

pan podium feature
NEW WORLD center stage with
STEEL ORCHESTRA

'Life is what you do and failure is a word that simply should not be accepted'

by Asha France

New World Steel Orchestra, originally founded in 1984 by Arthur France MBE was re-launched twenty years later in 2004. Arthur was born in Nevis the sister island of St. Kitts. Among the most lasting achievements has been his promotion of the first ever Leeds West Indian Carnival in 1967, throughout his life he has had a love of steel pan music.

From the 1960s in Leeds when he established, 'The Gay Carnival Steel Band', he has had ambitions to raise the profile of steel pan. At the same time he has pushed to encourage young people to learn to play. Out of this ambition the New World Steel Orchestra was born in 1984.

Now, in retirement, Arthur continues to press for the establishment of a fully funded centre for a Leeds Steel Youth Orchestra in Chapeltown, Leeds. NWSO's re-establishment was driven by their quest to encourage the participation of local, young people in all aspects of the steel orchestra.

They also wanted to offer the opportunity to facilitate the coming together of young people to enjoy the music of their culture, for them to express themselves through sound, to be creative, to stand proud and to appreciate their heritage, to allow young people to appreciate, learn, enjoy and embrace a culture not belonging to them, but a culture playing such an important role within part of modern day society, in turn allowing all



to come together in a common and shared heritage. Almost 6 years after the re-launch, The New World Steel Orchestra is proud to boast of not only three (3) youth orchestras comprising of sixty (60) young members with ages ranging from five (5) to twenty one (21), but also an adult orchestra that has dazzled and wowed audiences.

Spectacular performances which include, the celebrations for Leeds eight hundredth year (800th) year as a Commercial city with HRH Princess Anne, the Black Police Association, York Minister, The Sage, Carnival Messiah @ Harewood House and much more.

New World Steel Orchestra has developed rapidly over the years since it's re-form. One of the orchestra's aims was - 'to have a fifty (50) strong, highly professional youth steel orchestra, not only for young people and the community but one which is recognized locally, nationally and internationally by the year 2010'. Their aim has been met and surpassed.

New World Steel Orchestra is about developing the whole child. NWSO is fully committed to the Every Child Matters agenda put forth by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. As such at NWSO they run alongside and after rehearsals, an informal educational program, which allows the young members to not only learn about the history and culture of the steel pan, but also to thrive and develop personally and socially.



Arthur France MBE

The young people also take part in activities such as art and crafts, painting, acting, dancing and team games.

NWSO is proud of the support and admiration it receives from the community and the City of Leeds. Leeds City Council has been a supporter of the orchestra, its aims and achievements, as well as its place in today's society for some time. NWSO is proud of the many partnerships it has forged with local and fellow charities and community organisations.

NWSO is always actively encouraging new members to join, and welcomes any interest from young children and adults alike. NWSO continues working tirelessly to keep the steel band culture alive.

Pan Podium acknowledges the laborious efforts of all members of the NWSO and wishes them every success in future.

They hold classes for beginners and intermediate players. If



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Photographs courtesy NWSO.

you would like to learn 'The Art of Pan', classes are weekly

- 8:00 pm - 9.30 pm Wednesday (intermediate)
- 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm Sundays (beginners)
- 6:00 pm - 7.30 pm Sundays (intermediate)

Their classes are taught by NWSO's arranger & tutor Dudley Nesbitt & assistant tutor Melvin Zakers. Both tutors are renowned for teaching steel pan in a number of schools in the West Yorkshire area.

Whatever your requirements rest assured the New World Steel Orchestra can create that unique musical experience to thrill or calm any audience, from a local community event to a concert or corporate function.

NWSO has the flexibility to provide a band tailored for your needs. With over 40 years of expertise their dedicated team of people can offer support and advice to help make your event a success.