

Express 960301 p. 23

Pan salutes Nicky

ML1040

By TERRY JOSEPH

TWO OF Carnival's best shows had one thing in common, they were both tributes to Nicholas (Nicky) Inniss, the man whom Pan Trinbago describes as having built this city on pan.

Last Saturday's Champs in Concert and the Carnival Monday Night Pan Explosion were both staged by Pan Trinbago and in honour of the retired executive director of Angostura Ltd, the firm which Pan Trinbago says has done the most for the national musical instrument.

Inniss was present at both functions, participating vigorously in the enjoyment of the music and applying similar levels of energy to the attempt to play down his own importance to the steelband movement.

At the Pan Explosion he stood on the Ariapita Avenue pavement, just below the judges' box, dressed in the jersey of the night, which reminded aficionados that it was in his honour.

It was when the Hummingbirds Pan Groove played "Stormy Weather" that the real thrill was evident. Inniss actually did a twirl, coming over to Dennis Ramdeen to muse on the beauty of the music.

Not that he wasn't equally thrilled by Courts Laventille Sounds Specialists version of "Excerpts from Orpheus of the Underworld", but the idea of rekindling memories of his dancing days seemed to do it for him, as was again evi-

dent when Phase II Pan Groove did "Barcarolle" or the Petrotrin Invaders delivered Schubert's "Serenade".

The medley of pop songs by the Neal and Massy Trinidad All Stars, though, as pieces of recent vintage and the rustic version of "Back Bay Shuffle" by the St James Tripolians got him actually dancing, albeit with himself.

He nodded his head in quiet approval as DJ Chinese Laundry, without prompting, announced that he would cut his music to allow Amoco Renegades to perform "Chorus of a Hebrew Slave". It was all for Inniss.

And much the same was his mood at Champs in Concert last Saturday night at the Queen's Park Savannah.

The show of winners and their wares, sponsored by the Telecommunications Services of T&T (TSTT) to the tune of some \$100,000, was staged in his honour too, with a special plaque designed by Gillian Bishop and made by craftsmen of the Signature Collection to mark the occasion.

The show went without a hitch. The stage play of the MC saying to

Gypsy and Black Sage, two extempo artistes, that they should remember that this is a tribute to Nicky Inniss, was to all patrons an obvious set-up and not an admonition as suggested elsewhere.



NICKY INNIS

Express 96030 1 p.24

Thank you for the music

ML 1044

NICKY from page 23

What was bad indeed was that Len "Boogsie" Sharpe, whose band has been a recipient of many favours from Inniss and Angostura Ltd, many favours from Inniss and Angostura Ltd, should blank the show, all in the attempt to wring more money out of Pan Trinbago than they had budgeted for such appearances.

Although the officials of Pan Trinbago would have us believe that Boogsie had another engagement at Moon Over Bourbon Street, it has been learnt that Boogsie had demanded some ungodly sum for the five-minute presentation and insisted that he be paid immediately upon the completion of his performance (Lord knows why).

Even after they agreed to give him more, he still did not show up to give that respect to Nicky.

TOMMY JOSEPH, whose relationship with Nicky Inniss must not have been as intense as the one Boogsie enjoyed, came with his hoarse voice to make his contribution. Nigel Lewis, who had another engagement, simply came onstage earlier, the very children who probably would have more trouble identifying Nicky Inniss than Nigel Lewis, moved to the left, right, north and south, thrilling the audience and fulfilling the tribute.

Geraldo Vieira Jr was busily trying to raise a sponsor to pay for the reassembling of his King of Carnival costume, Sonny Mann sent his regrets from New York and all those who performed did it with love. Producer Keith "Grip" Matthews and director Norvan

Fullerton put together what everyone agreed was a giant show, so who is Boogsie?

The inscription on the plaque (also sponsored by TSTT) presented to Inniss by Pan Trinbago President Owen Serrette says it all: "We built this city on Pan Music" with the text "This sculpture was designed by Gillian Bishop to celebrate the work of Nicky Inniss, a master builder in the steelband movement."

"It was made with love by the hands of craftsmen of the Signature Collection in teak and brass and incorporates the glass sculpture of Aubrey Lee Yuen.

"THIS IS but a small token of appreciation of all panmen, panwomen, children, as well as lovers of pan in this country of this man who; having played pan as a teenager, knew and understood the needs of the pan so well that in his days as a corporate executive, he flew in the face of his colleagues and kept his door open to members of the steelband movement.

"To them he gave his valuable time and energy and support both monetary and otherwise.

"By honouring Nicky tonight, we are made aware of how necessary it is for all of us who claim to love pan to do whatever we can by way of support to ensure that this city is truly built on pan music, so when the twenty-first century does come, in the words of our Young King (Kerwin Dubois) 'steelband go be jamming and jamming still'."

"Thank you, Nicky."

Signed, Gillian Bishop

So now, who exactly is Boogsie Sharpe?