



# ERS Engine Room Section

A Caribbean-American Cultural Not-For-profit Organization

“Together As One”

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

617-759-7134

April– September 2006

Volume 1, Issue 16

Circulation - Postal Edition 500

## Inside this Issue

- 1 Upcoming events  
Mouther-be
- 2 Mouther-be cont'd  
The Way Forward for Steel  
bands in Boston Cont'd
- 3 The Way Forward for Steel  
bands in Boston Cont'd  
Jouvert in Boston  
ERS interest slip

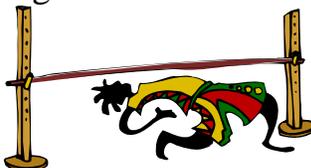
*As it is an objective of ERS for its Newsletter to be a forum for the free expression and interchange of ideas, statement of positions or expressions of opinion appearing herein are those of the authors and not by the fact of publication necessarily those of ERS, and likewise, the publication of any advertisement is not to be construed as an endorsement of the product or service offered unless it is specifically stated in the ad that there is such approval or endorsement.*

Engine Room Section  
C/O DePeiza  
55 Montebello Rd  
Jamaica Plain, Ma 02130

Engineroomsection.com  
617-759-7134

## ERS UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Friday August 18<sup>th</sup>**  
**“Back to School ” party**  
@ Unity Sports Club, 10  
Dunbar Avenue,  
Dorchester.  
Music By: Sounds Inc.,  
Sounds Vibration, Digital  
Seduction, and  
Underground Sound.  
Wear your School  
Uniform – Island Style.  
Prize for best uniform –  
Island Style.
- **Saturday August 26<sup>th</sup>**  
**“Boston Carnival”-**  
Come play mas with  
Engine room section  
**“Pirates of the  
Caribbean”**  
Music By: DJ Glenn &  
Digital Seduction  
alongside Ground Zero  
Sound system. Visit the  
“mas” camp at 19  
Atherton Street Roxbury  
or call 617-522-8066 to  
register.



## MOUTHER-BE

by Robert Saldenah

First I must mention the passing of a legend in Steel band, Winston Phillips, better and more popularly known as “Mouther-be”. “Mouther –be” as all knew him, was one of the Phillips brothers of Woodbrook. Mikey – previous leader of Starlift, now leader of Phase II, Pat, Andy and Hugo who never played pan, but was connected to the building of “Hoosay” for the Muslim festival, which is called “Hoosay” in Trinidad.

He “Mouther-be” first started playing with “Invaders” and earned his credit among the “gifted ones” – Emmanuel “Cobo Jack” Riley, Ellie Mannette to name just two. He moved over to “Starlift”, immigrated to the USA, but would return for Carnival to perform with Phase II, “Tropical Angel Harps” of Couva, and “Jewel 22”, the year they came third in Panorama. There are a few stories of “Mouther-be” performing, but the first time I heard his name called I was told that he was capable of soloing (reving – ramajaying) on the second pans from the Oval through Port of Spain and back to the Oval. While it may be an exaggeration in terms of the length of time, he was quite proficient and capable of improvising on the pans as others in Invaders at that time were capable of doing. I once

*Mouther-be cont'd*

witnessed him learning a Panorama tune outside of the Savannah a Preliminary Sunday as the band “Angel Tropical Harps” of Couva was getting ready to move down the stretch. He was one of those players who could “pull down” (learn) a Panorama tune on the day of Panorama itself.

He succumbed to cancer of the lung and die in Florida having moved back from California where he used to live and perform. He will be missed by all who knew him.

## THE WAY FORWARD FOR STEELBANDS IN BOSTON

*Written in “Trini speak”  
By Robert Saldenah*

The past five (5) odd years have witnessed the demise of the steel bands in Boston, with the scrapping of the traditional Panorama competition. While it is true that only one or two of the local bands took part, an effort should have been made to enquire why the lack of interest. One steel band leader told me that he no longer was willing to take part in the competition as he did not have faith in the judges’ decision. It is hardly likely that any results would be unanimously received by all in any competition; in any steel band competition it is virtually impossible to please the steel band fraternity with the results. “Volume II” is not really a road band, and with one tenor, one double-second, one cello and one bass, does not stand a chance in any Panorama competition or

on the road.

I once attended a steel band competition in Cambridge during the mid 1990’s, and was dumbfounded when the judges declared “Boston Jammers” the winners ahead of “Branches Steel Orchestra”. Branches’ tune was a complete Panorama tune, played in two or three keys with several variation of the melody, and on the other hand Boston Jammers tune was performed in one key with the tenors doing a variation of the tune. The latter tune was clearly top-heavy with the arrangement played solely by the tenors, while Branches arrangement was spread out among the various instruments. Added to that Boston Jammers pans were limited in range as their instruments were the traditional single pans, save for the bass, which were three. Branches musical range was that of any conventional steel band, “Desperadoes”, “All Stars” etc, but somehow the judges did not grasp that. How they came to their decision is one of the mysteries of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

However, having digressed I now return to the topic, that is to say the way forward for steel bands in Boston. There are approximately four active steel bands in Boston, “Branches”, “Metro”, “Volume II” and “Tropical Harmony”, if we should add “Hartford Symphony” from Connecticut then there will be five. Added to this lot is “Boston Riddum Section” formerly “Soca Boys and Girls”.

**I am proposing** that instead of a Panorama type competition, in which “Volume II”, “Tropical

Harmony” and “Boston Riddum Section” would be excluded, a **steel band show at White Stadium on the Friday night before Carnival** can be held in which locals and out-of-towners could have one more event to attend. Since switching the “King and Queen” show to the Thursday night, and forcing everything into that night, that is to say the Parade of the Kings, Queens, Individuals, Sparrow, Shadow and Branches, and hustling to fit everything into an already crowded program; why not utilize Carnival Friday night solely as a Steel band night. There would be more time for the participants on the Thursday night. During the summer, there are no longer any steel band shows. Those who are going to argue that there is a boat-ride on Carnival Friday night should remember that there was always a boat-ride on Carnival Friday night, and only so many people could fit on the boat. Surely the Carnival Development Committee with their experience of staging these shows could assist the steel bands financially in putting on the show. Instead of prize money, an equal amount of \$2,000.00 could be given to each participating steel band to offset their expenses. The criteria for each participating steel band, is that they must perform three tunes, two calypsoes and a “bomb” – a non-calypso tune performed in calypso tempo. Any band not performing three tunes should not receive any money.

Boston Riddum section could be used to fill in the gaps in the show.

*The Way Forward for Steel Bands... Cont'd*

I honestly believe that members of the Steel band fraternity, rather than the Carnival Development Committee could organize such an event, which over the years could be able to pay its way.

## JOURVERT IN BOSTON

*Written in "Trini speak"*  
By Robert Saldenah

On Saturday Morning of August 28th, 2005, I boarded around 12:42 pm ah plane bound for Trinidad after witnessing the Boston Jouvert celebrations. Even though I would have preferred to stay, I had to go home to attend the funeral for a very good friend in Tobago. I thought about leaving out Jouvert, and heading directly to Logan, but Calvin Lorreli (meh good partner from way back in Trinidad) promised to drop me off at the airport directly after Jouvert. About 2 am we loaded my pull-ons into his car and were back on Blue Hill Avenue in less than twenty minutes.

My first stop was to check "Doc" and Boston Pan Vybes. The gates were wide open, and all the pans and some sticks were evident but not a soul. If one wanted a tenor pan that was a good time to get one for free. One word of advice to Doc, even though you are having problems in getting a panyard, you cannot bring a steel band in two weeks. As you can see, you are losing your players to the other bands. The other bands are "stealing" your players, because they are

starting to prepare for the road one to three months in advance.

After calling Doc for about ten minutes and getting no reply, I moved on to "Metro", where they were all set, ready and just waiting for the beginning of Jouvert. We then moved around to some of the fetes, and I swear that everybody was at Johnson Road.

Finally the parade began, and I was impressed with "Debbie" and "Charlie's" (mother and son) steel band. They were playing "Drunk and disorderly", and they had the correct tempo. However, before coming on the road, they should get someone to blend the pans, as the tone of the pans was not pleasing to the ear. However good you may be playing is diminished if your pans need blending. Metro was good, but they need to play much faster. It is one thing playing good music, but when other bands have good arrangements, and kicking up, you will not sound outstanding. Doc and Boston Pan Vybes were around, but as I mentioned earlier, two weeks preparation and few experienced players will not cut it. "Branches" was undoubtedly the best playing band as usual. Apart from the big sound, their music was well rehearsed, and while the tempo was not as fast as "Drunk and disorderly" their rhythm section had the music "tight" (precise). Listening to their bomb selection, I share the view that the melody of the tune was lost in the arrangement. One had to strain one's ear to make out the tune, as only the first couple of lines of the melody were discernable.

"Boston rhythm section" (formerly "Soca boys and girls" aka "Soca noise") was outstanding for a rhythm section, and this was reflected by the enthusiasm of their masqueraders.

One last thing regarding the bands costumes: ah tired of the same ting over and over. Every year all yuh thieving the hospital clothes to play Jouvert, no wonder meh damn hospital bill was so high. No wonder all the HMO raising dey bill. Next year leave the people clothes alone, and play something else. All yuh could play a band of "Django" or "An expensive jab jab", but please **no more hospital clothes.**

## THINGS TO DO & HEAR

- **Boston Carnival on the Web.** Visit [www.bostoncarnival.org](http://www.bostoncarnival.org) for info on Boston Carnival 2005. Big Mike and Lennard Communications keep up the outstanding work for the love of our culture.

### ERS Interest Slip Clip and return to the ERS address on page 1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

the best times to reach me are:

Other way(s) to contact me:

Check all items that apply

I am interested in:

the mail list,  playing 'mas' with ERS,  writing an article for the newsletter  receiving the newsletter by email,  Membership,  Other:

ENGINE ROOM SECTION 2006

PRESENTS

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN

*Below is a taste of one of the costumes*



THE MAS CAMP TO SEE  
THE REST OF THE COSTUMES &  
REGISTER

Cost for Basic Costume, Refreshments  
& surprise send off --\$65.00

ENGINE ROOM SECTION

AKA

"THE MUDD BAND"

BACK TO SCHOOL  
PARTY

*\$10 before 10:30 pm, more after*

Prizes for the best male and female uniform  
"Island style"

Bake and shark or saltfish on sale

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> August

*Unity Sports Club*

*10 Dunbar Avenue*

Word Sound Productions  
Cell: 1-508-566-3647  
Biz: 1-978-969-1734  
Fax: 1-978-969-1808  
E-mail: wordsoundpro@mail.com

Theatrical & Sound Reinforcement Management Specialists

Word Sound Pro.

"Good Clean sound for any event"  
Sound Reinforcement Systems

At WSP we specialize in

- Rents
- Theatrical Presentation
- Lectures
- Ambient fields
- Custom Sound Reinforcement
- Bands
- DJs
- Rappers
- Installations

All work done by WSP is done with the latest Sound reinforcement technology. Educated Engineers are on all of our job sites.



*Do you want to  
advertise in or  
write an article  
for this  
newsletter?  
Call ERS at  
617-759-7134*

**ERS GIFT SHOP**

*While supplies last*

- **ERS polo shirts...\$20.00**
- **ERS Hats/caps ....\$12.00**
- **Rags (get ready for carnival)\$5.00**

**Call Fabian 617-759-7134**