

Starlift marks 50 years

HISTORY OF STARLIFT

PAN GREATS of the west assembled at the Mucurapo Road Extension site of PCS Starlift Steel Orchestra last Friday, to celebrate the band's 50th anniversary. The gathering evoked memories and a fresh appreciation of Brother Valentino's award-winning calypso Bands from the west was the best.

Starlift Steel Orchestra was founded in 1956 and has its roots in Woodbrook since inception, and has occupied several premises in and around the Woodbrook area. The band was founded at a time of growing national acceptance of the steelband, as a vehicle of popular culture in the context of its ties to the grassroots, to youths in particular, and to the neighbourhood that bred it.

Starlift represented a new trend in steelband membership that was

to become the norm for the country, where all sections of the community were happy to support and be identified with the steelband of their choice. The first captain of the band was Eugene Peters, followed by other notable pioneers including Beresford Lewis, Arnold and Kenny Lynch, Hugh Wellington, Irwin Alexis, Phylo James, Andrew Constant, Clyde Hinds and Ernest Greaves to name a few. These men were saluted and tribute was paid to them, for all of the work they did.

By looking at the list of these pioneers and recalling the social conditions in T&T in the late 1950's one understands immediately that Starlift is both a popular and a populist steelband.

PAN ON THE MOVE

The Band has had a rich and colourful history, and bearing this



Members of Starlift during one of their many performances.

in mind it adopted Pan on the Move as a vision that is in keeping with the historical past of the band. In 1972, Ray Holman created history with Starlift by being the first steelband to enter the Panorama competition with a tune composed by a panman especially for pan. It was unheard of at that time and as such the band placed third. The tune was entitled Pan on the Move.

It was however the beginning of a trend that has today become the norm.

THE STARLIFT VISION

The Vision of Starlift expressed as Pan on the Move encapsulates the passionate sentiment of the founders and members throughout the years to be the most creative, innovative and energised steelband in T&T. To set sights on T&T, the Mecca of steelband music, is to ac-



PCS Starlift manager **PETAL HINKSON** presents renowned composer/producer **ALVIN DANIELL** with an award at the band's 50th anniversary dinner and awards ceremony on Friday night.

cept the challenge to be the standard bearers of the steelband and its music throughout the world. Behind every Starlift initiative is the cultivation of discipline and the

development of universal leadership with its motto being We Not I. This vision is demonstrated in the successes of Starlift over the past four decades.