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ERS Engine Room Section

A Caribbean-American Cultural Not-For-profit Organization

"Together As One"

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ERS THANK YOU

Well, once again we must give special recognition to some extraordinary corporations and individuals for making our participation in Boston Carnival 2002 possible. In our opinion, these corporations and individuals go above and beyond their respective corporate missions and personal obligations to accommodate our request for sponsorship and support. Mere words cannot express the depth of our gratitude for their kindness. Thanks you:

- Thomas Construction
- ODF Construction
- Harvard Street Neighborhood Health Center
- T's Pub
- Rusty's Liquor
- Rhythm & Spice
- Jesse Anderson & Anheuser Busch
- Schell Printing
- Sergeant Danny Morson & Sergeant Tony Fonseca
- Caribbean/American Carnival Association of Boston (CACAB)
- The Toronto Massive (Roz, Martin, Jesse & Bertie)

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Upcoming Events

**** Friday, October 11th, 2002**
ERS Real Unity Friday (RUF)
After work until Affair
Somerville Holiday Inn
30 Washington Street,
Somerville
Music by Digital Seduction,
Uncle P & Jamming Joe
Pan @ Poolside by Panjammer
PJ Adamson

**** Friday, November 8th, 2002**
ERS Back in Time Party
Unity Sports Club
Music by DJ Glen (Wash. DC),
Casanovas (NYC)
Junior Rodigan (Boston), &
early juggling by Digital
Seduction

**** Friday, November 15th, 2002**
ERS Appreciation Party
After work until Affair
Somerville Holiday Inn
Music by Digital Seduction,
Jamming Joe, Uncle P &
Guest appearance by other local
DJs and Pan @ Poolside by
Panjammer

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

www.engineerroomsection.com

ERS THANK YOU*Cont'd from page 1*

- Hudson Samuel and the rest of Word Sound Production Crew
- Crystal Transportation and
- Special recognition to Prince (Pro F1)

BOSTON CARNIVAL '02

Well what can we say about our presentation, "Pompeii On The Avenue," that has not already been said. The true evaluation of the Mudd Band comes from the first-time masqueraders who experienced the Boston Mudd 'ting' for the first time. Folks like Althea Etienne, Stacy Alfred, Tabby, Margaret Mercury, Denise Carter (from Washington, DC), Diane Zamor (from Trinidad & Tobago), Jesse and Bertie (from Toronto), and many others will gladly tell any one who is willing to listen that it is "the most fun you can have with your clothes on." The total togetherness ("Together As One") atmosphere we strive to promote is not just an idle slogan to which we pay lip service. It is a way of life for our members, supporters, family and friends. We embrace it like a code of honor and on Carnival Day we display it publicly for everyone to witness. As far as the hurry-up nature of the parade, that is a topic for the next newsletter. However, let the record show that Carnival '02 started on time by Caribbean standards and definitely ended on time by American standards. So, to the powers that be that said, "it could not be done", the record speaks for itself. The Boston Globe

Writer (Sunday, August 25th) was so shocked by the fact that the Carnival did not provide any violent incidences for their sensationalized journalistic reporting machine that they could only dwell on the shootings that occurred last year.

ERS & Other CARNIVALS '02

Cambridge Carnival. The organizers of the Cambridge Carnival deserve a standing ovation for their professionalism and overall management skills. Much props to Nicola Williams, Orville Wright, Michelle Jones, Gregory O'Bannon and the entire Cambridge Carnival management team, along with the City of Cambridge for a job well done. ERS King & Queen placed fourth in the band of the year competition and preparations are already on the way for next year. The only question we have is whether Cambridge is ready for the Mudd Band?

NYC Carnival. Labor Day weekend was a complete wash out, but in true Brooklyn style (reminiscent of the Tilden Hall days) the show went on as planned. Grog Sippers International (Wayne, Sleepy, Fookie, Plenty, Flexy & Cezair) backyard party Carnival Sunday night was the highlight of the weekend. The Johnny Walker Black twin towers withstood heavy blows and kept walking in the deluge. Big respect to Grog Sippers International, "all yuh fellas really know how to throw ah fete."

Long Island Carnival. ERS bus ride to this Carnival was a qualitative success and ERS will definitely make this an annual affair. Much love and respect go out to Eileen Akintobi, Ancil Arthur and entire Long Island (LI) Carnival Committee. Special thanks go out to all the supporters who went to LI with us. The bread and salt fish was a big hit. Certain people, who shall remain nameless for now, are still requesting the recipe for this delicacy. Well, you will just have to wait until the next event.

Words To The Wise

As Nationals of the twin island nation of Trinidad & Tobago we have a lot to be proud about. Our little country has experienced something that not even the mighty United States of America has experienced. We have witnessed the rise to political power of an individual from an ethnic group once perceived to be a minority, in terms of their numbers in the overall population. This transformation from minority group to leader of the country was done without bloodshed or any other form of overt civil disobedience. This is a remarkable accomplishment when you think of, what would happen in America should Jesse Jackson or Colin Powell, for that matter become President of the country? Hypothetically speaking this is what Basdeo Panday and the UNC did in previous elections in sweet TnT. In the 60's, 70's and 80's most Trinbagoian would have thought Panday's accomplishment improbable, but it was done in the late 90's and in

Cont'd on page 3

Word to the Wise*Cont'd from page 2*

time we will all realize that we are better citizens of the world for experiencing the Basdeo Panday/UNC social experiment. Unfortunately, there are a few people who view this positive experience as a reason to act out their own personal prejudices and dysfunctional behaviors. To use the Panday experiment to promote racial hatred and animosity between Trinbagoian of African descent and Trinbagoian of East Indian descent is something only an evil, cruel and calculating person would do. We must show these negative influences among us that we have experienced something in Trinidad and Tobago that the rest of the world is still trying to understand and come to terms with. There is no blue print for us to follow, but the blessings from the almighty will show us the way. People who want to engage in some form of racial supremacy on account of some misguided notion that prevents them from seeing the forest from the trees must be educated and taught the lessons of Mahatma Ghandi, Carter G. Woodson, Martin Luther King Jr., and Nelson Mandela. Wake up people and fight for something worth fighting for – Peace and Unity among all humanity. This piece was written in light of the ugly, nonsensical incident that took place at the recent Miss Caribbean Beauty Pageant.

TnT Carnival 2003

March 5 and 6, 2003. Come fly with ERS.

**ERS Tidbits
July – September**

Our annual band launching on Sunday, July 14 at the Mas Camp 19/21 Atherton Street in Roxbury was our most successful launching to date. The weather was perfect and the gathering of supporters, friends and family gave the event a special feel and quality, which we plan to maintain for next year's event. The music of the Mudd band road DJ, DJ Glen and the special guest appearance of Digital Seduction with DJ Ox, Winnie & Anton created a musical vibe that is still reverberating in the ears of everyone who attended the launching. God willing, we look forward to seeing you all next year. **The band launching next year will be Sunday, July 13th, 2003 same time, same place.** So, save the date. We thank each and everyone for making the launching a fun, safe and uplifting community affair. Special recognition goes out to our sponsors: Thomas Construction, Laxton Records, Rusty's Liquor Store, T's Pub and our always accommodating Sister Cissy, Big Up!!!

On Friday, July 19 a group of thirty ERS supporters and members took an overnight bus trip to Mohegan Sun Casino in Connecticut and enjoyed a night of gaming experience. The Mohegans (our Native American brethren & sistren) definitely took a lost on that particular night. The game of choice was Caribbean Stud Poker, a real moneymaker for the experienced gambler. And at dinner time the complimentary buffet was

KO'ed like Mike Tyson in his last fight with Lennox Lewis. As a matter of fact, the Head Chef wonders, "how come they ran out of food?" To say a good time was had by all is an enormous understatement, and we are looking forward to making this an annual affair. Stay tuned for the date and time of the next Casino Bus Ride. Special thanks to Mrs. Thomas and family, Tony and family, C. Forde, Lorna and friends, Cynthia Coker and family, Mr. Duntin, Laureen, Marina, Natty and Sandra, the Framingham Crew and the ERS contingent that made the trip. You are all winners.

On Friday, August 16th ERS hosted a "Count Down to Carnival" fete at Unity and we were pleasantly surprised by the turn out we received, in light of the fact that Krosfyah and Machel Montano were performing at William E. Reed auditorium on the same night. We consciously try to avoid conflicts such as this, but this was one of those rare instances where it was unavoidable. However, we would like to thank our many supporters and friends who attended the event and give special acknowledgment to the musical wizardry of Digital Seduction (Ox, Winnie & Anton), DJ Glen, Junior Rodigan, Ground Zero Sound System and Hudson Samuel. Special props must be given to Sandra Kennedy and the entire Unity management team for creating the positive space for us to have the event. The overall success and quality of this event provided the proper vibe and *Cont'd on page 4*

ERS Tidbits

Cont'd from page 3

“groundwork” to carry ERS through a spectacular Carnival Week. ERS came out of this event on such a high that we proceeded to win the coveted King competition at the annual King and Queen show the following Friday night, August 23rd at White Stadium. This victory is a first for the “Mudd Band” and we would like to take this opportunity to recognize the judges for being impartial and objective in their deliberations of the competition. We are still receiving fan mail for the King with the golden posterior. We will be back next year to defend our title. Roz, Martin, Jesse and Bertie you are the best and we here at ERS dedicate R.Kelly’s “World’s Greatest” to you. And detractors remember this “who vex loss”. Much respect to all the other bandleaders who toiled many countless nights to complete their costumes for this competition, your efforts did not go unnoticed. Keep up the fantastic work. Special shout out to D’Horizon, 3rd Dimension, D’Midas, T&T Social Club, Soca & Associates, Unity, Mas Women & Men and all the others who work tirelessly to make Boston Carnival Week a smashing success.

One Person’s View

ERS introduces a new column titled “One Person’s View”. In this column ERS will publish thought provoking articles on issues of importance to the Boston Caribbean American community. If you wish to

provide an article for “One Person’s View” you must email ERS your article and the answers to the following questions:

Name:

Affiliation:

Address:

Phone #:

Email Address: (optional)

Article rationale: (Why are you requesting publication of this article?)

Has this article been published elsewhere? ____ If Yes, where?

One Person’s View

Boston Carnival – New Direction

By Michael C. Smith
Monday, April 08, 2002

Boston, like many cities in North America have been celebrating a Trinidad styles Carnival for many years. In Boston it has been held annually for the past 29 years.

Traditionally, as the annual celebration ends, plans are afoot to prepare for the next year’s celebration. The preparation starts with the bandleaders creating new design, pricing raw material and building the design. A date is set for the band launching, the public is then invited to the band launch, where interested participants purchase costume or register to play with a band and prepare for the Carnival day parade.

There are other activities that take place before the parade. These activities include: Panorama, King and Queen competitions and Kiddies Carnival.

The summarized process described above have been tried and tested for the past 29 years, with some improvements and gains made. It is time for drastic changes to ensure the continued growth and cultural diversity of Boston Carnival. This can be accomplished by first, expanding or exploding the box in which Boston Carnival is currently held.

I believe that in the city of Boston, this Trinidad type of Carnival can be taken to a new level of sophistication and involve a larger segment of the citizen of New England. The new direction can be accomplished in two ways.

1. Redefine Panorama and
2. Redefine the King and Queen completions and move them into to the city. This also has the affect of killing two birds with one stone. The parade and kiddies Carnival remain in the community and the other events take place in the city. This approach will create a win, win situation.

How then, can this lofty task be accomplished, and a new level of sophistication achieved? As a first step, how about redefining **Panorama and the King and Queen competition.**

The King and Queen competition could be called the **International King and Queen Competition.** Invite the King and Queen winners from the other cities across North America, Canada and the Caribbean to participate. Where can such a magnificent

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One Person's View*Cont'd from page 4*

show be held? The FLEET CENTER. With the city and the FLEET CENTER involved, they can assist CACAB in solving many of the logistical problems involved in mounting such a large production. To sell this idea to city officials and the management at FLEET CENTER, I suggest that they be sent to Trinidad courtesy of TIDCO. It is the only way they will ever understand the concept of such a show. No video will ever be able to achieve this.

Panorama, like the King and Queen show, should also be renamed as **The International Steel band Festival**. Colleges and universities should be approached for assistance. They could probably assist with room and board for the Pannists. Seminar could also be set up. Pan workshops, instrument sale and concerts through out the city can be arranged, most likely on the college campuses around Boston. The festival will end with an International Panorama for band registered to participate in this segment of the festival.

In the final analysis the community and the local bandleaders should benefit from these improvement, because maybe, just maybe, some of the funds collected from these annual production can be returned to the bandleaders who make Carnival possible each year, and have been doing so for the past 29 years. Scholarship programs can be also be setup for the future generations of 'Mas'

makers, designers and artist in the community.

The days of an inexpensive costume is long gone, therefore it is imperative that the organizers of Carnival make every effort to assist the men and women to continue their efforts. They, after all, have been making sacrifices for over 29 years. Today because of their efforts, Boston Carnival is the third largest event in the city behind First night and the Boston Marathon. Every effort should be made to keep Carnival alive in Boston and changing the direction along the lines proposed can only bring about positive results for all involved, even for Trinidad and Tobago and the rest of the Caribbean. Yes, Boston Carnival's new direction will ensure future growth and leave a legacy for future generations of Caribbean Americans to appreciate and proud to continue. Finding a home for CACAB and creating a museum are just a few of the things that can be achieved, only if we allow ourselves to dream outside the box and not to be so confined by the it. Free up yourselves.

Michael C. Smith is a Native of Trinidad and Tobago and a resident of Boston since 1977. He graduated from Northeastern University in '83 and is currently a senior electronic test engineer, Web designer, photographer, publisher of Boston Carnival Calendar member of CACAB and President of the Chaconia Foundation.

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ANOTHER LOOK AT THE HISTORY OF THE STEEL BAND PART VI

By Sam Saldenha

Another look at the history of the Steel band 1945 – 1962

As promised I will be looking at the preparation of the Pan Am North Stars for the 1964 Steel band Music Festival, which they won with "Voices of Spring"

However, I must return to the steel band trivia questions:

Trivia Response

Question: Which were the two steel bands to burst on stage while performing their Panorama tunes, the years and the names of the tunes.

Answer: Last time I gave the first band, which was the Esso Tripoli, which burst while performing "My Pussin", and the year was 1965. Danny Morson "Police Dandy" reliably informed me that there was a third band that also burst on stage- "Sunland" Steel Orchestra from Belmont. He could not remember the year or the tune, but he knew for a fact that they did burst on stage while performing on the "Dimarche Gras" show, (Carnival Sunday Night) when Panorama finals were first held. I do recall Sunland Steel Orchestra being impressive in the Preliminaries with "Sir Walter Raleigh" and being selected to perform in the Finals on Carnival Sunday night in the early 1960s.

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History of Steel band

Cont'd from page 5

“Chappee” the leader of “Boston Jammers”, verified that Sun Land reached the finals, but burst during their performance of Lord Nelson’s “Stella”. He claimed that the band played “Be a hero Sir Walter Raleigh” for the preliminaries, qualified for the finals, but foolishly changed their tune to “Stella”, and perhaps did not have enough time to master it, and so burst on stage. He cannot give the exact year, but knew that it happened while he was still living in Trinidad. It had to be pre 1970, because that was the year he left Trinidad to take up residence in the U.S.A. He mentioned also that the arranger was Arthur Byer, one of the legendary arrangers for Sunland from Belmont.

To keep you in further suspense, I will give you, only the name of the third Steel band, which was “WITCO Desperadoes”. **If you are the first person to supply the name of the tune and the year to the ERS web site, you will get an ERS T-shirt.**

Anyhow, on to the 1964 Steel band Music Festival. When the band (North Stars) first started rehearsing “Voices of Spring”, the “Crack-shots” (the better players) in the band were not enthusiastic, but Tony Williams –the leader of North Stars – and affectionately called “Skipper” by all the players, persevered with average players, and once the tune started taking shape, the crack-shots fell in. It is important to remember that the year was 1964, and at this time

“Voices of Spring” was perhaps the most difficult tune being attempted by a steel band, and as I pointed out in an earlier newsletter, this marked the beginning of the Waltz’s period in steel band history. While everyone was not eager to embrace change, it was progress, because the more difficult a tune is, the more skillful, the player will eventually become.

It usually takes about three months for a steel band to master a classic. To master a classic means to get everything perfect. Perfect means, the Crescendos are built up in unison, all pans increasing in volume at the same time. Unison means the tenor or soprano pans sounding as though it is one person playing, even during the most intricate passages. Remember, I am talking about the real skillful players, not beginners or players with one or two years of experience. It meant rehearsals perhaps six out of seven days a week, from 7.30 pm to midnight. Two weeks from the preliminaries the tempo really intensifies, and rehearsals are seven days a week, with practice going as late as 1 – 2 am during the week, and from 3 pm to 2 am on weekends. Of course there are breaks, but on occasions it could be boring, as several bars of music have to be repeated perhaps for days until the weaker players become accomplished as the crack shots. And when the entire band can perform the piece of music as the composer intended it to be, then it is on to the test piece (in some cases another classic), and a Calypso, usually the Panorama tune.

North Stars were able to emerge winners in the competitions they entered, because of the perseverance to get their presentations correct, and the patience displayed not only by the leader, but also by some of the top players in the band. Once I did an interview with Beverly Griffith, who at one time was the arranger for “Desperadoes”, and he confessed that while arranging and rehearsing with “Clarence Curvan Orchestra”, he could hear North Stars repeating over and over for days a few difficult bars of music, until the entire band had perfected it. This he felt made this band as great as it was.

We, Trinbagoian takes a lot for granted regarding the steel band, its unique sound, and the music which it produces; but it is exceedingly difficult for any arranger to put together for the steel band a simple tune, much less for a Classical piece of music. Classical music was never written for the steel pans, never intended for the steel pans, and the genius lies in the arranger or musical director’s ability to translate or to interpret it as best as he or she can for the pans. One weakness of the steel pan is its inability to sustain notes. While the violin, piano or almost any other instrument can sustain a note, the pannist has to roll the notes to sustain it, and trust me, this is very difficult for any composer to transpose on paper. So, next time when you attend Panorama, and you hear bands that are not “quite up to scratch”, please give the arranger some credit for getting the band to perform his/her musical arrangement.

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History of Steel band

Cont'd from page 6

Of course there are good times during the practice, and if there is a breadfruit tree in the yard, then there will certainly be roasted breadfruit for lunch, dinner and punch. There is a saying that in every good pan yard, there is a breadfruit tree. Check it out and see if it is not true.

Next Issue

ERS introduces a writing contest for Caribbean American children.

In the next edition, we shall continue the post 1960 era, leading into Panorama. Stay up, and take care.

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.

Boo/Hiss

Boos and Hisses for the local Boston media for its continual inability to showcase the Caribbean Carnival festival in all of its' international flavor. When will they leave their "trappings" behind and welcome the melting pot 21st century?

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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