are now taking place online to avoid placing participants at risk. Around 30 YC members and city hall staff took part in the meeting on 8 April. They were able to exchange opinions in a very positive manner. In May, Mayor Hozumi will participate in an online meeting as well, and there will also be elections.



Left - like other cities, **Shinshiro** has installed plastic sheets between workers and citizens at city hall counters. Also - and again as elsewhere - City Hall has been seeking restaurants that can perform deliveries or provide take-out menus.

Below - Due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus there has been a huge shortage of disinfectants and sanitisers. Company Sonax in **Neuburg an der Donau** is one of Germany's leading brands for premium car care and cleaning products, and has been taking actions to diversify. Instead of their usual products they decided to produce their own disinfectants and are providing them for the public, leading to a production of 50 to 60 tons a day. Companies and private people alike have also started to produce their own face masks which are obligatory from the beginning of May, with some companies even donating masks to Neuburg's Workers' Welfare Association.



Above - Young people from Danehofgarden have entertained residents at the nursing centre Egevang and Vindinge Village centre in **Nyborg** Commune, Denmark.



We are all now used to 'social' or 'physical' distancing, and it will continue, as the market here in **Neuchâtel** shows. The city is supporting its local economy through a

method of pre-purchasing. The "Ensemble 19" platform in Switzerland allows the public to support traders, artisans and local businesses by purchasing vouchers which can be used at the end of the crisis, or by making a donation.





MORE ON HOW DIFFERENT NEWCASTLES ARE TACKLING THE CURRENT SITUATION

Here is a four-minute film of the patrolling of streets in **Kota Bharu**, our Newcastle in Malaysia, during lockdown. The film was posted by the municipality, and has the added advantage of taking us through the city centre and seeing the sights by night.

The still to the left was a screenshot at about 2 minutes into the film and shows the graceful Sultan Ismail Petra Arch on the right and the Masjid Al-Muhammadi, a beautiful colonial style grand mosque, on the left.

<https://www.facebook.com/mpkbbrikotabharu/videos/228127024969074/?t=267>

Herceg Novi in Montenegro has found a novel way of “getting rid of the Coronavirus”.

In a ceremony that marked the end of the city’s annual Mimosa Festival in March there was a dramatic “trial” – the virus was found guilty of crimes against humanity and was burned in public.

According to end-of-festival tradition, the Prosecutor and the Defence Counsel presented their arguments, and the people ruled that “the evil of pride over the evil of evil”, the virus, has been the culprit for all the troubles of the past year.

Then the Judge declared: “Save the world and set fire to the beast.” The indictment stated, inter alia: “Let us not let Corona walk with us down the street; let us burn it while we can”.

The trial was preceded by music and dance from the majorettes to conclude the festival, just as public events and mass gatherings were about to be banned.



Unfortunately, because of the coronavirus, members of the public are not able to visit to learn about our castles and our history. David Silk, Learning Officer at the castle in **Newcastle upon Tyne**, has been making videos for young people from his own living room, and posting them via the castle’s social media platforms.

Check out one of the films here -

<https://www.facebook.com/NewcastleCastle1080/videos/147812603297716/?t=18>
To find out more about this castle, click here - <http://www.newcastlecastle.co.uk/home>

Digital Storytime for the little ones: As in most parts of Europe, German people have been advised or obliged to stay at home. So the city library of **Neuburg an der Donau** took measures to improve the lockdown for the children of the city. For several years now storytelling events with Ulrike Mommendey and Carla Teigeler have been a vital part of the library’s programme. Without delay, they decided to simply put the events online and offer weekly storytelling videos via the city’s homepage for the kids to enjoy at home.



It’s such a shame that just as its year as Slovakia’s “City of Culture” was getting under way, **Nové Zámky** had to cancel so many of the excellent events that they had lined up for local people and for visitors - let’s hope that some can go on in later months.

Meanwhile (*left*), at least the main market is now open again, to cheer local people.



Many who attended the 2014 Newcastle of the World conference in **Nové Hradý** will remember Marcela Kotrcova who was a key member of the organising team. Her experience over recent months of trying to manage her range of business interests during the spread of COVID-19 will be similar to many other businesses in so many countries. Marcela was invited by NBC News in the USA to be interviewed on what it's like to have four different professional activities in your family, and what the future prospects might be.



Marcela says: “My partner is a chef and restaurant owner = closed. And I am (1) a teacher of english classes with young children, (2) a waitress at the restaurant and (3) a guest house owner. All of these activities and income streams completely stopped with coronavirus from mid-March. It’s not just about about the immediate cancelled reservations and income losses, as there has been some helpful financial support from the Czech Government. But everyone thinks that when this blows over, all the restaurants and other businesses will reopen and keep going merrily on as before. As business people and employers, we still know there will be long-term effects once the bailout money dries up - we’ll still have to cover the thousands of euros for rent, electricity/gas/water, loans, staff and other expenses, but the custom will take months if not years to rebuild, especially from visitors to our town. Let’s hope that officials recognise that this will be a long recovery period.”

Over recent years the great medieval castle in **Jaunpils**, Latvia had been successfully growing custom for accommodation and for meals in the castle restaurant as well as castle tours. As plans for some degree of business resumption are now in hand, the emphasis is on maintaining the two metre distancing for family diners, and trying to compensate for fewer diners by providing pick-up and takeaway. Castle tours for families only can only take place now when pre-ordered. Yes, it will certainly be some time before life - and business - returns to what it was before the virus.



Castle photo -
Juris Grinfelds



Chris Brownlee (*right*) a student at the University of Northumbria in **Newcastle upon Tyne**, has been writing periodic updates for us during his placement as a Mechanical Engineering Intern in Japan at cutting tool manufacturer OSG Corporation. This was arranged through Newcastle of the World by **Shinshiro** City Hall. Here is his latest report, with reflections on life in Japan during this time of “lockdown”.

“Around the beginning of March, I started to notice that everywhere had hand sanitiser out for people to use, out in the open, yet this would be strange in other countries as it is very likely it might be taken. In Japan everything is much safer, even if you lose something, you don’t have much to fear because of how kind and helpful everyone is; you’ll probably find it handed in somewhere close by soon after.

When the spread started to get worse, the only major closes were schools and universities. Later, eventually a state of emergency was announced and many more closure requests were made, but lots of places had already closed before this stage to help prevent the spread. For companies and schools, only closure *requests* have been made, as officials say Japan can’t legally enforce full lock downs as in Europe. However, everyone complies as best they can, and there seems to be a lot more of a collective effort to prevent the spread.

Japan is generally very clean, anyway; people are very wary about dirt and diseases and it shows in everyday life. People will usually wear a mask if they have a cough to prevent spreading it. On top of this, people take a lot of care to keep everything clean. Schools often don’t hire cleaners and the responsibility is on students to clean the school every day, which probably instils a low tolerance for grime. Along with everyone keeping very clean, physical contact between people is fairly low, and people have a much bigger “personal bubble”.

I think these things are a big part of the reason why Japan has such a low number of cases, and the speedy reaction of individual people to the situation is probably why the number of new cases is starting to drop.”

PEOPLE

Many congratulations to Dr. Bernhard Gmehling for being elected again – for his fourth term of office - as Oberbürgermeister (Mayor) of the city of **Neuburg an der Donau**, our Newcastle in Bavaria, Germany. He was a judge at the district court in Neuburg before he first became mayor of the city of Neuburg in 2002, representing the CSU, and confirmed in office in 2008, 2014 and now again in 2020. The second stage of the mayoral election had to be carried out entirely by postal vote because of the covid-19 virus and the risks to the public and staff of voting in person in enclosed voting stations.



It was farewell from **Shinshiro** City Hall to Mori Harushige recently, and all good wishes for a happy retirement.

Mori has been an important member of the team at City Hall and was a key figure in the organisation of the Newcastles of the World conference in Japan in 2018. It isn't actually a case of retirement, as Mori will be working at his father's temple - the Jiko-ji temple - on the south side of the city. The temple has started to offer Zen meditation and tea ceremony experience for the “Newcastles passport”! So Mori will continue to be a great friend and supporter of Newcastles of the World. *Left* is a photo montage of the temple and three photos from Mori's visit to Newcastle upon Tyne last autumn when he accompanied the youth delegation from Shinshiro.

He is pictured with Lord Mayor Councillor David Cook at the civic centre, and with Newcastles of the World project director Zélie Guérin visiting the island of Lindisfarne ("Holy Island") during the trip - where he also enjoyed the lovely flower garden there.

The musician Sting, who comes from Wallsend (part of the **Newcastle upon Tyne** conurbation in north east England) is taking part in a new project by the Alzheimer's Association called “Music Moments”.

The project features award-winning artists coming together for a collection of new recordings and unreleased tracks. These songs honour the personal, emotional connection between music and the most important moments in life that we never want to lose. Each track is paired with behind-the-scenes videos and personal stories connected to the songs they chose.



See this link below for more, and to hear Sting talk about, and sing, the classic Otis Reading number “Sittin’ on the Dock of the Bay”. Please share and help promote Alzheimers awareness.

<https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/sting-otis-redding-dock-of-the-bay-966594/>

There is sad news from **Newcastle-under-Lyme**, England where we report the death of former Mayor David Becket. David was a Councillor between 2002 and 2015 and Leader of the Liberal Democrats Group on the Council. He was a Cabinet Member for several years, Mayor in 2012/2013 and became an Alderman in 2015.



David and his wife Anne were great supporters of Newcastles of the World. They were involved when Newcastle-under-Lyme hosted the 2006 conference, and also attended the 2012 and 2014 conferences – and they were planning to attend this year too. The photos are of David as Mayor and of David and Anne at the 2014 conference in Nove Hradky, Czech Republic.

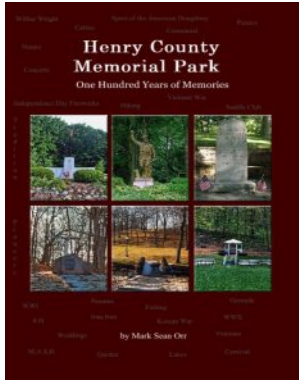


100 years ago, in June 1920, Henry County Memorial Park in **New Castle, Indiana** was opened as a military memorial park following the end of the First World War. Cannons and other memorials are just some of what can be found along the wooded trails.

HERITAGE

Mark Sean Orr's book "Henry County Memorial Park: One Hundred Years of History" chronicles the history of a tract of land that is about 230 acres (100 hectares) of once dense forest and low-lying valley in Henry County. This is land that started out in the early 1800s as a Native American Indian village, then became a farm in the mid-19th Century and eventually turned into Indiana's largest war memorial park. The park is also home to an 18 hole golf course, first class equine facilities, youth sports, a lake, family recreational activities – and trails and wildlife to enjoy.

The park is the former site of a "Dough Boy" (US infantryman) statue which was relocated two years ago to a plaza in front of a new veterans museum. Memorial Park has been the location of 4th of July celebrations since 1926.



More than three decades ago, Ismail Mohamed from **Kota Bharu**, our Newcastle in Malaysia, gave up his secure job as an officer at a telecommunications company to preserve his family legacy. He decided to follow his father and grandfather who were well-known top (gasing) makers and spinners in Kelantan state. Ismail is now not only an expert at making the saucer-shaped top (gasing piring) that Kelantan is famous for, but also a champion spinner in his own right. He has produced more than 5,000 gasing piring since 1984 when he took over the family trade after his father died.

To ensure the traditional art of top spinning remains alive, Ismail willingly shares his knowledge and expertise to those interested. Every year, students carrying out research on traditional games will visit him at his workshop to learn about top spinning.

He also trains new talents who show an interest in the game. A player must have dexterity to launch his top in such a way that it falls directly onto the hands of the "scooper" (the person who catches the "flying" top). And, how long it whirls is part of the game, he said. "Scooping the gasing piring after a launch is not easy as the disc can weigh as much as 4kg," said Ismail, who is often invited to participate in spinning contests in Malaysia and overseas.



The synagogue in **Akhalsikhe** is the oldest in Georgia that is still partially in service. It's hidden away at the end of a windy road in a beautiful peaceful location. Built in 1863, it was extensively renovated in 2012 and now features a beautiful interior of painted wood as well as rich icons. Partly used as a museum with portraits of the generations of rabbis who have officiated, it is open in summer, for tourists, mainly Israeli, who visit the region.

In the same street, about twenty metres below, is the second synagogue of Akhalsikhe, built at the beginning of the twentieth century and now abandoned.

Like the neighbouring synagogue, it received the status of "cultural heritage" in 2011. However, the building remains in a relatively good state of conservation.

Located on a hill overlooking the ancient Jewish quarter, the imposing Jewish cemetery of Akhalsikhe houses tombs, some dating back to the seventeenth century. The cemetery is now subject to a restoration project, partly funded by the United States Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad as well as the government of Georgia.

Prior to Georgia's annexation by Russia, the 2,600-year history of the Georgian Jews was marked by an almost total absence of anti-semitism and a visible assimilation in the Georgian language and culture. They trace back their migration into the country during the Babylonian captivity in the 6th Century BC.

However, following a major emigration wave in the 1990s, the vast majority of Georgian Jews now live in Israel and there are now only a handful of Jewish families in the area.

TOURISM FEATURE

After the COVID-19 virus is under control, it will be important to all our Newcastles to rebuild tourism in our areas as rapidly as possible. Just before lockdown began, the “Newcastillian” magazine in Newcastle, South Africa published an interview with Laurence Short who manages the economic development and tourism function at the municipality. The article outlines the attractions of Newcastle and surrounding area.

NEWCASTLE THE TOURIST DESTINATION OF BEAUTY

by Quinton Boucher

Surrounded by natural beauty and steeped in historical richness, Newcastle sports a rich tourism industry. With the tourism industry promoting development and growth, just how is Newcastle promoting its tourism sector?



The tourism industry plays an important role in any community, due to its role as a commercial activity which creates demand and growth for many industries.

Furthermore, not only does tourism contribute to a town's economy, but also assists in job creation, generating revenue and playing a significant role in development.

As a country renowned for its beauty, from coastlines to mountain tops, our tourism industry is without question our country's "saving grace".

According to Statista, a staggering 16.44 million tourists made their way to South Africa in 2018.

With hordes of adventurous people from foreign countries making their way to sunny South Africa, what does the tourism sector look like in Newcastle?

Laurence Short, of the Newcastle Municipality's Economic Development and Tourism department, claims Newcastle is doing

reasonably well in the tourism sector.

"Currently, we are seeing an occupancy of 74% in B&Bs and hotels. While this figure has gone down from 82%, Newcastle is doing much better than other towns."

Short explains the drop in occupancy is due to the current economic climate in the country, with national load shedding also playing a minor role.

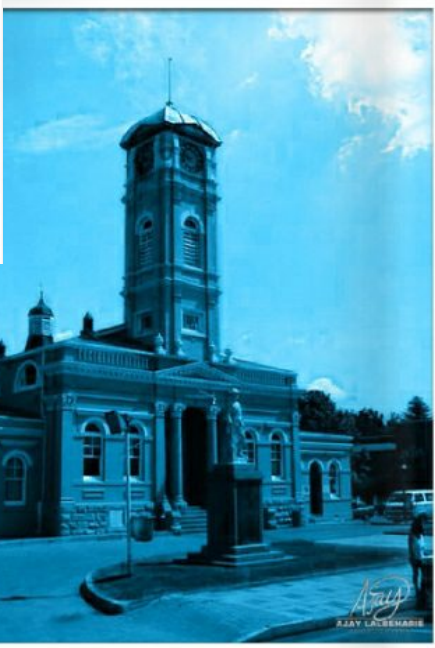
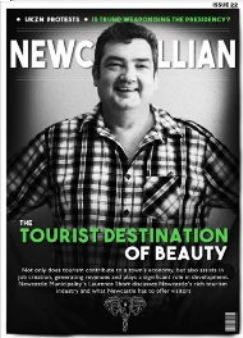
However, he explains that despite the financial constraints faced by people, Newcastle is still a popular destination.

"From February to October, Newcastle is a wedding haven. We are surrounded by beautiful nature scenes and this attracts a lot of people."

Furthermore, Short adds that events such as the Chelmsford Challenge, the Newcastle Winter Festival and the Newcastle Air Show also draws scores of people to Newcastle, which has a positive

LAURENCE SHORT

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NEWCASTLE

“**DESPITE THE FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS FACED BY PEOPLE, NEWCASTLE IS STILL A POPULAR DESTINATION.**”

impact on the town's economy.

Short adds that alongside Newcastle being surrounded by the splendour of nature, other contributing factors to Newcastle being a popular destination can be found through nature reserves.

"Newcastle is in close proximity to several nature reserves, such as Chelmsford, Nambiti and Utrecht," he explains.

The town's rich history and the Battlefields Route also draws a significant amount of tourists into the town.

But just exactly how does the Newcastle Municipality attract tourists?

Short explains that through KZN Tourism and the Battlefields Route platforms, Newcastle Municipality is able to advertise and promote its beauty to people across South Africa and in far off countries.

"We also get a lot of exposure through

our affiliation to the Newcastles' of the World," he says.

Short adds the Newcastle Municipality is also planning to participate in trade shows in the new financial year.

"We are also looking at a budget for a brochure for the business and tourism industry in Newcastle within the next year," he explains.

“**BY BEING POSITIVE, WE CAN DRAW POSITIVITY INTO THE TOWN AND HELP THE TOWN REACH ITS FULL POTENTIAL**”

With the Newcastle Municipality promoting the tourism sector and in turn the economic development, Short encourages Newcastillians to change their perceptions of Newcastle.

"By being positive, we can draw positivity into the town and help the town reach its full potential," he concludes.

As our town moulds and shifts through its developments, one thing is for sure, our gorgeous surroundings and memorable offerings are a uniqueness to be treasured by us all.

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TOURISM AND BUSINESS

New Castle, Pennsylvania and local tourism agency Visit Lawrence County, which is based in New Castle, is using the 37th National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW), May 3-9, to look ahead to recovery. NTTW is the annual celebration of the contributions and accomplishments of the U.S. travel industry, and will spotlight resilience and hope in the face of the coronavirus pandemic with this year's theme: 'the Spirit of Travel'. Celebrated annually, NTTW was created by Congress in 1983 to underscore the economic power of travel in the U.S. NTTW arrives at an opportune moment to unite the industry, celebrate its spirit and elevate the role it plays in America's economy. "Through every hardship, I find myself in awe of the travel industry's ability to join together, adapt, and emerge stronger than before," said U.S. Travel Association President and CEO Roger Dow. "This is our toughest challenge yet, but what I've seen is that the spirit of travel has not been shattered."



Some of New Castle PA's many attractions



Above - the University partners made site visits to various revitalisation projects in Newcastle, Australia. They are pictured at the RSL vertical residential aged-care village - high-rise CBD accommodation as opposed to regular aged-care models which are single storey and suburban or even rural. Dr Marcus Jefferies (University of Newcastle AUS) on the left and Professor Bob Giddings (Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK) is third from the right.

The question of how to sustain our city and town centres is one that is of shared interest among our Newcastles. With Professor Bob Giddings of Northumbria University in **Newcastle upon Tyne**, Professor Marcus Jefferies of the University of **Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia** is involved in a research project entitled 'The Future of the City Centre' which received funding from the United Kingdom's Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) under their international research networks scheme.

Marcus writes: "This international research network comprises universities from the UK, South Africa, Japan and Australia, with each University supported by several partners (industry, government, and not for profit organisations). Each host University/city organises a workshop (mini symposium) over 24 months. Each workshop includes selected speakers who prepare positioning presentations to establish the context for debates (round table discussion) on the Future of the City Centre.

Speakers represent academia, local government, non-government organisations, businesses and communities. The outcome will be possible scenarios that may be formed into multi-disciplinary policies."

The Newcastle upon Tyne (UK) symposium was the first, held in September 2018 (see Newcastles of the World newsletter of November-December 2018). The Newcastle NSW symposium was held last year, as was South Africa's, with the final symposium in Brazil this March.

For more information about this work see -

<https://newcastlesoftheworld.com/best-practice->



SMART CITY

The Smart City" was to have been the main theme for our Newcastles of the World conference in April - but there is still an interest in sharing information on the topic via our website.

See <https://newcastlesoftheworld.com/best-practice-information/smart-cities/>

The page is about how our Newcastles are using technology to bring greater efficiencies and improved service to citizens and a greener way of working and living, but also how it helps deliver the other main objectives that we as Newcastles have set for ourselves around culture, tourism, education and attractiveness to business investment.

ENVIRONMENT



(Left) Local people enjoy the spring sunshine and the beautiful cherry blossoms in Sakurabuchi park in **Shinshiro**, our "Newcastle" in Japan.

(Right) More spring flowers, this time from **Newcastle-under-Lyme** in Staffordshire, England. The town is known for its beautiful, award-winning floral displays.

(Below) - If we had been in **Neuchâtel**, Switzerland this spring for our conference as planned, these are some of the flowers we would have seen.



Volunteers, campaigners, community organisations and businesses are celebrating as Ouseburn has become **Newcastle upon Tyne**'s first "plastic free community." The award, from marine conservation charity Surfers Against Sewage recognises residents' efforts to start reducing the impact of unnecessary single-use plastics on their local environment. Award-winning musician Chad Male, who started the Plastic Free Ouseburn campaign in 2018 following concerns about litter in the Ouseburn, which flows into the river Tyne, said: "Everyone has embraced the campaign with open arms and relished the opportunity to do something positive for their local area and the environment. "A grassroots campaign like this goes to show how each and every one of us really can make a difference and, of course, though Ouseburn isn't yet completely plastic-free, the show of commitment towards that aim is truly inspiring.

As part of their work campaigners organised everything from plastic-free street food festivals at Ouseburn Farm to environmentally-themed events at 'Seven Stories', the national centre for children's books, and also education sessions for schools. Local businesses too, such as Ouseburn Coffee Co, helped by exchanging disposable items such as plastic straws, coffee cups and takeaway containers for more environmentally-friendly alternatives.

Newcastle City Council - which has already stopped using a range of single use products, supported a Refill app, and promoted citywide efforts to reduce plastic waste - helped with technical support and advice.



The City of **Newcastle, Australia** has signed a contract for an advanced organics recycling facility as part of a longterm commitment to revolutionise food and garden waste treatment. Over 25 years, the project at the Summerhill Waste Management Centre will:

- Divert about 900,000 tonnes of food and garden organics from landfill
- Slash greenhouse emissions by 900,000 tonnes, equal to eliminating 250,000 cars
- Save ratepayers 24 million Australian dollars (14m €) in operational costs
- Reduce the waste levy paid to the NSW Government by 32.5 million dollars (20m €)

Onsite recycling of garden organics will begin at Summerhill in a fully enclosed facility in 2022 before food organics are added four years later, following comprehensive community consultation.

Newcastle Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes said the project would generate major environmental and financial benefits for the city and community. "With food and garden organics accounting for around 30 per cent of waste streams, we are embarking on the largest waste commitment ever made by the City. When processed into compost, recycled organics can be sold as fertiliser that improves soil quality and productivity, displacing artificial chemical-based fertilisers on crops, sporting fields and in public and household gardens."



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 & Pennsylvania) 2002, South Africa 2004 & 2010, UK 2006 (Newcastle-under-Lyme) & 2012 (Newcastle upon Tyne), Germany (Neuburg) in 2008, Nové Hradý (Czech Republic) in 2014, Newcastle, Ontario, Canada in 2016 and in Shinshiro again in 2018. Our aim is to foster individual and civic friendships, with practical links through culture, education, business and tourism.

The 20th anniversary of Children's masopust!

This year, **Nové Hradý** in South Bohemia in the Czech Republic has marked 20 years of the tradition of their children's 'masopust'. Over the years, hundreds of children have taken part in this children's carnival carol.

Mayor Vladimír Hokr said: "For twenty years we have witnessed the development and improvement of children's masopust in our town - for example, from the original simple hats made of paper cones to the same hats worn by an adult caroller. Through the existence of the children's carnival carol, parents and teachers from kindergarten are also directly involved in the organisation. Our children's carol has brought the opportunity to take part in cultural events in the surrounding towns, even in neighbouring Austria. The children's masopust brings joy every year to our town, especially during its visits to the nursing home and the home for seniors.



In sunny and picturesque **Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia**, artists gather by its foreshore and in parks to connect with the essence of the city and its environment. One such artist is Hideaki Kobayashi (*his self-portrait is upper left*), who moved to Newcastle from his native country Japan, after falling in love. His love has now extended to the beauty of the city. In these struggling times of being required to stay indoors, Hide has risen to the occasion with his work.

He has predominantly been painting portraits of fellow artists as they engage through online video chat forums, but he also includes in his artwork the scenery of Newcastle through his loving eyes, the way that he remembers it prior to COVID-19 stopping us seeing it in person. The efforts exhibited online by Hide has inspired many artists to continue their art and others to begin painting as a hobby to maintain their wellbeing in these times.

See our associated Facebook page 'Newcastles of the World Artists Together' if you'd like to connect with other artists and share work.

SPECIAL LINKS BETWEEN NEUCHÂTEL AND SHINSHIRO FEATURE ON EMBASSY WEBSITE

It's a major disappointment for our friends in Japan, and for potential visitors, that the Olympic Games in Tokyo has had to be postponed. The Swiss Embassy in Tokyo had been promoting the Games to Swiss people by creating the "**Grand Tour of Switzerland in Japan**". They were invited to discover places in Japan that have a special link to Swiss locations, and one such place is Shinshiro, with its particular connection to Neuchâtel. Hopefully, the Games will go ahead on the new schedule in 2021 – so this initiative will not be wasted. Check out the dedicated website - <https://grandtourofswitzerland.jp> and <https://grandtourofswitzerland.jp/jp/>; or the dedicated page - <https://grandtourofswitzerland.jp/cms/561/> Here are images from that page that show the connections between the two cities.



From left - His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Naruhito (now Emperor Naruhito) on a visit to Neuchâtel in 2014; former Shinshiro Mayor Yoshio Yamamoto learns to play the Swiss alphorn at the 2002 Newcastles of the World conference; Shinshiro students on Lake Neuchâtel on a visit - one of many exchanges and visits.



OTHER NEWS

Australia commemorates ANZAC DAY annually on April 25th. It's a day to pay tribute to the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps members who served and fell in World War One and World War Two, in other conflicts and peacekeeping operations, as well as those who are currently serving in the Australia Defence Force (ADF).

The **City of Newcastle** usually holds a march, led by veterans and current serving members of the ADF, marching bands, schools, and family members, as well as placing wreaths at memorial monuments. Most importantly, an ANZAC Day dawn ceremony takes place at Nobby's Beach in Newcastle where tens of thousands of locals usually gather to place wreaths, pray and honour fallen ANZACS, as the Last Post is heard. .



The current governmental orders of self-isolation saw Novocastrians bind together in alternative ways. Residents stood in front of their driveways at 05.30 as they would gather for the annual ANZAC Day dawn ceremony. Tribute videos were also uploaded on social media, and a national broadcast captured live an ANZAC Day dawn ceremony.



Newcastle schools asked students to wear their school uniforms and participate in a moment's silence to honour those lost in war and conflict. So Newcastle was still able to pay its respects to those who sacrificed their lives for the safety of others. Lest We Forget.

A bench has been dedicated in the heritage garden in the grounds of the Newcastle Community/Town Hall in **Newcastle, Ontario, Canada** in honour of the Newcastles of the World Alliance Conference 2016, held from 19th to 23rd September. The hall was donated to the community by the Massey family in 1923 and has been the centre of community life for almost 100 years.



The Massey family was known for manufacturing farm equipment. In 1847, Daniel Massey founded Newcastle Foundry and Machine Manufactory in Newcastle, Ontario, which later became the world-famous Massey Ferguson Company. Former Councillor Willie Woo says "the 2016 conference was a memorable moment which galvanised our community and cemented our relationship with other Newcastles."



Work on what will be Europe's biggest observation wheel, on the Quayside (riverside) of Newcastle upon Tyne in England, is scheduled to start this summer. The private developers behind the project say they are "totally committed" to building the £100m (110m €) development despite the coronavirus epidemic. Hundreds of local jobs are expected to be created by the project, which was granted planning permission by Newcastle City Council last year.

Besides the 460ft (140m) wheel, the 'Giants on the Quayside' development will also include a 39 ft (12m) human-shaped steel statue called 'The Geordie Giant' ('Geordie' is the colloquial name for people from the Newcastle area) and other attractions, including a virtual golf club.

Work is beginning now on the second stage of the restoration of **Nyborg Castle's** west wing "The King's Wing". Where the first stage was a restoration of the old castle's impressive facade and enormous roof with hand-stained bricks, the second stage focuses on the interior restoration and preservation of the royal castle, where Denmark's first constitution was signed and sealed in 1282.

The work will include establishing new floor decks, new electrical installations throughout the building, solid plank floors, new tiled floors, all walls and ceilings will be restored, and the beautiful, hand-painted patterns on the walls will be treated by expert conservators.



The game of handball as we know it today is played by almost 30 million people worldwide and was invented by Nicolaj Ernst in 1897 in **Nyborg**, our Newcastle in Denmark. He was a young teacher, and he played the game with his students, according to basic rules that he came up with.

Elsewhere in Denmark, in the following year, Holger Louis Nielsen began experimenting with a ball game with his hands, and then developed an early set of more formal rules. In all likelihood, the two pioneers knew nothing of each other at the time. The first recorded competitive handball match was played in 1907 in Elsinore, Denmark. It was a game between a team from Elsinore Higher General School where Ernst became a teacher in 1905 and students from Ordrup Latin and Real School.

Handball is an indoor game played between two teams (a total of 7 players each - 6 outfield and a goalkeeper). The players pass the ball with their hands and try to score by throwing the ball into the goal of the opponent team.

A version of what is now handball was originally played by the Greeks and by the Romans, and then, from the 12th Century, by Germanic people, and later in France.



(Right) - Congratulations to Newcastle (upon Tyne) Eagles Basketball team who won the BBL (British Basketball League) Trophy in early March beating Solent Kestrels in the final - the final basketball game before the season was suspended because of Covid-19.

Easter 2020 passed without the opportunity for religious or family gatherings to mark the time of year. However, at least it was possible for young people and artists to create Easter eggs as a visual symbol of rebirth and to display them in public places. *(Right)* are photos from **Nové Hradý**, Czech Republic (upper of the two) and from **Nové Zámky**, Slovakia. On the youth section of our website you'll see information about a number of youth council/assemblies and similar groups in some of our "Newcastles" (**Neuburg's** is shown below). Have we missed out your group? Let us know if you have an elected youth body in your Newcastle, and how it operates. See <https://newcastlesoftheworld.com/youth-section/>



Sadly no spectators were allowed at the **Shinshiro** motor rally in March because of the Covid-19 virus - and it rained! But it's still an important sporting event, part of the national rally championships of Japan.



YOUTH



Before COVID-19 caused the suspension of all public cultural activities, young people in **Nové Zámky**, Slovakia, had the opportunity to perform as part of the **Vzdušné ZÁMKY** (cultural capital) programme in the Millennium Sports Hall - a great celebration of youth music, song and dance.





To all Member Cities of the Newcastles of the World Alliance

Neuchâtel, April 29, 2020

Dear friends

The year 2020 was shaping up to be a special and happy year for the City of Neuchâtel, its population and its employees, as we were going to have the chance to welcome you all, on the shores of our beautiful lake, on the occasion of the 12th conference of our Alliance.

Last week, we should have been a little more than 100, meeting with joy and sharing, beyond the work sessions, and under a spring sun, moments of friendship and of personal, geographical or gastronomic discovery.

But today, in Neuchâtel as well as throughout the world, the health, economic and social crisis linked to the Covid-19 pandemic has in a short space of time become the centre of our concerns; it is disrupting our daily lives, cutting us off from our friends, colleagues and family; blurring our bearings, it is forcing us to change our sometimes entrenched habits and to live through separations.

With this letter, the Municipal Council of the City of Neuchâtel wishes to express to the Authorities and to the populations of all the member cities of the Alliance a message of solidarity and to express its wishes for health and success in overcoming the current hardships, but also to prepare the times that will come after the end of this crisis.

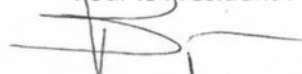
The enthusiasm to welcome you and the importance of the work already accomplished have led us to propose that you come to Switzerland in 2022. The Executive Board of Mayors of Newcastles of the World, which guides us between conferences, has accepted this proposal for the next conference. We would like to express our gratitude for giving our City another chance to welcome you. Special thanks to the cities that were interested in organizing the 2022 conference. We look forward to welcoming you from 5 to 12 April 2022.

The year 2020 will undoubtedly long be remembered. We hope that it will also stand out as the beginning of a renewal, of a transition towards a society open to others, richer in human values and more respectful of its environment.

In the hope of meeting you soon on the shores of Lake Neuchâtel, we send you, dear friends, our warmest greetings.

AU NOM DU CONSEIL COMMUNAL :

Pour le Président :


Fabio Bongiovanni

le Chancelier :


Remy Voirol



Chers amis

L'année 2020 s'annonçait comme une année particulière et heureuse pour la Ville de Neuchâtel, sa population et ses employés, puisque nous allions avoir la chance de vous accueillir tous, sur les rives de notre beau lac, à l'occasion de la 12^e conférence de notre Alliance.

La semaine dernière, nous aurions dû être un peu plus de 100, à nous retrouver dans la joie pour partager, au-delà des séances de travail, sous un soleil printanier, des moments d'amitié et de découverte personnelle, géographique ou gastronomique.

Mais aujourd'hui, à Neuchâtel comme dans le monde entier, la crise sanitaire, économique et sociale liée à la pandémie Covid-19 est devenue en peu de temps le centre de nos préoccupations ; elle bouleverse notre quotidien, nous coupe de nos amis, de nos collègues et de notre famille ; elle brouille nos repères, elle nous oblige à modifier des habitudes parfois ancrées et à vivre des séparations.

Par cette lettre, le Conseil communal de la Ville de Neuchâtel souhaite adresser aux Autorités et aux populations de toutes les villes membres de l'Alliance un message de solidarité et exprimer ses vœux de santé et de réussite pour surmonter les difficultés actuelles, mais aussi pour préparer les temps qui viendront après la sortie de cette crise.

L'enthousiasme de vous accueillir et l'importance du travail déjà accompli nous ont amenés à proposer de venir en Suisse en 2022. Le Conseil exécutif des Maires des Neuchâtel du Monde, qui nous guide entre les conférences, a accepté cette proposition pour la prochaine conférence. Nous tenons à exprimer notre gratitude d'avoir donné à notre ville une nouvelle chance de vous accueillir. Nous remercions tout particulièrement les villes qui étaient intéressées à l'organisation de la conférence de 2022. Nous serons ravis de vous accueillir du 5 au 12 avril 2022.

Cette année 2020 marquera sans doute longtemps nos mémoires. Nous espérons qu'elle se distinguera aussi comme l'amorce d'un renouveau, d'une transition vers une société ouverte à l'autre et plus riche en valeurs humaines et davantage respectueuse de son environnement.

Dans l'espoir de vous rencontrer prochainement sur les rives du lac de Neuchâtel, nous vous adressons, chers amis, nos plus chaleureuses salutations.