



# NEWS LETTER

February 2024

Issue No.53

**ASSOCIATION OF PAST EMPLOYEES OF SINGER**  
112, Havelock Road, Colombo 5.

## CONTENTS

- From the Editor's desk
- Annual General Meeting
- President's Message
- New members
- Let's Chat
- Health is Wealth
- The Future Leaders have their say
- Members' Buzz

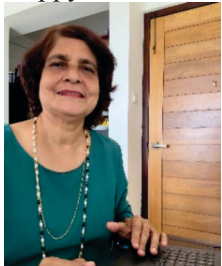
## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

### Children are the future leaders of tomorrow

Children live in a magical world. Through the eyes of a child the world is a fantasy land. Curiosity is their virtue and their imagination will run riot creating vivid imagery. The images help them to be innovative. With their innovative minds they will have a vision for our country which we adults would never fathom. Today's children are in a rat race to achieve top results in various exams. Parents try to achieve their dreams through their children, which is indeed a sad state of affairs. We must let them enjoy their childhood and develop their creativity to do wonders. Let's make a positive endeavor to let children enjoy their childhood.



Happy future leaders!



~ Keerthi Wijekulasuriya

**BREAKING  
NEWS**

The APES LOYALTY CARD has recorded a massive sales figure of Rs. 5 M for Singer in December 2023. We thank CEO, Mr. Mahesh Wijewardene and the management for their support in launching the card. We request members who have not yet applied for the loyalty card to forward information to Ms Nilanthi Perera through Whatsapp (+94774563942) and avail themselves of the attractive offers and discounts at Singer outlets and other business partners.



## Annual General Meeting 2024

The 22<sup>nd</sup>. Annual General Meeting of the Association of Past Employees of Singer was held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at the Grand Oriental Hotel. Patron of the association, Mr. Hemaka Amarasuriya, Singer Chairman, Mr. Mohan Pandithage, CEO Mr. Mahesh Wijewardene and members of the past and present directorate of the company graced the event. Outgoing President, Mr. Lashantha Perera addressing the gathering capped the events of the year. Launching of the apesinger website at the 2023 AGM, the Past vs Present employees' Sports Encounter in July 2023, the Sing along in November 2023, felicitating the patron for 50 years of association with Singer and the launch of the APES Loyalty card were the noteworthy projects for the year. He thanked the Entertainment Committee headed by Mr. Manjula Wijemanna for successfully organizing the events with innovative ideas. He also expressed his gratitude to Singer Sri Lanka and its subsidiaries for the grants offered, which would go a long way in helping past employees with medical expenses. A special word of thanks went out to Mr. Thushan Amarasuriya for permitting the use of the Singer Finance board room for meetings and sponsoring the newsletter. In conclusion he thanked the Vice Presidents and all committee members for their commitment in serving the committee and wished the incoming President and committee the very best.

Mr. Kumar Samarasinghe was appointed as the President for 2024. The President in his inaugural address stressed the need to launch fund raising projects towards improving the quality of life of our members. The members present had an enjoyable time, rekindling old memories with chit chats. A raffle draw with attractive prizes was held after the formalities. The meeting was followed by a lunch which everybody enjoyed.

The new Executive Committee.



**Seated from left:** Varuni Sagarika (Asst. Secretary) Nilanthi Palihawadana (General Secretary) Nassar Majeed (Vice President) Kumar Samarasinghe (President) Manjula Wijemanna (Vice President) Thasan Sathyamoorthy (Treasurer) M. Mahesharatnam (Asst. Treasurer)

**Standing from left second row:** (Committee members) Dilrukshi Perera, Nihal Kodagoda, Shan Jayasekera, Chandana Senarathna, Damith Jayasena, Keerthi Wijekulasuriya, J. Saddique, Sujith Ariyapala

**Standing from left third row:** (Committee members) Lahiru Weerasinghe, Siril Rathnaweera, Sriyani Weerasinghe

**Absent:** (Committee members) Ananda Weerasuriya, Sridhara Dissanayake

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



I am humbled and honored by the opportunity to serve as the President of the Association of Past Employees of SINGER. I am appreciative and thankful to the membership for having trust in me in appointing me as the President of APES.

To make my task easy I am blessed with a dedicated and energetic team as my committee. I am very confident of their capabilities and commitment to fulfill the objectives of our association, such as keeping all our past employees together on a strong platform so as our activities, achievements and news is shared and communicated. There is a great need to launch supportive programmes aimed at the wellbeing of our past employees. Towards this end we need to organize events and activities to keep the Singer family together and continue our brotherhood.

I am very confident that all of you will join with us to take our association to the next Level.

~ Kumar Samarasinghe



We extend a warm welcome to the following members who joined the APES family recently. We look forward to meeting you and enjoying with us at our future events.

413 Viresh Gomes	420 Y. M. Aruna Gunathilaka
414 Shanmuganathan Narendra	421 B. Nihal Priyantha
415 L A D Kapila Perera	422 Bonnie Joseph
416 Nilmini Jayaratne	423 K.F. Bede Fernando
417 Ivor Bulathge	424 W.M.V. Angelo Perera
418 K L S Ananda	425 Srianthie Salgado
419 M A S Rohana	

## AGM in Pics







## BEETA RAJANAYAGAM

During my recent tour to Jaffna, I visited my good friend Beatrice Rajanayagam (fondly known as Beeta to all of us) at her home in Uduvil, Jaffna . Present BM of Nelliady, Dushyanthan accompanied me. We had a lovely chat, going down memory lane and recounting her girlhood and subsequently her life at Singer.



Beeta had her primary education at Mahajana College Thellippalai and then moved to Vembadi Ladies High School, Jaffna. She joined the Lease Asset Department (later renamed as Credit Control Department) of Singer in 1972 . After a short stint in the Accounts Department, she was promoted to a supervisory position and transferred back to the Credit Control Department reporting to Credit Manager, Mr. P. Shivaji.

Q- Beeta, what was the turning point in your career?

A-Moving to sales in 1984. I was appointed AD for Thellippalai. Later, I became the BM of Chavakachcheri. You were the DM and Mr. Arulkumar was the AM. Both of us remembered the turbulent period during the IPKF occupancy in the North and the East. Can you remember how the IPKF visited the shop and demanded for the one and only microwave oven catalogue we had and never returned it?

Both of us remembered how agitated we were over the incident and how Beeta went to the IPKF camp and got it back. Recounting some more memories with the IPKF she said how they used to come to the shop and ask for water and how the Major always gave water to the juniors before he consumed it. One day, the shop staff had been drinking tea and they had requested for tea as well. Incidentally Major Kumar invited her to visit his home in Andhra Pradesh in India. She has nice memories of the visit to his grand mansion which had liveried staff etc.



Q- Did he propose to you? You could have been a “Maha Rani” in India!

A- No, not at all! People used to say I am married to Singer.

We have a hearty laugh.

Q- Any other memorable moments as a BM?

A- Yes, once we had a refrigerator promotional campaign with a free giveaway of a rice cooker. That was the first ever promotion done by a

company in Jaffna and we were amazed to see the long queue in front of the shop. We finished all stocks of refrigerators and had to quickly get down additional stocks from Colombo. After the Peace Accord the Singer shop was refurbished and it was the most sophisticated showpiece in town. The newer settlers in Jaffna didn't know about Singer. To build a customer base I had to conduct sales promotion programmes all over the peninsular including a stall at the Nallur temple festival annually.

As a BM and AD in the war-torn Jaffna district Beeta narrowly escaped when there was a bomb blast in the Chavakachcheri marketplace and a shooting incident in front of her shop in Teleppalai. We thank God for saving her life.

Due to the civil war the Jaffna district branches were closed for a certain period and reopened in 2002.

Beeta worked as Branch Manager of Jaffna branch until 2009.



#### **Q- What are your happiest memories at Singer?**

A- Forming the pioneer netball team at Singer with help from the late Mrs Piyaseeli Pieris. We had fun practicing at the YWCA court. Taking part in the indoor game tournaments and playing carrom and cards was fun. An event that I never missed was the annual Ladies' Picnic. We had great fun doing skits and taking part in the Fancy Dress Parade.

I could remember seeing photos of Beeta acting in various roles especially as a Montessori child in a pair of shorts and a pacifier in her mouth!

We were served with Ulundu wadai, modagam, plantains and tea which we enjoyed very much. Winding up our discussion she said, " I have no words to express , how much I enjoyed my career at Singer. Singer had so many facilities for employees. I am ever grateful to the management for appreciating my honesty and standing by me whenever I encountered any problems at shop level. I wish Singer the very best in the future.

Beeta spends her retirement happily with her brother and 98 year old mum in Jaffna. We wish her good health and happiness!

~ **M. Mahesharatnam**

## HEALTH IS WEALTH

Prevention is better than cure! When your day is packed with busy work schedules and family commitments, it is not always easy to remember this age old saying. Going to see your doctor should not be limited to only when you are feeling under the weather, but even when you think all things are going well, so that you can continue to feel that way for a very long time!

Age-appropriate vaccinations have been a cornerstone of good healthcare. Influenza vaccines, taken annually can significantly reduce the rate of hospital admissions and morbidity. Similarly Pneumococcal vaccination after the age of 65, is also advised to help reduce your risk of pneumonia.

Screening for hypertension, diabetes, obesity and high cholesterol are crucial to help combat the ever increasing heart ailments seen in Sri Lanka. Screening from the age of 40, and even younger in those with other risk factors would be advised as these are silent diseases that may not present with physical symptoms early on in the course of the disease.



An apple a day, keeps the doctor away - perhaps true, but let's not forget all that's mentioned above!

~ **Dr. C Shanmugasundaram, BM (UK), GDFM (Singapore)**  
**Healthy Life Clinic**



In the nineteen eighties, “Good Morning Singer” was a catchy phrase. Many other companies copied Singer. We remember with affection our telephone operator the late Mrs. Mala Abeysuriya and her infectious laughter.

A copy of *Riding the Zeitgeist*, the biography of Mr. Hemaka Amarasuriya was donated to the Jaffna library by Mr. M. Mahesharatnam.

A candid shot from a fancy dress parade at a Ladies' Picnic. Sriyani Weerasingha acting as a mobile “Thel beheth” vendor. She had a variety of oils to cure any ailment!



## THE FUTURE LEADERS HAVE THEIR SAY



**Janaan (8 Years)**

If I become the president of this country, I would have free government sponsored Art schools all over the country. We will provide all Art material free and have a contest yearly and award the best.



**Arian (7 Years)**

I'll build the tallest Lotus Tower in the world. When we go to the topmost floor we will see billions and trillions of buildings. I will become a swimming coach and teach swimming to poor children free.



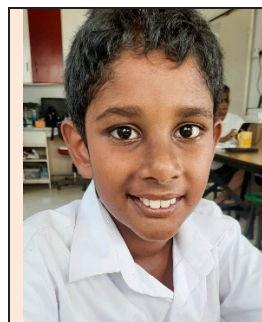
**Akshith (7 Years)**

I will give medicine, food, clothes and houses to poor people. Water will be given free. I will develop this country.



**Yaheila (9 Years)**

There should be freedom for everybody. I will see that all have freedom except wrong doers. All poor children will be taught water polo, tennis, athletics and art free.



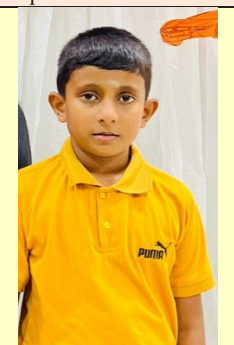
**Viren (9 Years)**

I will be an engineer cum artist. Our country will have the latest flying cars and remote-control cars. I will provide free education and houses. I will sell my paintings and from that money give meals to poor people.



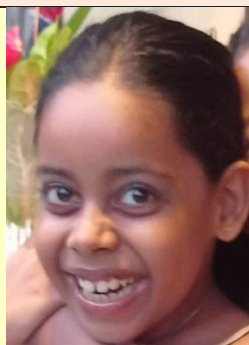
**Hasala (8 Years)**

I will end poverty and end hunger. Give food to poor people and free medicine. I don't like to see people suffering.



**Parikshith (9 Years)**

I will reduce the prices of goods and give food to poor children and also give houses to people who don't have. I will keep people happy.



**Danuli (8 Years)**

Wow! I will be living in the President's House! I will protect the country from invaders.



**Isila (5 Years)**

Football is my favorite game and my hero is Lionel Messi. When I become president I will build football grounds all over the country and also have Mc Donalds outlets everywhere.



**Sanuki (7 Years)**

I will make the largest chocolate fountain so that all the little children can dip their marshmallows and enjoy.



**Mesha (8 Years)**

I will build superhighways so that we can reach any holiday spot in a few hours. I love animals. I will see to it that their rights are looked after. Yes, they will be protected.



**V. Cooray (8 Years)**

I will stop people from cutting down trees. I will plant trees and make the country beautiful. I will stop shooting and make this country a safe place. We musn't waste money. Violence should be banned.



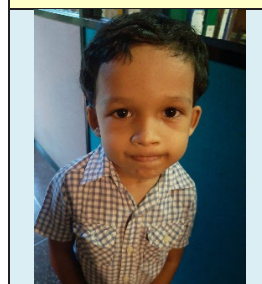
**Rahul (7 Years)**

When I become the President, all houses will be controlled by robots with automatic and high security functions. Everything will work with fingerprint functions. Household work will also be done by robots.



**Aleesha (7 Years)**

I will do everything to protect the country and make this a safe place to live in.



**Sithuka (4 Years)**

I will have those red double decker buses on the roads again



## MEMBERS' BUZZ

### WINNING THE" BLUE RIBBAND" AND OTHER HAT TRICKS

Bidding "Au revoir" to Nalanda College, I joined Singer Industries at Ratmalana as Security and Welfare Officer in 1979. I was lucky enough to continue my passion for coaching cricket at Singer. My good friend, Mr. Berty Fernando who was the President of the Singer Sports Club invited me to coach the cricket team. During my tenure as coach, Singer triumphed several times, winning MCA tournaments. During this period, I moved to Singer (Sri Lanka) as I was promoted as Personal Officer and Group Security Manager.



Mr. Hemaka Amarasuriya, Chairman who was an avid participant in MCA Cricket Tournaments at the time requested me to take over coaching. Mr. Anton Abeysekera, Commercial Director and President of the sports club extended his fullest support. When I took over the mantle of coaching Singer was a strong contender in Division A of MCA, the premier tournament at that time. Analyzing the field structure I felt we needed to have some experienced players and Mr Amarasuriya backed me. Within a month we had Sanath Jayasuriya, Dhammika Ranatunga and Kosala Kurupparachchi. 1989 saw us entering the semifinals of the MCA Division A tournament. But we were overpowered by the starstudded Mercantile Credit XI led by Arjuna Ranatunga. It was a huge disappointment for the boys as I had promised to take them on a tour to Malaysia and Singapore if they at least entered the finals. But luck was on our side and a surprise awaited us. At Sujith Ariyapala's homecoming, Mr Amarasuriya announced that the tour will be sponsored by the company. The tour was a huge moral booster and team spirit was at a high ebb. We won four out of five matches played overseas.

Our innings at MCA A Division was chequered with winnings and defeats. We strived hard for supremacy with Nawaloka, the reigning champions. With the absence of Sanath Jayasuriya who left to join Union bank the boys fought hard with determination. Initially losing to Nawaloka, we were later jubilant entering the semis much to the delight of the Singer supporters. At the Semis, our opponents were the fancied and strong and popular Mercantile Credit team led by the then Sri Lankan skipper Arjuna Ranatunga. The team had several national and first-class players. But the Singer XI did not bow down. With grit and confidence Singer stitched it up in style winning against the mighty Mercantile credit team.

Into the finals the excitement was a frenzy. The opponents were the hot favourites, Nawaloka team which comprised of six national players of repute with Aravinda de Silva captaining the side. Hashan Tilakaratne, Asanka Gurusinghe, Romesh Kaluvitharana, Asoka de Silva and veteran Sritharan Jeganathan adding more beef to the team.

The final played at the P Sara Stadium was a thrilling event. The stands were packed with supporters from both sides. Mr. Hemaka Amarasuriya came to the dressing room and in a pep-talk told the players, I quote "Do not be overawed by the big names in the opposition. Play the game with your capabilities and give everything you have towards it. Then you will never fail" Unquote.

Came match day. Nawaloka was brimming with confidence to achieve a 'Hat trick' of wins in MCA A Division championship. Winning the toss, they invited Singer to bat. Our boys were contained for 150 runs in the stipulated 50 overs, veteran Sritharan

Jeganathan claiming 5 for 30, supported by Aravinda de Silva with 2 for 28. For Singer, Dileepa Wickramasinghe top scored with 45 runs, while Janaka Kaluhandhiwela (27) and Sujith Ariyapala (18 not out) were the top scorers. Nawaloka replying found to their utter dismay that their counterparts were very smart in accurate bowling backed by smart fielding. The top Trio failed with Hashan Tillakaratne (19), Aravinda de Silva (9) and Asank Gurusinha (4) and only Sritharan Jeganathan (26) could show any resistance. The scoreboard read 109 against 150. The Singer supporters brought the house down. In bowling, Sujith Sirimanna (3 for 22), Nevin Noyahr (2 for 28) with Kosala Kuruppuarachchi and Sujith Ariyapala claiming one wicket each shared the spoils.

Singer Sri Lanka cricketers thus made history by winning the coveted “Blue Ribband” of the Mercantile Cricket Association A Division Championship in 1990.

The grand victory was celebrated after the awards ceremony in the Singer players’ dressing room sharing a beer together. When we were wondering where Mr. Amarasuriya was, he suddenly appeared with a bottle of Champagne which we all shared. What happened next left us flabbergasted. Mr. Amarasuriya laughingly threw his empty glass towards the ceiling, and it hit the rotating fan which broke the glass into smithereens. We didn’t utter a word but enjoyed the fun together clapping and singing.

Decades later it was when I was reading his Biography “Riding the Zeitgeist” that I found out that it was a well-known customary practice of young Amarasuriya from his good old days as a young “Articled Clerk” at Turquand and Young.

If anybody asked me “Howzat” with cricket at Singer, I would reply they had the BEST PARTNERSHIP WITH NO GOLDEN DUCKS!



~ Nelson Mendis

## WALK FAR, LEAVE NO CARBON FOOTPRINT BEHIND

What is carbon footprint? It is the total greenhouse gas emissions caused by something. Greenhouse gases is what is making our planet warmer and causing climate change.

Your carbon footprint is a number that shows the amount of carbon dioxide your greenhouse gas emissions equal. Anything that creates greenhouse gases can be included in your total carbon footprint. For example, a pen that was created in a factory that burns fossil fuels has a carbon footprint even if we can't see the fossil fuels that were used when we look at a pen. It's the same with food – a ham sandwich might not seem like it would have a carbon footprint but even things like transporting the ham from the farm to the shop will use fossil fuels.



**1 Kilogram of vegetables: 2.0kg of CO2**

**25-mile car journey: 10.9kg of CO2**

**1 Kilogram of Cheese: 13.5kg of CO2**



**1 Kilogram of Beef: 27kg of CO2**

**1 Kilogram of Cotton (clothes): 46.0kg of CO2**



**Return Flight for an average return flight: 350kg of CO2**

It is very difficult to have no carbon footprint at all but there are things we can do to **reduce** our carbon footprint.

Here are some ways to reduce carbon footprint in day-to-day life which will help us to reduce our energy usage. High Energy usage will impact climate change adversely.

- ✓ **Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle:** Reuse items instead of buying new ones and recycle as much as possible. People can reduce waste generation by recycling, composting organic materials, and avoiding single-use items like plastic bags, cups, and straws. You can also refuse. You can decide to refuse to buy bottled drinks, water in plastic bottles. This way we can reduce the carbon footprint in manufacturing the plastics.



✓ **Use energy-efficient lights and appliances:** Using energy efficient lights and appliances like LED bulbs, energy star-rated refrigerators, and air conditioners (inverter types) can significantly reduce your carbon footprint. We also can turn off lights & appliances when not in use.

✓ **Conserve water:** Save water by taking shorter showers, using efficient irrigation systems (example: rainwater harvesting), and fixing leaky faucets.

- **Use public transportation or walk and cycle**
- **Buy locally grown organic products**
- **Reduce meat and dairy consumption and move to plant-based food.**
- **Invest in renewable energy sources like solar power, wind power, etc.**
- **Plant trees and help in reforestation**
- **Support government policies in sustainability.**
- **Educate others: People can educate others about the importance of sustainability and encourage them to take action to reduce their ecological footprint.**



*The earth is not ours, it is a treasure we hold in trust for our children and grandchildren. We must be worthy of that trust.*



(Sources: ChatGPT and FunKids)

~ J. Sadique

## THE STORY OF A TAPESTRY

In life we all come with baggage. Mine's just filled with fabric!

Going down memory lane to my childhood, the Singer sewing machine occupied a prominent place in our home. My mum created magic with cutwork embroidery, shadow work, appliqueing, satin stitch, lace work , the whole gamut I would say. Maybe I inherited the talent from her. I walked into Singer in 1971 for my first interview, with my maiden effort at wearing a saree. Mr. Harry Jayasinghe, Marketing Manager interviewed me. Mrs. Kamala Peiris was my teacher in Kandy and role model from day one. Honing my skills at the training sessions under Mrs. Gertrude De Silva in Colombo for a monthly allowance of Rs.100.00 was quite an experience. I began my career at the Kegalle school. Whilst in Kegalle I tied the knot with Jayanthe. We celebrated our Golden Wedding Anniversary scoring half a century in 2023!



As I write this article, happy memories rush in a deluge of my career at Kegalle, Chatham Street and Kandy. I remember with much gratitude, branch managers, the late Mr. Abeysinghe, Mr Maniam and Mr. Keerthiratne, who supported me. The sewing school staff were one big family learning from each other and sharing experiences. 1985, saw me playing the role of Educational Supervisor under Mrs. Ruth de Silva. As a young girl working in the field, I preferred to stay in convents rather than in hotels. In lighter vain, once when I had to work late, I had to jump over the convent gate as it was past the strict deadline. Everybody had a hearty laugh hearing it. From the late eighties the sewing schools expanded geographically. The opportunity of turning nonperforming schools into profit centers was a challenge and a sense of fulfillment. My assistants, Srianthie Salgado and after her D.M. Heenmenike diligently worked with me to reach excellence.

As we forged ahead with expansion, several new courses were introduced. Costume jewelry, household linen and embroidered sarees were showcased at exhibitions. The introduction of Needle Painting was a huge success and the fashion shows saw our work modelled on the ramp. The feather in my cap was when Singer Australia purchased more than 200 needle paintings done by the students and invited me to take part in the exhibitions and demonstrations at the “Stitches and Craft Show” held in Melbourne and Sydney. Switching from Sewing Schools to Fashion Academies, an idea mooted by Mr. Gamini Abeysuriya gave the schools more prestige. The image of the schools soared, and our diploma certificate had more recognition. At this point I realized that we should cater to all provinces, even the far-flung hamlets and cover the whole island. Islandwide service projects was the brainchild of Mr. Hemaka Amarasuriya . Both projects boosted our image as a socially responsible organization and resulted in a remarkable increase in the intake to the schools as well as increased sewing machine sales.

The support extended to me by branch managers and field supervision was an impetus to my career. My gratitude to my bosses in the early years, the late Mrs Gertrude de Siva, and the late Mrs Ruth de Siva. A special word of thanks to Mr. Hemaka Amarasuriya, Mr. Gamani Abeysuriya , Mr. Kumar Samarasinghe and Mr. Asitha Abeysekara for their unwavering guidance. Also, I remember with much affection my team of teachers who worked together like a family.



In 2009 I bade farewell to Singer Sri Lanka as Senior Manager Educational Service with a heavy heart but my passion for sewing and serving Singer sustained. After moving to Sydney, from 2009 to 2015 working as Sewing Educator in Singer Australia was a new experience. My thanks to Mr Earnest Arul Kumar who gave me the opportunity. My greatest treasure in Sydney is my mum's sewing machine which has been my companion in this journey. It has withstood 77 long years but is still in perfect condition. In this modern age when the present generation would not opt for home sewing, I still derive happiness in the gentle art of artistically maneuvering stitches to create clothes for my loved ones. My dream is to complete the portraits of my three grandsons.

I am sure Isaac Merritt Singer would indeed be proud of me!

~ Damayanthi Ranasinghe

## LESSONS LEARNT FROM A SINGER RC 19

I joined Singer on 02<sup>nd</sup> January 1992 as a Trainee District Manager. It was the beginning of a lifelong friendship with my buddies, Channa Pathirana and Manjula Wijemanne.

We were under the “Eagle eye” of Mr. James Nandasiri – Training Manager and a tight training schedule was given to us covering all areas relating to Sales, Branch Administration, Inventory and Lease Asset Management etc. Being under the supervision of Mr. Nandasiri, was like being in the “Jaya niyathai” operation under Field Marshall Sarath Fonseka as we had to strengthen our forward defenses continuously. We learnt the job in no time. After 5 months of training I was assigned to Panadura District, successor for Ashan Kannangara who later became a good friend of mine in the latter stages of our career.

A letter was issued to me to report to Mr. Ravi Perera – Area Manager and I was happy about the location since my hometown was Moratuwa. The district comprised of 3 showrooms – namely Panadura (my Base), Moratuwa and Horana and 4 AD points viz Bandaragama, Ingiriya, Bulathsinhala. Piliyandala was added later.

Mr. Ravi Perera, Area Manager became my first boss. I was thrilled with my counterparts, all jolly characters. Clifford Johnson – Ratmalana District, Channa Pathirana – Ratnapura District and Ruwan Kasturiarachchi – Maharagama District. With Johnny in the area team our “spirits” rose to great heights and hence our passion to lead our districts. Of course we dared to indulge in “One for the road” when the boss was out of sight. Mr. Ravi Perera was a great influence in my career at Singer and from him all of us learned the art of balancing Sales and Administration. He mastered us on how to get sales from Branch Managers and Approved Dealers keeping Administration at a high ebb. After about 3 months in the district Mr. Ravi Perera informed me that our Marketing Director, whom I really feared at that is visiting my district. His main focus was Horana where the arrears had skyrocketed. From Horana, MD wanted to go to Bulathsinhala AD Point –Mr. Indraratne (known in the Bulathsinhala area as “Cashier Ayya”) was the Approved Dealer.

I went in my car 14 Sri 7100 – Toyota KE72 DX wagon and MD and AM came in MD’s car – Honda Integra. The 127 registers, cash book and the cash and Hire purchase registers were checked and I was feeling elated since I had carried out a shop check in the previous months. As my good friend “Johnny” says things were at my “fingertips” – until MD’s eye caught a Singer RC19 cassette radio– which was an obsolete item. He asked me “As the DM what steps have you taken to dispose of this obsolete item” I was speechless as I had not taken any steps. Second question was “Have you spoken to your AM and got it repriced “. Blank face again. The next ten minutes, I got reprimanded, left right and center. In between AM too got scolded and I was very upset since being a 25-year-old with 7 years of experience in sales I had never ever experienced a shelling of that nature.

I was sad that I had failed and because of my negligence my beloved AM too was blamed. Mr. Indraratne tried to explain but MD said “I am not talking to you I am talking to your DM” making AD silent. MD’s final words to me getting into his vehicle was “Young man do your duty, in vain I took you as a TDM, I should have taken you as a Sales Executive”, Those words left an indelible mark in my mind and made me determined to prove I was a worthy District Manager at Singer.

The lessons I learnt from Mr. Abeysuriya and Mr. Ravi Perera in overall job functions made my job easy at Singer and beyond. Later when I became an Area Manager replacing Mr. Russell De La Motte, who got promoted as Sales Manager I worked very closely with Mr. Abeysuriya and he was a brilliant administrator who had a huge analytical ability about the Field. It was a marvel how he could easily change his mood to suite the occasion. MD knew exactly who was working or not by hindsight and not based on what the field supervision told him.



He had a very effective radar, and his surveillance system was good. He had the correct picture of each and every individual. Some Branch Managers and Approved Dealers used to literally shiver when confronted by Mr. Abey Suriya. That was the respect he commanded in the field, but the entire field loved him. Some didn't "feel well" without getting scolded by MD!

In remembrance of this amazing individual, I have something to show you. I am so happy to have bought the Singer RC 19 from the Bulathsinhala AD point, from which I learnt a valuable management lesson. It is still in perfect working condition counting 32 years. Hats off to the Purchasing and Product Management team.

During my career at Singer the success of Singer was brilliantly exceptional. The Key and Senior Management wholeheartedly supported the Middle and Junior Management to carry out their duties. Many memories and lessons to cherish and many enduring friendships.

It was *THE* "FAMILY COMPANY"

~ Jaminda Mendis

### *LET'S PICKLE IT FOR AVURUDHU*



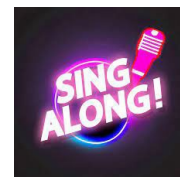
**Ingredients** – 1 cup cleaned red onions, 8 Green chillies, 1 large carrot, 8 green beans, 1 tsp mustard powder, 2 tbs Coconut vinegar, 2tsp sugar, salt, 1 tsp ground ginger and garlic.

**Method** – Cut carrot into fine strips, beans into 1inch pieces and mix all ingredients in a clay pot and microwave on medium high for 6 minutes.

~ Sujiva Vithana







A lineup of exiting events are planned for the year. We wish to see more of our members taking part at events this year.



## USEFUL MOBILE APPS FOR SENIORS

- As seniors it is very important that we update ourselves in Technology, or we will be missing out a lot. Technology, despite its challenges, can simplify life. Many seniors have smartphones but don't use the helpful apps available. These apps can save money and improve health. Here's a list of easy-to-use, beneficial apps for seniors.



	
<p>When you're on several medications, it can be challenging to manage. Many seniors forget to take their medication as prescribed by their doctor. Medisafe will help you manage your medications by sending you reminders when it's time to take medication and even alert you when it's time to refill a prescription.</p> <p><b>Availability:</b> iPhone and Android <b>Cost:</b> Free</p>	<p>If you've ever had trouble reading a restaurant menu, forms at the doctor's office, or labels on food packaging, a magnifying app could be a handy tool. With a touch of the screen, you can also "freeze" what you are looking at, so you don't have to point it in the same spot the entire time you're reading.</p> <p><b>Availability:</b> iPhone and Android <b>Cost:</b> Free</p>
	
<p>Remembering passwords for every online transaction can be overwhelming. LastPass is a convenient app that stores all your passwords securely in one place.</p> <p><b>Availability:</b> iPhone and Android <b>Cost:</b> Free</p>	<p>For seniors who have vision problems or arthritis that may make holding a book uncomfortable, audiobooks are a great alternative to print. Audible has the largest selection of audiobooks available. It's free to download, and you'll pay for a subscription to access books. Audible also offers a free trial period, so make sure to take advantage of this 30-day freebie!</p> <p><b>Availability:</b> iPhone and Android <b>Cost:</b> Free; requires a paid subscription after free trial</p>

(Sources - AARP Magazine, [www.seniorliving.org](http://www.seniorliving.org) & [www.thealdernetnetwork.com](http://www.thealdernetnetwork.com))

We propose to publish the next Newsletter in July 2024. Please email your articles to [wijekkeerthi@gmail.com](mailto:wijekkeerthi@gmail.com) or mail to Keerthi Wijekulasuriya, 75B, Dhammadara Road, Ratmalana.

We invite our readers to send in comments and suggestions to improve the newsletter and our website [apesinger.com](http://apesinger.com).