

DETAILS OF NOMINATION – ARTHUR FRANCE

On behalf of various residents and community members, we would like to nominate Arthur France for the Leeds Award. Below are details of Arthur's key achievements through his lifetime.

Achievements & Awards

*** Awarded the Member of the British Empire (MBE) in recognition of his work for the Community and the citizens of the United Kingdom.**

1964: One of three people that pioneered and founded the United Caribbean Association (UCA).

1965: Secured a building for the UCA Headquarters and organised the first youth club for Caribbean Children in Chapeltown and Harehills, which included a Saturday School, set up a Steel Band.

1967: Initiated and became the Chairperson of the very first West Indian Carnival in Europe and is still the Chair to date. Helped and advised the setting up of other Carnivals in the UK. Organise the 1st Steel Band Competition in Leeds and maybe in the UK

1969 to 1972:Became president of the West Indian Student Union in Leeds.

1973: Was among members of the steering group to set up the Chapeltown Community Centre.

1982 to date:Represent West Indian Centre in the Leeds City Council Race Equality Advisory Forum.

1983: Together with a friend, pioneered a pilot scheme using computers as a teaching aid with a class of six children (Guinebigs). This was a great success.

1984: Established and managed New World Steel Orchestra School and won the Hansib Community National Award for his work in the Community.

1985: Became the Chair of Leeds West Indian Centre and still is.

1986: Caribbean Focus : Leeds host Concerts for 5 players, Trinidad and Tobago Casablanca and Catelli All Stars Steel Orchestra and Jamaica National Dance Theatre

1985 to 1987:Was a member of the national Steering group for Caribbean Focus and became coordinator for Leeds representing the Commonwealth Institute.Brought Casablanca and Catelli All Stars Steel Orchestra to Leeds for Concert Performances.Helped to set up the Chapeltown and Harehills Assisted Learning Computer School (CHALCS) and became the Chairman and Board of Governors.Took the New World Steel Orchestra down to London to perform for the Inauguration of the first four black members of Parliament.Took New World Steel Orchestra to and win three Championship Steel Band Competition

- 1988:** Taking the New World Steel Orchestra on a 8 day concert tour to Dortmund, West Germany, the twin city of Leeds by the request of the Lord Mayor of Leeds. Working at the Technorth ITEC Develop partnership with the Met University to help mature young people to develop their Education potential this was done by recruiting these young people on to Tech North computing & Electronic Course, teaching and mentoring them to achieve Higher Education Grades and enabling them to go on Access Courses which enables them to go on to University Main Course a great success
- 1989:** Spearhead the move and get the Leeds College to put the teaching of Steel pan Music along with other Caribbean music on their curriculum. Carnival on water with New World Steel Orchestra and a costume troupe on board a ferry from England to the Netherlands and back. Taking a Carnival Troupe and steel orchestra to the 18 nation European Carnival in Italy – 3 day Carnival. Sponsored by Leeds City Council took New World Steel Orchestra on an 8 days concert tour of Dortmund West Germany its twin city Spear head the initiative to upgrade the teaching of the Steel Band Music in Leeds Schools brought brought Dudley Nesbit over from Trinidad to upgrade this
- 1990:** Spearhead teaching of Steelband and other Caribbean music on the college curriculum and got Dr Geraldine Connor from Trinidad to develop and teach these courses
- 1991:** With Dr Geraldine Connor and Susan Pitter got the College of Music to purchase a 40 Steelpan Instruments for a Steel Orchestra from Lincoln Enterprise Trinidad & Tobago
- 1992:** Was awarded the Black Achievers Award as ambassador for the Community.
- 1993:** Pioneered the setting up of the Women Self-Help Group at the Leeds West Indian Centre.
- 1994:** Received a fellowship for the Yorkshire Black Achievers. In the same year became involved with the SEC Radio 4 Programme 'On a typical West Indian Family'.
- 1995:** Family of the week for the Big Breakfast Channel 4 Television Monday – Friday 5 Days
- 1997:** Presented a programme on Black Children in Education for BBC Radio 4 and won first prize of the year (Radio Factual Documentary Features) 'BLACK ON BLACK'.
- 2000:** With colleagues set up the Stephen Lawrence Award under the banner of the Leeds City Council Education standard to highlight his death. This was done by some raciest young men; he was murdered because he was black
- 2002:** Arthur and Family featured in the Queen's Golden Jubilee TV Programme. The Spirit of Leeds (Civic Trust Leeds)
- 2007:** Initiated and became Chair of the Leeds Bi-Centenary Transformation Project secured £480,000 from Heritage Lottery and other funds to run this project for 2 years. Invited to Downing Street to meet with the Prime Minister Tony Blair for the

success of securing the Bi-Centenary Transformation Project. Award to Commemoration of the 800th Anniversary of Leeds as a Commercial City

2011: Organised with Dr Geraldine Connor to come and put on a full day Steel pan Symposium here in Leeds.

2012: Lifetime achievement Award presented by Hamara Community Award.

As can be seen from the achievements Arthur works tirelessly in the area and could be described as the heart and soul of Chapeltown West Indian Carnival. His reputation precedes him, but the man himself is a larger than life character with an unbelievable amount of energy. He continues to drive the Carnival forward which raises the reputation of not only Chapeltown, but that of Leeds and beyond.

His work draws in young and old to work together and takes community spirit to a whole new level.

Arthur is currently working with support of the Council and the Trinidad High Commission to develop a carnival business plan for 2017 to give the carnival international recognition. For 47 years, the Carnival's main resource has been people and goodwill. An estimated 200,000 plus volunteer hours per year are generated by an organisation with no paid staff. That goodwill has helped to establish Leeds Carnival as one of the UK's most respected and authentic Caribbean Carnivals – but it can only take us so far. We believe that with an outstanding artistic programme, supported by strategic partnerships and visionary ambitions, Europe's longest running Caribbean carnival can become the best carnival in Europe.

We have embarked on a programme of development work to establish a way forward for making those ambitions and vision a reality. The Council has committed to providing essential officer time for ongoing development, including support for a feasibility study and business plan, culminating in the milestone 50th Anniversary in 2017.

“Whilst Arthur's has been a central figure in the city's life for 50 years he is also focussed on legacy and passing down to the young the great sense of responsibility, boundless potential and determination that his actions have consistently embodied. This is one of the reasons his two main passions of carnival and steel pan have grown as new generations have enthusiastically rallied to add another layer to the city's cultural output by building on the shoulders of a giant.”

Franklin Riley LCC

“I am happy to nominate Arthur France MBE for the Leeds Award in recognition of his establishing Leeds West Indian Carnival for over 47 years, bringing a vision and his dream to reality.

I have worked with Arthur for a number of years as his deputy to his Carnival Chairman role and he has inspired me to want me to be part of such a wonderful event that has touched the lives of the residents of Leeds, the thousands of visitors who have come to our city because of Carnival and in particular those of us who have been a part of his wonderful vision.

Arthur is very hard working, sincere and dedicated to what he genuinely feels has been his responsibility to steer the Carnival to where it is today, regardless of the challenges and criticisms he at times has had to endure – nothing stops him. I have seen first-hand how that dedication has inspired many – young people in particular to achieve their full potential whether that is through education or involvement in the arts.

Carnival has brought so many people and communities in our city together like no other event. It really has changed lives, encouraged understanding, harmony and togetherness and I cannot imagine a Leeds without Carnival. That is all down to Arthur.

I hope that this nomination and hopefully the award will motivate and encourage him to continue making Leeds a better place. We are proud to be such a diverse city and Carnival is the perfect reflection of our diversity. Arthur truly deserves to be appreciated for the amazing hard work he does.

I am proud to say Arthur has inspired me in my own personal development as an educator and a contributor to my community. Like so many in Leeds, I am indebted to him and the Leeds Award would be the perfect gesture to say 'thank you' for all he has done."

Miss Brenda Farara BA Hons. (Teaching)

"My comments would be that you could not meet a finer resident of Leeds.

From the time he arrived from his home island in the Caribbean he has embraced Leeds and taken all its residents to his large heart, especially the children.

He has instigated many national and internationally acclaimed programmes and was at the forefront of the group organising the first Caribbean Carnival in Europe and that was here in Leeds.

His work with the New World Steel Orchestra has given so much joy to many and given an opportunity to excel for his many students."

Cllr Jane Dowson

Chapel Allerton Ward Councillor &

Deputy Executive Board Member for Children's Services (Education)

"As the pioneer of the Leeds Carnival, Arthur has dedicated all his life in developing this work in Leeds and throughout Europe. I believe Arthur deserves the Leeds Award for services to the community and carnival."

Cllr Mohammed Rafique

Chapel Allerton Ward Councillor

"Arthur France is one of the most inspirational people I know.

From a personal point of view I gladly credit him with setting me on a career path which today see's me working for a well known law firm as well as 'following in his footsteps' as much as I can by giving back to my community on a voluntary basis.

As a young single mother, he encouraged and guided me towards a role in administration where I learnt skills which I now use on a day to day basis in my career and community roles.

As Secretary for Leeds West Indian Carnival and for New World Symphony Steel Orchestra I have seen first hand how his passion, drive and vision have resulted in two of the country's most respected carnival arts organisations - delivering carnival arts, the sound of Carnival and the Caribbean and most importantly how Arthur has lead both organisations to inspire young people across Leeds.

There is no question that if it was not for him children in Leeds would not be being taught steel pan in our schools and many of the teachers delivering pan lessons would not be able to do so. That in itself is a huge achievement!

Under his leadership he has steered individuals to give back to the wider Leeds community by taking up unpaid, voluntary roles on committees and board memberships. He has somehow managed to engage young people over two and three generations to take part in the first and subsequent Carnivals, to learn how to play steel pan, to strengthen their academic potential and most of all to work with others to make things happen. I have personally seen how he has taken someone off the 'wrong track' and helped to nurture them to become successful entrepreneurs and citizens of Leeds.

Arthur has a knack of seeing something in others that they might not see for themselves – he certainly saw something in me as a young woman and I am proud to nominate him for the well deserved Leeds Award. It is my small way of saying 'Thank You Arthur'."

Debra Jeffers