



Quarter century of sweet pan

LATER this year, Shell Invaders will celebrate its 25th anniversary — a quarter a century of sweet music to the pan world.

At this celebration the band proposes to invite the veterans who rallied around Stanley Hunte during the war days, and formed the nucleus of what is today one of the country's most famous and popular steelbands.

Invaders — home of Ellie Mannette, rated as the most talented tuner the steelband movement has ever produced.

Invaders — what sweet memories the name brings back to thousands. The Invaders "sound," they would tell you, is a sound no one else can produce. Hear that bass section anywhere and you would recognise it immediately: it cannot be duplicated.

Now that Ellie is abroad, his brother, Vernon ("Birdie") has taken over the reins of captaincy. Vernon, too, is a tuner — has been for the past 21 years.

He and Francis Wickham — are today the only two founders who are still associated with the band.

Always famous for its "Sailor" mas, Invaders began making its presence felt at pan competitions in 1961. That year it placed second at the Steelband Festival for its rendition of "In a Monastery Garden." In '64 it placed third, and the tune was "Waltz from Serenade for Strings."

In '66 its rendition of Water Music earned it second prize in the Bomb competition. At Panorama last year, it won the prize as the band with the best outfit, and placed third in the People's Choice category.

Invaders has always made the Panorama Finals. This year certain changes have been made to the tenor pans. Though the pans carry the same amount of notes (23) each, a different arrangement of notes has lessened the distortion of sounds to considerable degree.

"This year we are coming better than ever," "Birdie" forewarned.

The band has made three overseas tours — through the Caribbean, Puerto Rico, and New York.

Invaders is going Hippy for Carnival Monday. On Tuesday (you guessed it), it is back to the regular "sailor" mas.

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T.G.
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