

Over two days in May 2007, steel pan was the centre of attention on Gunwharf Quays, famous for Samba Bands to French Markets, street entertainers & daredevil skateboard displays to fireworks & global yachting events – Gunwharf Quays hosts a year round programme of spectacular events & entertainment. In a festival organised by the Gunwharf Management Team and supported by Porchester’s Pan Yard, Pete Beadell. Steel pan brought a taste of the Caribbean to the shopping outlet, along with pan, soca, and food.

# GUNWHARF PAN EXTRAVAGANZA



**DAY ONE**

Day one was a mass workshop for steel bands from schools all over Hampshire County Council. After a showcase from all the participating bands, the hard work began! Toussaint Clarke, one of the UK’s top steel pan tuners co-ordinated a workshop of over 150 players of varying abilities, both learning and playing, ‘Where Have All the Flowers Gone’. This opportunity afforded these budding and promising players to be involved in an event which will encourage their future development, and performance in the pan world.

**DAY TWO**

Day two provided the people of Portsmouth to not only hear the spectacular homegrown talent of Sounds of Steel, but, also with the opportunity to hear two of the top bands from London perform on their doorstep. Both Ebony and Metronomes steel bands made the trip from London to Portsmouth, to participate in this Caribbean spectacular which took place outside of the more well known venues to hear pan.

Metronomes kicked off the day, drawing the crowds to the sounds of summer, inside the steel band tent. Metronomes captivated the audience and had them swaying to the sweet sounds of the steel pan. Sounds of Steel followed with their eclectic musical programme, highlighting not only the band, but the individual talents of Dan Sadler and Lindsay Joplin who not only played but arranged various tunes within their repertoire. Ebony did not fail to impress, picking up the baton from the previous two bands, they

continued to hold the crowd in a mesmerizing trance. By this point the people of Portsmouth were definitely into the sounds of pan rather than shopping! By the interval the crowds were begging for more and new arrivals were expressing regret about missing the first half.

Metronomes attacked the second half immediately upping the ante with a combination of standards and recent calypsos, drawing the crowds back to a promising second half. The event was not meant to be a competition but, Sounds of Steel did not seem to be aware of this, turning up the heat on a session filled with the melody of calypso and carnival. A musical treat for all in attendance.

Ebony slowed the pace down producing their high calibre of old favourites and standards, showing the Portsmouth crowd what a steel pan can do. Then without warning they teased the crowd until they had them begging for calypso after calypso!

With London believed to be the home of UK pan, it was nice to see that bands not performing at the event leaving London, to provide support for a pan event outside of the Capital.

That sunny summer afternoon was definitely the place to be for liming, dancing and hanging out, listening to good steel band music. At the end of the event people were heard to comment, ‘we should have more of this, when’s the next one?’

By Cordelia Johnney  
and Rachel Duchnowski  
Photos by Rachel Duchnowski



With London believed to be the home of UK pan, it was nice to see that bands not performing at the event leaving London, to provide support for a pan event outside of the Capital.