

Newcastles News



SHINSHIRO WILL CELEBRATE "NEW CASTLE DAY" IN OCTOBER !

In April, the Council of Shinshiro City, Japan designated November 13th as "New Castle Day".

November 13th is the day that the first world New Castle Summit (now referred to as the Newcastles of the World Alliance Conference) was opened in 1998 in Shinshiro. Mayor Mr Hiroyuki Shimoe said: "We will make this an opportunity for Shinshiro City's historical and cultural events to be better-known internationally. At the same time, we will promote our citizens' appreciation of multicultural collaboration and international exchange. "We are planning to have some exhibitions and interactions with other Newcastles (including online) and will provide information in the coming weeks of how other "Newcastles" around the world can join us".



This is an excellent idea, and, whilst we await further details from Shinshiro of their own projects, we welcome any additional ideas from other Newcastles, so we can evaluate them and share them with the team in Shinshiro. Please send them to us via newcastlesoftheworld@gmail.com

Recently, Shinshiro sent us a list of visiting delegates to that very first conference in 1998. It would be wonderful if any of those delegates from 26 years ago might write about their memories of the event.

The photo shows the late Shinshiro Mayor Yoshio Yamamoto (*to the left*) planting a tree to commemorate the conference, helped by the leaders of the other delegations. Page 16 of this newsletter has other photos from that conference and from those of ten and twenty years ago in Nové Hradý, Czech Republic and Newcastle South Africa respectively.

The Newsletter of "Newcastles of the World" • June/July/August 2024

In May, Neuburg an der Donau, our "Newcastle" in Bavaria, Germany, celebrated 50 years of the annual "Fischerstechen" (Fishermen's Jousting) alongside the "Fischergasslerfest" (street festival).



Born out of a citizens' initiative to save the residential character of the Fischergasse in the mid-70s against plans to redevelop the centre, the event is now a big part of Neuburg's cultural calendar. Every year, daring competitors challenge each other at the traditional jousting directly on the Danube river. The goal is to throw your opponent in the cold water by using a lance on top of a moving boat. The event draws audiences from all around the region to Neuburg to watch the amazing spectacle.

We are in the 12th year of this quarterly newsletter and the next edition of will be number 50. We will be aiming for some special features, so look out for it.

Let us know what you think of the newsletters and what else you might like to see in them - to newcastlesoftheworld@gmail.com. Here is the cover of edition number 1 from January 2013. All past editions are available via our archive - <https://newcastlesoftheworld.com/newsletter-archive/>

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REMEMBERING THOSE WHO FOUGHT FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM



On 6th June, the borough council of **Newcastle-under-Lyme** unveiled a tree carving at Brampton Park commemorating the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings.

The talented man behind this magnificent creation - which stands at nine feet tall and represents the troops, boats and planes that landed on the beaches of Normandy in France on D-Day on 6 June 1944 - is the chainsaw carver, Anthony Hammond, pictured to the right of the carving as we view the photo, with the borough Mayor on the other side.

Ex-servicemen gathered outside the civic centre in **Newcastle upon Tyne** on the eightieth anniversary of D-Day, and the beacons on the ceremonial way were lit to mark the occasion. It was the culmination of a day of tributes across the country and in France to the members of the armed forces who took part in the turning point Second World War operation that saw Allied soldiers land on the beaches of Normandy.



On 6 June a memorial ceremony was held for deceased seafarers in connection with D-day at the memorial for Danish war sailors - FORSAVN - at Kongens Shipbridge in **Nyborg**



MEMORIAL DAY IN NEW CASTLE, IN.

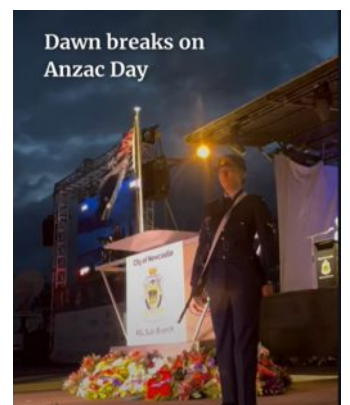
May 27 saw the biggest Memorial Day parade in the Midwest of the USA take place in **New Castle, Indiana**. Memorial Day (originally known as Decoration Day) is one of the federal holidays in the United States for honouring U.S. military personnel who died while serving in the armed forces. The photo, *below left*, shows Mayor Greg York addressing the gathering outside the court house.



Also *below left* is one of the huge number of parade floats and (*right*) is one of the guests who also addressed the gathering - Nate LaMar, former US Army Officer and international businessman, 10 years President of Henry County Council - and some will remember Nate as a delegate from his New Castle to our 2010 Newcastle of the World conference in South Africa.



ANZAC (Australia and New Zealand Army Corps) Day is a national day of remembrance on 25th April that commemorates those who served their respective countries in conflicts. The photo (*right*) is of the dawn service in **Newcastle, New South Wales**, which was attended by many thousands of people.



NEUCHÂTEL'S NEW CONSEIL COMMUNAL

Congratulations to the members who will make up the Conseil communal (executive/cabinet) of the city of **Neuchâtel**, for the next four years, following city elections. They are (*left to right in photo*): Johanna Lott Fischer, Jonathan Gretillat, Violaine Blétry-de Montmollin, Nicole Baur and Julie Courcier Delafontaine. Violaine Blétry-de Montmollin and Nicole Baur were re-elected, with the other three elected for the first time.



Violaine Blétry-de Montmollin will become president for the first year of the 2024-2028 legislature. Nicole Baur will assume the vice-presidency of the executive. Two outgoing candidates for re-election, Didier Boillat and Mauro Moruzzi, were not re-elected. Thomas Facchinetti, who has served 12 years on the executive, decided not to run for office this time. The elections represented a strong return of the executive to the left with two socialists and two greens. The participation rate was 27.51%.

NEW "FIRST CITIZENS" FOR UK NEWCASTLES



Councillor Barry Panter (*see left*) has become Mayor of **Newcastle-under-Lyme** for the coming municipal year. Councillor Panter enjoyed a career with the Royal Air Force as a young man before going on to complete 23 years of service as a police officer.

Councillor Rob Higgins (*right*) is the new Lord Mayor of **Newcastle upon Tyne** for 2024/25. A former probation officer, Councillor Higgins was first elected to the City Council in 1995.



ACADEMIC LINKS GROW BETWEEN TWO NEWCASTLES



Bob took part in studio design projects and made presentations to staff and students. He attended a meeting of International Newcastle and visited the new Nihon University Campus, which he was found impressive. Bob is pictured on the *left above* with Gary Foster of International Newcastle/ Newcastles of the World.

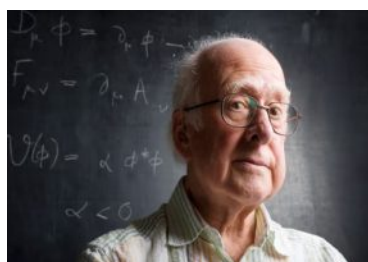
Bob Giddings, Professor of Architecture and Design at Northumbria University, **Newcastle upon Tyne**, has paid another visit to **Newcastle, New South Wales**, Australia to develop further collaborative work.

Bob says: "I am engaged with a research project, which is reviewing densification in the city centres of Newcastle upon Tyne and Newcastle NSW, as part of the Future of the City Centre project - <https://www.futurecitycentre.com/>.

"I have also been appointed as Visiting Professor at the University of Newcastle Australia, Department of Architecture and Built Environment, hosted by Dr Marcus Jefferies." (*pictured right*)



REMEMBERING A CELEBRATED SCIENTIST



Born in **Newcastle upon Tyne**, Peter Higgs, the Nobel prize-winning physicist who proposed a new particle known as the Higgs boson, died in early April, aged 94. He was awarded the Nobel prize for physics in 2013 for his work showing how the boson helped bind the universe together by giving particles their mass.

He is pictured receiving his Nobel prize from the King of Sweden. Higgs was awarded the freedom of the city of Newcastle by the city council in 2014.



CELEBRATING AFRICA DAY

Saturday 25th May was “Africa Day”, marking the day when the Organisation of African Unity was created in 1963. Among those celebrating were the learners at Mntimande Primary school in our **Newcastle in KwaZulu-Natal**, South Africa.

We have a special connection with the school and its Principal, Thulani Phakathi. Last year Newcastles of the World raised funds for the school. Thulani and his young people have twice performed to welcome delegates at our Newcastles of the World conferences when hosted in Newcastle, South Africa.



The third Jack's Donut Hole Eating Contest in

New Castle Indiana was held on May 24.

Australia's top competitive eater James Webb set a new world record and won first place eating 350 donut holes in 8 minutes! It may seem frivolous and indulgent, but it promotes local business, brings visitors into town and raises money for charity as well.



Work continues on the repairs at the medieval castle of **Jaunpils**, our "Newcastle" in Latvia, following the very serious storm damage of last August. The castle will be back in good shape for our Newcastles of the World conference in Jaunpils next summer, and visitors can still enjoy its attractions now.

The newly opened Philip Astley Centre, located in the heart of **Newcastle-under-Lyme** celebrated World Circus Day on April with a range of demonstrations that enchanted the public. World Circus Day is an international celebration initiated by the Fédération Mondiale du Cirque and is now observed worldwide. It commemorates an art form that traces its roots back to Philip Astley, born in Newcastle, a military hero, and the original ringmaster, and creator of the modern circus,



Bob and Lyn Cook of **Newcastle New South Wales, Australia**, have visited many other “Newcastles”.

Their latest holiday in Europe included a visit to Neufchâteau, our “Newcastle” in Belgium. We were delighted that Francois Huberty, Bourgmestre (Mayor) of Neufchâteau hosted them to breakfast in the Hotel de Ville (City Hall). This was followed by an extensive city walking tour, including the history of the 'new castle' by passionate local historian Christian Kellen.

Thanks to Izabela Nowak for organising it all and Deputy Mayor Micheline Louis for co-hosting the visit. A great memory said Bob. The Mayor (*far right in photo below*), Micheline (*centre, green jacket*) and Izabela (*far left*) attended part of the 2023 Newcastles of the World conference in Nové Hradky, Czech Republic.



Neufchâteau centre

NYBORG CASTLE BACK ON TRACK

The flags are raised, the smiles are wide, and the news is huge in **Nyborg**, our Newcastle in Denmark, because the much-delayed project for the renovation of the historic medieval castle - one of the country's most important buildings - is back on track.

The Ministry of Culture, Realdania, A.P. Møller Foundation and Nyborg Municipality have announced that they have jointly secured the financing of a total of a further 327 million Danish kroner (44m euros).



The expectation is that the castle, which has been closed to the public for seven years, will be open again no later than 2028. The total cost of the project is DKK 472 million (63m euros). The renovation will be completed with a new museum wing, a ring wall and the restoration of the existing watchtower. It was at Nyborg castle that King Eric V Klipping signed Denmark's first constitution in 1282.

The castle became the venue for the *Danehof*, the country's first parliament.



The second piece of excellent news for Nyborg and for the castle is that HM Queen Margrethe, who abdicated as monarch recently, will continue as patron of the castle. Nyborg Mayor Kenneth Muhs said: "We are very honoured that the Queen continues as patron - it confirms the importance the castle has had for our history and for Denmark's democracy. It represents the continuation of a close and long-standing collaboration with the Royal House to safeguard the cultural heritage and convey the history of the palace".



David and Gitta Faulkner of **Newcastle upon Tyne** were able to meet up again with Alison and John Hamilton from **Newcastle, New South Wales**, Australia last month at their home in the UK. Alison and John have been great supporters of Newcastles of the World for over 20 years, hosted David and Gitta in their own home in 2009 when they had the chance to meet many people of influence from their Newcastle and were delegates to the Newcastle of the World conference in Newcastle upon Tyne in 2012. Alison and John have both had exceptionally distinguished careers in the field of medicine and are known internationally.

More than a thousand residents joined Mayor Adrian Foster and members of Council on June 1 to celebrate the official opening of **Newcastle Ontario, Canada** Community Park, located alongside the Diane Hamre Recreation Complex.

The park features a tournament-grade hardball diamond, new tennis and pickleball (a paddle racket sport) courts, a skateboard park and paved walkways.



The city of **Neuchâtel**, Switzerland is celebrating "a colossal project" that has been carried out in recent years by more than 100 researchers in different universities in China: the entire work of the world-renowned Neuchâtelian psychologist and pedagogue Jean Piaget has been translated into Chinese. The first volumes were recently handed over to Thierry Chatelain, director of the Public Library in Neuchâtel, by a delegation from Shanghai.



This is the first time that Piaget's entire work has been compiled in a single edition - so far, this has not been the case in any other language, not even in French! This was also a working visit, organised by the Institute of Psychology and Education of the University of Neuchâtel and the Piaget Institute. Fifteen professors, researchers and local specialists from the institute accompanied the Chinese delegation of Weiguo Pang, Junsheng Liu and Yuan Fang and were able to exchange current research.



Jean Piaget (1896 -1980), born in Neuchâtel, is a celebrated psychologist who developed a theory of cognitive development focused on intellectual development of children.

SOLAR ECLIPSE WAS BEST SEEN FROM NEW CASTLE !

The total solar eclipse was seen by millions of people in the USA on 8 April - but one of the best vantage points of all was **New Castle, Indiana** which was right in the path of the eclipse. Thanks to Mark Sean Orr for his dramatic photos!



The reopening of the shell grottos in Neuburg castle

The “shell grottos” have reopened in the magnificent Renaissance castle of **Neuburg an der Donau**, our Newcastle in Bavaria, Germany. The grotto complex was built around 1667 as part of the construction of the castle’s east wing. Back then, such buildings usually depicted the same themes: time and transience, the cosmos or the world of fauns and nymphs. The Neuburg castle is open every day except Mondays, in the summer season from 09.00 to 18.00. Visitors can enjoy the grotto area, with its ornamental shells, as well as the rest of the museum which includes an exhibition about the history of the principality and also the state gallery of Flemish Baroque Paintings.



Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia recently hosted a visit from the Japanese Consul General Mr Shuichi Tokuda and Consul Economic Section Ms Mayumi Ikegaya. The visit focused on the development plans for the city of Newcastle - the Consul was particularly briefed on house construction, including plans for new stand-alone cottages and high rise apartment buildings.

Energy alternatives and current supply generation methods with wind and solar generation were also discussed.

Following the briefings from the Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes, Hunter Business and Newcastle Port representatives, the Consul and his party inspected the recently-revamped Nihon University campus, east of the city centre (*see photo, top right*).



The Federal Government of Malaysia has supported the Kelantan State government's proposal to extend the runway at the Sultan Ismail Petra Airport in **Kota Bharu** (“Newcastle”) by 400m, allowing it to become a truly international airport that accommodates larger planes for flying longer distances.



EUROPE DAY IN NOVÉ ZÁMKY On May 9th "Europe Day" took place on the main square in **Nové Zámky**, Slovakia. The participants in this event could take part in a quiz about Europe and could express their opinions about Slovakia's 20-year membership of the European Union. The event also included a discussion, which was attended by guests such as Marco Németh from Dunajská Streda and Zoltán Sidó, editor-in-chief of the daily Új Szó. The main organiser of the event was the Petr Pázmán High School with co-organisers the Basic Art School, Europe Direct Komárno and the city of Nové Zámky.



Does nature also have rights? The City of **Neuchâtel**, the Maison de l'Europe transjurassienne, the Génie-Citoyen association, the University of Neuchâtel and their partners invited the population to a series of free events to consider the issue of the natural world.

Placed under the banner of "Europe Day 2024", the events took place from 24 April to 7 May.

There were debates, shared reflections, exhibitions, and a new Neuchâtel film: all of this marks the city's attachment to the European continent and to the values of openness, for humanity as well as for the rest of the biological world.



In **New Castle, Pennsylvania, USA** there are three "food trails"- Burger, Sunday Sauce and the Coffee Club trail which highlights the local coffee shops. The Burger trail is going strong and includes 19 local restaurants that serve craft burgers. New this year is the "Sunday Sauce" trail, which celebrates the city's rich Italian heritage with many Italian restaurants. Information on all trails and how to participate can be found on the website *VisitLawrenceCounty.com*. This spring, *Visit Lawrence County* involved students from all County Elementary schools to help colour the coffee sleeves for the Coffee Club trail. It was a huge success with 500 sleeves being beautifully and creatively decorated (*see photo above*). It was so well received that there have been many requests to continue the project and keep it going for the foreseeable future.



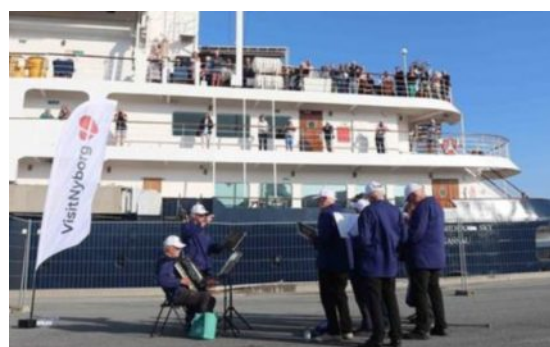
On May 24, the opening ceremony was held in the municipality of **Akhalsikhe**, Republic of Georgia for the project "Rehabilitation of Multipurpose Agricultural Facility". The ceremony was attended by H.E. Mr. Ishizuka Hideki, the Ambassador of Japan and also by Mr. Irakli Lazarashvili, Mayor of Akhalsikhe Municipality and Ms. Nana Zubashvili, Head of Union Samkaro, a local NGO.

Under this project, Union Samkaro has established an agricultural laboratory and upgraded a training centre for farmers. The laboratory will provide resources to test soil, water, and dairy products and will help promote ecologically friendly agricultural practices locally. Agriculture is essential to the economy and prosperity of the Akhalsikhe area.

Major harbourside improvements are taking place in **Nyborg**, Denmark - a lounge area, activity zone and barbecue area, beach volleyball court and table bench set, also a new floating bridge.



There are over 600 private moorings in the marina, and this summer will bring to Nyborg everything from cruise ships to international yachting and rowing competitions.



SALUTING COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS



A new recognition programme that honours residents for their service to the community has been launched in Clarington, **Canada**, in National Volunteer Week, with recipients awarded 'Challenge Coins'.



Joyce Kufta (*second left in group photo*) is a strong proponent of seniors and their housing needs. She is a tireless member of the Newcastle Parkview Seniors Lodge board of directors and spearheaded the expansion project that provides more quality and affordable living spaces for older adults in the Village of **Newcastle**. She was also a member of the team that organised the 2016 Newcastle of the World conference in Newcastle, Ontario. **Pat Thexton** (*fourth from the right*) is a driving force behind the stunning public gardens in Newcastle. **Crystal Yaki** (*pictured right above with Mayor Adrian Foster*) is the chair of the Newcastle Community Hall Board, where she oversees the management and maintenance of the historic building, a landmark for the village since 1923. She is also a member of the Board of Directors for the Newcastle Village and District Historical Society, where she helps to preserve and promote the village's local history and archives.



This time of year is when the city of **Shinshiro**, our "Newcastle" in Japan, marks the most important battle in its history and one of the most important in the whole of the country.

The Battle of Nagashino (Shinshiro) was a historic battle during Japan's ancient Warring States period by prominent military forces of the time.

In early May the spectacular annual Battle Flag Festival of Shinshiro took place.

The Battle of Nagashino-Shitaragahara in 1575 was the first war in Japan to use guns on a large scale. The battlefield around the ruins of the old castle acts as the stage for the Shitaragahara Battlefield Festival on 8th June.

A matchlock gun demonstration, school warrior parade, warrior demonstration and other events take place, to give an insight into what the actual battle may have looked like.



The City of **Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia** has recognised the

dedication of more than 250 volunteers who contributed over 6000 hours of their time to the local community during the past year. Their efforts were acknowledged during a special morning tea hosted by Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes (*in centre of photo*) to mark National Volunteer Week, which ran from 20-26 May.



ALL THE FUN OF THE SPRING FAIR IN JAUNPILS

On May 12th, Mother's Day, the parking lot of **Jaunpils** Castle in Latvia was filled with smiling faces as people attended the traditional Spring Fair.

The market square resounded with a Mother's Day concert, and mothers with children were invited to participate in a group relay race. Fun activities were also available for the youngest visitors, who could enjoy inflatable attractions, face painting, and cuddling rabbits.



Marking the start of the new tourist season, visitors had the opportunity to visit the Tourism Stand and learn about the attractions and offerings in Jaunpils and its surroundings. The fair in Jaunpils has always been an event that attracts people from near and far, both for shopping and to enjoy the pleasant atmosphere.

This Spring Fair gathered more than 100 vendors from various regions of Latvia.

Thanks go to the fair organiser Velga Pavlovskā.



JAUNPILS' COLLECTIVES CHAMPION SONG AND DANCE

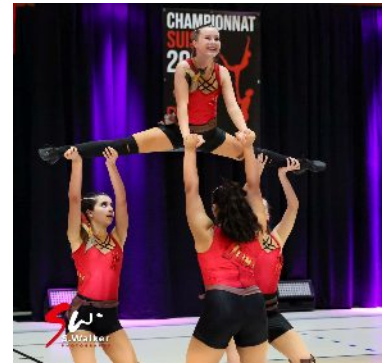
This year has marked the celebration of two significant anniversaries for **Jaunpils'** community groups (they are Latvian “self-employed collectives”). In April, the Jaunpils Mixed Choir celebrated its remarkable 100th anniversary. The leader of the collective is Lāsma Pommere. Continuing the festive spirit, May saw the children's dance group “Pīlskundziņi” commemorate its 10th anniversary with delightful performances by its young dancers. Over the past decade, “Pīlskundziņi” has become a significant part of Jaunpils, nurturing the love of dance in children. The leader of the “Pīlskundziņi” is Agita Trokša- Grāvīte.



Neuchâtel hosted the Swiss championship of acrobatic rock'n'roll and “boogie woogie” on 8 June, bringing together the best dancers in the country (*see right*).



Newcastle Australia residents are being consulted on how the City Council can deliver the vision for the future. *Newcastle 2040* is the city's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and sets out a 10-year roadmap identifying the vision and aspirations for Newcastle.



Residents can help shape the next version of the CSP by completing a survey and sharing their own aspirations for the future of the city.

A “pocket park” is coming to East Washington Street in downtown



New Castle, Pennsylvania (*see left*). Meanwhile, a downtown wind turbine mural has been dedicated (*see right*) - designed by Asia Ward. This is all part of the revitalisation of the city by the Council, the Development Corporation and other agencies such as Arts & Education at the Hoyt.



Below are two recent photographs of **Kota Bharu**, our Newcastle in Malaysia, taken by Ruzely Abdullah.

On the left is one of the many streets in the city that display amazing street art.

Next to it is an aerial view of the famous Central Market (Pasar Besar Siti Khadijah).

Ruzely Abdullah is an elected councillor at Kota Bharu Municipal Council and an accomplished and much-published photographer. He studied at New York Film Academy and the International Institute of Art & Photography in Sydney. He has travelled extensively and is recognised for his travel photography, but his particular specialisms are in portraiture and in capturing the cultural heritage of his home state of Kelantan. He is a member of the Creative Content Guild of Malaysia and works as a freelance photographer and a tutor.



He was one of the 19 contributors to Bienále Zámky exhibition of artists from cities associated through Newcastles of the World in Nové Zámky, part of the 2020 Slovakia City of Culture project:

See <https://www.facebook.com/vzdusnezamky2020/videos/424521882027640>





EMPOWERING WOMEN IN AKHALTSIKHE

UN Women is the United Nations agency dedicated to gender equality and empowering women. The organisation has launched the publication “We Women Have Power” in **Akhaltshikhe**, our Newcastle in the Republic of Georgia, accompanied by a corresponding photo exhibition (*see photo, left, at the launch*).

The publication narrates compelling stories of rural women living in villages across Georgia, including Samtskhe-Javakheti, which is Akhaltshikhe’s region. The women are driving positive change within their families, villages, and communities, despite facing obstacles.

The project was funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Austrian Development Cooperation.



The annual winter festival in **Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa** in May attracted huge crowds.

Visits to the Ocean Baths in **Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia** have skyrocketed since the refurbished pool was reopened to the public, with almost 30,000 swimmers taking a dip each month now. This is almost five times higher than the number of swimmers during the corresponding period in 2021/22, before the pool and promenade areas were upgraded. We covered the story of the historic Baths in our last newsletter.

As the Pope arrived in Venice on Sunday at the end of April to visit the Vatican’s pavilion at the Biennale art show, in Alessandro Tarantino’s photo (AP) we spotted a sign on the building behind him in St Mark’s Square.

It was for an exhibition for the Biennale of the life and work of Robert Indiana, the famous pop artist who was born in our **New Castle, Indiana, USA**. The exhibition, “Robert Indiana: The Sweet Mystery”, opened on April 20th at the Procuratie Vecchie, and runs until November.

This is one of the most famous buildings in one of the world’s most famous city spaces – the building opened to the public for the first time in its 500-year history only a few years ago and now houses a major art gallery.

Organised by Yorkshire Sculpture Park in the UK, developed with The Robert Indiana Legacy Initiative, and curated by Matthew Lyons, the exhibition brings together works spanning 60 years of his career. The “LOVE” works for which he is best known - images as familiar as any artwork ever produced - figure in the show of course, alongside a range of others, some shown here.



May 18th was marked in many countries by participation in European Museums Night and International Museums Day.



This year’s theme was “Discover and Acquire, Explore and Understand” At the castle in **Jaunpils**, our Newcastle in Latvia, over 1200 visitors enjoyed a scientific show, also conducting their own experiments.



Jaunpils also provided late openings for many of its other buildings,

from the library to the craft house, church, and watermill.

FEATURE - NEW CASTLE, PENNSYLVANIA



LOCATION OF "SMALL TOWN NOIR"



"Small Town Noir" is a unique and award-winning true crime blog/website (smalltownnoir.com) that tells the life stories of the ordinary people featured in a cache of old mugshots from one town – it's our **New Castle, in Pennsylvania, USA** - not so small a town, really.

The mugshots date from the 1930s to the 1950s and were rescued when the town's police department threw them out. Those decades correspond to the classic era of American crime cinema – but these are stories of long-forgotten people committing crimes at a time when New Castle was actually doing very well. It had become one of the most industrially productive cities in America, with the biggest tinplate mill in the world and thousands of immigrants from Europe arriving every year to work in its steel factories, ceramics plants, foundries and paper mills. But the depression - unemployment and depopulation- that began in the 1950s and earlier was just about to come.

The author of this project, Diarmid Mogg, a writer and reporter from Edinburgh, Scotland, said: "Since I started researching and publishing the stories behind the mugshots on the Small Town Noir website, I've visited New Castle a couple of times, tracked down crime scenes, met relatives of the people I've written about - I've even attended the 95th birthday party of a man who had his mugshot taken at the age of seventeen, in 1935, when he was charged with stealing a car. Over those years, I've come to feel something like love for New Castle and the people whose lives I've tried to piece together.

"The subjects of the mugshots were, for the most part, largely innocent of wrong-doing, aside from an occasional error of judgment or alcohol-induced indiscretion. They were citizens of a town that was unaware it was experiencing its golden age."

Nowadays, downtown New Castle is being revived and tourism is on the up with visitors enjoying such attractions as the North Hill Historic District.

The magnificent spring cherry blossoms in Sakurabuchi Park in **Shinshiro**, our Newcastle in Japan have long faded as summer arrives. But the annual cherry blossom festival in late March and early April was again much enjoyed by locals and visitors alike - and we need no excuse for showing the blooms once again!



The latest issue of **Shinshiro**'s monthly newsletter "Honoka" features the city's new Tourism Officer Mr Mazu Karaburi Murakami - a "larger than life" character!



Newcastle upon Tyne City Council joined partners on 21 May for a groundbreaking ceremony that marked the start of work at Newcastle University's new £500m - almost 600m euros - Health Innovation Neighbourhood at the former General Hospital site.

It will house new academic hubs to build on the city's world-class research on ageing and living well, plus more than 1,200 new homes as well as business, employment and education space and new health facilities.

Robert Dulfer writes a personal note:

Nové Hradý Masopust highlight crowned King of the Disability Ball

“In 2020, **Nové Hradý** blacksmith Daniel Cerny, his kids, and head apprentice stole the show at the annual Masopust (carnival). They appeared with an UFO on wheels pushed by an astronaut and two Martians selling tickets for flights to Mars and Pluto. But the centre piece was the three meter high ET, a wire-framed costume carried by Daniel.

On September 16 of 2023, Daniel was asked to show this costume to children at a recreational camp he has been visiting all his life. Later that day, without costume, Daniel slipped and broke his first vertebra and became largely paralysed. In January 2024, he was moved from the regular spinal units to the Hamza Spinal Rehabilitation Centre in Luže-Košumberk. There, the staff are working intensively with him to slowly regain at least some control over his body.

As family and future carers for Daniel, we were impressed and very touched by all that the Hamza staff are doing for their patients - not only the daily training of the body, but also working on emotional welfare as part of the rehabilitation. The annual masked ball for patients, their family, and staff is one example of that - their involvement is worth paying tribute to.

We would like to make this a next attention point/project for our New Castle family: what is done to help people after crippling accidents or diseases to get back into their professional and social life?

Are our New Castles doing enough in this field?; are there facilities?; can we do more?

More about this later, but to complete the story; we brought ET to the ball. Since Daniel was not able to carry the frame, his brother took his place. And was crowned King of the Ball.”



Janet Falotico is CEO of *Visit Lawrence County*, the tourism agency based in **New Castle Pennsylvania**, where she is our Newcastles of the World contact.

We welcomed her most recently online at our conference in Nové Hradý last October and just last month she was an interviewee on *Older Voices*, the fortnightly radio programme of the Newcastle upon Tyne Elders Council.

She is pictured here (*right*) from the 2016 Newcastles of the World conference in Newcastle, Ontario, Canada, with Beverly Matthews from New Castle, Indiana. On the link below the photo you can listen to her interview (at one hour 14 minutes) in which she speaks about her New Castle and its attractions. Very appropriately, when asked for a song for the radio station to play, Janet chose *We Are The World*.

On the same link you can also listen to an interview (at 50 minutes) with Vladimir Hokr, Mayor of **Nové Hradý** - this particular interview was carried out at the conference.

Thanks to the Elders Council and Steve Whitley in particular for the sustained interest and support for Newcastles of the World and for internationalism in general.



<https://www.mixcloud.com/LLARC/older-voices-282-5-may-2024-international-relationships/>



The winners of **Newcastle-under-Lyme** Borough “Heroes” Awards have been announced. Council Leader Simon Tagg said: “The awards, a fantastic legacy from the borough’s 850th anniversary celebrations in 2023, are a brilliant way to thank unsung heroes for their outstanding commitment to the borough”. The winners are: Community Champion Award – Dr. Michael Salt, a tireless advocate for clean air in Newcastle; Young Hero Award - Declan Mason, whose journey in Scouting is a testament to his remarkable growth and dedication; Sporting Hero Award – Luisa Mackey who has been the driving force behind Audley Striders running club since its inception in 2018;

Lifetime Achievement Award – Vera Bloor’s illustrious career spans 30 years in the police force, culminating in her role as Chief Inspector, then District Commissioner for Newcastle Scouts.

YOUTH

In late May, the the youth parliament of **Nové Zámky**, our Newcastle in Slovakia, paid a visit to the town of Bardejov in the east of the country. In addition to sightseeing, they enjoyed a range of activities from visiting the wellness center, finding out about the jobs of local municipal workers, and, of course, meeting Bardejov's youth parliament to share information and experience.



Hundreds of children in **Herceg Novi**, our Newcastle in Montenegro, accompanied by teachers, took part in the 15th International Children's Carnival of Herzegovina (*see left*), together with guests from Slovenia and Macedonia. This is just one of the many festivals that Herceg Novi organises and hosts every year. That's why it is known as "the city of festivals and cultural events". Herceg Novi is the winner of the prestigious "Golden Hearts" "for hospitality and champion of cultural tourism for South-East Europe.



And the International Day of Protection of Children was celebrated in **Akhaltikhe**, Georgia with a diverse range of events - one of the highlights was the music performed by the pupils of the kindergarten groups of the city (*see right*). Since 1950, 1 June has been celebrated as Children's Day in many Communist and post-Communist countries.



The ninth Swiss Festival of Children's and Youth Choirs has taken place in **Neuchâtel** : 54 choirs, approximately 1500 young people and children from all over Switzerland. Of a range of well-supported indoor and outdoor concerts perhaps, the most memorable event was a transgenerational "flashmob" in front of the Fountain of Justice that attracted over 700 people!



The Youth Council in **Nyborg**, Denmark took advantage of the annual "Culture Night" in the city to take a stall and promote their work (*see left*)



Good news from **Newcastle upon Tyne** - the city's Youth Council has been re-established with 16 members elected by the 7000 young people who voted - four of them are members of the national Youth Parliament (two are deputies).

On April 17, awards for the most successful pupils and athletes of the city of **Nové Zámky**, Slovakia for the year 2023 took place in the House of Culture.

These were young people who have exceptional talent in arts, science and sport.

In the category of the most successful academic students, awards were presented by Mayor Otokar Klein to 39 individuals and 16 teams, and in the category of the most successful athlete, 40 individuals and 18 teams were awarded. Congratulations to all!



SPORT

The City of **Neuchâtel** have received the players of the first team of the Viteos NUC Volleyball team, as well as a delegation from the club, at the DuPeyrou Hotel, to congratulate them on their remarkable journey to the final of the CEV (European Volleyball) Cup. The City's medal of honour was awarded to them on this occasion. The Municipal Council, praised this magnificent performance, which will go down the history of Neuchâtel sport.

Almost 300 **Neuchâtel** athletes were congratulated on April 16 at the Théâtre du Passage by the City for their performances.

Biathlon, orienteering, gymnastics, pole sport, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, skating, wakeboarding: these sportsmen and women, from 24 clubs, distinguished themselves in 32 disciplines by winning medals at national and international level in 2023.



A NEW CHAPTER FOR JAUNPILS BASKETBALL

This spring, the U-14 girls' team from **Jaunpils** Secondary School participated in the Latvian School Spartakiad basketball finals, securing second place. This achievement is unprecedented in the history of Jaunpils youth basketball. The competition was fierce, with teams evenly matched, and the final outcome was determined by the smallest of margins.

The season has also ended for other Jaunpils basketball teams. The men's team, BK Jaunpils (competing in the LBL-3 league), had hopes for medals but finished 4th out of 27 teams. Both the men's and women's teams performed well in the open Tukums Basketball Championship, with the men finishing 8th and the women 6th. In the Latvian Youth League competitions, Jaunpils was represented by in four age groups for both boys' and girls' teams.



An exhibition at Northumbria University in **Newcastle upon Tyne** has celebrated the life of a multiple snooker and billiards world champion and one of the most inspirational sportswomen of her generation. Vera Selby MBE, who worked at the university in textiles was a trail-blazer in many ways: as a pioneering sportswoman, equality campaigner, art educator and textile artist. She continued to play competitively into her eighties and died last year, aged 93. As an Art and Textile Lecturer and then Head of Art Education until her retirement from the university in 1983, Vera's passion for creating unique textile and mixed media art from recycled and repurposed items used in day-to-day life led her to run outreach and training activities for teachers across the region and beyond. Her teaching notes, lesson plans and guidance were published as an educational book called Creative Textiles in 2000, still used in classrooms today.

Vera was introduced to billiards as a child, and in the 1960s she honed her skills in the tough school of Newcastle's working men's clubs, often practising for hours in the evenings after teaching all day. Between 1970 and 1978, she won eight World Women's Billiards Championships. The first Women's World Open Championship in snooker was held in 1976 and Vera won the title, and again in 1981. In the same year she was named Newcastle's Sports Personality of the Year. She went on to command respect as a professional snooker referee. Recognised as a pioneering figure in women's sports, Vera received an MBE in 2015 for her services to snooker and billiards.

The exhibition of her work at Northumbria University ranges from an emotive tapestry of Jesus, through to knitted bin liners, beautiful batik work and exquisite embroidery alongside pictures, amazingly created, from re-purposed paperclips and plug heads.



St James' Park, the home of **Newcastle United** football club, was the venue for two England international football matches recently.

The first was a women's match against France in the UEFA Women's EURO 2025 qualifying group on May 31 (France won 2-1), followed by a men's friendly against Bosnia and Herzegovina (England won 3-0) on 3 June ahead of the 2024 EURO finals in Germany.



MORE SPORT

"Her World, Her Rules" gathered 250 young basketball players in **Herceg Novi**, our Newcastle in Montenegro. It was the final event of a programme of the same name, organized by the Basketball Association of Montenegro, with the aim of providing support for girls, young basketball players and the promotion of sport for a healthy lifestyle.



The first part of the 2024 world championships in kettlebell was held in **Nyborg**, our Newcastle in Denmark from 3-5 May, with 200 athletes from 23 countries taking part. In weight training, a kettlebell is a cast-iron or cast-steel ball with a handle attached to the top (resembling a cannonball with a handle).

It is used to perform many types of exercises, including ballistic exercises that combine cardiovascular, strength and flexibility training.

The championships covered several kettlebell disciplines and took place in Nyborg Idræts- & Fritidscenter.



NEUBURG IS BEHIND FORMULA 1 MOTOR RACING!

Audi is expanding the Competence Centre Motorsport at its facility in **Neuburg an der Donau**, our Newcastle in Bavaria, Germany, ahead of the car maker entering Formula 1 in 2026. A new 3,000 square metre building is being added to the site to support the development of power units for Audi's Formula 1 and is almost complete.

"With the Competence Centre Motorsport, we have an ideal base for our Formula 1 project," said Oliver Hoffmann, board member for technical development. "Audi Neuburg was designed from the outset to be able to tackle the most demanding motorsport projects. This foresight is paying off. With the existing facilities, we were able to immediately begin with the Formula 1 project." "Developing a power unit for the world's most demanding racing series in Germany is a great challenge," said Adam Baker, managing director of Audi Formula Racing. "We already have a great team at our facility in Neuburg an der Donau that is growing all of the time."

Audi plans to develop and build the entire power unit for Formula 1 at the Neuburg site, which will comprise an energy recovery system, electric motor, battery, highly efficient combustion engine and transmission.

Around 300 employees have been involved in the project.

Audi Neuburg is home to the Audi driving experience and the Audi Motorsportcentre with Audi Sport Motorsport and Audi Sport customer racing.

Around 400 employees are located at the site. The Centre first opened in 2014.

CONFERENCE FLASHBACKS

The first conference, in
Shinshiro, Japan -
November 13 - 18, 1998

Participating cities:
Neufchâteau (France),
Neuburg (Germany),
Newcastle (South Africa),
Neuchâtel (Switzerland),
Newcastle-under-Lyme (UK),
Newcastle (Indiana, USA),
Newcastle (Pennsylvania, USA),
Shinshiro (Japan)



Left - 20 years ago, our 2004 conference in **Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal**, South Africa (with the monument outside the old town hall), and (*below*), 10 years ago: the conference in **Nové Hradý**, Czech Republic. These are the three “Newcastles” that have hosted our conferences twice!



ABOUT NEWCASTLES OF THE WORLD

www.newcastlesoftheworld.com



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, Newcastle South Africa in 2004 and 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, Shinshiro again in 2018 and Nové Hradý again in 2023. Our aim is to foster individual, group and civic friendships, with practical links through culture, education, business and tourism.