

Our Boys make pan history in USA

ML 1040

CO-OPERATION between pannists of different nationalities has given our Boys Steel Orchestra, of Fort Street, Scarborough, a first in the annals of steelband performance overseas.

The appearance of the 24-member band at the annual convention of the Percussive Arts Society held in Washington D.C. recently, was made possible with the co-operation of Andy Narrell, U.S.-born pannist (who himself created pan history by being the first non-national to play with more than one band for Panorama 1986) and marked the first time a steelband had performed at one of the society's conventions.

Pat Arnold, manager of Our Boys, said he contacted Narrell while the band was on tour of St Catherines, Ontario, Canada, and arrangements were made for them to perform in the San Francisco area to raise funds for their stay in Washington.

Advance publicity made their first concert at the First Unitarian Church in Oakland a sellout success and their subsequent performances wherever they played got rave reviews (See box on this page). Proceeds from their appearance at Eastuary Park for Carijama, a show organised by the Caribbean Cultural Centre, made them the talk of the town.

The Fort Street boys shared billing in Washington with a prestigious symphony orchestra, and they were pleasantly surprised to see and hear their arranger, Len *Boogise* Sharpe, demonstrate his pan virtuosity on the show at George Washington University. The Percussive Art Society also arranged for the band to perform solo at a special concert.

It is understood that Narrell was instrumental in getting Our Boys to lay down the tracks for a record, utilising the most up-to-date technology. The record is expected to be released here before Carnival.