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ERS Engine Room Section

A Caribbean-American Cultural Not-For-profit Organization

“Together As One”

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ERS Thoughts

In the wake of the tragic events of September 11th our thoughts and prayers are with the victims, their families and the global community for peace and unconditional diplomacy to be the guiding principles of our Leaders' daily activities - Good will always triumph over evil.

ERS also extend our sympathies on the passing of “Chic Magoo”, one of the early innovators of pan.

ERS THANK YOU

ERS is eternally grateful for the generosity and sponsorship of the following corporations and individuals without their support our participation in this years Carnival would have been virtually impossible, thank you!!!

- Thomas Construction- a pillar in our community
- ODF Construction - once again you literally carried us
- Rhythm & Spice - you keep us Hot and groovy
- Laxton Records - for keeping it real
- Rusty's liquor - taking us to higher heights
- T's Pub- welcome and the best is yet to come
- JL Hammett - decorations are your specialty
- Rick Power & the entire Rodman Family - we know you have our back

- Craig Tornberg, Jen Mena & the New England Revolution - you love futbol. Great fun @ the Jamaica vs. USA match
- Michelle Johnson, Dan Lane & Anheuser Busch - you are truly the king
- Emil, Mike, Seth and the entire Artsign Family - a sign from above
- Hudson & the rest of the Word Sound Production Family - bring the noise
- Dave Francis, Gary Bowman & the Scorpio Crew - lets do it again, you are “Da Bomb”
- Andy and crew at Schell printing - there are a lot of copies, but you are the original
- Levi's Restaurant - what can we say, keep it cooking
- Richard Heath and Family - substantive image is everything
- And last but not least Cassius Moore and Family - we could not have done it without you.

We would be remised if we did not acknowledge the tireless contribution and public service that our elected officials put forward every day to make state and local government more accessible and to bring the Carnival to fruition; Representative Gloria Fox and Staff, Representative Shirley Owens Hicks and Delores Richardson, City Councilor Chuck Turner and Senator Diane Wilkerson - we cannot thank you enough for all your hard work.

Carnival 2001 NOTES

Inaugural Awards

A couple of band members, on account of their enthusiasm, inspired us to acknowledge their contribution in making ERS (AKA "Da Mudd Band") the peoples choice on the road. Whether the organizers of Carnival want to recognize it or not, we know that we are the peoples choice for band of the year. We keep the spirit of Trinidad Style Carnival alive and well in Boston. If anyone wants to dispute this fact they must first be willing to consult Mr. Keith Shephard, reporter for the Mirror Newspaper from Trinidad and Tobago and a frequent visit to Boston for Carnival, and he will unequivocally tell you that his favorite band is "Da Mudd Band". To ERS this is an opinion that we give a lot of credit because Mr. Shephard plays Mudd mas on Carnival Tuesday in Trinidad with Brian "Tico" Skinner's band every year. Tico Skinner has played Mudd mas on Carnival Tuesday for over 20 years and counting. In any event, so much for the side bar lets get back to the matter at hand. And the awardees are: Laureen Lennard for most creative costume, Roderick Lewis for most authentic aboriginal appearance, and a man known to us only by the name "Shabba" is presented with the spirit of carnival award. We have been told that this man, Shabba, was last seen Labor Day weekend in Brooklyn, NYC drinking something from to separate brown paper bags. And so goes

the legend of the man they call "Shabba". Congratulations to all of our awardees, and see you next year in all your splendor. Shabba's notification of his award will be placed in a sealed bottle and drop in the Boston Harbor for next day delivery.

Special Thanks go out to the Dineasa, Annie, Angela, Pauline, Chrissy, Sheldon, Debra W., Roots, Mas, Trevy, Ramiro, Shawnie, Rhonda, Nikki and small man Errol from California, Dr. Roz from Toronto, Clyde and Melrose from DC, Alleyne/Taylor family, and Cheryl, Nicky and the Mary Innis Social Club Crew. We look forward to seeing you all next year.

Special Shoutout to all the members of the Cross Cultural Committee and the Carnival Committee - lets keep working towards a common good.

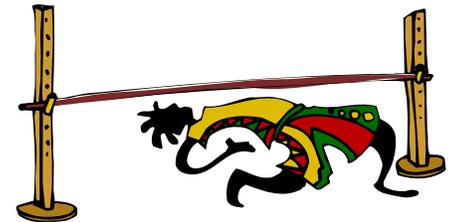
Big Up to the Washington, DC Mudd Band ("Garage Boyz") Jerry, Andy Mix, Brian Regis, Andrew and Crew continue to hold it down - Much respect!!! ERS says thank you to our band members, who made our 2001 presentation one of our best efforts. More than 100 costumed revelers danced and jumped to the sounds of DJ Glen. We have lots of pictures posted on our website. So check your self out at engineroomsection.com.

Missing in Action Bulletin

This year ERS was missing several of its' prominent band members on the road, but we have been assured by these individuals that God willing they will be here next year for

the bacchanal. The NYC connection of Joe and Tom were unable to make it for personal reasons. Trinidad and Tobago nationals Kathleen, Ernest, House Cat, Joe G., Bajan Iley, and Floridian Ana were also missing in action. Bostonian Avril and Joy were not issued the appropriate documents to play mas this year and could only watch from the sideline. It may have appeared that the show went on without you, but in hindsight your presence was sorely missed in spite of the gallant efforts of Trinidadian nationals Shabba and Liddell.

News Flash from the Lighter Side, fresh off the press, there has been a Shabba sighting at the intersection of Tremont St. and Columbus Ave. near the Roxbury Community College Campus yesterday morning at approximately 2:30am. It appears Shabba was being a good Samaritan and was assisting the local lamppost to stand up straight. Apparently this random act of kindness lasted for a little over 15 minutes (inside joke).



Point of Emphasis for Carnival 2002 – ERS

Engine Room Section would like to see the Carnival Committee and the Bandleaders Association take effective steps to make the 2 so called “bandleaders liaisons” positions on the Carnival Committee more functional and accountable to its constituents. We would like to see the responsibilities and duties for the Liaisons’ positions clearly defined, for example whose duty it is to notify the bandleaders of upcoming meetings and specifics on reasonable advance notification of meetings. Having a clear understanding of the term limitation for the positions or are the 2 individuals currently in the positions lifetime appointees? Some discussion relative to this issue should occur during the upcoming months of 2001 and early 2002.

ERS would also like to see the written copy of the proposed recommendations generated from the forum/panel discussion the Cross Cultural Committee held at Unity on Thursday, September 20. The forum primarily dealt with the Media coverage of the shootings that coincidentally and unfortunately occurred on Carnival Day - Saturday, August 25. All of the forum’s panelist and attendees express some level of disgust and frustration with the media coverage of the shootings and the Carnival. The two separate events were treated as if they were connected. As panel member Felix Arroyo stated,

“the media coverage gave the impression that the shootings took place on account of the Carnival... which we all know is simply not the case.” To create such a causal relationship between the two separate events is irresponsible and totally unfair to the decent hardworking folks in the Caribbean/American community. To make such a connection is ridiculous and the same as saying that the shootings that occurred in downtown Boston the following weekend had some relationship or connection to the nationally observed Labor Day holiday - how ridiculous does that sound? If our memory serves us correctly the Cross Cultural Committee was going to draft recommendations to present to the Carnival Committee on some of the ideas generated at the forum on ways to have better relationships with the media - We are hereby calling on the members of the Cross Cultural Committee to provide us with a copy of the proposed recommendations. Big respect to Boston Police Officer Danny Morson for his insightful comments and participation on the panel. We need your leadership and voice on the Carnival Committee. Big respect also to the honorable Mayor Thomas Menino for his commitment to keep the Carnival in the Roxbury/Dorchester community. ERS welcome the opportunity to work closer with you to ensure the growth and stability of the Carnival and the Caribbean/American community.



*Call ERS for information on pictures and check out the website:
engineroomsection.com*

Sweet Music From the Music Factory

Get your groove on. Check out the Music Factory Volumes I and II CDs. These hot and spicy CDs are guaranteed to chase away your blues. Call ERS

T-shirts Etc.

ERS polo shirts and sized baseball caps with embroidered Logo on sale now - proceeds go to the further development of our website.

You can also still purchase fabulous ERS T-shirts or Trini rags.

T-shirts (white with ERS logo)

- Sizes: 2x-large

Price: 1 for \$15.00, 2 for \$20.00
 “Trini” Rags

- Trinidad colors

Price: 1 for \$6.00, 2 for \$10.00

- Black

Price: \$10.00

ANOTHER LOOK AT THE HISTORY OF THE STEEL BAND PART III

By Sam Saldenha

As usual there were the usual contests for Carnival 1950. The Beauty Queens' Contests and the Steel band Competition were the main attractions on Carnival Sunday night. Bands played a variety of tunes from calypsoes to classics. Casablanca stole the show playing Chopin's "Nocturne in E flat, and from all indications was a well-deserved win. It was the first time a classical piece was played by a steelband, and that started a revolution in steel bands choice of tune.

By that time steel band members were considered outcasts of society, and there were the usual confrontations with the law enforcement agencies, among them, the Police. And again members from different bands continue to wage war between and among the bands. However, there are names, which stood out in helping to change this image. Most note-worthy were Lennox Pierre, Carlyle Keer and Sydney Gallop, who tried to create a harmonious relationship among steel bands men. A Steel band jamboree at the Cocorite Youth Center later that year, led to the formation of the Steel band Association, and the executives chosen were Lennox Pierre, Carlyle Keer, Sydney Gallop, Nathaniel Critchlow and Oscar Pyle.

A closer look at the names would show that Nathaniel

Critchlow was a trade union executive, Lennox Pierre was branded a Communist therefore one could question if there was an ulterior motive with these gentlemen aligning themselves with the steelband movement. Were they using the movement as a political base of support? Never the less, a series of concerts were organized, one at the Empire Cinema on St. Vincent street – which was later burnt- another in San Fernando, and yet another in Oropouche, bringing the new sound to the people.

As mentioned before Carnival days was synonymous with steel band clashes (fight), and in an effort to end these fights, and foster better relationships among the bands the Steel band Association created T.A.S.P.O – Trinidad All Steel Percussion Orchestra. It was made up of one representative from ten bands under the leadership of Lt. Joseph Griffith of the St. Lucia Police band. This band would eventually represent Trinidad & Tobago at the Festival of Britain, held to commemorate the Allied Victory over Germany and Japan. The method adopted to form this band was that, all steel bands belonging to the Steel Band Association should nominate two members, and from that total one representative would be selected from twenty bands. Twenty-three names were submitted, but on further reflection they realized that twenty players would be too costly, and so it was reduced to eleven (11) members.

Upcoming Events

Band Members' after work appreciation party on **Friday, November 30** from 6:00pm to 10:00pm at the Holiday Inn (Nightgames) in Somerville. Follow-up reception from 10:00 pm onward. Call (617) 524-0539 for info.

Next Issue

- Significance of costume portrayal.
- Feature Island- St Vincent
- Caribbean Poetry

Local Trini Radio Stations

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you can listen to these stations live on the air.

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History of steel band cont'd

The eleven members chosen were:

Theo Stephens from Free French – San Fernando, Belgrave Bonaparte from Southern Symphony – Oropouche. Andrew De Labistide from Chicago – East Dry River (Port of Spain), Philmore Davidson from Syncopators (later became City Syncopators) – Quarry Street (Port of Spain); Patsy Orman Haynes from Casablanca – East Dry River (Port of Spain), Winston “Spree” Simon from Tokyo – East Dry River (Port of Spain). Dudley Smith from Rising Sun in Belmont, Ellie Mannette From Invaders in Woodbrook, Sterling Betancourt from Crossfire, Granville Sealey from Tripoli, and Anthony Williams from North Stars, the latter three bands from St. James.

Even though Granville Sealey was chosen, he did not make the trip as Sonny Roach of Sun Valley from St. James subsequently replaced him. What is ironic is that Sonny Roach fell ill on the way, and never rejoined the band.

Be aware that some historians continue to state that Granville Sealey made the trip, which is incorrect. My source is Anthony Williams of North Star.

All the players chosen were Ping Pong or tenor player (i.e. they played the melody). Lt. Griffith introduced the chromatic steel band. Prior to that, on the Ping Pongs in some bands were tuned chromatically. The bass boom comprising three

55-gallon oil drums were introduced. Prior to this All Stars and Chicago were the only steel bands which had one player playing more than one bass pan – they had two, each were caustic soda drums.

The four official tuners appointed were Ellie Mannette, Sterling Bentacourt, Andrew Delabistide and Philmore Davidson. Ellie who tuned the bass wanted to play it, but was discouraged and advised to stay on the Ping Pong, as he was already known as a Ping Pong player. The others on the Ping Pong were Theo, Patsy, Andrew, Spree and Granville. On single second (or alto Pong) were Sterling and Belgrave. On two pairs of Tenor Boom were Dudley and Tony (Anthony Williams), and Philmore on the bass. While the tenor booms and the altos were tuned alike, the Ping Pongs were tuned in various styles to suit the styling of the players respective bands. Tony recalled that the tenor booms were tuned from biscuit drums, which tone he did not like, and as a result he tuned his own from two 55 gallon oil drums, which was accepted.

Some of the tunes played by the band were “Touseli”s Serenade”, “After Johnny drink meh rum”, “Jamaica Rhumba”, “Golden Earrings”, “Figuray”, “Mambo Jambo”, and “God save the Queen”. The band gave concerts in Port of Spain, San Fernando, Perseverance Club, Country Club and Government House to raise funds for the trip. Other bands pitched in by giving concerts of their own to help raise funds.

Sir Hubert Rance the governor made a public appeal, and public donations poured in.

The band left Trinidad late in the afternoon aboard the S.S. San Mateo and arrived in Martinique the following day, where they remained for five days, and performed in a few concerts. The next stop was Guadeloupe, where they stayed for a few hours before traveling on to Bordeaux, France. As mentioned before, Sonny Roach, who replaced Granville Sealey became ill in Martinique, and remained for medical attention. He was to rejoin the band in London together with Beryl McBurnie, but for some unknown reason never did.

The band arrived in Bordeaux, France on 24th July 1951, and later that evening traveled by train to Paris. They arrived the following day, had a brief stay, and boarded another train to Calais.

The band crossed the English Channel in the SS Invicta, and landed at Dover, where they took another train, and reached London at 9 p.m. in daylight. One could well understand how the members felt, seeing daylight for the first time at that time of the day. The band stayed at King’s Court Hotel, London, and the first engagement was over the British Broadcasting Corporation (B.B.C.) on a program entitled “In town tonight”. The other performances were at the Colonial Office, on Television, at the Festival, and also made recordings at a recording

History of steel band cont'd
company.

For approximately two weeks the band had no engagements, but continued practicing in the basement of Edric O'Connor's Flat, where they learnt among other tunes - "Blue Danube Waltz". There was a hurricane relief fund for the West Indies, where they were able to show off their skills. Two of the players (Dudley and Theo) got home sick, and wanted to return home, but because the contract was signed for three months they had no other choice but to stay on. Fortunately, the band received a two weeks contract with the Savoy Hotel, where the band played in a Cabaret show.

On the final night there, they traveled to Edinburgh – Scotland- to fulfill another contract, playing for a chain of dance halls called "The Mecca Dance Halls". Places they performed were Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester and Tottenham.

The tour also had its humorous moments. The members did not like the food, as it was not highly seasoned. On one occasion Beryl McBurnie made a pelau, (which was described as a rare treat). She suggested to the Chef of the hotel that West Indians like sweet foods. The Chef willing to please prepared the curry with sugar, but was a mess, and unable to be consumed. As the tour was winding down, they met a Trinidadian by the name of Chris Leimett, who advised them not to return to Trinidad as yet. Five members, Sterling

[Betancourt], Belgrave [Bonaparte], Philmore [Davidson], Patsy [Orman Haynes] and Anthony [Williams] decided to remain. They asked Lt. Griffith for the pans, but were turned down. Once more the band got a two-week contract in Paris, to perform at the "Medrano Circus, and left for Paris on 15th October, after securing their baggage at Edric O'Connor's Flat.

By the time they fulfilled their contract they all just wanted to get back home. At the last moment Sterling had a change of heart, and returned to London, where he remains to day. A few years ago he was given an honorary Ph.D., by a University in England. Ellie Mennette was the only person who got up to see him off. The band left Paris on the evening of 22nd November, traveled to Bordeaux by train, and left Europe aboard the S.S. Barfleur the next day. On 5th December they band arrived in Martinique, overnighed and left on another ship, arriving in St. Lucia the same day. The band spent three days in St. Lucia, giving concerts with the Police Band under the direction of Lt. Griffith. They boarded the S.S. Lady Nelson on 9th December, and took three days to reach Trinidad, as the ships made calls at St. Vincent, Barbados and Grenada. One could well imagine the triumphant return of this band. It is said that Trinidad came out to greet their heroes.

The next year – 1952 – is significant, because it was the

first time that steelbands were included in the Music Festival. "Boys Town" from Point Cumana – Carenage – led by Glen Beterand won the Competition playing "You are my heart's delight" along with the test piece. Among the comments made by the Adjudicator, Dr. Sydney Northcote, was that steel bands should not attempt the Classics, as they could not play sustained notes. He told "Free French", who played "Handel's Largo" that they did not know as much music as Handel did, and that they should not change his music. In those days bands would learn the melody correctly, but alter the harmony to suit themselves. This was not intentional, because at that time the arrangers lacked proper music ability. The tunes were usually learnt by ear.

Dudley Smith on the Ping Pong Solo competition performed "Body and Soul", together with the test piece.

It was during this year that Dixie Land produced the double strumming pan, the forerunner of the double second or alto pan. There is another story to this, as Anthony Williams already had produced a double strumming pan. However, while his was hung from a wooden stand, the pans from Dixie Land were welded together using a steel bar on top and below. This meant in order to play the pans, the player had to be seated with the pans resting on his legs. And slowly but surely the pans began appearing on stands.

History of steel band cont'd

1953 is one of the biggest watersheds in Steel band history as the Spider Web was introduced. This is the accepted note placement on the tenor pan. It is easily identified, as all the sharps and Flats are on the left side, and the natural notes on the right. I will speak about the Spider Web some time in the future, but it got its name through the markings (grooving), which separates the notes. A spider web is easily identified. Today it is not called the Spider Web as tuners use the rounded note formation. I once asked a tuner why he did not groove his pan in the Spider Web design, and he confessed that it was a very difficult pan to tune.

Carnival 1954 was the first time that the Public saw these new Ping Pongs on the road. After Carnival the Music Festival preliminaries began. North Stars was the only band to appear with their pans on stands, fully suspended. All others were still using straps around their necks. "Southern All Stars" were the eventual winners playing "Anna", "Trinidad All Stars" was runner-up; their tune of choice "La Meir". The Adjudicator – Dr. Herbert Wiseman – was high in praise for Theo Stephens of Southern All Stars for his virtuosity on the tenor pan.

Again, Dudley Smith won the Ping Pong Solo competition for the second time consecutively. He played Minuet in G. Dr. Wiseman remarked, that he would have liked Beethoven to

hear his tune rendered on a Ping Pong.

In 1955, "Skokiaan" and "Happy Wanderer" (Valerie) were the top tunes on the road. At this time, more and more bands were discarding the caustic soda and biscuits drums for the oil drums. Eman Thorpe of Crossfire, decided to tune the 55-gallon oil drum, cut off the tune part to a depth of 4" to 6". The top of the caustic soda drum was also cut off, leaving it opened at both ends, and then the tuned top of the 55-gallon oil drums was welded on, making a lot lighter to carry.

Later in the year, there was the Caribbean Exhibition, and the Steel Band Association organized a steel band competition. "Happy Wanderer" (Valerie) was the test piece. Boys Town, Katzenjammers, Spellbound and North Stars all won their respective groups. In the final held two weeks later, the test piece was changed to "Skokiaan". North Stars won, and Boys Town was the first runner up.

Carnival 1956 is perhaps the most memorable Carnival. Two things of significance: For the first time steel bands became mobile. That is to say some of the instruments were now on wheels. The second is, for the first time a long playing records of steel bands was made on the street, by an American name Cook, and is considered a collector's item. On the record is North Stars playing "Puerto Rican Mambo", and is identified by someone calling out to a player in the band

named "Zambie". "Star Land" performs "Back Pay Shuffle", and another band, some claims to be Trinidad All Stars can be heard. Also on this record are Lord Melody and the Mighty Sparrow going at it, giving one another picong. When listening to this record pay particular attention to the bass chords in "Puerto Rican Mambo", for though it sounds like one drum playing a particular run, it actually was several players, picking up where one left off. However it is so well rehearsed, that one can miss it.

Once again Music Festival began a few weeks after Carnival. Katzenjammers, Tripoli, Merry Makers, North Stars, Ebonites, and a steel band from British Guiana were among the participants. Very early in the Festival, North Stars performing "Constable Tre" composed by Lord Kitchener and Puerto Rican Mambo were eliminated. At the end of the semi-final "Ebonites" from Morvant led the field. Tripoli played "Unchained Melody" and "Go Go Mambo"; "Merry Makers" played "Unchained Melody, and Katzenjammers played "The Breeze and I". However, in the finals Katzenjammers won the festival.

Dr. Northcote, at the end of the festival addressed the audience on the progress of the steel band in these words: "It was the most incredible improvement. You have showed me that you can play sustained notes". He praised Katzenjammers for their rendition of the "Breeze and I".

Nerlin Tate from South won the

History of steel band cont'd
Ping Pong Solo competition.

A farewell show was given in honor of Dr. Northcote, and it is believed that Star Land performed "Blue Danube Waltz". (This is yet to be confirmed).

As to comment on the performance, Dr. Northcote remarked that the bands could play the Classics, but not to go delving into them. I am sure he would be very much surprised if he should hear a steelband performing the 1812 Overture today.

Some time later Warwick Films came to Trinidad to shoot the movie "Fire down below", and they took Katzenjammers to Britain.

Sir Patrick Rennison who was Colonial Secretary of Trinidad & Tobago and also a patron of the movement, promised to send a trophy for the steel band when he left. The trophy did arrive, and competitions were to be held every two years for the trophy, but up to 1961 none was ever held.

Carnival 1957 saw almost every band mobile (on wheels). Many bands bolted two drums together while other bands welded them. However, Merry Makers was a jump ahead of the others in that they had three

drums attached to a frame (stand) made of steel pipe.

Carnival 1958 can be described as the year of the Classics. Many bands played classics on the road, but Trinidad All Stars made a huge hit with Minuet in G. "Tan Tan" composed by Fitz Vaughn Bryan, and "Theresa" composed by the Mighty Sparrow were the most popular tunes on the road. The Music Festival due that year was postponed as Queen's Hall was undergoing repairs.

Another steel band – "Samba Boys" – led by Theophilus "Tello" Mollineaux was formed that year, but later changed their name to "Wonder Harps". "Tello" is one of the great steel band soloists, and should one ever get the chance to see him perform, one should not miss out.

"Michael" composed by Lord Melody was the Road March, and Invaders made a hit playing it. That year Invaders introduced the Double Strumming pan on wheels, on the road. They also recorded "Liebestraum", and Emmanuel "Cobo Jack" Riley became famous for his improvisations on the Ping Pong.

Invaders won the Music Festival

that year in the West Zone performing "Come back to Sorrento". Silver Stars played "Rubenstein's Romance", and Tripoli played "Moonlight Love". Other preliminaries were held at the Roxy Cinema, and Dixie Land won in their zone playing "Estudiantina" and "Endlessly". Ebonites also won in their respective zone, but withdrew. This Music Festival, one of the grandest up to that time was completed in 1960, with Dixie Land although leading changed their tune, as well as Invaders. However, that is for another time, until then take care and Stay Up.

Robert "Sam Saldenha is a truly righteous brother, a graduate of the University of the West Indies, ERS founding member, father, exceptional tailor, Teacher, Historian and Pannist.



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