



## NEWCASTLES OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE 2025

AUGUST 8-15  
JAUNPILS, LATVIA



## YOU ARE INVITED ! JOIN US AT THE NEWCASTLES OF THE WORLD GATHERING IN AUGUST

A wonderful gathering of people from “Newcastles” of many countries will be meeting in **Jaunpils**, Latvia from 8-15 August - and you’re invited!

Meet friends, old and new; enjoy discovering a new country and a different culture; visit fascinating places such as Latvia’s beautiful capital Riga and UNESCO World Heritage town Kuldiga; enjoy Jaunpils’ magnificent 14C castle and medieval festival; take part in interesting discussion subjects -

- \* *age-friendly communities*
- \* *preserving our cultural heritage*
- \* *addressing some current challenges in education*
- \* *nature protection and local actions to mitigate climate change*

You can visit as part of a municipal delegation or other group or as an individual, and there’s a youth gathering with its own topics.

For delegate information, the conference programme and contact details, see:

[https://newcastlesoftheworld.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/newcastles-of-the-world\\_jaunpils\\_2025-program-8-15-august.pdf](https://newcastlesoftheworld.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/newcastles-of-the-world_jaunpils_2025-program-8-15-august.pdf)

## The Newsletter of “Newcastles of the World” • May- June 2025

The President of the Czech Republic Petr Pavel and First Lady Mrs. Eva Pavlová were in South Bohemia earlier this year and visited **Nové Hradý**, our “Newcastle”, where they met Mayor Vladimír Hokr, other officials and members of the public.



Almost 2,000 swimmers from all over Europe took part in the 54th Danube Winter Swim in January in **Neuburg an der Donau**, our “Newcastle” in Bavaria, Germany. The swimmers, including Lord Mayor Bernhard Gmehling, covered a distance of four kilometres in water temperatures of two degrees Celsius and an outside temperature of four degrees. After hot chicken soup and the presentation of the trophies, many of the swimmers stayed until the early hours of the morning at the carnival ball. Organised by the Neuburg Water Rescue Service, the Danube Swim has become Europe's largest winter swimming event.

On 13 April, 21-year-old Gergő Szarka, a 21-year-old athlete from **Nové Zámky**, our “Newcastle” in Slovakia, won a sensational victory at the 77th Tipos National Run Devín in the capital, Bratislava, defeating favourites from Kenya and becoming the sixth Slovak winner of the country’s oldest sports event.

**FOR LOTS MORE SPORTS NEWS, SEE PAGE 12**

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# PEOPLE



Bailey Myers has been chosen as Citizen of the Year in **Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia**. - he completed a solo 4,500km walking journey from Western Australia to Newcastle, raising nearly 10,000 euros in donations for The Indigenous Literacy Foundation.

Bailey is a passionate Worimi man, dedicated to providing academic support to First Nations communities, particularly in remote areas.

Khuslen Batmandakh is 2025 Young Citizen of the Year for her dedication to improving literacy and community engagement. Evelyn Collins is Senior Citizen of the Year for her work on behalf of the welfare of patients with Parkinson's disease. The Unforgettables Dementia Choir is Community Group of the Year - co-founded by Dr Helen English, the choir is dedicated to supporting people living with dementia and their carers.



L-R Khuslen Batmandakh, Dr. Helen English, Associate Professor Michelle Kelly, Dr Ross Kerridge - Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Evelyn Collins and Bailey Myers.



In the April local government elections in **Herceg Novi**, our "Newcastle" in Montenegro, the grouping headed by the current Mayor Stevan Katić (*left*) won most mandates.

Democratic Montenegro took 12 council places (up 2 on the 2021 election) and its partners Novi List took 10 places, of the overall total of 35 councillors.



Congratulations to Detective Hailey Houk (*left*) of the **New Castle Police Department** for being honoured with the **Pennsylvania (USA) Blue Ribbon "Safe Kids"** Award. Detective Houk is one of only four individuals in the entire state of Pennsylvania to receive this award in recognition of her sustained dedication and outstanding efforts to protect kids in the community; she is also a member of the Lawrence County Sexual Assault Task Force.

A celebrated screenwriter with roots in **Newcastle upon Tyne (United Kingdom)** was the winner of an Oscar last month!

Peter Straughan was a student at Newcastle University and became writer-in-residence at the city's Live Theatre. He won the award at the Oscars in March for adapting the 2016 novel "Conclave" by Robert Harris for the film that has been a box office success across the world. The book/film is about the election of a new Pope - how strange that the sad passing of Pope Francis should occur at this time.

Peter, who was born in Gateshead on the other side of the River Tyne, paid tribute to the Newcastle agency New Writing North which helps develop writers in the north-east of England. He had previously won a Golden Globe for Conclave and before that a BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) for Best Adapted Screenplay for the film Tinker Taylor Solider Spy in 2012 for which he also received an Oscar nomination.



We were saddened to read of the sudden death of the Mayor of **Newcastle-under-Lyme (UK)**, Councillor Barry Panter (*above*) who passed away following a road accident in February. Councillor Robert Bettley-Smith has taken over as Mayor for the remainder of this civic year.





# HISTORY

## SHINSHIRO'S FAMOUS BATTLE 450 YEARS AGO

May 5 is the time of year when **Shinshiro**, our Newcastle in Japan, marks the famous Battle of Nagashino-Shitaragahara with both a very large-scale historical re-enactment and a battle flag festival. But this year it's very special because it's 450 years since the great battle! During what is known as the Warring States Period of Japanese history, the forces of Oda Nobunaga and Tokugawa Iyeyasu defeated the renowned samurai Takeda Katsuyori, whose army had attacked Nagashino castle. Nobunaga's use of firearms to defeat Takeda's cavalry is considered a turning point in Japanese warfare, which, together with his tactical innovation of wooden stockades and rotating volleys of fire, led to a decisive victory. You can see the reconstructed stockades from the Shitarahara Historical Museum in Shinshiro.

As this special year goes on, Shinshiro City will hold a Sengoku Warlords Expo at the Shinshiro Cultural Hall on 30 and 31 August to celebrate the anniversary. A lecture and workshops on history will be held. Later, a "Gun Summit" will be held in November, where the activities of historic gun squads from all over Japan will be presented.



To commemorate the year, four different designs of Goshuin stamps will be sold at local facilities: Shitarahara Historical Museum, Nagashino Castle Ruins Preservation Museum, Horaijiyama Natural Science Museum, and Sakute History and Folklore Museum. A goshuin is a stamp or seal you can obtain from temples and shrines in Japan. It's a token of your visit and features unique hand-brushed calligraphy.

For those who visit each facility and combine all the Goshuin stamps, you will complete a special city emblem of Shinshiro City.

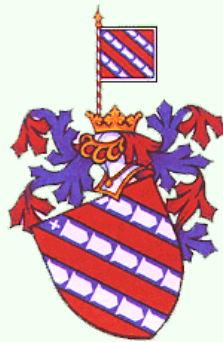


## HISTORY CONNECTS TWO NEWCASTLES

Our Newcastles in the Czech Republic and Slovakia are over 300km apart but there is a fascinating historical connection between them.

Karel Bonaventura Buquoy (or, in French, Charles Bonaventure de Longueval comte de Bucquoy) was a military commander of French-Belgium ancestry who fought for the Holy Roman Empire during the Thirty Years' War. In 1618, Emperor Mathias placed him in command of Imperial forces sent to Bohemia to put down a rebellion among the Czech aristocracy. He won several important battles, and, as a result of his successes, Emperor Ferdinand II gave him estates in South Bohemia at **Nové Hrady** ("Newcastle") and nearby.

The Comte died in 1621 during the siege of **Nové Zámky** (then called "Neuhäusel"). This battle formed part of a war waged by the Habsburg army against the troops of Gábor Bethlen, who was Prince of Transylvania and briefly King of Hungary.



The estates granted to Buquoy by Emperor Ferdinand remained in the family for over 300 years until 1945. Throughout that time, the Buquoy family built a lasting legacy in Nové Hrady. The Buquoy Funeral Chapel in the town houses no less than 28 family tombs.

The print (above right) depicts the death of Buquoy in the battle. Visible are soldiers on horseback brandishing swords and troops carrying pikes. Also visible in the background is the Star fort of Neuhäusel, now Nové Zámky, and an engraved portrait of Buquoy.



# ENVIRONMENT

## THE NEXT STEP IN NEUCHÂTEL'S FLAGSHIP PROJECT

The redevelopment of the Jeunes-Rives park is the flagship project of the City of **Neuchâtel**, our “Newcastle” in Switzerland. A link between the historic centre of the city and the lake, this huge 70,000 m2 park will provide a vast urban beach, public establishments open all year round, a large playground and facilities for leisure and sports, while hosting cultural events and other events. Over 20 years after the Swiss National Exhibition Expo 2002 took place at this location, the magic of that time will be reborn!



A major decision has been taken this month. A vast expanse of greenery dedicated to leisure, outdoor sports and events will be created between 2026 and 2027 around the famous Red Square. The plane trees will be preserved and a multi-purpose urban scene will enrich the space. This commitment is a continuation of the work on the first sector, which is nearing completion: a long-awaited new playground with changing rooms will be accessible this summer.



The photo is of Violaine Blétry-de Montmollin, Président du Conseil Communal de Neuchâtel (third from left), with colleagues, at the site of the next stage of development.



Under the campaign slogan "we are in nature, we are together", over 20 members of the very active seniors society in **Jaunpils**, our Newcastle in Latvia, set about environmental clean-up activities and new planting in their community on 23 April. It was part of the Tukuma Novada Pašvaldība - supported project "Digital and Green"



The municipality of Clarington, **Ontario, Canada** is moving forward with plans for a nature-based restoration of Bond Head beach and the Graham Creek Jetties in **Newcastle**. “New funding over the next two years from the federal Great Lakes Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative will transform the Lake Ontario waterfront at Newcastle into a vibrant, inviting space and also make it more resilient to environmental challenges” said Mayor Adrian Foster.



**EARTH DAY** is an annual event on April 22 to demonstrate support for environmental protection, coordinated globally through [earthday.org](http://earthday.org), including a billion people in more than 193 countries.

Events have been held in many of our “Newcastles” - pictured left is the work of the Climate and Environment Protection Commission of **New Castle, Colorado, USA** which has organised litter pick-ups, new recycling and composting initiatives and a range of educational games and activities.





# NEWS

Gordon Brayford, the official Town Crier of **Newcastle-under-Lyme**, in the heart of England, was recently gifted a special piece of local history - the bell of former Town Crier William Coomer from 1886. It was received from Louise Baldwin whose grandfather was a mayor of Newcastle and had kept the bell for safe keeping. The bell would have been used in news proclamations from the town's market cross almost 140 years ago. Gordon says the bell is "very loud and heavy!"



Over 2000 people took part in this year's Marche du 1er mars to commemorate the 177th anniversary of the **Neuchâtelé** Republic in Switzerland. Federal counselor Élisabeth Baume-Schneider participated, alongside the cantonal and municipal authorities.

The ceremonial firing of cannon started the event; in the esplanade of the College, a giant absinthe fountain welcomed walkers: and, as night fell, a sound and light display completed the day.



On International Theater Day, it was highly appropriate for the city of **Akhaltzikhe**, our "Newcastle" in the Republic of Georgia, to recognise Tsira Tabatadze on reaching the age of 65 and for 40 years of achievement in the arts. A recipient of the Medal of Honour, she has been a prominent member of the nationally-recognised Meskhети Dramatic Theater and Puppet Theater in Akhaltzikhe, creating many popular characters.



**Nyborg**, our "Newcastle" in Denmark, is already looking forward to Danehof 2025, the famous annual medieval festival in the city. Recruitment is starting for the many dozens of volunteers who wish to help out with the festival in the summer.



The Neuburg Castle Festival (**Neuburg an der Donau**, Bavaria, Germany) reenacts the reign of the most important prince of Neuburg, Count Palatine Ottheinrich (1502 to 1559). Neuburg owes not only the dominant castle complex in the old town to Prince Ottheinrich, but also, under his reign, cultural life in Neuburg reached its peak.



What do they say about Schlossfest, which began in 1976 and is the largest Renaissance festival in the German-speaking world, with around 55,000 visitors each weekend? "Castle Festival is not just an event - it is living and experiencing history". "Castle Festival is immersing yourself in the magnificent and colourful era of the Renaissance". "Castle Festival is cultural diversity and civic engagement and an economic factor and employer."



Once a sleepy fishing village with rows of shabby houses, **Kampung Sungai Budor** in **Kota Bharu**, our Newcastle in Malaysia is now a spectacular setting to capture great photos. Ever since the houses were painted with a rainbow of colours, its rural landscape has changed, bringing an air of freshness and creating a cheerful atmosphere.

Today this charming hidden gem featuring houses in rainbow hues is a must-visit location for tourists. The idea to add colour to this dreary village was mooted by the Kelantan Women's Association in collaboration with Kota Bharu Municipality (MPKB) and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.



## MORE NEWS

The 56th edition of the famous Mimosa Festival in **Herceg Novi**, our Newcastle in Montenegro, took place from 14 February - 2 March.

The festival celebrates the yellow flower that blooms in what is Europe's earliest springtime. This is the biggest winter tourist and promotional event in the entire country and features a very large programme of music, dance, sport, the famous local marching majorettes, masquerade balls and the flower, fish and wine festival.



The Federal Council of Switzerland held its weekly meeting in **Neuchâtel** ("Newcastle") in early April. Huge crowds turned out to welcome the representatives of the government. Karin Keller-Sutter, President of the Swiss Confederation (who attended business school in Neuchâtel), led a walk through the city and is photographed here (*centre*) with Florence Nater, President of the Canton and Violaine Blétry-de Montmollin, President of The City Council (*left*).



Sakurabuchi Park in Shinshiro, our "Newcastle" in Japan is a very special location, a cherry blossom ("sakura") abyss ("buchi") with a myriad of the pink flowers creating one of Aichi Province's most stunning cherry blossom spots.

The Toyo River runs through the center of the park, with cherry trees lining the banks, dying it in elegant shades of pink. The Cherry Blossom Festival, held annually from mid-March to early April, is host to numerous events which bring even more festivities to this special natural phenomenon.



The United Kingdom Department for Culture, Media and Sport has awarded £5 million of its Cultural Development Fund to support the dream of creating a centre for writing in **Newcastle upon Tyne**.

The centre will be a public building for writers based in the north. It will host programmes, courses, and events for professional and aspiring writers, for those who write purely for the love of it and for those who want to try creative writing for the first time.



## MORE NEWS

## THE GAUDIWURM RETURNS TO NEUBURG !

After an eight year gap, the fabulous Gaudiwurm carnival parade has returned to the streets of **Neuburg an der Donau**, our "Newcastle" in Bavaria, Germany. Over 70 community and commercial groups came together in February with floats, dance and music to entertain the large crowds in Ottheinrichstadt. After the parade (the "fun worm") there was a carnival party on Schrankenplatz.



The annual Seniors Festival in **Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia** ran from 3-16 March, a state-wide event celebrating the invaluable role and contributions of older adults in the local community.

The festival was all about connection and discovery, with a theme of 'Time to Shine'!

The 2025 Festival in Newcastle was curated by the City of Newcastle, alongside the Newcastle Seniors Reference Group to bring together a diverse and exciting program for the entire community. This year, the festival was further enhanced by Shine Central, a vibrant one-stop hub of information, inspiration and interaction in Newcastle. The program lineup showcases the wealth of activities and support available within Newcastle, highlighting the many ways the community stays connected, engaged and active to shine throughout the year.

## Newcastle South Africa Provides Bursaries to Deserving Class of Beneficiaries

The Mayor of **Newcastle**, Councillor Xolani Dube, has awarded registration bursaries to 100 deserving learners from the Class of 2024, each receiving 5000 rand (230 Euros). This initiative is part of the municipality's ongoing commitment to supporting access to higher education for learners from all backgrounds.

Mayor Dube emphasised the importance of education in shaping the future of Newcastle and uplifting communities. "Education is a powerful tool for breaking the cycle of poverty and creating opportunities for young people. As a municipality, we recognise the financial challenges that many young people face when trying to access higher education.



"Through these bursaries, we aim to ease that burden and ensure that deserving learners can pursue their studies without financial constraints," said Mayor Dube.

The registration bursaries will cover initial enrolment fees, ensuring that students can secure their places at various universities and further education institutions. This initiative benefits numerous students who might have otherwise struggled to afford the costs associated with furthering their education.

The last-ever episode of "Vera" was broadcast in the UK earlier this year - and will eventually be seen in the 100-plus different territories around the world in which it is usually broadcast. There have been 14 seasons, almost 60 episodes. Here Brenda Blethyn is pictured with Ann Cleeves who wrote the books on which the programmes have been based.

The television crime series is filmed in **Newcastle upon Tyne** (where the production studio is located) and throughout the counties of Northumberland, County Durham and North Yorkshire in North East England.

## VERA SAYS GOODBYE



Lots of people like to have a New Year dip in the sea or lake - well, it's OK in the southern hemisphere because it's summer, but more of a challenge in the northern.

So well done to those who go for it - here's one example - it's in **Nyborg**, our "Newcastle" in Denmark.







## MORE NEWS

Many of our “Newcastles” are proud to have important Chinese communities in their towns and cities. Here, **Newcastle upon Tyne** celebrated the Chinese New Year - thanks to Ian Buist/Newcastle Chronicle for the photo. Newcastle is one of the few cities in the United Kingdom that have their own “Chinatown” - you can see the Chinese arch in the photo, this being the entry to Chinatown.

The Piggly Wiggly Convenience Store in King Avenue East, **Newcastle, Ontario, Canada** is the place to go to buy your lottery tickets! A local lady has just won the 5 million dollar Classic jackpot in the Ontario lottery draw. The store has sold several other big winners in recent years. A Newcastle man won 700,000 dollars in the lottery in 2021; a local syndicate won 60,000 dollars in 2019; a Newcastle woman won 250,000 dollars on a holiday scratch ticket in 2017; and a Newcastle man won 1 million in Lotto Max in 2015!



## RACE FOR PEACE - NOW NEXT YEAR

In our last newsletter, we publicised the Race for Peace, which was scheduled to take place in June. A big thank you to friends in Shinshiro and Neuchâtel who responded with ideas for their participation. However, the race will now take place next summer - details will be in a future newsletter.



The Municipality of **Herceg-Novi** participated recently at the URBACT City Festival in Wrocław, Poland, one of the most significant European events dedicated to urban development and cooperation between cities.

The festival brought together more than 600 representatives of local governments from across Europe, providing a platform for the exchange of good practices in the area of sustainable urban development, including topics such as waste management, green infrastructure and participatory planning. Herceg-Novi was represented by Marina Vukalović Bosnić and Aleksandra Pejović from the Secretariat for Social Activities and International Cooperation.

Tuan Haji Azi Rahimee Bin Haji Mohamed, President of the municipality of **Kota Bharu**, our “Newcastle” in Malaysia (*centre in photo*), has strengthened the city’s links with Japan by welcoming Consul General Mr. Machida Shinoya. Also attending were Mr. Haji Izuddin Bin Ab. Rashid (Director of Corporate Management Department), Tuan Haji Ropein Bin Hasan (Director of Administration and Management), and Muhamad Huzaifah Bin Abdul Halim (Assistant Director of City Services).



**Newcastle Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa**, has reaffirmed its commitment to enhancing library services by investing in modern technology, expanding book collections, and creating inclusive spaces. Through initiatives like these, the municipality hopes to inspire a lifelong love for learning and ensure that libraries continue to serve as vital hubs for sustainable communities.





# HERITAGE

The North Hill Historic District is a residential neighbourhood in the city of **New Castle, Pennsylvania** that was entered into the National Register of Historic Places in 1999. It covers an amazing 91 blocks, 450 acres and almost 1900 properties, many of them ornate homes and mansions from the 19th century. The district includes a variety of architectural styles including late Victorian, and late 19th Century revivals. Queen Anne, Folk Victorian, Neoclassical, and Colonial Revival are the most common design styles of homes closest to the downtown area. Below are just a few of the splendid houses.



"Masopust" is the annual (very noisy and colourful) festival in **Nové Hradý**, our "Newcastle" in South Bohemia in the Czech Republic.

The timing of the festival is associated with both the driving out of winter and the feasting that precedes the time of fasting and abstinence of Lent.

Top right in photo -Mayor Vladimír Hokr gives official permission for the carnival parade to begin.



*Youngsters carry on the tradition !*

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

Subsequent gatherings were held in Neuchâtel, Switzerland in 2000; USA (New Castles of Indiana and Pennsylvania) 2002; South Africa 2004 and 2010; UK 2006 (Newcastle-under-Lyme) and 2012 (Newcastle upon Tyne); Germany (Neuburg) in 2008; Nové Hradý (Czech Republic) in 2014; Newcastle, Ontario, Canada in 2016; Shinshiro again in 2018 for our 20 year celebration; and Nové Hradý again in 2023. The aim of Newcastles of the World is to foster links of friendship, culture, education and tourism between us all.





# YOUTH

In March, hundreds of students from all nursery, primary and secondary schools in the commune of **Neufchâteau**, our "Newcastle" in the province of Luxembourg, Belgium, gathered on the Grand Place in the city, all years and all streams combined.

As in the previous year, the aim was to demonstrate, as young citizens, their support for peace efforts around the world. During this symbolic action, students from each school spoke in front of the assembly.



(Left) - Members of the Youth Parliament of **Nové Zámky**, our Newcastle in Slovakia, have taken the oath of office with the Vice Mayor of the city Lukáš Štefánik.



(Below, left) April 14 was "Mother Tongue Day" in the Republic of Georgia and was marked in **Akhalsikhe** ("Newcastle") with celebrations by young people and their teachers.

The event was organized by the Culture, Education and Sports Service of Akhalsikhe, with participation by the city's Youth Council.

Poems, songs and choreographed dance on national themes were performed by the pupils of Chvinti, Kheoti and Akhalsikhe public schools, and there were theatrical performances, quizzes and games. Participants were given books as gifts from the Municipality Hall.

A public lecture on the importance and history of the Georgian language was given by Manana Chindzaladze, winner of the "Teacher of the Year" competition, Georgian language teacher of Chvinti Public School.



The youth mayor and youth deputy mayor in **Nyborg**, our "Newcastle" in Denmark, have completed a three-day internship programme with Mayor Kenneth Muhs, gaining an insight into his work and the operation of the Council. They all stood together (above) to mark the beginning of an exciting and significant project in Nyborg - the transformation of the Bryggergården at the Storebæltsvej into a new housing project. Youth mayor Klara Willems is in the centre, with her deputy Rahim Alan Durukan (right) and Mayor Muhs.

Dionis Paratte of the **Neuchatel** (Switzerland) Youth Parliament reports that five of their members have had a recent opportunity to take part in a United Nations meeting simulation in Paris, organised by the Young Citizens Initiative.



Stevan Katić (centre), the Mayor of **Herceg Novi**, our "Newcastle" in Montenegro, and the Secretary for Culture and Education, Ana Zambelić Pištalo (left), have recognised students who achieved significant results in state competitions, as well as their teachers, mentors and principals of the schools they represented.





**Newcastle Museum (New South Wales, Australia)** was transformed into a hub of creative activities during Youth Week in the city and state, 9-17 April. It was a vibrant mix of local live music, creative workshops and climate and activism activities during the 'takeover'. NM:PM Future Street Party was one of several free activities being hosted or supported by the City of Newcastle. Director of Museum Archive Libraries and Learning, Julie Baird, said: "We're proud to celebrate the valuable contributions that young people make to our city" The Youth Week program was shaped with input from around 35 young people, with members of Newcastle's Youth Council Standing Committee actively participating in the funding process.



The annual talent awards of the Local Action Group - Rose Association is held under the auspices of the Minister for European Affairs and the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic.

This year's event for talented children and youth was held on 6 March in Trhové Sviny, South Bohemia and among those recognised was Tomas Tuscher from **Nové Hradý** ("Newcastle"). With Stepan Troják, Tomas forms a very successful accordion duo, which is gaining success at national music competitions.

A new children's art exhibition in Newcastle town centre celebrates



local landmarks that make **Newcastle-under-Lyme** unique. There were over 1000 entries to this "Britain in Bloom" competition, and 55 winning paintings that will be on display until mid-June.



Looking at these lovely photos of young people in **Jaunpils**, our "Newcastle" in Latvia, in recent days, we echo the words of Inese Gintere who posted: "It is a pleasure to look at the young generation of Jaunpils, how children's steps, laughter and movements filled the beautiful medieval courtyard of Jaunpils Castle at Easter.

"We, Jaunpils parish, a small place in a small country, can be extremely proud that we have such a lively community, so many capable teachers, children, powerful people and historical places. In the daily run, we fail to notice and say 'thank you' to those teachers who instil in our children a love of cultural heritage - folk dances, songs."

How true - thank you to all the teachers and mentors in Jaunpils and elsewhere!

On 4 May, the city of **Nyborg** will mark the 80th anniversary of Denmark's liberation from German occupation. On that day in 1945, German forces in Denmark surrendered to British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery, marking the end of five years of occupation. The news of the liberation was broadcast at 8:35 pm after which Danes took down blackout curtains and lit candles in windows, a tradition they continue to this day.

This year, on 4 May there will be a procession from the King's Ship Bridge to the city square in Nyborg after which there will be community songs, musical performances and speeches.

As Nyborg is the birthplace of Denmark's democracy and home of its first Parliament, it is no coincidence that the celebration of freedom and community has a special value there.

## OTHER NEWS



The firm of KOPPERS, founded in the USA, is a global company specialising in chemical and material products, including timber treatment, carbon compounds, and railroad products. They offer a wide range of solutions for various industries, such as aluminum, railroads, utilities, and construction.

Koppers has operations in **Newcastle New South Wales, Australia** as well as another member of Newcastles of the World member cities, **Nyborg in Denmark**. International Newcastle in New South Wales are working with Koppers to encourage a possible employee exchange with the operation in Nyborg. Gary Foster, our Newcastles of the World main contact in Newcastle, New South Wales, says: "If this initiative succeeds it will be levered with the knowledge/assistance of the Newcastles of the World organisation".



Congratulations to **Newcastle United** Football Club for victory over Liverpool FC in the final of the Carabao Cup at Wembley in March. This was the first domestic trophy for the club since 1955 and the first of any sort since European success in 1969. At the time of writing, the club is in the running for Champions League qualification next season.



Surfest Newcastle 2025 (**Newcastle Australia**) features a series of competitions and events spanning several months.

The EJE Men's Pro & Genesis Health + Fitness Women's Pro event took place from March 13-15 with winners Jahly Stokes and Julian Wilson (*above, right*).



The municipality of **Herceg Novi**, our "Newcastle" in Montenegro, hosted top table tennis clubs from around Europe the at the beginning of April for the Europe Trophy Grand Final - and the host club, team STK Novi, won the men's event! They defeated a team from Slovakia in the final, having beaten teams from Italy, Spain and Serbia in earlier rounds of the tournament. Herceg Novi President Stevan Katić congratulated the team - the first European club trophy in the history of Montenegrin table tennis.



## Takwon-Do Success for Nové Zámky

On March 22, members of Club Taekwon-Do Academy Nové Zámky (*left*) won a total of 11 medals (4 gold, 2 silver and 5 bronze) in the 2025 Slovak Cup - many congratulations!



**Newcastle Eagles** are the most successful club in the history of British men's professional basketball, with 28 British professional titles and 3 English titles as of now.

Earlier this year the latest success was the British Super League Trophy, when the Eagles defeated Bristol Flyers in the final. They also reached the final of the European North Basketball League, losing to Romanian CSO Voluntari in Bratislava in early April.



Mixed Martial Arts club Mikheili Meskhi's club from **Akhaltzikhe** has achieved great success in the Georgian national Grappling Championship in Tbilisi. The club was represented by 25 athletes, with 16 fighters returning with various medals (*see left*) - and the club won the team event too to become champions of Georgia!

The City of **Neuchâtel**, Switzerland held its annual Sports Merits ceremony on 8 April when it paid tribute to its champions in many activities. 276 athletes from 27 disciplines were recognised.

A Merit of Honour was awarded to Lauren Bertolacci, the emblematic coach of the Viteos Neuchatel UC volleyball team who is leaving after many years of success. The Neuchâtel-Cortailod judo club also received a "Coup de Coeur Merit" and a "Jubilee Merit" for its 50 years of existence.

