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# ERS Engine Room Section

*A Caribbean-American Cultural Not-For-profit Organization*

**"Together As One"**

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## Oh What A Night- ERS appreciation event

Band members and supporters after work appreciation party on Friday, November 30 at the Holiday Inn/Nightgames in Somerville was well attended and all the responses and feedback thus far have been congratulatory. This was the first one and hopefully in the future more members and supporters will be willing to venture out of our "so-called community" and showcase our culture and heritage to the neighboring and adoring communities. In other words people, lets not be afraid to venture outside of Dorchester, Roxbury, Mattapan, Jamaica Plain, and Hyde Park... our community. The only limits we have are the ones that are self-imposed. So stop the questions as to why should ERS do a function in Somerville? The only answer to that is why not? . Big respect to Maureen and John (Holiday Inn Management Team) for creating the opportunity to make this event possible. We believe this is the beginning of something special.

Mr. Fitzpatrick your presence did not go unnoticed, you were the only member of the Carnival Committee there and for that we give you a resounding ERS

## Upcoming Events

- April 20, 2002  
Men of Dennison Annual  
Spring Dance  
Prince Hall
- April 27, 2002  
**ERS first ever "Total  
Togetherness Bash"**  
**Unity Sports Club**  
**Music by Sounds Inc,**  
**Junior Rodigan & DJ Glen**
- ERS Casino Bus Trip  
Call ERS for more  
information
- July 14, 2002  
**ERS Band Launching**  
**19-21 Atherton Street**  
**Roxbury**

Call ERS at 617-524-0539 for  
information on events, pictures,  
mail list, advertising etc. and  
check out our website:

***engineroomsection.com***

salute.

We urge you to communicate  
with your committee members  
how refreshing and professional  
the event was. Well what can we  
say about DJ Glen, the MAN  
traveled to Boston twice in the  
same day (no joke) to lay down  
*Continue on page 2*

Oh what a night*Cont'd from page 1*

some wicked rhythms, he also left behind some of his favorite mixes for your listening pleasure - call ERS for info. Big-up to Rick E. the sole member of Boston's infamous rhythm section that took the time to bask in the ambience of the after work event and went right through to the reception that followed. Rick, you have earned your rights as an adopted Trini, the only 'ting' left for you to do is to make the pilgrimage to Smokey & Bunty for Trinidad & Tobago Carnival. You will need to bring your own Rebel beer however.

## ANOTHER LOOK AT THE HISTORY OF THE STEEL BAND PART IV

By Sam Saldenha

### STEEL BAND HISTORY 1960

I was pleasantly surprised by the number of people, who stopped and complimented me on my article. More important to me than the compliments, is the interest being generated by the articles. However, the folks who are involved in steel band, (i.e. the players and non-players usually seen at the practice sites) generally do not seem to be aware of the articles, at least none have made any written comments to our paper, or by word of mouth. Special thanks to Hudson, formerly of Silver Stars, for the support and encouragement.

### 1960

Last time we stopped at the beginning of 1960. The 1960's saw a lot of improvement to

the steel band. There were several tuners who made contributions. Worthy of mention was Ellie Mannette from Invaders "Suzie" St. Rose from Cross Fire, "Bass Man" from San Juan for his tenors. Those who stood out from the pack were Ellie Mannette, Anthony Williams from North Stars, Herman "Rock" Johnson formerly of North Stars, but who later started his own band "West Side Symphony", Alan Xavier from South, who was a free lancer not attached to any single band. Last but not least was Bertie Marshall who introduced chromatic tuning, and in turn revolutionized tuning. That however, is a story for another time.

As mentioned in the last article the Preliminaries for the 1960 Steel band Music festival, saw some bands changing their tune of choice. In the Preliminaries Invaders played "Come back to Sorrento", and then included "Drigo's Serenade" in the quarter final, and in the semi-final changed one more time to "In a Monastery Garden". Dixie Land who was the eventual winner started with "Estudiantina" and "Endlessly". In the quarter final, which was held at Queen's Hall, they changed to Estudiantina and "O Holy Night", and in the Semi-final they played Estudiantina and a composition by the renowned Trinidadian composer, "Pat Castagne". The final was held after the 1960 Carnival.

On Carnival Friday evening, the Trinidad and Tobago Steel Orchestra Association staged a competition at the Queen's Park Savannah. Bands taking part

were Desperadoes, Joy land, City Syncopators, Tripoli, Sun Valley and North Stars. On the evening of the Competition Tripoli was announced as the winner, but that decision was rescinded the following day, as there was an error in calculating the points. It is important to note that Panorama, as we know it today, started in 1963, so this was pre-panorama times.

Sparrow's "Mae Mae" was the Road March. Symphonettes Steel Orchestra made its debut on Carnival day led by Rupert Nathaniel, who was the previous captain of Crossfire and was succeeded by Eman Thorpe, another legendary figure in the steel bands of the West. He in turn was succeeded by "Zu Ze" St. Rose, who in the 1980's was the bass tuner most in demand. I deliberately mentioned Symphonettes Steel Orchestra, because it is with this steel band that "Boogsie" Sharpe first learnt to play pan. It is said that the captain was Boogsie's uncle and the band practiced in his 'yard', but Boogsie's mother did not want him playing pan in his pre-teenage years. Boogsie, it is said would look through the window at what the players were doing, and when no one was around would then start playing what he could remember, and that helped him developed his skills "in a hurry". *The next time I see Boogsie; I will get his "take" on this story.*

After Carnival, the Music Festival was the hottest ticket in town. Remember, the preliminaries, quarter and semi finals had already been  
*Continue on page 3*

History of Steel band*Cont'd from page 2*

Taken place in 1959. Weeks before it started tickets were completely sold out. The first band to take the stage was "Sundowners" from south Trinidad, performing "Skaters Waltz". "Cross Winds played "Moonlight Sonata" and placed fourth. "Invaders" played "In a Monastery Garden" and came second. "Silver Stars" played "Softly awakes my heart" and came fifth. Dixie Land was to change its tune once more from "Estudiantina" to "Angus Dei" and won the night and Festival. Dixie Land changed its tune, because Estudiantina surpassed the allotted time given to the band to perform its tune.

Dr. Wiseman and Mr. Wilcox were the adjudicators. Mr. Wilcox commented that it was his first time hearing the steel band, and when Sundowners were performing "Skaters Waltz", he felt like getting up and dancing. When it was announced that Cross Winds were performing Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata", he thought that it was impossible for them to create the mood, but after hearing them, he admitted that they had captured the mood, and that it was a "moon" between the clouds. He praised Dixie Land for their accuracy in playing the octaves in a particular part of "Agnus Dei", and said that they sounded like harps. Regarding Invaders performance, he observed that as a boy he had never fancied "In a Monastery Garden", but their performance of the tune was the best he had ever heard. The tuners also came in for high praise. Not all of his

comments were complimentary he told Silver Stars that in a particular segment of the tune, they seemed to have lost the mood.

Dixie Land won the 1960 music festival. They were the only steel band at that time, which won every competition that they had entered in the entire festival. They won the preliminaries, quarterfinals, semi finals and the finals. 1960 and that music festival was very important, as it ushered in the Waltz periods in steel band history. Festivals in the 1960's would see bands attempting Johann Straus's waltzes, such as "Voices of Spring", "Emperor's Waltz", "Sleeping Princess Waltz" (which we common call "Sleeping Beauty Waltz), and the likes.

**Steel band Trivia**

*My editors have asked me to make the article more compact, as it is becoming very expensive to include lengthy articles in the newsletter. Notwithstanding their advice, to make this section more interesting, I am including a trivia question with three parts. In the history of Panorama (Steel band championship competition), there are two bands that 'burst' ('burst' – failed to complete the tune, or the band did not stop together).*

- 1) Who are the bands?
- 2) What were the tunes?
- 3) In what years did it occur?

The answers will be in the next edition. Send your comments, answers and steel band advertisement to ERS.

**[www.engineerroomsection.com](http://www.engineerroomsection.com)**

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.

**Letter to the Editor**

" On reading your October issue article on the History of steel band I compliment the "righteous brother Sam" for his research and writing. I believe there were two Trinidad Policemen on that first Tour of Europe, Lieutenant Joe Griffith who was the leader and Horace Gaskin of Desperadoes... Horace was given the nickname TASPO when he returned from the tour. Three months after the tour Horace resigned from the Trinidad Police Force and went back to England to further his education, and two years later returned with a B Sc. in Economics. He later became a professor at the University of the West Indies St. Augustine. This continuing series of articles on Steel band brought back fond memories of the early pan men like Ellie Mannette, Chunks and Bubbles. Chunks (Uncle Sugar) was also a policeman in the Courts and Process Department. I am still laughing at the various nicknames. Thanks for keeping the Trini Flag Flying. Special thanks to Carl Smith for all of the work he is doing in the Boston steel band community".

Freddie DePeiza,  
Retired cyclist, policeman and entrepreneur

**Special Appreciation**

Special thanks and recognition to a truly righteous brother who has unconditionally donated his time and energy to develop our website. We offer long overdue thanks to Mr. Selwyn Dyett.

## Trinidad and Tobago Carnival 2002

For those of you who made the trek 2002 in TnT was the bomb. The music provided something for all different taste. There were some outstanding presentations like **Peter Minshall's** "Picoplat", **Trini Reveller's** "Six Days Seven Nights in Shanghai" and **Tiko Skinners'** presentation (The godfather of mud and body paint). As usual there were issues. The issues this year was crime, politics, naked masqueraders and the judging of the bands uptown. ERS members were well represented in TnT 2002 and are still recovering. ERS is also making preparations for next year March 5 and 6, 2003. Come fly with us.

**Corrections** to Volume 1, Issue 4.  
**Chic Magroo name was spelled incorrectly**

### 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

### Feature Island St Vincent

The country comprises the island of St Vincent and the northern Grenadines, a series of 32 islands and cays, stretching southwest towards Grenada. (The southern Grenadine islands are part of Grenada.) The larger northern Grenadines are Bequia (pronounced Beck-way),

Canouan, Mayreau, Mustique, Isle D'Quatre and Union Island. St Vincent is volcanic in origin, and has an active volcano, La Soufrière, which erupted violently in 1812, and again in 1902. A mild eruption in 1971/2 created a volcanic dome in the crater lake, forming an island. This exploded in another eruption in 1979, blasting ash, steam and stones high into the air. Many of the beaches of St Vincent are of black volcanic sand; there are some white-sand beaches. The Grenadines have been much celebrated for their beaches of fine white sand and clear waters.

The country's first known inhabitants were Arawaks, who were later driven out by Caribs; the latter put up a strong resistance to European colonization. Columbus sighted the principal island on 22 January 1498, and named it after the saint whose feast falls on that day. No immediate European immigration followed this discovery. In 1627 Charles I of England granted the island to Lord Carlisle, but no settlers arrived. Charles II granted it to Lord Willoughby in 1672; possession was disputed by the British, French and Spanish. All these claims were resisted by the Caribs. The Caribs did not, however, oppose the settlement of a shipload of enslaved Africans who escaped after a shipwreck in 1673, and in due course seem to have merged with the Carib community through intermarriage. In 1773, under an Anglo/Carib treaty, the Caribs were allowed to continue to live independently in the north of the island. France took the island in 1779, but restored it to Britain in 1783, under the Treaty of Versailles. In 1795-6, the Caribs rebelled, aided by the French in

Martinique; when this had been crushed, the rebels were deported to the island of Roatan in the Bay of Honduras. A plantation economy, based on slave labour, was developed, producing sugar, cotton, coffee and cocoa. But in 1812 La Soufrière erupted and devastated much of the island. After the emancipation of slaves by Britain in 1834, indentured labour from the East Indies and Portugal was brought in to remedy the labour shortage.

In the second half of the 19thC sugar slumped and the economy remained very depressed for the rest of the century. In the early 20thC, a series of natural disasters further damaged the society: with a severe hurricane, and a further eruption of La Soufrière in 1902, which devastated the northern half of the island and killed 2,000 people.

St Vincent and the Grenadines was a member of the West Indies Federation. After its dissolution in 1962, and the move of larger Caribbean countries to independence individually, the transition towards independence began in St Vincent. At first, the smaller Eastern Caribbean countries attempted to set up a federation of their own, but negotiations among them were unsuccessful. Universal adult suffrage had already been gained (and the Executive Council became partly elective) in 1951. Internal self-government was achieved in 1969, and the country assumed the status of a Self-governing State in Association with Britain. Full independence came in October 1979, and the first post-independence elections followed two months later.  
*Continue on page 5*

Feature Island- St Vincent*Cont'd from page 4*

The newly independent country faced a series of political difficulties with, first, an armed rebellion on Union Island by a Rastafarian minority led by Bumba Charles, and then protests early in the 1980s, which led to special 'public order' legislation. St Vincent and the northern Grenadines continue to be a wonderful destination.

### St Vincent National Anthem

Saint Vincent! Land so beautiful,  
With joyful hearts we pledge to thee  
Our loyalty and love, and vow  
To keep you ever free.  
Whatever the future brings,  
Our faith will see us through.  
May peace reign from shore to shore,  
And God bless and keep us true.  
Hairoun! Our fair and blessed Isle,  
Your mountains high, so clear and green,  
Are home to me, though I may stray,  
A haven, calm, serene.  
Our little sister islands are  
Those gems, the lovely Grenadines,  
Upon their seas and golden sands  
The sunshine ever beams.

### Thoughts

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of the young man who tragically lost his life at a New Years' Eve party in our community and we send our well wishes to the other injured young people. We pray that our community will work together to solve the problem of senseless violence.

## POETRY CORNER

### A Bajan Speaks

By H. Hargreaves

Welcome to my home, my island,  
my paradise  
and share the sunshine, the flowers  
and the rain  
Walk with me along our glorious  
beaches  
and your heart will say come  
again, come again.

Listen with me to the surf upon  
the shore  
whispering stories of far distant  
lands  
and see the flash of green at  
sunset  
that tells you, you are safely in  
his hands.

Smell the myriad tiny blossoms  
of the frangipani tree  
and hear the birds greet you as  
you go  
feel the soft warm breeze  
surround you that makes the red  
blossoms wave a glad hello.

There is fruit in all abundance  
piled high upon our carts  
and peace beyond understanding  
for the world weary heart  
Join us in our worship, sing a  
joyous song  
clasp our hands together and my  
world can not go wrong.

## POETRY CORNER

### Islands

By Guy Tirolien (Guadeloupe)

This is the low house in which  
my race has grown.  
Twisting and lifting, the road  
takes off beyond.  
Will it reach the weary waters  
beneath the distant mango trees?

Smells of burnt earth and salt cod  
Wafting under the muzzle of  
thirst.  
A smile splitting the ripe coco-  
plum of an aged face.  
The vague prayer of smoke-  
trails.  
Lament of a prolonged neighing  
that scales the sides of the  
ravines.  
Voices of rum with their breath  
warming our ears.

Clatter of dominoes rifling the  
birds' repose.  
Calypso rhythms in the warm  
belly of our banjos.  
Laughter of desire in the deep  
insides of the night.  
Mouths starved of bread  
swilling the cheap alcohol of  
words.  
The island pushing towards  
morning its weight of humanity.

### 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

*Look for  
ERS 2002  
Carnival  
Presentation  
"Pomneii"*

*Display Ads*

**Half Page (71/2'W x 43/4'H) - \$100**  
**One fourth Page (31/4'W x 43/4'H) - \$50**  
**1/8 Page (31/4'W x 21/4'H) - \$25**

**If typesetting and layout is desired ads will be billed at an additional \$25.00 per hour.**  
**ERS reserves the right to refuse any advertisement.**



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