

Room naming for Woodhouse Community centre

The Systems group want input on a variety of names for the new-and-old space that are now available to us in Woodhouse Community Centre.

We have approximately 10 possible names for eight possible spaces, the final decision will be made by the Systems group, but we'd like to know if you have any feelings about the shortlist.

Having talked to our volunteers and members, we settled on the idea of naming rooms after people we like and respect who have a connection the local area.

Please feel free to write your thoughts on the sheets. If you have extra information about them, that's also useful. You can write it down or email it to info@oblongleeds.org.uk.

Mary Gawthorpe

was suffragette, socialist and trade unionist born in Woodhouse in 1881.

She was imprisoned and beaten for her beliefs in a universal suffrage.

She spoke at a huge rally of the Suffragettes on Woodhouse Moor in 1908, just a stones throw from where she was born at 5 Melville Street, Woodhouse.

The Wikipedia page describes her as "a merry militant saint"!

John Egan

John Egan the long time park keeper and head gardener of Woodhouse Moor who recently retired after 34 years

Doreen Tinker

I think one of the rooms should be called The Doreen Tinker room. Doreen MBE was an amazing community activist, who did so much for Woodhouse - setting up community groups, running an advice centre and taking on difficult housing and tenant issues. Doreen died earlier this year and there were hundreds of people at her funeral, inc me!

Pat Regan

Pat lived in Hyde Park and was based in Oblong at the time of her death in 2008

Ushawant Kaur/ Usha

Usha has been quietly doing extraordinary community bridging events in this area and other parts of the city for at least the last 15 years I've known her, including multi-lingual poetry events and at least one amazing day at the old Liberal club (now TJs) some years ago, which featured local poets, singers, theatre company, belly dancers, irish drummers, chinese classical musicians, artist's exhibitions and asian dancing & cuisine (and probably a lot more I've forgotten). She's brought artists & writers together through the 'Living Artist's' movement, and inspired a couple of local multi-cultural poetry books, Gathered Leaves & Scattered Leaves - the latter which contained poems in Bengali, French, Gujurati, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu, with their translations, and where those languages don't use a non-Roman script, a transliteration from the original script in to Roman script, (which I thought was pretty damn cool!).

Opinion so far

- Usha's used Oblong in the past so she'd be one of our own. She's in her seventies now, living in Little London & I think it would be good for Oblong to honour an Asian elder.

Wilson Armistead (1819 -1868) -

a leader of the Leeds Anti-Slavery Association. He wrote a number of books aimed at the American market and his "A tribute for the negro" (1848) which discusses the 'pernicious influence of slavery' and mounts an impassioned defence of African cultures is still used in American universities as a text to discuss slavery. He lived in Virginia Cottage, which was on the site of where Lyddon Hall now stands

Pablo Farque (1796 – 1871)

was the first black circus proprietor in Britain. Buried in Woodhouse Cemetery.

Louis Le Prince (1842 - 1890?)

captured the first moving pictures in the world in Leeds (three years before Edison and four years before Auguste and Louis Lumière)

- We think this would be appropriate for whichever room is used by the Media collective

Ned Ludd/George Mellor

Local Luddites

George Mellor was leader of the Marsden Luddites

- We would enjoy the humour of naming our server room after a Luddite

Thomas Garforth

first established the Methodist chapel on Woodhouse Street.

Isabella Ford /Tom McGuire

Local radical socialist pioneers

McGuire was an influential socialist and trade unionist. He was a co-founder of the Leeds Socialist League and the architect of the famous Leeds Gasworkers strike of 1891.

In addition to being a political thinker and activist, he was a prolific poet.

Tom McGuire is buried in Beckett Street cemetery, Leeds.

Ford was born into a wealthy family of radical quakers; her father was an influential Leeds solicitor and she had two sisters and a brother, who all became politically active.

She was very active in the suffragist (rather than suffragette) movement, and also devoted a lot of time and resources to the role of women in the Trade Union movement, founding in 1896 the Women's Trade Union Club in Belgrave Street, Leeds. She was an important figure in Leeds and West Yorkshire through the early years of the Labour Party.

Isabella Ford was born in The Mount on Clarendon Road in Leeds 2, now demolished.

She is buried at the Friends' Meeting House, New Adel Lane, North Leeds.

