



MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL
FOLK ARTS & HERITAGE PROGRAM

FIELDNOTES

Fieldworker(s) [(Initials) Name]: (MH) Maggie Holtzberg, (RC) Russell Call

Accession Numbers:

RC-03-01-FN

Fieldnotes

- - -C

Audio recordings

RC-03-01-CN

Photographic documentation

- - -M

Additional materials

Initial Contact: _____ Contact Date: 8/25/2003

Related Accession Numbers: MH-03-09, - - - -

Individual/Group/Event: Boston Caribbean Carnival, 2003

Address: Blue Hill Avenue

City: Roxbury Zip: 02120 County: Suffolk

Phone: Daytime: _____ Evening: _____

E-mail: _____ Website: _____

Contact person: Shirley Shillington

Title: President of The Caribbean American Carnival Association

Location of Interview: Observation of 2003 Boston Caribbean Carnival

Street Address: Blue Hill Avenue

City: Roxbury Zip: 02120 County: Suffolk

Special Needs (including translation): _____

Traditions documented on visit (traditional art/skills, occupational experience, ethnic or religious community): Carnival mas bands in succession along the parade route including T & T

Traditions noted for follow-up: specific mas bands

Other Possible Contacts: _____

Summary Description: see attached

RC-03-01-FN Summary
Boston Caribbean Carnival

Russell Call and Maggie Holtzberg attended the annual Boston Caribbean Carnival which takes place along Blue Hill Avenue in Roxbury. We arrived to find crowds gathered on both sides of the Street, multiple sound systems on flatbed trucks blasting calypso music, and the smell of jerk chicken is in the air. Vendors sold flags and trinkets from Trinidad, Tobago, Jamaica, Barbados, and a number of other West Indies islands.

We watched a succession of *mas* (masquerading) bands from competing clubs that dance their way down the 21-block parade route. A king and queen led each band, adorned in dazzling handmade costumes of steel frames, bent wire, fabric, feathers, sequins, and glitter. Junior king, junior queen, individuals, and sections of dancing masqueraders complete each club's entourage. The final stop on the parade route was a street stage, where Trinidadian judges observed the celebrants from a viewing station.

We photographed the incredibly lavish display of costumed mas bands, aware that we were the only white people in the crowd.