



LONDON ALL STARS STEEL ORCHESTRA

"Hey boy...what is the name of that band again? You know, the band from South London, mainly family members... you know, Rollock's band? Oh...you mean LONDON ALL STARS! That's the name, London All Stars...what happen to them boy?"



Frank Rollock's seven talented children developed their musical skills on a variety of brass and reed instruments and the family

band; *The Royaltys* enjoyed great success under Frank's direction. Such intense interest developed for the pan instrument that in 1974 a band evolved to foster and maintain this, *London All Stars* was an obvious tribute to Frank's background. He has directed the band through many successes, culminating in them winning the UK's first National Steelband Festival Championship.

Well, I am writing to put all you fans out there mind to rest. Due to circumstances out of their control, the band has been resting on their laurels for a few years now, but they still have been making their mark on the steelband scene in their own inimitable way. The youngsters in the band have been making their mark each year at the Notting Hill Jouvett competition, winning it for three consecutive years 2004 – 2006, with the older heads just being around to ensure that everything runs as

smoothly as it possibly can.

The beauty of it is that when people hear the band coming down the street, they automatically know its "All Stars" and their excitement at seeing the band "back on the road" is gratifying to say the least. The band in its own right has not been inactive, just more discerning in their performances. The band has been more prominent on the private function scene, with individual players enhancing other "band's" performances at private functions, as those in the know realise that if you want a good session pan player that can play any pan, (and if the pay is right, will play two separate instruments at the same time i.e. bass and a strumming pan,) then you must have a "Rollock".

Out of frustration due to the lack of a place to practice, "*Mr Steelband*" – Frank Rollock Sr – built his own panyard in his back yard in Brixton, and the band is slowly coming back to terms of bringing back the "big band" for the British Association of Steelbands Panorama competition.

Frank Rollock Jr has formed his own offshoot from the band, namely "Divine Steel" which has gone from strength to strength on the private

function scene. The band consists of key players from London All Stars, and the repertoire is diverse to say the least. They mainly perform Frank's own compositions, a mixture of cultural, roots and calypso pieces, and these go down a storm at functions and clearly put Frank at the top as a composer to be reckoned with. The thing is, he is so humble in his achievements and laid back with his talent that he is sometimes overlooked, but clearly once it is known from which stable he hails from, then all is understood and nothing more need be said.

The thing is people still tend to view the band as consisting of Frank Snr and his "children", when in reality the children are children no more. Their ages range from Princess at 46 to Philip at 33. Yes...Princess is 50 in 4 years, and that in itself tells its own story of how long the band has been operating in its own right!

London All Stars will always be well remembered for their unique style of playing and sound and people in the know are clamouring for their return. Panorama 2008? Watch this space!

By Princess Rollock

CARNIVAL VILLAGE @ THE TAB

Carnival Village is a flagship organisation promoting Carnival Arts that nurtures and showcases artists, supports the development of Carnival related creative industries; and does so to enhance the cultural and economic well being of the communities it serves.



Carnival Village is earmarked to take up residence in the Tabernacle after awarded the lease from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Supported by a Lottery Capital grant of £4.2m, Carnival Village will span its work over two spaces: The Tabernacle in W11 and at Chippenham Mews W9, which locates this unique project within two boroughs, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster respectively. The project is also supported by a grant of £505,000 by the LDA.

The project was launch in 2001 and is the making of four partners who are rooted within the Carnival Artform: Yaa Asantewaa Arts and Community Centre, Association of British Calypsonians, Mangrove Y2K and Ebony Trust. The acquisition of the Tabernacle has afforded the opportunity to refurbish Chippenham Mews into a new building suitable for Carnival Industry development.

Spearheaded by its newly appointed CEO, Shabaka Thompson, Carnival Village is destined to become London's leading Centre for the development of the Arts and Business of Carnival. According to Shabaka "Carnival Village will play a major role as a leader in the Carnival Arts sector in Britain, with a strong international flavour. It will develop a robust arts entertainment programme supported by training and industry development

that will regenerate and service the sector for decades to come"

David Elford, Project Manager, the man holding the building works together said, "We all feel that we may now be approaching the end of the beginning of this vital project, a project that has tested our resolve and perseverance. We have not been found wanting"

Decorative and corrective drain works are earmarked to start at the Tabernacle in May, which will provide a new box office, restaurant and bar, small retail store and a more adequate practice space and office for Mangrove. From January 2009 major refurbishment on the YAA Chippenham Mews site will commence ending in December 2009.



Despite these works Carnival Village @ the Tab is set to open its doors in June when it will provide a programme of arts activities and events for the community.

Prior to that members of the public are invited to participate in an Arts and Culture Symposium at the Tabernacle on Wednesday 13th February from 1pm – 9pm.

Anyone interested in attending the symposium or finding out more about Carnival Village @ the Tab should write to Shabaka.thompson@carnivalvillage.org.uk