

Newcastle upon Tyne

21 - 27 July 2012

A week of celebration of our mutual identities and interests through poetry, photography and song, and for building new opportunities for business, tourism, educational and cultural links.



Newcastles of the World 2012



Programme of Events and Activities



www.newcastlesoftheworld.wordpress.com

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Newcastles-of-the-world/292335624135182>

<http://twitter.com/#!/NCLsoftheworld>



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SATURDAY

21

Guests arrive during the day. Welcome arrangements at the conference hotel - the Vermont Hotel, immediately next to the castle and cathedral of Newcastle. Optional visits - to Hadrian's Wall, the remains of the Roman wall running from east to west coast, including forts and museums. This was once the northern outpost of the Roman empire and is a World Heritage site. Or take a look around Newcastle United's football ground, steeped in sporting history.



In the evening we'll get together for a welcome party at the famous Bridge pub (right) just next to our hotel, with food and music.

SUNDAY

22

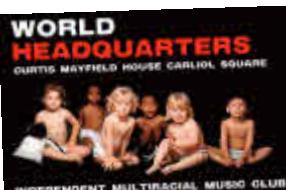
After breakfast at the hotel, there's a chance to take a guided tour of the historic Quayside area, with its famous bridges and a Sunday market.



Late morning we gather just two minutes away from the hotel at Newcastle's 14th century cathedral for a service of welcome, with music and a chance to look around.

After lunch there's a short parade along Newcastle's main shopping street Northumberland Street, with flags and music, accompanied by local schools who have been carrying out research on each visiting Newcastle.

There's just time for a first look at Newcastle's civic centre and the floral display in the gardens, with a Newcastle's theme, before being transported to the Mansion House to meet the Lord Mayor and other civic guests. After signing the guest book and exchange of gifts between the mayors and heads of delegations, we will be led into the Mansion House Gardens by the Lord Mayor's piper for a traditional English garden party, local music and guests from among Newcastle's community who have links with our visiting nations.



After a rest and evening meal there's jazz at The Bridge, or a quieter time in the hotel bar with new friends – but for delegates from youth councils there's another option - the chance for their own welcome from local young people at World Headquarters night club.



MONDAY

23

After breakfast and on the way to the civic centre we call into the main City Library for the opening of the Newcastle's exhibition of film, photographs – and of postcards, postmarks and stamps of Dorothy Martin of Newcastle upon Tyne from no less than 29 different Newcastles!

Then it's down to work as we spend the rest of the morning at the civic centre on the theme of how we brand and market our different Newcastles. We'll have short presentations by each

Newcastle of how it sees its "brand" and how it promotes it, with a speech by Professor Andy Pike, of the Newcastle University Centre for Local and Regional Studies. Youth council delegates will be meeting separately.

Just before lunch, there will be a chance to contribute a stitch or two to the Newcastle's "proggy mat" project, a specially-designed rag rug which is a local tradition.

In the afternoon we'll go on study tours – delegates can choose between several options including Hoult's Yard centre for new creative industries, Siemens' new training centre for offshore wind turbines, the internationally renowned Byker social housing development and community housing trust or the national centre for children's literature "Seven Stories" – all within two kilometres of each other so delegates can visit more than one.

There's an option of shopping, sightseeing or rest (surely not?)



After evening meal we go to Live Theatre to enjoy the work that will have been going on all spring and summer by people from several Newcastles, creating "A Song for Newcastle" and "Poems for Newcastle", and to enjoy other local performers. For those who have the stamina we'll offer "last order" drinks at The Bridge before bed.

Day two of the business programme involves presentations and discussions about international tourism and how we can bring together our Newcastle brands into a coordinated tourism network with a “Newcastles passport”. We’ll also have a presentation by Newcastle University International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies about preserving world cultures and how we can all help with a new global heritage database project, which the Centre is leading on.

The youth programme continues, whilst the afternoon offers a chance to visit the Discovery Museum to take a look at the “Newcastle story” through the ages and also the city’s great engineering and maritime heritage. Late afternoon sees us having “tea at the castle” for a short tour.

Then we have a great evening in store on board a private ferry sailing to the mouth of the River Tyne, with food and music. We’ll see the site of what was one of the world’s great shipyards, the stretch of river occupied by the international ferry terminal and the emerging offshore and subsea industries, the fish quay at North Shields, the harbour overlooked by the statue of Admiral Lord Collingwood (one of Britain’s greatest sailors), St Peter’s Marina, public art on the riverside, and then sail back up river at twilight to see the wonderful sight of the bridges from the water.



Time to look around the Newcastle region, as delegates spend the day first visiting Alnwick Castle, one of Britain’s great medieval castles and a film location, for everything from Harry Potter (Hogwarts) to Elizabeth, Becket and Blackadder.

Then it’s across the low tide causeway (“Pilgrim’s Way”) to Lindisfarne, or “Holy Island” where the monk St Aidan came from Iona in the year 635 to found a monastery. The Christian message spread from here and you can visit the ruins of the abbey, also the museum and the castle.



Then a short drive across the border so you can sample the air of Scotland at Coldstream and take a few photographs before returning to Newcastle.

After time to rest, we return to the Mansion House for an evening of “Food from around the World” part of our annual EAT festival, but with a special Newcastle theme – and a quiz, and some music!



In the last business session we will finalise plans for our tourism initiative and hear a presentation from Youth Council delegates of their challenge to the decision-makers of the Newcastles.

After lunch at Blackfriars, established as a Dominican friary in 1239 and the oldest continuously functioning eating place in the country, delegates will have the option of either enjoying a production of Julius Caesar at the recently refurbished Theatre Royal Newcastle (part of the Cultural Olympiad World Shakespeare Festival) or be present for the first game of the Olympic football tournament – we find out in April which teams will be playing in Newcastle.

Over tea the mayors and mayor representatives will agree the declaration/action plan. The final official event is something we are calling “Celebrating International Friendship”. This is a dinner at the Banqueting Hall, with music, bringing together people and organisations across the city who play a part in promoting international collaboration - an appropriate way to conclude the conference and to mark the eve of the Olympic Games.



Departure day for delegates, but we will offer a programme for those who can stay a little longer. This will include other cultural visits or business trips (by arrangement), and a visit to another World Heritage site close by - the magnificent Durham Cathedral which is one of the great buildings of Europe of the Norman period. This trip will include lunch at Lumley Castle (famously haunted) and the “Angel of the North”, the largest sculpture in the country and one of the most talked about pieces of public art ever produced.

For those who stay for another evening, we will have a party to watch on television the Opening Ceremony of the London Olympic Games.



What is the Newcastles of the World Alliance?



Newcastle upon Tyne - based John Nicolaou came up with the idea in the mid-1990s to link those communities who share the name "Newcastle". He contacted writers and photographers in English-speaking Newcastles around the world and compiled a book which was published in 2000. Meanwhile, in 1998 the Mayor of Shinshiro in Japan had taken the initiative to invite representatives of seven Newcastles to his city. They have continued to meet every two years - in Switzerland in 2000, USA (Indiana/Pennsylvania) in 2002, South Africa 2004 & 2010, Newcastle-under-Lyme (UK) in 2006 and Germany in 2008.

The aim is to foster friendship and collaboration, and to share and enjoy each others' heritage and culture. Each gathering has taken a discussion theme to ensure practical, usable outcomes, and there has been increasingly useful involvement of young people and of business representatives. Of all the possibilities for developing international associations, what more natural link is there than with the towns and cities that share the same name?

The Newcastles of the World network is ripe for expansion and we expect to welcome several new guests in July. A new website for the alliance is now live and will be the vehicle for drawing in people and groups in many more Newcastles via open access, Facebook groups and other social networking.

The richness and depth of the Newcastles network need not just depend on the support of mayors and municipalities but instead on ordinary people across the world eager to learn about other Newcastles and how their citizens live, and to build their own contacts and projects.

