



# NEWS LETTER

FEBRUARY 2023

Issue No.50

**ASSOCIATION OF PAST EMPLOYEES OF SINGER**

112, Havelock Road, Colombo 5.

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Friends,

First and foremost, let me on behalf of the President and the Executive Members wish all my APES Members, their spouses and family members a fabulous New Year blessed with good health, happiness and prosperity. May all your endeavors be fulfilled to your hearts content.

The year 2022, ended with a mixture of happiness and sorrow for all members. On November 26th, the much awaited Sing-A-Long Musical evening was held at the Cey-Nor Family Restaurant with the participation of over 150 members giving them an opportunity to quench their thirst with the 'hot stuff' and loosen their limbs after a long time. Thereafter on December 19th, our good friend Vidya said 'Goodbye' to all of us. I do not wish to elaborate on these two incidents as two separate articles appear elsewhere in this edition of the Newsletter.

It is my fervent hope that the new ExCo to be elected at the forthcoming AGM will provide our members more opportunities to get together and renew their cordial relationship of the past.

*Gamini Wasalathanthri*

## APPRECIATION - LATE MR. VIDYA VIDYARATNE

*'Rupam Jirati Machchnam, Nama Gottam Najirathi'*

*(Meaning) 'The body decays but the good name, of the person will not'*

I will commence writing this appreciation quoting the above Pali Santza. Mr. Vidya Vidyaratne said 'Good Bye' to all of us, early morning on 21st December 2022 bringing immense grief to everyone who associated with him. Vidya is no longer with us but no one can deny the fact that Vidya's photograph is firmly ENGRAVED in his heart. Vidya was a gentleman of the highest caliber and an Engineer par excellence. Even though he held the high posts of Factory Director and Group Manufacturing Director, he was a modest, ever smiling, down to earth person who was ever willing to offer his advice and help others, especially his subordinates. Even though I knew Vidya, my relationship with him grew after I started visiting Singer Industries and Regnis Factories to discuss defects and quality of products. On every occasion I visited Regnis, he greeted me, offered a cup of tea and despite his enormous duties as Group Manufacturing Director, accompanied me to the factory to discuss the problems with his Factory Manager and Line Managers.



Vidya was solely responsible for setting up the Regnis Factory and amongst his other accomplishments was getting Regnis to be the first Factory in South Asia to introduce R600 gas to its Refrigerators. As most of you are aware, Vidya was ailing for some time with a memory problem and partial paralysis. Yet he continued to meditate as far as possible! I still remember vividly, the day the three Musketeers, late Bert, late Vidya and my good friend Nelson visited me when I was recuperating at the Asiri Surgical Hospital in May 2018 after undergoing an operation on my left fractured femur. Before leaving the hospital, Vidya placed his hand on my head and said 'Don't worry Gamini, you will recover soon. We will pray for your speedy recovery! True to his words, I was released from the hospital three days later with instructions to use the walker for two weeks whenever I need to walk. This is the quality of a perfect human being.

Farewell my dear friend Vidya. Your pleasant memories will linger in my mind until I follow you to the 'Land of no return'

*Gamini Wasalathanthri*

## APPRECIATION - LATE JANAKA KALUHENDIWELA

Soft spoken, ever smiling Janaka said ' Good Bye' to all of us who knew him intimately. His untimely demise on 16th January at the age of 60 years brought immense grief to all who associated with him. Janaka was a gentleman of the highest caliber, exhibiting true qualities of a human being. I came to know him from the time he was a Cash & Carry Dealer in Pothuhera.



Janaka joined the Association of Past Employees of Singer in 2000 and served in the Ex Co rendering valuable service as a member of the Social & Entertainment, Membership Drive and Welfare of Members Sub Committees. He was an active member of the Association, participating in all its activities, especially at get togethers providing the music with his own equipment such as speakers, amplifiers and cassettes etc. He was an excellent cricketer who captained his Alma Mater Maliyadeva College, Kurunegala First X1. Later, he joined Bloomfield Cricket & Athletic Club and excelled as a batsman. Subsequently, he was also elected to the Executive Committee of the Club for the year 2016-2017. Janaka was also a member of the Singer Cricket Team under the captaincy of Dhammika Ranatunga and played an important role as a batsman throughout the Mercantile Cricket 'A' Division tournament helping Singer to emerge Champions in 1989 beating the much fancied and studded Mercantile Credit in the semifinals and Nawaloka in the finals. I was fortunate and privileged to hold the position of President of the Singer Sports Club when our team for the first time in Mercantile Cricket won the trophy. Farewell, dear Janaka. Although you are not with us now, you will be fondly remembered by everyone who knew you. On behalf of the members of the Association of Past Employees of Singer, I offer my sincere condolences to Janaka's wife and children. May he attain the supreme bliss of Nirvana.

*Gamini Wasalathanthri*

## A MEMORABLE EVENT - SING-A-LONG 2022

The venue was by the picturesque Beira Lake. Multi coloured jets twinkled in the surrounding greenery as lilting music and soprano voices wafted across. It was a fun filled evening of song and dance. The 26th of November 2022 was a Red Letter Day in the calendar of the APES. The Sing A Long was a welcome break after a long spell of Covid restrictions. The Entertainment sub-committee of APES with the able leadership of Mr. Russell de la Motte and the guidance of President Mr. Nelson Mendis organized a memorable event which all present enjoyed immensely.

The event was expertly compered by Mr. Lashantha Perera. Mr. Priyantha Senevirathna joined him later with his wit and humour to keep the audience entertained. Music was provided by Battison Bolonne and the Wild Flowers. The compere got the ball rolling with the evergreen, Green green grass of home. Then the melodies continued and finally broke out to a baila session which kept everybody's toes tapping. The dance floor was a hive of activity with the jive, cha cha and ball room dancing. The games added more merriment and the winners walked away with surprise gifts. The grand finale was the arrival of Santa who ushered a festive air to the event reminding us that Christmas was round the corner and it was the season of giving the less fortunate to make them happy.

The Organizing Committee is indeed grateful to the many sponsors who contributed generously to make the event a success.

*Keerthi Wijekulasuriya*

*Mr. Nelson Mendis, President of APES, receiving Mr. Hemaka Amarasuriya, Chief Guest at the entrance to CEYNOR Family Restaurant*





*Talented Master of Ceremonies Lashantha Perera conducting the events of the Musical Evening*



*The Patron & Chief Guest Mr. Hemaka Amarasuriya with his family and a few Senior Members of the APES with their spouses*



*Mrs. Amarasriya being received by Russell*



*Fragrance of 'Wild Flowers' kept the participants swinging throughout the evening*



*Two senior members hugging each other*



*Age is no barrier for an occasional dance*



*Manjula exhibiting his hidden talent with his wife*



*Ruwan K and Manjula two members of the Ex-Co with Nilanthi our Secretary*



*Mrs. Amarasuriya and daughter Dilkeeka going through the Song Book*



*Evidence of free flow of the hard stuff*

## FOR THE READING PLEASURE OF ALL MEMBERS

### CIEVER LITTIE STORY

*This is a clever little story created from titles of Shakespeare's plays*

Who were the bride and bridegroom?

= Romeo and Juliet

When did he propose?

- Twelfth Night

What did he say?

- As you like it

From where was the ring obtained?

- From the Merchant of Venice

Who were the Chief Guests?

- Anthony & Cleopatra and Troilus and Cressida

Who were the bridegroom's friends?

- The two Gentlemen from Venice

Who prepared the wedding breakfast?

- The merry wives of Windsor

What was the honeymoon like?

- A Midsummer Night's Dream

How would you describe their quarrel?

- The Tempest

What was the bridegroom's chief occupation?

'= The taming of the shrew

What did she give him ?

- Measure for Measure

What did their friend say?

= All's well that ends well

What is the moral of this story?

= Much ado about nothing

Courtesy; Daily Mirror of October 12th 2022

*From - Gajini Wasalathanthri*

## 21ST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 21st AGM of the Association of Past Employees of Singer was held on 19th. February at the Grand Oriental Hotel. Patron, Mr. Hemaka Amarasuriya graced the event. Also present were several members of the past and present directorate of the organization. President, Mr. Nelson Mendis who served the association in several capacities rendering yeoman service over a period of twenty two years stepped down from the presidency making way for Mr. Lashantha Perera. In his inaugural address the new president outlined the “Way Forward” for the association, so the committee could serve the members with more agility. The raffle draw was an immense success with members carrying away attractive prizes donated by generous contributors.



*Address of incoming President Mr. Lashantha Perera*



*Gamani Abeysuriya & Gamini Wasalathantri, very senior members of management*



*Raffle draws with Beeta*



*Membership participated*

The highlight of the event was the launch of the past employees' website, “apesinger.com” by Mr. Amarasuriya. The website is a cache of memorabilia spanning two decades for members to enjoy with a single click. We are now literally in the “ clouds” offering our members more engagement and enjoyment in this digital era.



*Launch of the website “apesinger.com” by our Patron Mr. Amarasuriya, Mr. Nelson Mendis, Mr. Lashantha Perera & Mr. Manjula Wijemanne*

## THE NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



President	: Mr. Lashantha Perera	<b>Committee</b>	Mr. Ruwan Kasturiarachchi
Immediate Past President	: Mr. Nelson Mendis		Mr. Damith Jayasena
Vice Presidents	: Mr. Kumar Samarasinghe		Ms. Sriyani Weerasinghe
	Mr. Russell de La Motte		Ms. Keerthi Wijekulasuriya
	Mr. Manjula Wijemanna		Mr. J. Sadique
Secretary	: Ms. Nilanthi Perera		Mr. Nihal Kodhagoda
Asst. Secretary	: Mr. M. Mahesharatnam		Ms. Ranmalee Silva
Treasurer	: Mr. Nasser Majeed		Mr. Sujith Ariyapala
Asst. Treasurer	: Mr. Thasan Sathyamoorthy		Ms. Varuni Sagarika
			Mr. Lahiru Weerasinghe

After the formalities, it was an enjoyable session of camaraderie with many humorous anecdotes of yesteryear being recalled. The chilled beer and cocktails uplifted the spirits of the members and later were seen enjoying themselves on the dance floor and there after enjoyed the delicious buffet dished out by the hotel. The new Executive Committee has pledged to engage all members in the activities of the year. A well-organized event which all present enjoyed. Wishing the new committee, the best in its future endeavors.

## TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE APES

Dear Ladies & Gentlemen,

As you are probably aware, I have resigned from the Executive Committee of the Association with effect from 19th February, 2023. I arrived at this decision with a heavy heart and after much thought. My advancing age is one factor, and the other is my inability to make a worthwhile contribution to the discussions taking place at the ExCo meetings due to a hearing impediment. This has caused me a great worry, I sincerely felt that I should leave way to young blood who could help the association to grow from strength to strength with their ideas and suggestions.

Singer has been a part and parcel of my life and blood for the past 58 years. 35 Years as an employee and 23 years thereafter as a member of the Executive Committee of the APES from the very inception. In addition, I have also handled the publication of the Association Newsletter continuously as its Editor for 21 years with commitment and dedication with the assistance of the members of the Newsletter Sub Committee and other members who supported me with articles for publication. To each one of them I offer my grateful thanks.

Even though I am not a member of the ExCo, I assure you my unreserved cooperation and participation in all the activities organized by the Association.

In conclusion, I wish my colleagues in the past Committee, members of the new Committee and the entire membership and their family's good health, happiness, and prosperity.

MAY THE ASSOCIATION OF PAST EMPLOYEES OF SINGER SHINE AS A MODEL OF UNITY, TRUST AND TEAMWORK.

*Gamini Wasalathanthri*

## CRICKET QUIZ

Regret we have not received any answers to the two questions asked in the last Newsletter.

The answer to the first question is Dennis Lillee, 5 wickets for 34 runs against Pakistan on 7th June, 1975 at Leeds

The answer to the second question is at Lords in England in June 1975

*Gamini Wasalathanthri*

***Dear Members,***

A new feature captioned " MEMORIES OF THE GOLDEN ERA OF THE PAST THROUGH CAMERA LENSES" will be added to the Newsletter commencing from Edition No. 51.

Members are kindly requested to submit photographs of Singer events which took place preferably prior to the year 2000 with an appropriate title for publication in the Newsletter. The size of the photographs should not exceed 5 1/2" by 3 1/2. The first of these photographs taken from my album will appear in the Newsletter published following edition No.50.

Trust you will extend your fullest cooperation to make the Newsletter more attractive and meaningful.

***Editor***

## LAUGH & LIVE LONGER

1. Q: Why do Accountants make good lovers?  
A: They are great with figures
2. A female Secretary was helping her new boss set up his computer and asked him what word he would like to use as a password to log in. Wanting to embarrass his new Secretary a bit, and let her know were they stood, he told her to enter ' penis'. Without blinking or saying a word, she entered the password. She then almost died laughing at the computer response " PASSWORD REJECTED. NOT LONG ENOUGH"
3. Lady Teacher: Q- Where is Middlesex?  
Student, A boy: A- Between the legs
4. How do Chinese describe an afternoon siesta?  
Chew enlie
5. A teacher says ' OK Children, today we are going to be talking about tenses. If I say " I am beautiful. What tense am I using?"  
A boy raises his hand and says" Obviously, the past tense Miss"
6. A man and his wife were arguing about who should make the coffee each morning. The wife says " You should do it because you get up first" The husband says " No. you are in charge of cooking, you should do it" The wife replies. ' No even the Bible says that the man should make the coffee" The husband is incredulous. He says " I don't believe that. Show it to me"  
So the wife opens the Bible and points out how the top of several page read " HEBREWS"

## OBITUARIES

19th Dec 2022 - Mr. Vidya Vidyaratne (Member No.211)

16th Jan 2023 - Mr. Janaka Kaluhendiwela (Member No. 124)

## EVENT CAIENDAR – 2023

- Avurudhu Ullela - Families - April
- Cricket match - Present Vs. Past - July/Aug
- Sing-A-Long - Oct/Nov.
- AGM - Feb. 2024

## NEW MEMBERS

Mem.No.	Name
369	Ravi Perera
370	Koshitha Peramunugamage
371	Nishani Perera
372	Sandhya Samarakoon
373	Sujeewa M I Wickrema
374	Dileepa Wickremasinghe
375	Yogendra Dinesh Kumar
376	Nadika Seneviratne
377	Nilmini Saram
378	Shantha Wijeweera
379	M H M Fairoz

## UNDELIVERED NEWSLETTERS

Since of late, several newsletters posted to members have been returned undelivered with the remarks "has left" "not at this address" etc.

May I therefore request all members who have changed their residential address, even temporarily, to inform the Secretary their new residential address. This will enable us to save a lot of money spent unnecessarily on postage.

The Secretary's address is given below:

Ms. Nilanthi Perera,  
Secretary – Association of Past Employees of Singer  
336D, Christ King Road  
Batagama North,  
Ja-Ela.  
Email: nilperera@gmail.com

Editor