

A wealth of culture on campus



Cultural events abound at UNB! After last weekend's Africa Night (pictured above) and Chinese New Year celebrations, you can look forward to India Night tomorrow.

Photo by Mark Bray

by Jethelo E. Cabilete
Brunswickan Entertainment

It is always a pleasure to attend cultural events at UNB. The ability to "visit" other cultures through these events enables people to understand, and get acquainted with, people from other countries. Last Friday, February 16, 1996 was the Chinese New Year Celebration, hosted by the Overseas Chinese

Students Association (OCSA). This particular year, is the Year of the Rat.

Myself, the inestimable Mark Morgan and a group of friends were part of this celebration to honour the turning of the new year. The Chinese New Year occurs between January 22 to February 24, and follows the Chinese lunar calendar. The designation of twelve animal signs to each year, is symbolic of that

particular animals influence on the year and the people born under its influence. According to Chinese legend, the formation of the twelve animal signs occurred when Buddha summoned the animals of the world to him. Those that came to him, were awarded with a year named after them. Of all the animals, the rat appeared first, followed by the ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog and pig.

The OCSA Chinese New Year celebrations began Friday night at the SUB Ballroom. The atmosphere was very celebratory, and the decor added a pleasant touch to the mood. People were mingling with each other, expecting the coming events that heralded the New Year. The evening began with introductions by the Masters of Ceremonies, followed by a brief address by Dr. Israel Unger, Dean of Science. Dr. Unger remarked on the cultural diversity at UNB, and that these cultural events helped develop understanding and appreciation of the various cultures on campus. The following speech by Dr. Anthony Lister, professor of Math and Statistics, explained the celebration of the Chinese New Year. Dr. Lister illustrated the animal symbol's influence on people, with the fortunes of various people in the Year of the Rat. The rat apparently won the right to be first in the yearly cycle, by challenging the ox in a contest. Both animals would walk down a street, and whichever one was considered largest would have the privileged position. The ox thought it would win (being the larger animal), but it lost. The sight of an ox was common, but a rat walking beside an ox was unusual. Therefore, people remarked, "Look at that big rat." The rat won, much to the chagrin of the ox. Dr. Lister finished his speech with

predictions for the coming year. OCSA President, Eddie Chan made a brief introduction and New Year salute, before the dinner commenced. The dinner was a different affair from previous years. The numerous dishes were served to each table, whereupon guests helped themselves to each dish. The food was delicious, and the friendliness of the servers needs to be lauded. It was certainly a pleasure to meet and greet old and new acquaintances during this time. The excellent dinner was followed by a traditional lion dance by members of OCSA. This has always been an interesting performance, and this year was a marvelous display of acrobatics and music. Next came a series of games that were entertaining to say the least. Volunteers from the audience competed against each other in such games as Chinese calligraphy copying, Rat mask placements and drum repetition. The highlight of the evening, was the casino and subsequent auction. Everyone was given an amount of play money for the casino. Winning more "money" allowed you to "purchase" various items from a booth. At the end of the night, there wasn't much play money left, so the remaining items were awarded through a lottery style draw. A good time was had by all, and students should certainly look forward to next year's Chinese New Year celebration.

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Tickets at: the venue, SUB Help Centre or contact 462-9102