

Proud To Call It Home

nyborg castelonovo jaunpils
neuburg gakhaltzikhe novehrady
newcastle
gherla neufchateau savonlinna newcastleupontyne
newcastlekzn
castilloneuvo nowyzamek newcastlensw
shinshiro
newcastleunderlyme
hercegnovi
neuchâtel
kotabharu
castelnuovo

Newcastles of the World

PROUD TO CALL IT HOME

NEWCASTLES OF THE WORLD

Edited by

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Sheree Mack, UK**

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FOREWORD



I am delighted that you have chosen to celebrate through poetry, drama and song the gatherings of Newcastles of the world from different continents, peoples and cultures.

Literature and song has been an important part of my consciousness. It had to be so. My maternal grandfather was a coal miner. The first English expression I learned when I started primary school was “Do not send coal to Newcastle”. Why not I enquired! Because all Newcastles mine coal!

I love words and always have. They are a vehicle that has carried me in and out of homes, hearts, streets and around the world. Sorrow or anger, dejection or uplift, exhilaration joy or exuberance words carry me through the length breadth and depth of human feeling! Words energize, inspire and mobilize! Words speak from heart to heart!

Thank you to the writers, young and old, professional and otherwise who have created and crafted words that say what their Newcastle means to them.

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Lindiwe Mabuza was born in 1938 in the Coal Mining town of Newcastle. Initially brought up by her grandmother, Mary Makhumalo Msibi, a laundry service provider in a white girl’s hostel before the washing machine. She later joined her parents in Johannesburg where her father was a track driver, her mother a domestic worker and factory hand alternatively. The family struggled against grinding poverty and Lindiwe was the only one of four children to finish high school.

With the help of “a good Samaritan” she enrolled at University to increase her understanding of world and African Literature and Culture in South Africa and the United States. Over the years her ability and drive led her into many professions, yet her over-riding ambition was to see the end of the apartheid, “that crime against humanity” in South Africa.

She worked as a Professor, a poet and short story and writer of considerable acclaiming radio journalist, political organizer for the African National Congress (ANC). After the fall of apartheid she served a term in the first democratic parliament. She became South Africa’s first black Ambassador to Germany (1995-1999). From 1999-2001 was High Commissioner to Malaysia and Brunei and from 2001 -2009 was High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.

The Newcastles of the World Alliance

This anthology has been produced as part of the 2012 Newcastles of the World Alliance meeting. The idea of linking communities who share the name Newcastle came about - as many good ideas do - in two separate places in the world in the mid-1990s.

Newcastle upon Tyne-based John Nicolaou came up with an idea 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 and Pennsylvania) in 2002, South Africa 2004 and 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?

In July 2012, Newcastle upon Tyne hosted the gathering for the first time and the meeting saw many first-time Newcastles in attendance: Newcastle, Australia; Newcastle, Ontario, Canada; Akhaltsikhe, Georgia; Jaunpils Latvia; Kota Bharu, Malaysia and Nové Hradý in the Czech Republic. The main conference theme was "Branding & Marketing our Newcastles" which, amongst many ideas explored, began discussions of an informal "passport scheme" to link people from Newcastles all over the world.

The expansion of the network means that the richness and depth of the alliance can be relevant to citizens across the world eager to learn about other Newcastles and how their fellow Novocastrians live, work, study and enjoy life across the globe, enabling them to build their own contacts and many more new and exciting projects.

This anthology is one of the many exciting projects that came out of the Alliance in 2012, as well as a collaborative Song for Newcastle, an exhibition of photographs from around the world and a unique schools project which links schools in the Newcastle upon Tyne with overseas Newcastle schools. The aim is to continue to develop and strengthen these programmes and to continue to share in our aim of fostering greater international friendship. We hope this selection of poetry gives an example of what "home" means to our friends around the world.

With special thanks to:

Sheree Mack, Wajid Hussain and Catherine Graham (UK),

Ann Harley, A Gift of Art (Canada)

Jeanette Burgess Lopes, Ifa Lethu (South Africa),

Walter Friemel and Marieluise Kühnl (Germany),

The Hunter's Writers Centre (Australia),

Evelyne Zehr, Chancellerie de la Ville de Neuchâtel (Switzerland)

Miho Ishino, Shinshiro International Exchange Association (Japan).

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Echoes of the Tyne

The paving slabs on our street
are still the same concrete
we slapped with our trainers when we ran.
The back-lane was our Edgbaston,
straight and narrow.
We'd bowl and bat like Geordies –
bring the rain and the bad light.
We wouldn't stop
until the score was settled -
or when Mum called us in.

Martha's neddin-cake rests
like a full moon on the scullery workbench,
the smell of warm dough
wafting along the passage to the end-room
where Nancy keeps her savings
in a yellow-white chest of drawers.
She has no idea that every Monday, my mother
borrows a pound note, promising herself
she'll replace it by Friday, before Nancy clocks-off
at the liver-salts factory.

We were schooled at the local takeaway
in the art of earning.
Washing dishes put callouses
on our knuckles that made our Mum grimace.
"What kind of work can these hands do?"
she'd whisper.

In the close evening shade, rusty flecks
of light sit upon the water, slack rolling
in and out of shore, like tears between
our hearts. At the allotment, Mum grew
potatoes, spinach, peas but more
importantly strawberries, organic and
dipped in a bucket of cold water,
enjoyed in the hot summer.

This line of beauty we breathe in, as
sassy pinks die upon the water.

Edie has never married: never met
the man of her dreams, a man who
plays for United and bleeds Black
and White. He has a quiff like Elvis
and a voice like Pat Boone: smokes filter tip
cigarettes. He is as hard as December
and gentle as July; slightly bow-legged with
a glint in his eye like Russ Conway.
If ever he swears he puts tuppence in the cuss box.

The blossom tree on Croydon Road
sheds its momentary glory
and petals fall -
cling to the wet pavement
breaking like silent silver coins.
The thick silver sea crawls over
our toes; a cold clinging water, folding
in on itself – such a beauty
that keeps on giving. Sparkling russet
tones clinging like tears
between our hearts. Our hands grow slack.

Romance is played down for love is -
carrying the coal up three flights of stairs.
There will be two children, a boy
who can kick a ball like his father
and a girl who can kick even higher.
On Fridays,
 maybe Saturdays we'd
get a film on VHS
all of us would kick-back,
and watch it, late into the night.
We trace these last moments of beauty,
feeling the chill of the coming end.

Nothing else feels like the
antithesis of summer with
everything dripping
through the window giving a grey tinge.
A dreary tolerance for a Thursday Morning
But it's all in a day's work for a superstar.
The women we grew up with had tell-it-like-it-is
voices, o aye. They favoured vowels, vowels
that flex mouths like opera singers limbering up
for an aria. We hear the cawing gulls.
See their slack flight as they dive into the sea,
fighting for space and whites tears
of flesh.

They made soup from bones and
knitted anything from booties to balaclavas.
Bless them, for they breastfed their babies and
had bairns vaccinated via sugar cubes
for fear anyone might hurt them with a needle,
harsh tears between our hearts.

Remember the beauty because it's hard work
and calloused fingers that make true dreams
slip and slide as they may. We will grasp them,
bring them home. The women we knew never
complained out loud but made
their feelings known in a clash of pans.
Fish, deep in the water,
give up skins iridescent russet
as glassy eyes stare on their last beauty.

There's something lazy
sitting in school and not at home
on a beautiful Friday afternoon.
Waiting for the breeze that breathes summer,
we can use this energy to light dreams
with a blue tinge, just like water

seeping into the ground, slack,
giving and winding into the sea.
Secretly, we know that the heat of russet
flames are dampened by our tears.
Between the meeting of land and sea,
they believed in the Bible and best butter and
knew by heart, their Co-op dividend number.

On the way to school,
we're taking down criminal overlords
like a vigilante superhero,
In class, we dump doodles of delicious dreams
The women we knew, always
there waiting at the school gates, their headscarves
blowing like flags in the biting northeasterly wind.
Something warm to eat
and books to drip into when we get home.

The sky has changed,
clouds kissed with an orange tinge. The
slack pull of the moon over russet waves
breaking, this long travelled sea this
wide flowing water,
this river running through our minds,
carrying echoes of our hearts,
telling us this is home.

**Catherine Graham
Wajid Hussain
Sheree Mack, UK**

Newcastle, Australia

Take an aircraft,
from anywhere really,
and fly in
 across the Pacific.

Come in low.

See the convict-built breakwater
slowing the tides
for a smooth-harbour flow.
Note the city,
 southside,
 rising gently
 on colonial-drawn lines.

Northside,
 ships lie at dock.
coal-trains roll in
and scoop-loaders transfer
black-heavy cargo
to the bowels
 of now plimsoll-deep ships
 bound for venues
 somewhere ... everywhere.

Follow the river
and the University spreads
from the city
 its research and learning
among nurturing and relaxing
 native-tall grasses and trees.

Over the hill,

south a bit,
Lake Macquarie

sports sailboats and sailors
from daybreak to dusk
into star-reflecting nights.

Turn round and dip over the coast.

Watch surfboarders,
surfers and sand-players on
yellow-bright beaches
invent fun
.... over and over again.

You haven't seen the valley yet,
lush and rich,
nor its Aboriginal rock-art
and remnants from tribes
long here long
past.

You haven't seen
the art and theatre and dance
or even heard the music
this place does so well.

You haven't seen
the tugboats harbour-dance,
or the kindness and care
shared by people and groups.

You haven't seen inside
the Cathedral on the Hill,
beacon to ships,
to travellers and all,
survivor of earthquake,

of storms
and a great ship

beached fast on the sand like
a migrating whale
gone off-course.

Land now at the airport.

Newcastle Australia's
best felt from the ground
over coffees, in bars,
with friends, and loved ones.

It's a secret well kept
from the world on the run,
but it's willing to share
its rich treasure trove
with the free and the brave,
with the wise and discerning.

Valerie Shevels, Australia



Newcastle

I was born the village we speak of at
the end of a busy town street Mom
and Dad in Policing
and we swam in the old Lion's Pool.
But now I'm out in her country
I can see her through a veil of wheat
corn, apples, brand new homes
vantage point from end of my lane

Trent Flower, Canada

Newcastle, Canada

Old new
shadows blend
seasons glow all
is peace
Newcastle

Ann Harley, Canada

Where From Ye Be?

The streets are lined with trees so tall a
welcome sign for one and all.

The little village by the lake
the perfect place your home to make.

The trains whistle, loud and clear
with apple orchards, oh so near.

Pizza shops and pubs are three
at the grocery store, our friends we see.

Important events big and small
are celebrated at Town Hall.

Three church steeples are in our town
but "true" religion at the arena's found.

Triumph, defeat, laughter, tears

teams memories shared with beers.

At Christmas time we have a parade
Many floats, all hand made

When asked abroad "Where from Ye be?"
"Newcastle, Ontario is home for me."

Brent Matthews, Canada

What Newcastle means to me

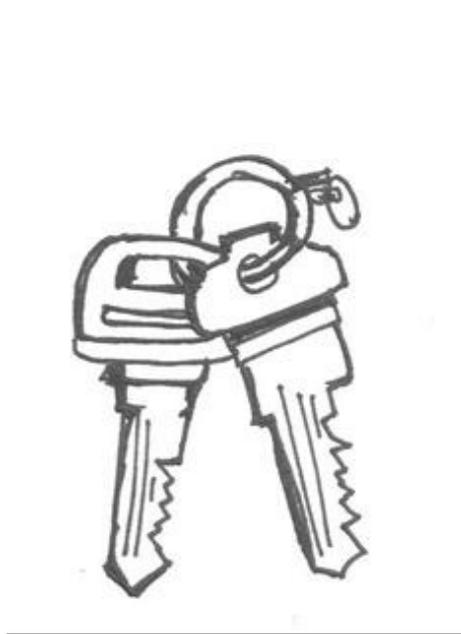
To be in a place BUILT on pride...
and over the centuries; hearing of all its strides,

heritage of the people coming together,
to BUILD up and not tear down...
to keep in perfect harmony of not just PEACE,
but our little town...

As different background from here and far...
BUILDING a bridge across this world,
bringing all Newcastles to be known as one.

What Newcastle means to me...
seeing this great township of opportunities
not just for one, but for all cultures therein.

Yvonne Thomas, Canada



Newcastle, Ontario

There is a small town in Ontario, where many folks seem to go.

An exquisite little community, full of love and unity.

The perfect spot to buy some land, begin the family you've always planned.

A place for youth to grow and learn, where parents need not concern.

A postal code of L1B, the place that holds your heart's key.

A place no one can outgrow, is Newcastle, Ontario!

Samantha Trudeau, Canada



Newcastle, Ontario

Village, you hold me
prescribe memories and dreams with your clear boundary
and when I'm in Timbuktu
you quench my thirst for home
always right there
by the water

Greg Ward, Canada



Neuburg

schlossfest umtanzt
hutschaubehütet
kunstbegeistert
naturbewußt
und kirchenfromm
blauumflossen
burgbewehrt
und grün umsäumt
ruhig und rührig
bunt und lebendig
bewahrend und freudig
bereit
für neues Geschmeide
am städtischen

Gerda Stutz, Germany

Neuburg - Donau

Hier steht ein mächtiges Schloß, das nie die Sterblichkeit berührt
In dieses hat Ottheinrich die zarte Susanna geführt.
Im duftigen Rosengarten lebendig das Brunnenwasser springt
Und glühendes Liebeswerben, - die Amsel betörend singt.

Das gleißende Abendrot spiegelt in den silbernen Wogen
Die Schwäne lassen sich nieder, im Schatten des Brückenbogen.
Es flüstert die Muschelgrotte in der warmen Nacht
Die Liebe der beiden ist wie ein Feuer entfacht .

Ein Park, der sich in die Windungen der Donau schmiegt
Und blühende Natur, wo der Duft nie versiegt.
Aus tiefer Liebe schenkte er Susanna ein kleines Jagdschloß
Durch die schattenreiche Allee ritt er oft hoch zu Roß.

Über Pflastersteine spazierten die Edlen - in Pelz und Gewand
Durch verträumte Gassen, immer Hand in Hand.
Die Bibliothek verschaffte dem Fürsten auch Ehre und Ruhm
Welche Schriften er auch las, sie wurden sein Eigentum.

Auch rauschende Festgelage mit Musik und Tanz,
Erotisch und füllig, doch mit vornehmer Distanz.
Die Bildungsreisen lenkten so oft seinen Schritt
Deshalb war sein Begehren: die Bücher müssen mit.

Für die Not seines Volkes verschloß er seinen Sinn
Die neue Burg war nur für die Edlen ein Gewinn Nur
stattliche Bürgerhäuser säumten die Straßen Seine
Devise war stets, Leben und Leben lassen.

Doch gibt es heute noch Zeiten, in denen das Schloss lebt
Heiter und beschwingt der Geist des Fürsten schwebt.
Durch die Räume hallt ein fröhlicher Gesang
In sonnenhellem Entzücken ertönt der jubilierende Klang

Brigitte Zechmeister, Germany

Haiku of Shinshiro

Tweeting birds
Shadows are cast on
Sakurabuchi

Moonlight
Spreading gradually
Across the rice terrace

From Mt. Ganbo
See Mt. Fuji in the distance
With sweat on the face

Shitaragahara
Hearing battle cries
First frog calls in the season

Mr. Tatsuo Natsume, Japan

School of sweet fish In
clear water flowing
Toyokawa River

Ms. Michiko Suganuma, Japan



Hi-Ondori
Against the summer sky For
the repose of the souls

Ms. Kyoko Hamaguchi, Japan

Summer is coming
Young leaves at the castle Full
of light delighting the eyes

Ms. Mitsue Fujii, Japan

The first tea of the season
Served first to no one But
the guests

Ms. Katsuko Nakajima

No Fun

It is no fun my friend
No joy
In the eye that blinks
From all these grim fields
With their predictable
Bumper harvest graves
Especially the children's assembly-line
In those black cemeteries
And the crude messages
Of apartheid slaughter
Between the lines of birth and death It
is no fun

Not at all funny
When suddenly every day
This conflagration of graves
Shapes questions
And the reasons why
Our young seedlings
This tender fruit of love
This softness of bone of brain
That even now needs a shield
My closed arms around
My full breast and heart
To give in all seasons
And the reasons why
This future is fertilized
With gun-powder
It is not funny at all

It is not a game at all
When explosives
Packed into some pieces of steel

Burst spread consume
My child's flesh
Burns then bone then marrow

Our blood waters
Their deserts of hate

These are no mere games
Of hide and seek
When children battle armoured trucks
Trap battalions with dare
It is no simple game
But war against
Hitler's sons and daughters

Lindiwe Mabuza, South Africa



The journey

The air I breathe the
soil I step on the
landscapes I see,
Newcastle, you define me.

Previously named Waterfall River Township
this is my home.
Named after the Duke of Newcastle
Newcastle, South Africa is my home.
Having been a coal mining powerhouse a
battleground for the Anglo-Boer War
a supply station for the first and second World Wars.
This is my home.
It defines who I am.

You are a mother of note.
Politicians, musicians, athletes

have all grown up under your shadow.
Mac Maharaj was born here.
Lucky Dube put you on the music map
Chief Albert Luthuli walked on your ground.
Anton Lembede drank your water. Dr.
Frank Mdlalose calls you home.
Ambassador Lindiwe Mabuza calls you home too. I
too, call you home.
So did the legendary boxer Theo Mthembu.
No, no, no, no, not only them,
many other heroes and heroines call you home.
Newcastle, your role in the liberation struggle shines bright,
brighter than the sun.
Newcastle, you define me.

Whether I was working hard from my palace at Leazes Terrace.
Whether I was gracing the streets of Europe and America.
Whether I was at St. James, the greatest church in the Toon.
Newcastle South Africa, you were still my home.

Newcastle, you didn't stop defining me when I left your shores,
you embraced me from afar.
Memories of you always made me to miss you.

I missed walking down Allen Street.
I missed the long queues waiting for my portion of chips at Porto. I
missed the views of the Majuba pass.

I have been around the globe, a long journey it was. I
need to quench my thirst.
Let me drink from the Ntshingwayo Dam. Newcastle, I
am back in your loving arms.
Let the *Newcastle Advertiser* update me on what you have been up to
Newcastle, you never stopped to define me.

Ndukuyakhe Ndlovu, South Africa

Hymne neuchâtelois

Nous sommes les enfants heureux
De la meilleure des patries;
Nous aimons ses coteaux ombreux,
Son doux lac, ses combes fleuries, Et
la paisible majesté
De ses grandes joux séculaires,
Et le soleil qui les éclaire,
Le soleil de la liberté!

Là-haut sur l'Alpe aux blancs sommets,
Aux jours anciens de notre histoire,
Nos aïeux déjà l'acclamaient
Quand il s'est levé dans sa gloire. Vers
d'autres destins emportés Poursuivant
ce rêve d'aurore,

Leurs yeux au loin cherchaient encore,
Le soleil de la liberté!

Mais voici qu'au son des tambours
Descend la jeune République;
Neuchâtel, sur ses vieilles tours,
Fait flotter la croix helvétique.
Béni soit Dieu dans sa bonté,
Et les hommes au fier courage, Qui
préparèrent sous l'outrage,
Le soleil de la liberté!

Ils furent les bons travailleurs
Qui pour les autres ensemencent;
Nous aussi dans des jours meilleurs,
Répondons le grain d'espérance, Afin
qu'au souffle des étés
La moisson du peuple grandisse
Moisson d'amour et de justice,
Au soleil de la liberté!

"Hymne Neuchâtelois" is the anthem of the Republic and Canton of Neuchâtel, Switzerland . The text was written by Henri Warnery



Hyem

Home

She welcomes with a smile as wide as the Tyne:
This city celebrates different voices.

Her daughters sold clothes, second-hand at Sandgate
as the boats sailed like long-lost lovers into Dean Street,
keeping their promise.

Reborn, her lassie sings a brand new song,
silencing the battalion of buses
that bully past the building societies,

while the lads that once danced for their daddies
push bairns in buggies, with one hand.

And still, people remain puddled
by the play of her spirited, underground rivers that
flow, like lifeblood right up to Spital Tongues.

She is a carnival of bridges skinning a heron-coloured sky.
Flooded with pride, she lands her logo
like kisses, on lamp-posts in Grey Street.

Catherine Graham, UK



Memphis Geordie Style

*“10 foot off
of
the ground”*

He's walking through Memphis,
Apparently

He's belting it out
with a raging need
dramatic pauses
to tell me how this place
enlightens him,

how he's unsure how it
makes him feel.
It made me think
what could I write about
my City
that's a little more than just
chanting
"Newcastle, Newcastle, Newcastle!"

on match day.

Maybe I could try
and paint
a nice watercolour
to capture
the bridge
and the castle keep.

Photography for the fog
on the Tyne
near the swing bridge -
but what
words
can I use
to share the *meaning*
of this place.

Pondering one evening
I walked home from the shops
with my two year old in tow.
Behind came

a couple of local burly lads
just into earshot,
effin' and blindin' away

until suddenly one
of them said:

No one knows where the name comes from.
Gregg's the bakers have said they christened
the bread because it was thrown
onto the oven floor.

Whatever, wherever, I can't believe
that ordinary bread dough makes
something so special.
Leftovers kneaded and rolled together,

thrown onto the oven floor,
smouldering amongst the ashes,
turned over and baked again.

Thick and flat straight out of the oven.
Finger burning hot, tear off a piece and
eat it straight away.

It's warm and gooey and takes me home.
When cooler grab another bit
and forget butter, spread with peas pudding.

Peas pudding hot
peas pudding cold
peas pudding in the pot
nine days old.

Cooled stottie cake, spread with peas pudding
stuffed with ham, delicious
for breakfast, lunch and tea.

The stottie cake
filling the gap crying with hunger
for generations of Northern folk.

I'm a Northern lass through and through,
cut through this black flesh
and see thick discs of stottie cake

rolling and wrapping around my body
to the core.

Sheree Mack, UK



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