

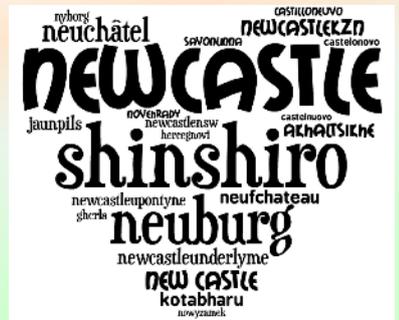


Newcastles News

The Newsletter of the
"Newcastles of the World"

March - April 2021

Sent by email to over 2500 people and organisations in over 50
"Newcastles" - please share it with your contacts too!



TUNE INTO NEWCASTLES AROUND THE WORLD !

Radio Garden is a free app which connects to 30,000 radio stations from around the world and offers access to music and news from the rest of the globe. It was created a few years ago, but there has been a huge increase in the number of users during the current COVID-19 confinement. Why not try it out? - click on <http://radio.garden/> You can rotate the globe and tune in to radio stations across the world. The spots on the map increase in size with the number of broadcasters available in that location. Just click on "play".



To make it easier for you we've selected stations in or close to our main partner
"Newcastles" (below) for you to tune in to ! See page 2



BIENÁLE ZÁMKY PROGRAMME EXTENDED

Because of Covid-19, it has been an utterly frustrating year of stop/start for the Vzdušné Zámky project, the year in which Nové Zámky, our Newcastle in Slovakia, celebrated its selection as the country's City of Culture.

As we write, it is reported that the situation in Slovakia is still not improving and the future is uncertain. With great patience, the organisers are again moving back the dates of scheduled events and programmes, communicating with artists, looking for support for foreign guests and most importantly, giving appreciation to the Slovak national Art Support Fund, for now extending the duration of the City of Culture until August. Organisers say that this extension will be the last one and if the coming weeks do not bring improvement to the coronavirus situation then they will have to say goodbye to the remaining part of the programme.

See pages 11 and 12 for more information about the Bienále Zámky Newcastles of the World exhibition that brought together artists from 14 different Newcastles.

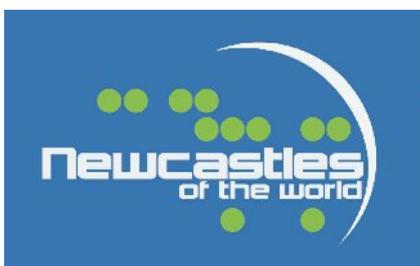
A NEW LOOK FOR NEUCHÂTEL

To mark the creation of the extended municipality, with surrounding communities now part of the "new" Neuchâtel, a change in corporate identity has been made. Here are Violaine Blétry-de Montmollin

(3rd from right), présidente du Conseil Communal de la Ville de Neuchâtel, her colleagues on the Conseil Communal and Chancelier Daniel Veuve braving the rain to promote the new visual identity of the city.



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Radio Garden - here are some radio stations in or close to our main partner "Newcastles" (below) for you to tune in to !

- Newcastle, South Africa - Lit Radio <http://www.radio.garden/listen/lit-radio/xWN5zq8g>
Newcastle Australia – Raw FM <http://www.radio.garden/listen/raw-fm/Ejx5COY5>
Newcastle Australia - Rhema FM <http://www.radio.garden/listen/rhema-fm/rRPvXU93>
Kota Bharu, Malaysia - Radio Klatakita - <http://www.radio.garden/visit/kota-bharu/y-p1ET5O>
Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom – BBC Radio Newcastle <http://www.radio.garden/listen/bbc/lwP2yfxa>
Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom – TFM Radio <http://www.radio.garden/visit/newcastle-upon-tyne/YVNvHrTx>
Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom – Spice FM (mainly South Asian - <http://www.radio.garden/listen/spicefm/AYGhRuE6>
Nyborg, Denmark - Radio DR P4 Fyn, Odense - <http://www.radio.garden/visit/odense/Gucm8pyh>
Herceg Novi, Montenegro, Radio HN - <http://www.radio.garden/visit/herceg-novi/DwODr18b>
Neuchâtel, Switzerland, RTN Neuchâtel <http://www.radio.garden/visit/neuchatel/IFDSsNqu>
Jaunpils, Latvia - Lounge FM 99.5 <http://www.radio.garden/visit/kuldiga/U00Mf8df>
Newcastle-under-Lyme, United Kingdom – BBC Radio Stoke - <http://www.radio.garden/listen/bbc/RUUDJWGf>



New Castle, Indiana, USA – WWHI - WCRD 91.3 FM - <http://www.radio.garden/listen/wwhi-wcrd-91-3-fm/ybJy2ZWO>

New Castle, Pennsylvania, USA - AM600 WSOM - <http://www.radio.garden/visit/youngstown-oh/Q8rRC6Gf>

Newcastle, Canada – Radio CKDO, Oshawa, Canada - <http://www.radio.garden/visit/oshawa/CZCXCcse>

Akhaltshke, Georgia - Radio Nor FM 100.1 <http://www.radio.garden/visit/ninotsminda/H00fGNFm>
and Radio Gipa FM 94.3 <http://www.radio.garden/visit/tbilisi/08Oxc6zo>

Neuburg an der Donau, Germany - volXmusik <http://www.radio.garden/visit/augsburg/6kOTIP0W>

Nové Hradky, Czech Republic - ČRo České Budějovice - <http://www.radio.garden/listen/rozhlas/ksQIxdn0>

Nové Zámky, Slovakia - Radio Plus, Nitra - <http://www.radio.garden/visit/nitra/sfb7ajBf>

Shinshiro, Japan - FM Haro! 76.1 - <http://www.radio.garden/visit/hamamatsu/WuEhZ53W>

KEEP SEARCHING - YOU MAY FIND OTHERS !



The much-loved Newcastle Community Hall is central to life in **Newcastle Village, Ontario** (Canada) - it's the venue that played host to our 2016 Newcastles of the World conference. At the present time, scaffolding is in place as repairs and restoration are under way.

In particular, the iconic clock tower is being restored, including replacing deteriorated wood, refurbishing the clock mechanisms and copper flashing, and roof repairs. The contractor is also making exterior masonry repairs, repainting and replacing some of the bricks.



The Hall has a 25-foot ceiling, original hardwood floors, eight-foot wainscoting and a stage with a grand piano. In the past it housed a theatre, jail cells and council chambers. It still has a four-lane bowling alley, small meeting rooms and large main banquet hall for hosting weddings, sport banquets, fundraisers, trade shows and auctions. The building is also home to the Newcastle Historical Society Museum, Lions Club of Newcastle, Ontario Early Years, Soper Creek Model Train Association and Durham Lodge.

The hall was built in 1923 by the famous Massey family (founders of the internationally renowned agricultural machine company Massey Ferguson) and later willed to the Municipality of Clarington.



CHALKING THE WALK

The City of **Newcastle, Australia** welcomed the art event 'Chalk the Walk' in February. 'Chalk the Walk' brings art right to your feet!

It reflects the public fascination with street art and artists who love to demonstrate their skills in public.

The footpaths of Newcastle have become concrete canvasses with a collection of mind-bending 3D artworks. 'Chalk the Walk' is a fantastic initiative which enhances community engagement, tourism, and economic development.

Neuchâtel in 100,000 Lego bricks !

If you live in Neuchâtel, our Newcastle in Switzerland, then you'll certainly recognise the most famous buildings in the city. And now they're enshrined in Lego too ! The castle and the collegiate, the city hall, the Latin college, the Diesse tower, the football club stands, the Chaumont tower. These masterpieces in Lego were built, brick by brick in nine months by Kevin Plisson, co-owner of the Optique des Arcades store in Neuchâtel.

Kevin displays his creations in his own shop window and in other city centre shops.



Previously, this miniature architecture virtuoso had built three of the city's buildings, wanting to revive the tradition of Christmas display cases. But for the following year he spent his evenings and weekends assembling a dozen monuments, and some 100,000 bricks, after consulting the original plans to be closer to reality. And it's really successful; state employees even found their own office window on the castle! Animated rides, legendary castles - including Harry Potter's - and vintage cars complete Kevin's extraordinary works.



During the home restrictions brought about by COVID-19, we read that the sales of jigsaws and other puzzles have increased dramatically. But it's nothing new for Erika Pinkeová from Pribeta, just outside **Nové Zámky, Slovakia** (she works in the city at the Regional Health Board). Her hobby is solving jigsaw puzzles of the most amazing complexity, including one puzzle of no less than 40,000 pieces! At an exhibition where Erica showed off her puzzles, there were over 200,000 pieces, folded in composite images. ”



Erika got her first puzzle nearly 20 years ago. She says: "I've completely fallen for it; it calms me down!" She only pursues her hobby when there is no other job in the garden or in the home. "I literally became a maniac, I divide the pieces first by colour and then by shapes. First I start making margins, I divide the whole picture into sectors, so I keep going," she describes the whole process. Under the finished work she lays paper and paints a special glue on it for the puzzle. "Then I just have to find a place to store it, it can't all be exposed!"

The mimosas still bloom in Herceg Novi

Covid-19 may have stopped plans for the usual Mimosa Festival in Herceg Novi, our Newcastle in Montenegro, but, through a number of local measures, residents are being reminded that it will be back again next year. Officials of the Municipality planted 50 mimosa seedlings at several locations along Herceg Novi Riviera. Mayor Stevan Katić said that the planting was included in the festive programme instead of the usual public celebrations and events that were absent this year. The municipality appreciates and supports successful students from our city, so as a symbolic gesture, one of the seedlings was planted by Secretary Ana Zambelić-Pištaló (responsible for culture, education and youth policies) and student Jelena Vukasović (*centre below*)



Another way of marking the importance of the Mimosa Festival to the city was through a retrospective exhibition of photographs in Herceg Novi centre. On 10 triangular supports there were 30 large photographs selected on the theme of “50 years of the Mimosa Festival”. They depict some of the best events from past festivals, as well as recognising the programme organisers, whose work and commitment have contributed to staging and popularising the festival over half a century. One of the supports carried a photo from the “Newcastles of the World Day” event, which was held as part of the 50th Mimosa Festival in 2019.

NEWS IN BRIEF

FESTIVAL IS ANOTHER COVID-19 CASUALTY It’s sad to learn that the wonderful **Neuburg Schlossfest** - the biennial Renaissance castle festival in our Newcastle in Bavaria, Germany - has been cancelled for this year. The organisers say that there is insufficient time for the many music, dance and singing groups to begin preparations and rehearsals even if the testing and vaccination programme might have advanced by the summer. So the festival will next be held in 2023.



A new social service centre will soon be established in **Jaunpils**, our Newcastle in Latvia, to provide 24-hour social rehabilitation, care and independent residence for people with mental health issues, as well as offering “respite” service facilities.



Our Newcastles of the World team in **Ontario, Canada** have added their thanks to the Newcastle and District Chamber of Commerce for providing a displayed on the site of the soon-to-be built new hospice in Newcastle.

On hand for the installation (right) were Jane Black, Marian Timmermans, Jim Norwood, Jill Richardson, Jackie Nixon, Rod McArthur and Willie Woo

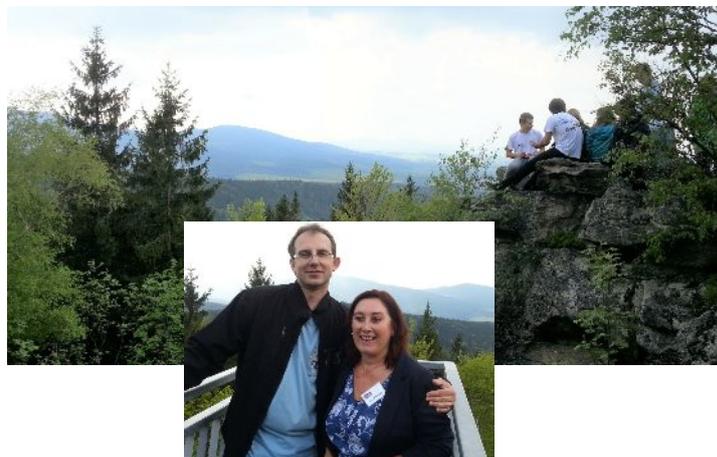


The revitalisation of the City of Newcastle’s, East **Newcastle (Australia)** has received an exciting upgrade. Amidst the new building developments is a new plaza which has an artistic flavour, with ethereal artwork and contemporary architecture, marrying the modernisation with the historic location of East Newcastle (*see photo left of work under way*)

NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT

During the COVID-19 crisis, there's great emphasis being placed upon fresh air and exercise in the great outdoors (but always observing any travel distance limitations that may be in place). So let's feature one of the great attractions among our Newcastles - the Novohradské (Newcastle) Mountains which lie on the Czech-Austrian border above Nové Hradky and are spread over 162 km². It's an area of dense forests full of blueberries and crystal-clear streams, and the mountains have a total of seven 1000 metres high peaks on the Czech side. Hiking and nature trails carefully guide you through the landscape, which is one of the best preserved in the country.

The main attractions are : the oldest protected nature reserve in Europe, the Hojnovodský and Žofín Forest; the Terežín Valley; and the observation point on Kraví Mountain (953 m) that looks out over the pilgrimage site of Dobrá Voda (Good Water). Nové Hradky is the gateway to the mountains with many opportunities to hike, cycle and, in winter, to ski. Delegates to the 2014 Newcastles of the World conference in Nové Hradky climbed to the top of Mount Mandelstein on the border - with fabulous views of the mountain landscape - here on the viewing platform at the top of the mountain are Nové Hradky Mayor Vladimír Hokr and delegate Sue Wilson from Newcastle upon Tyne.



THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS WILL STILL FLOWER !

The crowning glory of Shinshiro, our Newcastle in Japan, is Sakurabuchi Park, a designated Prefectural Nature Park, which takes its name from its avenues lined with cherry blossoms ("sakura") and its deep pools of water (the "buchi" in the park's name). It features some of the most outstanding scenery in the prefecture. The park is famed for its blooming cherry blossoms that seem to dye pink the banks of the Toyogawa river that meanders through the park's centre. Various events are held during the Cherry Blossom Festival from late March through early April. Sadly, the festival events programme has again been affected by the restrictions caused by COVID-19 but the cherry blossoms will still flower - and a little earlier than usual this March - so keep an eye out and enjoy the sights.



Newcastle upon Tyne is one of the cities in the United Kingdom that have been selected by the country's National Trust for the planting of blossoming trees, including cherry, hazel and plum. The project will help improve access to nature for those in towns and cities. The idea is to try to create a UK equivalent of Japan's concept of "Hanami" - the annual celebration of flowers, and the coming of spring. The idea for a circle in Newcastle is supported by Newcastle City Council and Urban Green Newcastle (UGN) who manage the city's parks. Barbara Hooper, UGN's director for parks and allotments, said: "The events of the past year have highlighted more than ever how important it is for us all to have access to green space - somewhere for us to breathe fresh air, connect with nature, and find solace during difficult times."

The people of **Newcastle-under-Lyme**, England have said a big "thank you" to the Sakura Cherry Tree Project for gifting the town 30 cherry trees as a symbol of the enduring friendship between Japan and the UK. They have received three varieties called "Beni Yutaka", "Somei Yoshino" and "Tai Haku" after applying to a national donation scheme to help celebrate Newcastle's 30 years of award-winning involvement in "Heart of England in Bloom". These stunning ornamental trees are known for their colourful and fragrant explosion of showy flowers in the spring.

"Heart of England in Bloom" is one of seventeen regions within the UK that delivers the "Britain in Bloom" campaign on behalf of the Royal Horticultural Society - bringing colour and beauty to communities through the planting and nurturing of trees, plants and shrubs.

NEW CASTLE, INDIANA, USA -- WHERE LOVE WAS BORN

Aaron Dicken (right) is a member of the City Council in New Castle, Indiana, USA. He works as VP Employee Benefits/Marketing for an insurance company in the city and was formerly a school teacher - and before that Director of the Art Association of Henry County.



He has previously contributed to our newsletter when he told the story of how he met the late Robert Indiana, the famous artist who created the renowned "LOVE" sculpture and who was born in New Castle. We asked Aaron if he would contribute some reflections on how the past year has been for his New Castle:

2020 will undoubtedly be remembered as one of the most impactful years of our lives. On a global and national scale, we will remember it for spreading infections, racing for vaccinations, and rising death tolls. On a local scale, those were not just numbers on the news—they were loved ones with names, with relationships, with futures. And while news events will fill history books, it is the memory of our families and friends that will fill our hearts.

2020 affected our local community events. 1400 Plaza in Downtown New Castle had completed most of its finishing touches. The beautiful venue was ready to be filled with crowds attending car shows, outdoor concerts, and so much more. Of course, that didn't happen. It wasn't totally vacant, though, as a number of socially-distanced concerts still occurred and community gatherings assembled, including an event calling for unity against civil unrest and racial division. The Plaza was even the centerpiece for a Christmas celebration, affirming our faith in a future full of hope.

2020 made it difficult for so many small businesses in our communities. But in true New Castle (Newcastle) fashion, many stepped up to help. "New Castle Main Street" helped 58 businesses and granted \$214,650.71 (177,000 EUR) while the New Castle-Henry County Economic Development Corporation issued \$301,750 (250,00 EUR) in grants and loans. Additionally, our businesses adapted by using innovative strategies, such as contactless pickup, socially-distanced dining, or home delivery.

In the middle of it all, our medical professionals, our teachers, our city and county employees, and many more frontline workers were responsible for keeping our daily lives as normal as possible — an effort for which we will be eternally grateful.

2020 tested our grit. It tested our flexibility. And it tested our love for our fellow citizens. But we passed those tests. Presently, 2021 doesn't seem much better than its older sibling, 2020. But the calendar continues to be filled with hope of normalcy, promise of more community involvement, and signs of stability from our love of each other.

NEW MOBILE VACCINATION SERVICE

A "vaccination bus" has just been launched in Newcastle upon Tyne. Travel company *Go North East* has converted one of its buses into a new mobile Covid-19 vaccination unit that will travel the local area visiting communities who are unable to get to vaccination centres, or where uptake has proved low. The bus will initially visit hostels in Newcastle, to vaccinate members of the homeless community, and Newcastle Muslim Centre, and is part of work to address health inequalities in the area.



Go North East has teamed up with Newcastle GP Services (NGPS) – the GP (doctors) Federation for Newcastle – Newcastle City Council and community and voluntary sector partners to provide the service. The vaccination bus has been converted, with a waiting room area and annexe tent, two registration desks and two vaccination points, with a one-way system operating throughout the vehicle thanks to fold down steps added at the rear of the bus.

The bus will be driven, housed, maintained, and cleaned by Go North East, whilst staff from GP practices and NPGS will deliver the vaccinations and handle patient administration. Their work is conducted in a private area on board behind a privacy screen and with frosted glazed windows. The bus has full Covid-secure measures on board, including hand sanitisers, socially distanced seating, a Covid safety screen for the driver and enhanced cleaning with hospital grade 'X-mist' antibacterial fogging treatment.

NGPS has been running vaccination programmes at Newcastle Racecourse and Newcastle Eagles (Basketball) Community Arena since December where more than 50,000 people have already been vaccinated.

PEOPLE BERND EICHINGER (1949-2011)

It's exactly ten years since the death of the celebrated filmmaker Bernd Eichinger who was born in **Neuburg an der Donau**, Germany. He attended the University of Television and Film Munich in the 1970s, and bought a stake in the fledgling studio company Neue Constantin Film in 1979, becoming its executive director.

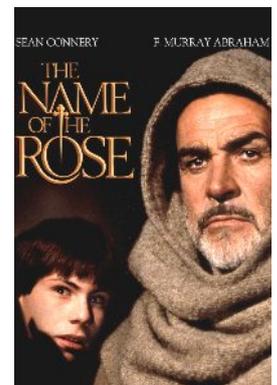


Under his leadership, it evolved into one of the most successful German film businesses and became the first German film distributor with its own production company in just six years, with production activities extending to the international market. Eichinger also produced many movies independently. The range of genres of films, for both television and the big screen, was unusually varied – with almost 100 films to his credit as producer, director or screenwriter.

One of Eichinger's last films was about the left-wing terrorist group Red Army Faction based on the book "Der Baader Meinhof Komplex" ("The Baader-Meinhof Complex") by Stefan Aust. The film was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at the 81st Academy Awards. In 2006 his film "Perfume: The Story of a Murderer" was released, grossing \$135 million (112m EUR) worldwide. Much earlier Eichinger had started making movies based on Marvel comics long before it was trending elsewhere.

Of the films that he worked on, readers may be most familiar with "The Name of the Rose", a 1986 Italian-West German-French mystery and historical drama based on the novel of the same name by Umberto Eco and starring the late Sean Connery.

"Nowhere in Africa" (German: "Nirgendwo in Afrika") is a 2001 German drama film, co-produced by Eichinger and based on an autobiographical novel by Stefanie Zweig. It tells the story of the life in Kenya of a German-Jewish family that emigrated there in 1938 to escape persecution in Germany. The film won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. In all, Eichinger won 18 international film awards with ten other nominations. It was said that for more than 30 years Bernd shaped the German and international film industries. In 2010 the German Film Academy honoured him with a long-overdue lifetime achievement award.



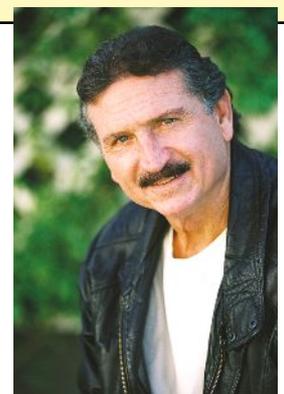
Danish architect-designer **Arne Wahl Iversen** (1927-2016) who was born in **Nyborg**, can be counted among the most significant modern Scandinavian designers. Arne got his interest in furniture from his father, who had a furniture shop in Nyborg. He first trained as a furniture carpenter and then took a furniture engineering study option at Odense Technical School . At the age of 25, Arne started a design office in his hometown . His ambition was to make elegant and functional furniture of a high craftsmanship quality.

In 1957, he entered into a collaboration with Ingvar Kamprad , who was in the process of establishing **IKEA** in the Swedish market. By this time, well-known names such as Arne Jacobsen , Finn Juhl and Hans Wegner had made Danish furniture world famous.

Kamprad therefore wanted the young architect to design furniture for his business. The collaboration ended after a few years when Arne Wahl Iversen chose to go his own way.

Arne Wahl Iversen had his furniture manufactured at many different factories around Denmark, but he is probably best known for the models from Comfort and Winde Furniture Factory . In 1968, his bedroom no. 92 from Vinde Furniture Factory was at the furniture fair in Geneva . Monaco's Prince Rainier 3. and his wife Grace Kelly saw it at the exhibit and immediately ordered one. It provided good public relations value and helped his bedroom furniture become popular in the US. Initially his furniture was primarily sold in Denmark, but from the late 60s there were higher sales to the major European countries and the US market.

Keen to get back to public performances after the pandemic is **Fanie de Jager**, a renowned classical singer of opera, light classical music and popular ballads who was born in **Newcastle, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa**. During his 40-year career he has performed in concert halls throughout South Africa and beyond, and he continues in high demand as an artiste. His popular album *My Classical Soul* includes a world-class collection of opera and operetta arias and duets with South African soprano Michelle Veenemans. Videos of his renditions of the Neapolitan song "O Sole Mio" and the operatic aria "La donna è mobile" have been aired by Classic FM TV in the UK.



MARCH 8TH IS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY - READ HERE THE INSPIRING STORIES OF THREE WOMEN FROM NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME IN ENGLAND



Fanny Deakin (1883–1968) was a politician from Newcastle-under-Lyme, noted for her campaigns for better nourishment of young children and maternity care for mothers. She was born into a large but poor family and, motivated by the poverty she observed around her, she entered politics and was the first woman to be elected onto her local Council in 1923. Of her five children only one survived into adulthood. In an era of high infant mortality she campaigned for better maternity care of women and free milk for children under five.

Along with unemployed miners, she met Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald and, as a result of this meeting, local councils began to give free milk to pregnant mothers and children up to the age of five.

In 1934 she became a County Councillor in the newly-merged Newcastle-under-Lyme Council, continuing her advocacy of child and maternal welfare issues. Her advocacy was recognised when Fanny Deakin Maternity Home was opened in 1947 in Newcastle.

Born in Newcastle **Janet Bloomfield** (1953 - 2007) spent a lifetime campaigning for nuclear disarmament and peace. She became the chairperson of CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) in the United Kingdom the largest peace and disarmament organisation in Europe. She was a consultant (Vice-President 1994–1997) to the Geneva-based International Peace Bureau, a Nobel Peace Prize-winning network of non-aligned peace organisations in 44 countries.



Janet was a member of the Global Council of Abolition 2000, the Global Network to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons and she convened the “Abolition Now” Campaign Working Group. She led the “Atomic Mirror Pilgrimage 1996” around nuclear and sacred sites of England, Scotland and Wales. This was filmed and made into a documentary called “Sacred Fire”.



The best-known of these three inspiring women from Newcastle was **Vera Brittain** (1893 – 1970), an English Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) nurse, writer, feminist, and pacifist through the League of Nations Union and the Peace Pledge Union. Her extraordinary life was featured in an award-winning TV programme, and in a film named after her most famous book “Testament of Youth”.

The film featured Swedish actress Alicia Vikander, and Vera’s book, over 600 pages long, was her vivid picture of the horror and futility of war based on her own experiences. It gives a voice to the wartime role of women. This life-size statue (*right*) in Brampton Park, Newcastle-under-Lyme depicts a



woman reading a letter informing her that a family member has been killed in action in war.

Vera Brittain was the inspiration for the statue, which was commissioned to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War in 2018.

NEWCASTLE AUSTRALIA'S CITIZENS OF THE YEAR

Australia’s first recognised Indigenous surgeon and a passionate advocate for health equality, **Associate Professor Kelvin Kong**, has been honoured as **City of Newcastle’s** “Citizen of the Year” 2021. As one of only three Indigenous surgeons in the country, Dr Kong is passionate about addressing the disparity in health outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children. Each year, he spends time working in remote Australian communities, providing access to quality healthcare that would otherwise be limited or unavailable.

Awarded Newcastle’s “Young Citizen of the Year” 2021 was netballer **Samantha Poolman** who has been recognised for her contributions to women and girls in sport, representing Newcastle in the GIANTS Netball team at the sport’s most elite level. She is also an ambassador for the Confident Girls Foundation, inspiring and empowering a new generation of young netballers. In 2020, she led a fundraiser for bushfire-affected communities through her Hunter athlete development programme, “Aspire Netball”, which raised \$12,000 for Netball Bushfire Relief.

This year the city also awarded a “Senior Citizen of the Year” accolade to Jaci Lappin, CEO of Carrington Bowling Club, for her dedication to providing a safe, inclusive space for the community to gather. She was also the driving force behind fundraisers to install solar panels and complete much-needed renovations to the club.

YOUTH

Yuki Kasegawa is a fine young filmmaker and photographer from **Shinshiro** City, our "Newcastle" in Japan, and is one of the 18 artists from 13 Newcastles whose work was currently featured in the Biennale Zámky - Newcastles of the World digital arts exhibition in Nové Zámky Slovakia, part of Vzdušné ZÁMKY 2020. At the beginning of the year he posted this film retrospect of 2020 - https://youtu.be/y0-YFtD_6mY



Emily Buckley is a talented young artist from **Ontario, Canada** who is one of the 18 participants in our Newcastles of the World exhibition in Mesto Nové Zámky, Slovakia. She was nominated by Ann Harley of A Gift of Art gallery in **Newcastle, Ontario**. You can read more about Emily through this link and view her film "A Mere Freckle" <https://vzdušnezamky.sk/bienale-zamky/10/>
Also - <https://agiftof-art.com/emily-buckley/>

“Learning from other Newcastles” - is a Newcastles of the World youth project led by **Nyborg** in Denmark. Schools will create a video, which tells a specific story of their country and city. The purpose is to encourage learning about and between our Newcastles through the creation of videos by students (aged 12 to 16 years). The students decide on the content according to specific guidelines. The videos can contribute to building closer links between our cities by establishing new friendships between students/classes across the world. The videos are released on our YouTube channel “Learning from other Newcastles”.

In the latest video you will learn about the beautiful nature around **Shinshiro**. You will discover a lot about the fascinating history and heritage of the Japanese "Newcastle". And take a look at the delicious, chargrilled rice cakes! This film was created by High School students in Shinshiro and produced by the city.

See : <https://youtu.be/H96AR0shRXo> or <https://newcastlesoftheworld.com/education/>



How Jaunpils youngsters cooperate with local municipality?

Invest in youngsters. We opened little but cozy youth center in Jaunpils center. It is important to have safe place where to just be and build relationship.

Tip: Youngsters are not only our future, they are our present. If treatment is very important. We can not only say that they are important to us, in some point we have to show it.

Youth Forum

Organized by local group of youngsters in order to invite local policy makers, educators, entrepreneurs, NGO people, parents etc. To have their opinion and to create discussion in between.

Event: Coffee with politics

Tip: It is important to introduce youngsters and even kids with the work of policy makers. Often society create a lot of false theories around politics and their work. If they manage to understand the work, they can start to recognize their opportunities to be part from it.

In the Youth Section of our website we carry information about youth councils in the various Newcastles, plus other information to share. For example, **Jaunpils**, Latvia has provided us with a very interesting presentation about how the municipality engages with young people - some slides are here, and the rest available via : <https://newcastlesoftheworld.com/youth-section/>

Akhaltzikhe State Puppet Theatre is one of the important cultural attractions of the Samtskhe-Javakheti region of the **Republic of Georgia**, supported by the Georgian Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport. The theatre in Akhaltzikhe is located close to the famous Meskheti drama theatre, but is much younger,



The theatre was improved in 2017 and equipped with modern lighting and sound equipment. The history of puppet or dolls theatre goes back to ancient Egypt, and XVI BC and theatrical dolls are mentioned by Greek and Roman historians. Modern Georgian puppet theatre was created in 1934, founded by Georgian People's Artist Giorgi Mikeladze. Find out more about Akhaltzikhe State Puppet Theatre here -

<https://www.facebook.com/akhaltzikhepuppettheatre/>

INTERVIEW WITH CHRIS FRYE, MAYOR OF NEW CASTLE, PENNSYLVANIA

In November 2019, Republican Chris Frye won the election to become Mayor of New Castle, the city's first African-American Mayor. He has kindly agreed to be the subject of our occasional mayoral interview series.



What did you do before you entered politics? I worked as a non-profit administrator in neighborhood development and workforce development for agencies in my city. By training, I am a Master Level Social Worker specializing in Community Organizing and Social Administration.

What made you want to be a politician? How did it happen? When you work in communities and see the hardships people face daily and their loss of hope, it moves you with compassion. I would pray and ask God how I can be part of the change. One day he responded- it is time to run for Mayor. My decision to become involved in politics, not a politician, but engaged in my city's leadership, is what God has prepared me for my entire life. Politics is not my "career"; this is my act of service to my world. We forget that no political office should be a career. It is public service. The greatest among you is the servant. I desire to serve; serve the people in my city by making sure they are heard and not stifled, letting them know they can dream, and they can be supported to see those dreams come to pass.

I desire to see this city become a vibrant city, alive with families, commerce, and opportunities, a city where people can raise their families, start their businesses, and build their lives! That is the environment I want to develop in New Castle. I want to see HOPE restored! It starts in this office, as the Mayor of New Castle.

What are the biggest challenges facing New Castle? I would say our perception of ourselves and those outside the community is our biggest challenge. That said, sometimes perceptions are based on truth. In the case of New Castle as a whole, we must put aside our ego and take advantage of this opportunity for self-examination. We are not perfect, but we must begin to make the internal changes necessary for growth. How we see ourselves is how others will perceive us. We must build on what remains in this city. Some businesses and families have weathered the good and challenging times in this city. Some organizations and churches have been stalwarts in this community, and they are still standing. There is good that remains.

The people in this city are GOOD HEARTED people. When faced with tragedy, I have never seen a community that pulls together like New Castle. This is what we use to build our future. From an economic standpoint, the loss of industry has resulted in a significant decline in population, and our city's blight. To address this, we must restore hope among the residents here. We have a saying, "NC Pride".... We must begin to define what we are proud of in this community. As we change internally, this includes working closely with our local legislators to address the statutes, ordinances, and laws that hinder growth; we will see the blight begin to lift. People who have hope take pride in themselves, their families, their properties, their businesses. THEY DREAM AGAIN. What is behind us is nothing compared to what is ahead of us!!! Hindered hope makes the people disappointed, but lives are whole and sweet when a dream comes true.

What would you say to persuade people to visit New Castle, PA? If you are a person with a passion for history, architecture, outdoor recreation, or want to experience a community on the rise, come to New Castle. If you are an innovator, influencer, big thinker, and looking to create, come to New Castle. We have great people in our city. We are also centrally located, and there is easy access to multiple highway systems so that you can visit cities like Pittsburgh, PA, and Cleveland, OH. You can experience a laid-back, quiet community to rest but still easily access the multiple attractions within miles of New Castle.

What are your other interests? Family is essential to me. Being with family is especially important to me. I love sports. I love food, explicitly experiencing diverse cultural cuisines.

How has Covid-19 affected New Castle, PA, and how has your city and community responded? COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on communities across the nation and individuals and families due to losing jobs. Small businesses have had to close, or they have suffered a considerable loss of revenue. As a city, we responded by encouraging the community to shop and eat locally. We encouraged the community to work together to support one another through this time. Our non-profits, churches, and community organizations responded by providing resources to families and individuals in need. Our schools have worked collaboratively to address the educational needs of their students and their families.

Administratively, we accessed the COVID relief monies that were available from the state and the federal government. We worked closely with our county to disseminate the funding people needed for rental assistance, business grants, and food relief. New Castle is resilient, and in crisis, we band together.

I saw this throughout the pandemic.

What are your hopes for Newcastles working together? I would like to see us connect, talk, collaborate, and build a cluster. I would like us to become collaborative partners, a support network. We can together create a swarming effect that draws people to our communities. We can market what we have happening in our specific Newcastle across the world.

BIENÁLE ZÁMKY exhibition - Newcastle of the World

A non-public opening of the Bienále Zámky exhibition, an exhibition of artists from cities associated through Newcastle of the World, was held in the Mier cinema in Nové Zámky just before Christmas, part of the Slovak City of Culture 2020 project. The exhibition of photographs, videos and films ran until the end of January but you can still see the exhibition and find out about the artists via this link:

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



The curator of the exhibition, Magdaléna Klobučníková, (pictured left), commented: "Unfortunately, due to the compliance with the measures taken against the spread of the coronavirus and the impossibility of authors participating, we decided to open the Biennial Zámky exhibition with an online opening without the presence of spectators."

The Bienále Zámky exhibition presented visual art works by 19 authors from South Africa, Australia,

USA (Pennsylvania and Indiana), Japan, England, Germany, Canada, Malaysia, Switzerland, Latvia and the Czech Republic. Space was also given to two artists from Nové Zámky itself.

The majority of the exhibited photographs relate to landscape - they map historical monuments and capture the uniqueness of nature and the atmosphere of different seasons. Displays of local traditions and photographs from the field of computer games are also partially represented" Curator Magdaléna Klobučníková said about the exhibition. The exhibition was also enriched by the screening of several short video films of various genres.

Magdalena says: the aim of the first Bienále Zámky is to create a solid platform for years to come, with the participation of exhibiting artists.

IN THIS ISSUE WE FEATURE SOME OF THE ARTISTS AND PROJECTS FROM THE EXHIBITION - WE WILL FEATURE MORE IN OUR NEXT EDITION. SEE ALSO PAGE 9 FOR INFORMATION ABOUT TWO OF OUR YOUNGER ARTISTS. YOU CAN FIND OUR MORE ABOUT ALL THE ARTISTS FROM THEIR CONTACT DETAILS ON THE NEXT PAGE.

"CELLO ESCAPES" - NEUBURG AN DER DONAU, GERMANY

The "Cello Escapes" project began at a time when musicians were unable to perform in front of an audience due to the corona pandemic and visual artists had no exhibition opportunities. During this time, Alexander Suleiman set out to explore different sound spaces. The visual artist Susanne Pohl, who is very familiar with the surroundings of Neuburg, looks for inspiring places where Suleiman captures the special atmosphere with suitable pieces of music and creates the sound recordings. The visual artist Stefan Wanzl-Lawrence takes over the filming and editing.

So far, the trio has produced very different films in which music and images form a unity of mood and expression. See <https://vzdusnezamky.sk/bienale-zamky/8/> for "Cello Escapes"



Photo from "Woman, Nature and Culture" series

Ruzely Abdullah is a councillor at **Kota Bharu** Municipal Council, Malaysia, and an accomplished photographer.

He studied at New York Film Academy and the International Institute of Art & Photography in Sydney Australia. 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 has contributed to many international publications, is a member of the Creative Content Guild of Malaysia and owns his own photography company, working as a freelance photographer and a tutor.



Sharon Bailey is an artist and creative producer working within communities in the north east of **England** (the area around **Newcastle upon Tyne**) and internationally. Her projects span art, heritage and health and she is passionate about telling the stories of those she works with, those living on the edges of our society, to create a space where we can talk, make and share.

Sharon says: "I work intimately with individuals, spending time in people's houses, community centres, Care Homes, Day Centres and at hospital bedsides.

"I develop close relationships with the people I work with and my photographs and audio are created in a sharing and safe environment."

The film "Home Alone" is very relevant during these long days of Covid-19 lockdown.

homeALONE
a project by Sharon Bailey

Click here to view "Home Alone" and "Colin's Table": <https://vzdusnezamky.sk/bienale-zamky/19/>



Alina Mnatsakanian is a transmedia artist based in **Neuchâtel** Switzerland, with an artistic background that spans from painting to new media conceptual works, using mediums as varied as robots, software, technological and scientific elements, everyday objects, painting, drawing, video and audio. She holds a BA in Visual Arts from the University of Paris, and a Master of Visual Arts from California State University, Los Angeles. She has exhibited her work in the United States, Canada, Europe, Switzerland and Armenia.

In 2017 Alina Mnatsakanian created a work related to her and her grandmother's connection to two cities in the Newcastles of the World (her family roots are in Akhaltsikhe, our "Newcastle" in the Republic of Georgia.)

This artwork is from a series called "C minor", "Walking to the roots", a wall-projected animated painting projected on a wall. An animated painting is a painting that evolves gradually over the duration of the music, where the viewer can see many mutations.

View it here - <https://vzdusnezamky.sk/bienale-zamky/4/>



Mark Sean Orr of **New Castle, Indiana, USA** enjoys photography and genealogy as hobbies. He is also a music and film lover and plays guitar, drums and trumpet - he was in a rock band for six years. He has published 5 books of history/photography including "A Midwest Pictorial", "The Road Home" and 3 books in the series "21st Century Photography".



His photos were used as cover art for albums by German band Mindmovie. His book "Henry County Memorial Park – One Hundred Years of History" chronicles the century-old history of a tract of land that is about 230 acres of once dense forest and low lying valley in Henry County, Indiana, once a Native American Indian village then a farm and eventually became Indiana's largest living war memorial park.

His photographs are inspired by this land and this part of the state of Indiana where he has lived all his life.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ARTISTS WHO ARE PART OF BIENÁLE ZÁMKY

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SADNESS AT PASSING OF INSPIRING TEACHER AND NEW-FOUND MUSIC STAR

There was great sadness in **Newcastle South Africa**, and the whole country, just before the turn of the year with the untimely passing of Olpha Selepe, who had become better known as “Gee Six Five”.

She had recently become an overnight success, after her song Obani Lababantu went viral. She died after being diagnosed with COVID-19 on Monday, 7 December.

The proud Newcastle resident was a leader throughout her life. The 65-year-old retired teacher had an illustrious career as a primary school and then college Principal. She spent some time teaching in the United Kingdom.

She had completed her master’s degree in 2018 at the age of 63 and at the time of her death, she had been pursuing a doctoral degree.



Her love for music began while training at a teachers’ college, and she went on to be a highly decorated choir conductor performing in both regional and national competitions.

Prior to her hit song, Obani Lababantu, which proved to be a major hit on both social media and music-buying platforms, Selepe also produced a music album comprised of children’s nursery rhymes in isiZulu.

Newcastle Mayor, Cllr Dr Ntuthuko Mahlaba said: “It is clear that uMama u-Selepe’s illustrious musical career was yet to reach new heights and blossom. The community of Newcastle and the music fraternity has been robbed of a songbird, who will be remembered in years to come.”

You can watch the official music video here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8MK5SN16UI>

"New Annual" is the inaugural arts festival of the **City of Newcastle in Australia**. Spanning ten days and many venues in February, the festival featured local and visiting artists sharing music, dance, contemporary performance and visual art in a celebration of creativity. Whilst so many countries face continued harsh restrictions because of Covid-19 it's good to see life returning to a kind of normal like this in some countries - but still in a Covid-secure way. Find out more here - <https://www.newannual.com/about/about-us>



New Castle, Pennsylvania is a “Zoom Town” !

The New York Times reports that in the USA, “many middle-class millennials who lingered on the housing market’s sidelines for years reported that the pandemic had hastened their buying plans, lured by low interest rates, which have made mortgages cheap and by the prospect of more space. There is evidence that many people freed from office buildings by remote work arrangements seem to be aiming for smaller towns and cities where homes are relatively affordable — what some writers have labelled “Zoom” towns. People roughly aged 21 to 40 have accounted for a huge share of home purchase loans in places like **New Castle, Pa.**, and Frankfort, Ind., according to data from Ellie Mae, a mortgage software company.”

New Castle Mayor Chris Frye says: “The pandemic created a unique opportunity for people to relocate to areas outside of the larger cities and metropolitan areas where they once worked.

No longer being tethered to a cubicle at a specific branch or headquarters has empowered these employees to seek housing in areas with a better cost of living, more family friendly statistics and often times a slower and more pleasant way of life.

A few smaller cities like ours are being quoted as some of the communities that these unchained workplace exiles are marking as their choice for relocation.”



Jaunpils, our Newcastle in Latvia, reports: “During winter time, whilst the Covid-19 virus is still with us, there is a varied choice of sporting activities.

Jaunpils municipality promotes a healthy lifestyle in many ways - this includes “Gym Together “with the healthy lifestyle enthusiast Andris on the ZOOM platform, as well as some talks led by a psychologist.

There is also public ice skating on offer for families, coordinated by a local volunteer Aivis Krūmiņš.”

SPORT

Former Malaysian national Olympic footballer Salleh Ibrahim who was born in **Kota Bharu** (“Newcastle”) died last year. Kelantan Football Association (KAFA) president Datuk Wan Abdul Rahim Wan Abdullah described Salleh, who represented the country at the 1972 Munich Olympics, as one of the greats from the golden generation of Malaysian football.



Salleh, who played as a winger, is fondly remembered for scoring the second goal in Malaysia’s 3-0 win over the United States in a group match in Ingolstadt – close to Neuburg an der Donau (our Newcastle in Germany). Ibrahim was a prison officer by profession, as Malaysian football was not professional in his time.

In the 1970s, Malaysia was among the most feared and best football teams in Asia and reaching Munich justified its status. In qualifying, Malaysia was flawless, beating Japan, South Korea, China and the Philippines to join Burma (now Myanmar) and Iran at the Olympics. In the first game on Aug 27, 1972, at the Munich Olympic Stadium, Malaysia faced West Germany in front of 60,000 home fans.



Malaysia silenced the fans when they managed to hold off the Germans in the first half. However, the home team scored three goals after the breather to claim victory. Two days later, Malaysia's hopes of qualifying for the next stage were reignited when they beat the United States 3-0 with goals from Shaharuddin, Salleh and Wan Zawawi Wan Yusof. The dream was on, and Malaysia only needed to beat Morocco to reach the second round on Aug 31.

However, their National Day celebration did not end well as the team was defeated 6-0 by the African side at the ESV Stadium.

Newcastle New South Wales will launch the Australian leg of the world pro surfing tour, in April with 52 of the best surfers from across the globe set to converge on the city in April.

Destination NSW has secured the new event kicking off at Merewether Beach from the start of April as the first Australian stop on the World Surf League (WSL)’s revamped 2021 Championship Tour (CT). Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes said the WSL event was a massive coup for Newcastle, providing a major boost to the tourism sector by promoting the city and our coastline on the world stage. “The event will bring a major influx of competitors, media representatives, event officials and fans to our city throughout April, delivering an estimated benefit of more than \$15m (10m EUR) million to Newcastle’s economy. “It will also provide invaluable promotion for future tourism by showcasing Newcastle to a global audience of more than 10 million viewers, with the event to be live-streamed across various platforms and broadcast on Channel 7 and Fox Sports.”

Councillor Nelmes said the City of Newcastle has a long and proud history of supporting top level international surfing contests, having hosted Surfest since 1985, the largest surfing festival in the southern hemisphere. “Newcastle has become a destination of choice for major sporting events, including Surfest, the recent SAANZAR Rugby Championship, Supercars Newcastle 500, the 2015 Asian Cup Football tournament, the A-League Grand Final and various rugby union and league Test Matches.”

Right - Jackson Baker, Philippa Anderson, Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes, Deputy Premier John Barilaro, Ryan Callinan and World Surfing League, General Manager Andrew Stark at Merewether Beach for the announcement.



Congratulations to Newcastle Eagles who in January won the BBL (British Basketball League) Cup final 84-77 against London Lions - after being seven points behind with only four minutes of the final quarter left! It was the Eagles' seventh cup final success.

Newcastles' secondary / high Schools - Come and Join us!

Calling Newcastles' secondary / high schools to join in our exciting international school projects! They are up and running! As you know, international links offer us all friendship, hope and increased wellbeing. We offer a tremendous opportunity for teachers and students to get involved with Newcastles of the World. "Linking Newcastles' Schools" is beginning with connecting secondary level schools in participating Newcastles. So far, we have schools in Neuburg (Germany) and Nové Zámky (Slovakia) seeking to connect with schools in other Newcastles across the Alliance.

Using our bespoke international online communications platform, we will set up links between schools, enabling initial conversations to take place. We can also connect you with the main Newcastles of the World contact(s) in your Newcastle. Despite the restrictions placed by the impact of the pandemic, it is altogether possible for teachers and students to benefit from joining in, initially through "virtual links". Students can benefit from learning about each other's cultures and languages, with projects complementing school learning objectives. Looking towards a safer future post-pandemic, there is potential for participating schools to consider organising school exchanges.

Have you heard about "Learning from other Newcastles", which is led by Nyborg (Denmark)? This is our video making project, where students aged 12 – 16 are making videos, telling the story of their Newcastle and what is special to them about it. The videos are uploaded to the "Learning from other Newcastles" YouTube channel.

Here is the link to Nyborg's video: https://youtu.be/iFmcC0u_SAo as well as a link to Shinshiro's video: <https://youtu.be/H96AR0shRXo>. The Shinshiro (Japan) video is hot off the press! Let's look forward to more videos being produced, enabling students to learn about other Newcastles whilst using their digital skills.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Zélie Guérin, Project Director, secretariat E: zelie@zelieguerin.com

CELEBRATING THE REGISTRARS

First, there was St Valentine's Day on 14 February, then soon after there's a sense that Spring is in the air in the northern hemisphere and, with spring fever, young couples often turn their minds to love and marriage. On February 18, the Latvian civil registry system celebrated a hundred years and an online service took place from the Riga Dome Church; here the employees of the registry system were recognised by the Ministry of Justice who oversee the country's 122 municipal registry offices. **Jaunpils** Registry Office started its work in 1922 covering Jaunpils, Biksti, Lestene and Strutele parishes.

For almost 30 years the head of Jaunpils Registry office was Council chairperson Ligita Gintere - she married more than 500 couples!

Now this role is performed by Dzidra Krastiņa, often in the magnificent setting of Jaunpils' historic castle, after which the town is named.

She says "Civil registry offices perform important functions in society - marriage registration, birth and death registration. This means that civil registry offices are with a person all their life - from birth to the end of life. The practical and daily work of civil registry offices plays a fundamental role in safeguarding family traditions and values, which have been important to our society for centuries". Congratulations on the anniversary!

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.

