

## **KEN'S CHOICE.**

Nr,15. 29<sup>th</sup> August 2006



### GODFREY CHIN – NATIONAL TREASURE

You're lucky if just once in your lifetime you cross paths or find yourself on the same path with someone who is utterly unique in a way you just wish you could

be; someone who remembers everything he's ever seen, heard, experienced; someone who then takes the time and effort and also has the skill to write the details of his life as if they happened to him just yesterday. If only I could remember all the poems, stories, jokes that I've heard and even told, I would be able to stay on stage for six hours without repeating myself. If only I could remember the names of people I meet and know that I should know very well, but just can't remember.

Anyway to make a story that could be very very long fit on one page, I present to you and acknowledge the one and only, the energizer bunny of energy and creativity, the Guyanese memory man himself –



Sir Godfrey Chin !!

**Athlete** (National hockey goalkeeper),

**Artist** (Master Mas Maker), **Dancer**

(Salsa expert), **Writer/Archivist/History-Harvester** (countless Nostalgic essays)

But the single most outstanding talent he has is his remarkable memory. Name a Hollywood film shown in Guyana 40 years ago, and he tells you who the stars were, what cinema it showed in and when, and the cost of a ticket to the cinema's pit. Who were in the national hockey team that played Trinidad in 1955? He'll reel off the names, positions, score and most of the Trinidadians too. Who lived in which house in an entire street he once lived in? Easy. The names of all the cook shops and what they sold? No problem. Whose sister was who's cousin whom he tackled at whose party and what juke box or band played? He'll revel in telling you it all. Name the boys and young men who congregated on the seawall during the school holidays to play their own brand of beach cricket. Where was the best curry and roti, black pudden, white eyes, mauby, peanut punch, sugar cakes, condoms sold? He'll tell you those and any other such trivia

you want to know.

The second great talent is that he writes down everything, and then indulges in yet another remarkable talent – his generosity in sharing of everything he remembers. Over the past five years, he has emailed us these essays and anecdotes with the intention that they be passed on to all we who lived in Guyana in from the 40's to the 70's encouraging all to add and comment at will. He has been a kind of social and cultural anthropologist, archivist and social glue and commentator for an increasingly growing and fragmented diaspora.

Given the power, I would declare Godfrey Chin a **Guyana National Treasure**. How can we make this happen without involving the Government? If you like the idea, spread the word.

and let's see if it takes root. What I can and will do is send him a cheque in advance for a copy of his forthcoming book NOSTALGIA Memories of Guyana.

And Hi ! We all have the power, and therefore **I, ME-ONE, HEREBY DECLARE GODFREY CHIN TO BE A GUYANA NATIONAL TREASURE.**

...and duh is um.....