

The History of Junior Junkanoo

The idea of Junior Junkanoo originated when members of The National Junkanoo Committee, the Junkanoo leaders and representatives of the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture visited Carnival in Trinidad.

They first observed the participation, involvement and interaction of principals, teachers, parents, supervisors and students at various schools preparing for what they call “Kiddies’ Carnival.”

For several years, persons intimated that we were ready for the introduction of a “kiddies” parade, patterned after the one viewed in Trinidad.

In 1987, Mr. Keith Glington, country manager of Esso Standard Oil S. A. Ltd. approached the Ministry of Youth with an offer to fund a Junior Junkanoo parade. This was following the discussions with several members of the National Junkanoo Committee and Mr. Glington’s belief that such a program would go a long way in taking the country’s support of the arts to a higher level. Esso sponsored several art workshops over the years.

Then in 1988, the vision to host the first Junior Junkanoo Parade in New Providence was conceived. The idea was presented to the then Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture, the late Mr. Peter Bethell, who approved the plan and instructed that it be presented to The National Junkanoo Committee with a mandate for the implementation of the first Esso Junior Junkanoo Parade in December of that same year. The title was changed from “kiddies” parade to Junior Junkanoo, since we did not want to be seen to be emulating Trinidad’s kiddies’ parade. This was also followed with consultation from several people in the school system.

The Junior Junkanoo Committee was headed by Ms. Veronica Inghram of the Cultural Affairs Department of the Ministry of Education.

As acting Director of Culture in 1988, Mrs. Veronica Inghram – Thompson was instrumental in launching the first successful Junior Junkanoo parade.

Gina Mortimer-Storr was appointed as the first coordinator of the event, with the support of a Junior Junkanoo Committee. Ms. Mortimer served in this capacity for three consecutive years, until her departure from the civil service. However, she maintained a high profile in her capacity as Chairman of the Junior Junkanoo Parade Sub-Committee as a liaison person for her new employers and major sponsor of the event – Esso Standard Oil S.A. Limited.

The first parade in 1988 was funded entirely by Esso and its dealers, and was called the Esso Junior Junkanoo Parade. For the next seven years, the Caribbean Bottling Company was invited at the request of Esso to become co-sponsors in 1989 and become known as the Esso/Coca-Cola Junior Junkanoo Parade.

Caribbean Bottling Company Ltd – Coca Cola discontinued their sponsorship of the program in 1996. Esso Standard Oil S.A. has been the major contributor of the Junior Junkanoo program from the inception and is presently going into its 18th year as the major sponsor.

We are grateful for the role that Esso is playing and their vision is fostering the future growth and development of our youth through this program.

The Junior Junkanoo program is the feeder system and the future survival of Junkanoo for years to come. Mr. Troy Simmons is presently the country's chairman for Esso.