

THE FÊTE DES VENDANGES : FESTIVAL TIME IN NEUCHÂTEL !

It was the 99th edition of the Fête des Vendanges in **Neuchâtel**, our "Newcastle" in Switzerland, at the end of September. An amazing 400,000 visitors came to celebrate the grape harvest that brings the area such wonderful wine.

There were fairground rides, fireworks, confetti battles, tastings of local white wine (of course) and a truly magnificent parade of floats – the *Corso Fleuri* – all creating a wonderful atmosphere in the heart of Neuchâtel.



There are more photos on page 4

The region boasts a 2,000-year history of wine-making. After long working days in the fields, local grape pickers walked from cellar to cellar to cheer on wine makers. When the harvest was complete, the wine pickers and farmers noisily accompanied the remaining grape tanks, often decorated with flowers, to the press. Spread throughout the city, there are over 300 stands run by local companies and shopkeepers to add to the festival atmosphere. It's one of the highest attended events in the whole of Switzerland. We look forward to an even bigger event next year for the 100th festival!

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The road cycling events for the 20th Asian Games Aichi-Nagoya 2026 were held in **Shinshiro**, our "Newcastle" in Japan, on September 22 and 23, drawing large crowds to the viewing areas.

Alexey Lutsenko of Kazakhstan won the men's race (157.6 kilometres long) and Guo Li of China as the women's road race victor (90.4 kilometres distance).



Amid the sounds of cowbells, cheering, applause, and warm encouragement, the venue was filled with great excitement as the athletes flashed by at breathtaking speeds. The Games were held under the slogan "Imagine One Asia" and were a triumph for the host nation - Japan's women's team is *right*.



63000 runners took part in September's Great North Run, including the UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham (*below, right*). It was the 45th running of the world's largest half marathon, from **Newcastle upon Tyne** to South Shields on the North Sea coast. Millions of pounds are raised each year for charity, with the Prime Minister running for the Newcastle homelessness charity, "Changing Lives".

American Zouhair Talbi won the men's elite race. In the women's race it was a Kenyan one/two with Brigid Kosgei taking the win ahead of last year's champion, Sheila Chepkirui.



SUMMER FESTIVALS AROUND OUR “NEWCASTLES”

The most important film festival in Montenegro and one of the most significant in South-East Europe, the 39th **Herceg Novi** (“Newcastle”) Film Festival – Montenegro Film Festival, was held from 22 to 28 August. The week-long festival began with the award of the Outstanding Contribution to Film Art to Bogdan Diklić and the showing of the film "Home" by Marijana Jankovic,



On the red carpet at the opening ceremony were numerous guests from the world of film, culture and public life, including Hollywood actor John Savage who appeared in *The Deer Hunter*. Montenegro’s Minister of Culture and Media, Dr. Tamara Vujovic, announced that the Herzegovina festival had achieved a historic success this year by gaining accreditation from the International Federation of Film Producers. With this, as the only newly registered festival from South-East Europe, it entered the company of Cannes, Venice and Berlin, confirming also the growing strength of contemporary Montenegrin cinema.



Photo: Dorothy Pfaffel

The 48th Summer Academy of Arts took place in August in **Neuburg an der Donau**, our “Newcastle” in Bavaria, **Germany**. It’s a unique mixture of music and art, a popular and well-established holiday academy that attracts lecturers, performers and participants from all over the world. The course programme ranges from jazz and pop, classical and early music, visual arts to world music and dance.



Her Highness the Sultanah Nur Diana Petra Abdullah, (*left in the foreground of the photo*) officiated the opening of the Kelantan State Flora Festival, 2026, which took place at Taman Perbandaran Tengku Anis, **Kota Bharu**, our “Newcastle” in Malaysia.

The festival, themed "Sustainable Nature, Harmonious Community," ran from September 24 to 27 with a range of programmes and activities highlighting the beauty of flora, landscapes, and efforts in preserving the environment.

BRASS BAND MINI-FESTIVAL IN NOVE HRADY

The third Saturday in September was, as is tradition, filled with the sounds of popular brass bands in **Nové Hradý**, our “Newcastle” in the Czech Republic. Warm, sunny weather provided a perfect backdrop for the program in the town square, where three outstanding bands took turns performing.

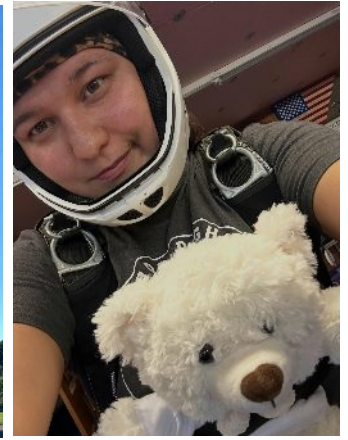
The legendary band Babouci opened the festival, followed by the "home" band, Podhoranka, with songs themed around the region alongside classic South Bohemian folk tunes. The third brass band Légrúti had travelled all the way from Moravia and brought beautiful songs, excellent music, and Moravian spirit to the event. The square was bustling all day long, and the festival drew a large crowd! The bands were thanked for a fantastic musical experience. Some of the regular attendees even felt that this was the most successful festival in years.



MORE SUMMER FESTIVALS



“Airplanes and Automobiles” (formerly known as “Wings and Wheels”) returned to New Castle Municipal Airport (**New Castle Pennsylvania, USA**) in late August. This free event, celebrating things with wings and wheels, also hot air balloons, again brought in large crowds. The airport is publicly-owned airport and is controlled by the Lawrence County Airport Authority.



The wonderful annual Buskers Festival in **Neuchâtel**, our “Newcastle” in Switzerland, was again an August highlight. It included performances in the villages of the municipality, plus five days with a range of artists performing in the city in the streets of the pedestrian zone.



The poster for festival was made by a group of 12-13 year olds students from a special needs school in the United Kingdom - students with a variety of social, emotional, and mental health needs. In this context, art and music are important drivers of self-expression and self-confidence. This poster project encouraged children to explore music and musical instruments, sparking wonder, enthusiasm and creativity! The characters drawn reflect human richness and diversity, and remind us that music is a universal language that brings us all together.

CHOIRS SING TOGETHER

With the song "There is One City at the Sea", under the conductor's baton of Professor Jovana Ražnatovic, the XI International Choir Festival in **Herceg Novi**, our “Newcastle” in Montenegro) was opened in August.

The event brought together 20 ensembles from throughout Montenegro and the wider Balkan region but also from Greece and Norway, presenting themselves through different styles, from popular to spiritual music.



Opening the festival, the Vice Mayor of Herceg Novi Municipality Ivan Otović said it was a pleasure that the city once again hosted such an important meeting of choirs, conductors, music educators and choral art lovers.

MORE NEWS FROM AROUND THE “NEWCASTLES”

On October 8, a major conference took place in **Nové Zámky** as part of the SocInoLab project, a programme to promote Social Innovations, co-financed by the European Union under the **Slovakia Programme**. During five thematic blocks, a total of 14 contributions were made by local and non-regional experts from various areas of social assistance.

Participants focused on material and food aid, sustainable development, social housing, social and legal protection, health care and humanitarian aid.

The conference created a space for the exchange of experiences, the presentation of examples of good practice and the search for new solutions to current social challenges. Our photo is of Otokar Klein, Mayor of Nové Zámky, speaking at the conference.



In September, a meeting was held in Weitra between the mayor of **Nové Hradý**, Vladimír Hokr (*centre*), the mayor of Weitra in Austria, Patrick Layr, and Saskia Kaas, who is in charge of tourism and cross-border cooperation. The main topic of the meeting was the preparation of joint projects within the EU Small Projects Fund (FMP).

Nové Hradý, our “Newcastle” in the Czech Republic, wishes to repair the entrance gate to the important Terčina Valley, while its Austrian partners across the border are keen to improve facilities within the Gabrielental Park.



100 years ago this autumn (fall), the beautiful Scottish Rite Cathedral in **New Castle, Pennsylvania, USA** was opened for its first events. Brother John S. Wallace wanted to build a Masonic Temple large enough for all local Masonic groups to meet. Today, the Cathedral is still used as a Masonic Temple, as well as a public banquet and performance facility with a 2,800 seat Auditorium.



The city of **Kota Bharu**, our “Newcastle” in Malaysia, celebrated the country's independence day in 1957 at the end of August (*see above*). The events included music, poetry, dance and parades.



All the fun of Fall Fest in **New Castle Indiana, USA** !



More photos from Neuchâtel’s 2026 Fête des Vendanges - City Chancellor, Daniel Veuve feeds the lead horse of the flower parade (Photo: Bernard Python)



MORE NEWS FROM AROUND THE NEWCASTLES

"Newcastle Annual" is a great 10 day arts festival in **Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia**, and it's just concluded its 2026 edition of sold-out shows, record-breaking crowds and events. Festival Director Tory Loudon said audiences had embraced the opportunity to experience the unexpected and unforgettable. "New Annual is all about bringing art to the audiences across our beaches, ocean baths, parks and plazas, alongside the more traditional cultural venues, and the response to the festival this year has been outstanding,"

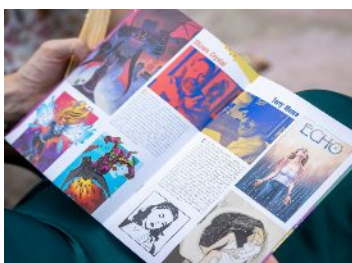


The Midaira-bashi Hanekomi, recognised as a "city-designated Intangible Folk Cultural Property", was held in the Yotsuya district of **Shinshiro**, our "Newcastle" in Japan in August. Hanekomi is a traditional ancestral memorial event that has continued since the Edo period (1603–1867).

Young people dressed in yukata robes and wooden geta (footwear) form a circle, holding a lantern in one hand and a thick, short drumstick in the other. To the sound of flutes, they alternately strike the skin and rim of a drum while dancing on one foot with bouncing jumps. Memorial Buddhist chants and circle hand-dances were also performed, drawing a large gathering of local residents.



Volksfest is the oldest festival in **Neuburg an der Donau**, our "Newcastle" in Bavaria, Germany - and this year the city celebrated the 80th edition in late July with a variety of attractions that was bigger than ever.



A dazzling music performance marked the opening of the 20th anniversary **Herceg Novi Strip Festival**, with the city - our "Newcastle" in Montenegro - again the centre of the world comic scene. Riccardo Secchi, screenwriter of the cult comic book "Alan Ford" and one of the most important names of the current European comic scene, was the main speaker at the festival.



The "Three Rivers Region" action plan involves the City of **Nové Zámky**, our "Newcastle" in Slovakia.. The aim of the project is the development of cultural tourism in the Slovak-Hungarian border region through the restoration and attractiveness of culturally important sites, the support of program tourism and the strengthening of cooperation between cultural and public actors. The project is supported by the Interreg Hungary-Slovakia program and co-financed by the European Union. In Nové Zámky, the project will focus on the restoration and attractiveness of the space near Fogd's Bastion, which has significant potential for cultural, social and community events. As part of the project activities, the revitalisation of the park, and the construction of an outdoor stage for cultural and social events are planned.

JAUNPILS CASTLE CELEBRATES 725 YEARS



In August, the parish of Jaunpils, our “Newcastle” in Latvia, celebrated a remarkable milestone with the festivities “725 Reasons to Celebrate”, marking the 725th anniversary of Jaunpils castle. The celebrations brought together history, culture, local traditions and the community for a day filled with activities and shared experiences.

The day began with a special reception in the Great Hall of Jaunpils castle, bringing together local entrepreneurs, members of the Latvian Association of castles and manors, and invited guests. Over a festive lunch, guests reflected on the castle’s 725-year history, its role today and its future.



The festivities continued throughout Jaunpils with a distinctly medieval atmosphere. The official opening was marked by the firing of a cannon, followed by knights’ battles, historical activities, theatre and poetry, and a costume parade taking visitors on a journey through the centuries. The Jaunpils museum offered an opportunity to discover more about the history of the castle and its surroundings



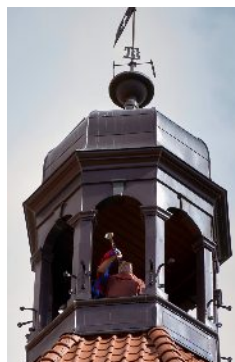
Families and children were at the heart of the celebrations as well. The youngest members of the community, including children born in Jaunpils in 2025, were specially welcomed together with their families. The creative group “Pasaku nams” added a fairytale touch to the occasion, while bubbles, rides, horses, water balls, face painting and other activities provided. The craftsmen’s and home producers’ market offered an opportunity to meet local makers, discover their work, taste local products and take home a special souvenir of the day. An entertainment for visitors of all ages.



As evening arrived, the celebrations continued with live music by much-loved musicians, followed by a lively night-time dance party. At midnight, the festivities came to a grand finale with a magnificent fireworks display illuminating the sky above Jaunpils lake.

The anniversary was a celebration not only of 725 years of history, but also of the people who keep Jaunpils alive today and will carry its story into the future.

Among the many reasons to celebrate, the community itself remains one of the most important.



The Vegvisir Race is a challenging annual shorthanded sailing event in the waters connecting Denmark, Germany, and Sweden, which since 2021 has been sailed to and from **Nyborg**, our “Newcastle” in Denmark.

The event tests participants' skills, physical fitness, endurance, and tactical abilities as the race courses combine tight inshore sailing with potentially rough coastal racing.

Skippers face extreme demands on their navigation, meteorology, tactical, and strategic expertise.

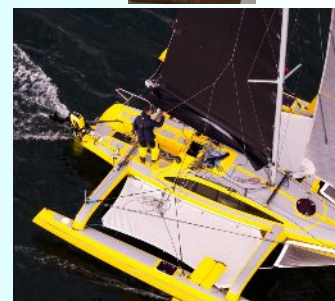


The 2026 race was held in early September in very difficult conditions but no accidents or damages were reported and new "Speed to Beat" records were set in all categories. The first boat home on the Red Course (200 nautical miles) was the trimaran Ra, sailed by Denmark’s Jacob Haaber and Thomas Palm Hansen. On the shorter Green Course, (100 nautical miles), German sailor Patrik Heinrichs was first back aboard his Esse 850 Jinx after just 9 hours and 38 minutes, especially impressive as he was sailing single-handed, yet kept all the double-handed boats behind him.



A Vegvisir is an Icelandic magical symbol believed to help people find their way. According to myth, anyone bearing this symbol will never get lost, even in storms or bad weather.

In mythology, it aids people in finding their way at sea and serves as a guiding symbol for personal journeys in life.



AKHALTSIKHE WELCOMES THE “QUEEN OF CHESS”



Varlam Tsiklauri, Mayor of Akhaltsikhe, our “Newcastle” in the Republic of Georgia, has welcomed world chess legend and Grandmaster Nona Gafrindashvili to the city.

A black and white chessboard stage was created at Rabati castle and a performance made in honour of this very special visitor.



During the event, students interested in chess had the opportunity to meet the “Queen of Chess”, interview her, attend her masterclass and play a friendly game with her.

There was an exhibition of her chess life, her sporting path and key victories.

Chess continues to be extremely popular in the Republic of Georgia, with a rich tradition and deep cultural significance.

Nona Gaprindashvili was the women's world chess champion from 1962 to 1978, and was the first woman to be awarded the title of Grandmaster. She was inducted into the World Chess Hall of Fame in 2013.

Besides her chess career, Gaprindashvili maintained an active presence in Georgian politics: she served as a member of the Supreme Soviet of the Georgian Republic, as president of the Georgian National Olympic Committee, and as a member of the People's Assembly group.

The spirit of resilience, courage and collective action took centre stage as women from across **Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal**, South Africa gathered for the Newcastle Municipality’s Annual Women’s Summit on 20 August. Celebrated under the powerful theme, “Empowered Women, Empowered Nations,” the summit brought women together to celebrate their strength, reflect on their journeys and inspire one another to become catalysts for positive change in their communities and the nation.



The summit formed part of the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the historic 1956 Women’s March, a defining moment in South Africa’s history when more than 20,000 women marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria in protest against the apartheid pass laws.

WOMEN TAKE CENTRE STAGE

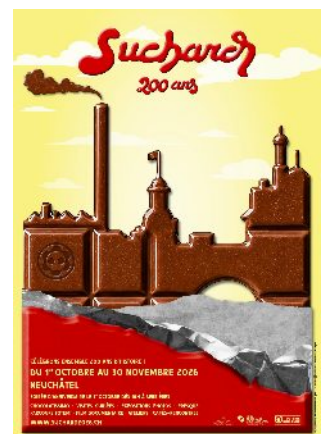


The programme in Newcastle was divided into two sessions, offering opportunities to engage on a range of topics aimed at advancing women empowerment, personal development, leadership and active participation in society.

Neuchâtel says: Eat as much chocolate as you can to celebrate Suchard’s 200 years!

At the beginning of October, the city of Neuchâtel, Switzerland launched celebrations marking Suchard’s bicentenary. Founded in Serrières in 1826, Philippe Suchard’s first factory quickly grew into a chocolate empire that became one of the world’s leading confectionery brands. The transfer of the brand abroad in the

1990s was a traumatic event for the region. Today, feelings have settled and the city is celebrating a fascinating heritage that is inspiring new ideas among artists and artisan chocolatiers. The programme of events includes films, exhibitions and workshops.



PEOPLE

We were delighted to learn that our friend Thulani Phakathi, Principal of Mntimande Primary School in **Newcastle, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa** has been recognised in the National Teaching Awards for Excellence in Primary School Leadership.

The announcement honours his dedicated hard work and exceptional leadership commitment to improving education and brightening futures for his students. His work on behalf of Newcastles of the World has also been exceptional.

Mr NN Zungu of the school was also recognised for his contribution to promoting life skills. Two awards for one school! - many congratulations.



PROMINENT SWISS COUNCILLOR TO STEP DOWN

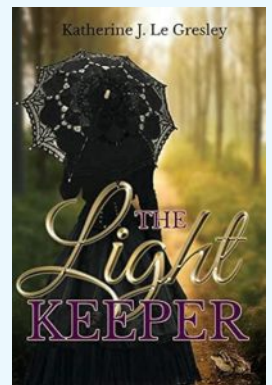
Violaine Blétry-de Montmollin, member of the Municipal Council, former President of the Council and currently Head of the City of **Neuchâtel**'s Department of Spatial Development, Housing and Buildings, has announced that she will step down from the executive next year and retire from politics after 30 years of public service. The Municipal Council commends her commitment and her decisive contribution to the merger of the municipalities in 2021 and to the urban development of Neuchâtel.



(Photo: Lucas Vuitel)

The first citizen of the borough of **Newcastle-under-Lyme** is going to extreme lengths to support his chosen charities. Mayor Christopher Bailey will soar head-first along the world's fastest and UK's longest zip line alongside his wife, Mayoress Deborah, to boost his fundraising efforts for Bradwell Bombers and the Tri Service and Veterans Support Centre. Riders can reach eye-watering speeds across a one-mile span.

Dora Farncomb, whose family had settled in the **Newcastle, Ontario, Canada** area in the mid-1800s became a nationally known and cherished author with hundreds of articles and three books to her credit. Notably, she also had a strong impact on Newcastle itself through the establishment of a young men's social club. For many years after her passing, the group of men affectionately known as "Dora's Boys" spread throughout neighbouring towns and cities, where they became dedicated and influential members of the communities in which they settled.



A book by Katherine J Le Gresley called "The Lightkeeper" documents the Farncomb family from their arrival in Newcastle to the passing of Dora in 1938. It covers the lives of the members of the family who played the most influential roles in the history of Newcastle including Frederick (the chief customs officer at the harbour), Alfred (town doctor), John (the rector of St. George's Anglican church) and Dora (the author). Katherine's book explores the joys and tragedies of the Farncomb family through the eyes of Dora.



A green-fingered resident whose outdoor space is a magical oasis of calm and tranquillity officially has the best residential garden in **Newcastle-under-Lyme** in England.

Passionate gardener Donna Thorley, from Clayton, is the overall winner of this year's Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council's "Newcastle in Bloom"

The Council's popular summer gardening competitions been at the heart of the Borough's award-winning "Heart of England in Bloom" campaign for more than 30 years.

NEW NEUBURG YOUTH PARLIAMENT STARTS WORK

The new Youth Parliament for **Neuburg an der Donau**, our Newcastle in Bavaria, Germany has been elected at five schools and during an afternoon at City Hall. Members will serve for the legislative period from September 1, 2026, to August 31, 2028.

Anyone between 12 and 21 years of age with their place of residence in Neuburg was eligible to vote.



There were 32 candidates running for office. Each eligible voter had a total of 16 votes to cast. The voter turnout was very high and underscores the strong interest of young people in political participation.

A total of 1,743 voters participated in the election. The newly elected Youth Parliament is diverse and comprises young people aged 12 to 19 years. Every school in the city is represented by at least one representative. Also, two apprentices are part of the body. Three members were re-elected from the previous Youth Parliament to the new body. We wish the new Youth Parliament much success in their youth work.

In September the new Youth Parliament (JUPA) met for the first session at the town hall. Constantin Schwienheer and Jana Gebre were elected as speakers. Clear priorities emerged: public water fountains in public spaces and at schools; Shaded areas at schools, bus stops, and sheltered areas; ideas to manage the traffic situation in Neuburg; improved offers for young people in Neuburg's nightlife; expansion of the JUPA's social media activities.

NEW YOUNG MAYORS IN NYBORG!



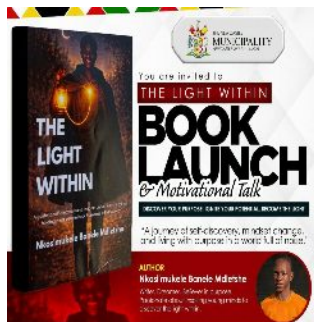
And Nyborg, our "Newcastle" in Denmark has also elected its youth representatives.

Nyborg says: "Young people should not just be heard. They should have influence."

And now the new Young Council has democratically chosen who will be at the forefront of the coming year: William Frostholt from 4kløverskolen in Ørbæk is the new Young Mayor, and Simon Fentz Albrechtsen from Refsvindinge Friskole is the new Young Vice Mayor.

"Together with the rest of the Young Council, they will put young perspectives on the political agenda, take the debates and bring ideas and attitudes all the way to the adult politicians. Because young people have opinions about the municipality, where they live and grow up. And they will be part of shaping it."

YOUNG NEWCASTLE AUTHOR LAUNCHES MOTIVATIONAL BOOK



22 year old author Nkos'ukele Banele Mdletshe of **Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa** has launched his debut motivational book, "The Light Within", at Newcastle Library. The book explores self-discovery, purpose, mindset, social media, AI and preparing young people for the future, encouraging readers to believe in themselves and develop their talents. At the heart of The Light Within is a message of hope, purpose and personal responsibility everyone has potential, but discovering that potential requires self-awareness, courage and a willingness to grow.



A CALL TO ALL YOUNG LEADERS

And also in **Newcastle**, Mayor Councillor D.X. Dube, is calling on all young leaders, specifically Grade 10 learners from across Newcastle, to seize an exciting opportunity to shape the future of our city by taking part as candidates or voters in a "Junior Mayor" election.

He says "This is a call to the next generation of change-makers, innovators, and community builders. If you are passionate about leadership, service, and making a difference, the Mayor wants to hear from you. Let us build Newcastle together, starting with our youth."



YOUTH

In early October, members of the Youth Council of **Newcastle upon Tyne** gave a presentation, with challenging questions, to the full meeting of Newcastle City Council in the Council chamber. Their presentation was well-received and the City Council committed to closer working with the Youth Council.



One of the floats in the Neuchâtel Grape Harvest Festival (see front page) was created by the the **Neuchâtel Youth Parliament (PJNE)** on the theme of “Newcastles of the World” !

The festival, the 99th, is one of the largest in Switzerland, with a huge parade, over 300 stands and a fireworks display by the lake. Thank you to PJNE !



The Mayor of **Akhaltzikhe**, Varlam Tsiklauri, attended the presentation of the annual activity report of the Youth Council of the municipality at the City Hall, together with the Chairman of the City Council, Saba Kbilashvili. He is pictured in the second row centre of the photo to the left.

The Youth Council members spoke about the projects that they have implemented in the year, including events held within the framework of the "Green Festival".

MORE NEWS FROM AROUND THE NEWCASTLES



Newcastle upon Tyne's historic Grainger Market was transformed into a spectacular catwalk as local fashion, creativity and talent took centre stage for the "Fashion Britain: Future Heritage" show by the British Fashion Council. From established designers to the next generation of creative talent, it was all about celebrating Newcastle's distinctive fashion identity. Congratulations to local designers for their fantastic Future Heritage designs

The 'Bendy Tree', an elm tree in **Newcastle, County Down, Northern Ireland** has been named the UK “Tree of the Year 2026”. The 150-year-old tree on the central promenade in Newcastle took over 30% of the national public vote in the annual competition organised by the Woodland Trust's. The theme for this year was “Against All Odds” for trees that are impressive, beautiful and baffling examples of how nature can survive adversity.



Newcastle upon Tyne has been named Airport of the Year at the Aviation Industry Awards UK. The airport was recognised for its award-winning customer service, significant network growth, infrastructure developments and sustainability achievements.



SPORT

NOVOHRADSKÝ CYCLOKILOMETER AND STAGE OF THE TOUR OF SOUTH BOHEMIA RACE



After last year's successful premiere, the town of **Nové Hradý**, our “Newcastle” in the Czech Republic, repeated a small cycling race for elementary school students, their teachers or assistants and parent representatives this year, on September 3rd. The prizes to the successful cyclists were presented on the Novohradské square. But they reserved the awards for the very best in the 1st and 2nd grade categories for Friday afternoon, in the interim between the cyclists' first ride as part of the professional Tour of South Bohemia stage and their arrival at the finish line. As part of the accompanying program for the race, another small race for children from first grade and kindergarten took place on Friday afternoon on part of the square.

The Tour of South Bohemia race itself brought hundreds of cycling fans for not only a sporting experience but also a show in the form of accompanying vehicles of individual professional teams and motorbikes. There was drama when in the main group a mass fall occurred during a very fast and sharp climb. When the results were announced, it was clear that there had been no serious injuries. But the successful riders admitted in interviews that the stage was very demanding and that the valley hill gave everyone a hard time.



Mayor Vladimír Hokr with stage winner Flavio Astolfi of Luxembourg.



Pictured above: Sanjay Manimaran won the men's category and Nurul Juliana Shakira Abdul Halim won the women's category at the Half Marathon held on 5 September in **Kota Bharu**, our “Newcastle” in Malaysia.



In the Australian Rugby League Grand Final played on 4 October in front of 80,000 fans, the **Newcastle Knights** lost 19-18 to Sydney Roosters.

It was a heartbreaking defeat by one point, especially as the Knights had been leading 12-0 at one stage. Having finished with the wooden spoon last season, this year has still been one to enjoy.



The Australian Hunter Region “Sporting Hall of Fame” welcomed its newest inductees on 20 August celebrating local athletes who have performed on the national and international sporting stage. Now in its 34th year, the ceremony took place at McDonald Jones Stadium in **Newcastle**, bringing together past inductees, current honourees, family, friends and the broader sporting community for an evening dedicated to Hunter sporting excellence.

Since its inception, the Hall of Fame has recognised more than 350 elite athletes with strong ties to the Hunter region, whether by birth or through junior and senior sporting careers based in the area, who have gone on to represent Australia or compete at the international level.

This year's inductees were: Angela Leadbeatter – Distance Running; Tara Andrews – Football; Kelly Puplett – Marathon Swimming; Brittany Hepburn – Baseball; Boyd Cordner and Anthony Tupou– Rugby League. You can read about their achievements on this link: <https://regionalacademies.org.au/34th-annual-hunter-region-sporting-hall-of-fame-inducts-six-new-legends/>



The Neuburg Motor Club celebrated its 10th Tour de Neuburg on 15 August, highlighting classic and vintage cars, some dating back to the 1930s. The tour, which finished at the Audi Driving Experience Centre in **Neuburg an der Donau**, our “Newcastle” in Bavaria, Germany, is not so much a competitive race but focuses instead on being a memorable scenic tour and social experience.





UPDATE FROM NEWCASTLES OF THE WORLD CO-ORDINATOR SHARON RACE ON ACTIVITIES SINCE THE LAST NEWSLETTER REPORT

I hope you had a great summer (or winter in the southern hemisphere, of course) !
We, here at the Newcastles of the World, have been very busy and have seen the launch of several initiatives. More are ongoing as we go to press.

First off, we ran a competition for the young people of the network to help design our future by creating a new logo image. This was a huge success as we received over 100 entries from youths aged 25 and under around the world! The Executive Board have chosen the Final Five, which were put out to the public to vote on.

Further meetings have been held of our Castles & Museums Network, sharing best practice and ideas to assist in engaging and appealing to the public and visitors. Highlights included:

Nyborg Castle advised how it has played a role in Danish history, particularly its connection with the Danish TV series “Oxen”, based on the Danish crime novels, helping increase interest in the castle and the Danehof celebrations. The show has helped so much so that Nyborg recently hosted a session with the director and actors from Oxen to discuss the history behind the castle, receiving national press coverage.

Jaunpils shared that in July the castle hosted a week-long conference for computer programmers, who created a game featuring the history of Jaunpils Castle.

Shinshiro explained that visitors can buy collectible castle stamps as part of a castle stamp scheme that runs across Japan, which has proved especially popular with younger visitors, many of whom travel to collect as many stamps as they can.

Our Education Ambassadors have adopted the name of “Education Leaders”.

Their latest meeting brings the news that the Leaders will run creative poetry sessions with their students and submit them to our exciting new poetry anthology, “My Newcastle”. The poems will capture the unique flavour, history, and young energy of each Newcastle. The Result? The poems will be collected into one designed anthology produced to celebrate Newcastles of the World Day in November 2026.

If you are an educator and would like to take part in the scheme, poetry submissions can be uploaded directly to newcastlesoftheworld.com/poetry/

Finally, we have launched an open call to anyone living, studying or working in a Newcastle to enter our Global Photography Competition and feature in our 2027 Calendar! Capture the heart of your Newcastle and share it with the world.

Enter in 3 simple steps:

1. Snap! Take a photo in your Newcastle with a camera or your smartphone.
2. Share it on your socials and use the hashtag **#NewcastlesOfTheWorld**
3. Upload – submit it to our website by October 26th 2026 – at newcastlesoftheworld.com/calendar/

Seasonal blessings to you all!

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 an initiative by John Nicolaou of Newcastle upon Tyne to connect Newcastles in the English-speaking world, and by the Mayor of Shinshiro, Japan to bring the Newcastles together via the first Newcastles of the World international summit or conference in his city 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 an der Donau) in 2008; Nové Hrády (Czech Republic) in 2014 and 2023; Newcastle, Ontario, Canada in 2016; Shinshiro again in 2018, and Jaunpils (Latvia) in 2025.

We aim to foster individual, group and civic friendships, with links through culture, education and tourism.