



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

After a lay off for nearly 2 1/2 months, I am back at the Editor's Desk (if I may say so).

2014 was a fairly successful year with most of the events planned by the Executive Committee being achieved with the co-operation of the general membership. What we had achieved during 2014 have been adequately mentioned in the Hony. Secretary's Report for 2014, and hence I do not propose to elaborate on them any further except briefly touch upon one item - our NEWSLETTER.

As planned at the beginning of 2014, we published four Newsletters as against three the previous year. This was possible due to the unreserved co-operation extended to us by some members who contributed articles for publication. This change in the attitude of members is very encouraging.

Please remember, your Newsletter is the only wave length through which members could share their past experiences with others. A few members continuously send articles for publication but we know there are many more who are capable of transferring what is stored in their minds to pen and paper. So why wait? Devote a little of your valuable time.

YEAR 2015 - FORTHCOMING EVENTS

MAY	- Get-together / Lunch	- Date: May 31st (Shalika Hall) Venue: Narahenpita
JUNE	- One Day Outing for members & Families (Tentative)	
AUGUST	- Medical Camp	- Date & Venue to be fixed
NOVEMBER	- Sign-a-long	- Date & Venue to be fixed
DECEMBER	- A.G.M.	- Date: 13th December (Fixed) Venue: To be fixed

Life in 1959 (Continuation)

I joined the organization in 1959 as a junior clerk and the starting basic salary was Rs.87/- as for the collective agreement signed by collective agreement CMU (Ceylon Mercantile Union) after general strike and Gazetted by the Government in July. The basic salary increased from Rs. 66 to Rs. 87 in 1956. The take home pay was Rs.250/- This is with the cost of living allowance and over time.

A car could be purchase for Rs. 15,000 (on finance). My first car was purchased for Rs. 12,500 which I operated as a taxi. The milage fare at that time was 50 cents. and my daily income was Rs.20/- net of expenses. Monthly income was Rs.300/- approximately.

The staff in the organization at that time was relatively young - exception being Mr. Samuel, Mr. Fonseka, Mr. Mathews & Mr. Vendergen was in their 50's.

For Wedding invitation each individual contributed Rs.5/- & for family bereavement Rs.2/- . One would receive Rs.500/- family bereavement Rs.200/-.

A packet of lunch cost 50 cents. With this salary we could live comfortably. A shirt cost Rs.13/- or maximum Rs.20/-. A Wedding Suit stitched at Marikkar Bawa's also at Chatham Street cost R.250/-. A brand new 'Humber' bicycle could be bought for Rs.215/- from Millers Ltd. You could use your own and even travel to office on this. I did. WimaJasiri had! a Ford Prefect and travailed to office from Welikada. T. Shanmugam a baby Austin, and he traveled to office from Wattala. There were big distance traveler like Aquinas who traveled from Marawila and Clarrie Peiris who traveled from Alutgama by train. Won't these days ever come back ??

Sent by M.I.M. Nizar

Good-Bye Mala



*Silent tears rolled down my cheeks
When I heard that you were no more
I am still bruised with grief
You were a magnificent human being
With a sweet smile and a good heart
When I first met you at SINGER
My first impression was
"A sincere person with a sweet smile"
Amidst all ups and downs life brought you
You always lived happily and
You were always very cheerful
What an example to all of us !
I really enjoyed your poems
Appeared in Singer Past Employees magazine
You always spoke very highly about Mr & Mrs. Amarasuriya's
Visits to you, their help and kind words
Mala it shows that you were not forgotten
By them and most of Singer employees
You lived your life fully
Setting so many examples to us
But now you are gone and your sweet smile is no more
It is so painful to say "Good Bye"
To a nice person like you
But life is so uncertain according to Buddhism
And we will have to accept it
Mala May you be able to shorten
his voyage of sansara and at the end of this journey
May you attain the Supreme Bliss of Nirvana !
I would like to end this article
With one of your poems which appeared
In Past Employees magazine
And hope this will be very useful
To all of us.*

නිතරම සිහිහවෙත් මුව සරසා ඉන්න
ඔබටත් මටත් කාටත් ප්‍රිය දසුනක් වෙන්න
අඩුවෙන් කපා කර වැඩිපුර කන් දෙන්න
හැකි වෙයි ලොවෙහි සුන්දර බව දැන ගන්න

We miss you - we miss you a lot
Thank you and Good Bye Mala

Sent by Renuka Gunasekera

MALA - REMEMBRANCE

Our family knew Mala for over 40 years, & this included our children. She used to call home regularly & We reciprocated accordingly. The smile & laughter which characterised her personality, never deserted her even in difficult times. She epitomised a person who was friendly & loveable, a indomitable spirit that made all around her bubbly. Her uncontrollable laughter was infectious & spread to all around her. At Chatham Street she was the first to greet us in the morning. Those were the days when Singer was small & Beautiful & we all knew each other personally. Many of the old Singer family would surely long for the nostalgia of the Chatham days where we were surrounded by ancient restaurants & seedy bars. Mala was one chain that held us together. I would join Anoma (when free) to visit her at 'homes' & hospital & console her & share in the companionship she longed for towards the latter days.

We visited her 2 days before her passing & she was not her usual self. Her pride in 'Singer' never left her, not in the last moments. She epitomised the joy of living, her unquiqua camaraderie to those close to her & her happy laughter will ring loud & clear though she is no longer with us. May her sourjon in Sansara be forever Happy & Peaceful.

Hemaka Amarasuriya

Mala's last text message received by MRS. Anoma Amarasuriya

Quote.

"Madam, u are so kind n love me so much. lord buddha will shower its blessings on u, my big boss n children for ever never. I am so lucky 2 get ur love"

-Unquote.

මාලා සමුගනී ඇයට නිවන් සුව පතමු !

සිංගර් ශ්‍රී ලංකා සමාගමේ දීර්ග කාලයක් සේවය කළ මාලා මිසී සදහටම අපෙන් සමුගෙන ඇත. මාගේ බලවත් යෝකය පලකරමි!

මාලා මිසී සිංගර් සමාගමේ ප්‍රධාන කාර්යාලයේ එවකට වැනම් විදියේ ගොඩනැගිල්ලේ පියගැට පෙල නැග කාර්යාලයට ඇතුලු වන විටම සිනා සිසීම පැමිණෙන හැම දෙනාම පිළිගත්තේ ඉතාම සුහදවය. ඇය කොක් හඬලා සිනා සෙන ගිතවත්කම හැමටම පෙන්වන දුර්ලබ ගතයේ කාන්තාවකි. මාලා යන නම සමාගමේ ඕනෑම අයෙක් හඳුනන වර්තයකි. ඇයට හැමදෙනාගේම නම මතකය. නමින් කතාකර සිනාසීම ඇගේ සුපුරුදු හැසිරීමය.

මට ඇය නිවාසයක සිටින බව දැනගන්නට ලැබූ පසුව මම නිවාසයට ගියවිට, මම 1981 සිට දුටු මාලා මිසී ඇයට උපතින්ම හිමි සිනහව පා මාව ඉතාම ලෙන්ගතුව පිළිගත්තාය. ඇයගේ ජීවිතයේ යම් යම් දේ සිනාසෙමින්ම මා සමග පැවසීම මට තවමත් මතකය. මම ඇය වාසය කල ඒ නිදහස් නිවාසයට කීපවරක්ම ගොස් ඇත. ඒ හැම වේලාවකම සිංගර් සාමාජිකයින් පිළිබඳව තොරතුරු පැවසුවේද ඉතාම සෙනෙහෙවන්තවයි. නිතරම වාගේ ඇය අමරසූරිය මැතිණියගේ ගුණ සිහිපත් කර ඇත. තවද ඇය මට හමුවූ අවසන් දවස වූයේ 2015 ජනවාරි 29 දිනයේදීය.

වරක් මාගේ උපන් දිනයට ඇගේ මිතුරියන්ට නිවාසයට ගොස් රාත්‍රී සංග්‍රහ කර ඇත. ඒ නිසා ඇයට මාගේ උපන් දිනය මතකය. මාගේ පියා මිය ගොස් දින කීපයක මාලා මිසී මට දුරකතනෙන් කතා කර මංගල මෙවර උපන් දිනයට අපව අමතක කරන්නේ නැහැ නේද කියා විමසුවාය. මම ඇයට ඇවිත් විස්තරය කියන්නම් කී විට ඇය කියා සිටියේ මංගල දිනය පමණක් වෙන් කරගන්න කියාය. ඒ අනුව මම ඇයගේ ඉල්ලීමට කැමැත්ත පලකර ඇයට මගෙන් ලැබෙන අවසන් රාත්‍රී සංග්‍රහයයි නොදැන, අප පවුලේ හැමෝම එදින ඇය කීපයක්ම ඇය හා මිතුරියන් සමග සතුටු සාම්වයේ යෙදුනි. ඇය ගිලන්පස බුද්ධ පූජාව පවත්වන විට වඩා ශබ්දයෙන් ගාථා කියා පූජා කරන්නීය.

අවසන් කාලයේ ඇයට සිංගර් සමාගමේ සාමාජිකයින්ගේ සම්බන්ධතාවය ඉතාම ඉහලින් ලැබූන බව මම දනිමි. මාර්තු 07 වෙනි දින මමත් මාගේ පුතාත් ගමනක් යන ගමන් කොට්ටාවේ නිවාසයට ඇය බලන්න ගිය අවස්ථාවේ තමයි දැනගත්තේ ඇය අපෙන් වෙන්වෙලා ගිහිල්ලා කියා. මගේ 65 වෙනි උපන් දිනයේදී ඇයගේ ඉල්ලීමට රාත්‍රී සංග්‍රහයට මට කරගන්නට බැරි වුනා නම් මට ඒ පසුතැවිලි වීම කිසිදා අමතක නොවන්නේය. කෙසේ වුවද ඉපදෙන හැමදෙනාම මිය යන ධර්මතාවය මත ජීවත් වන කාලයේදී තමතමන්ට පුලුවන් තරමට තමන්ගේ දෙමාපියන්ට වැඩිහිටියන්ට නැදැයිත්ට අසරණයන්ට හිත මිතුරන්ට සැලකීම රෝගී වූ විට බැලීම උපකාරයක් කල හැකිනම් කිරීම, සිදුකිරීමට උත්සාහ කිරීම, ජීවිතයේ සතුටයි. අවසානයේ අපට ඉතිරිවන්නේ යනවිට ගෙනයන ධනය වන්නේ යහපත් හොඳ වර්තයයි.

සැමට තෙරුවන් සරණයි
යහපතක්ම වේවා

මංගල වේලාරත්න

1. WHEN SAMAD LOST THE BET

Office Assistant A.M.A. Samad's life, like a true Muslim, was centered around the avowed objects of attending Friday prayers and refraining from all minor vices such as smoking, drinking and of course gambling. Many were the times he discouraged others from even buying lottery tickets, classifying it as a gamble.

His pastime it was observed, was admiring Factory Manager's Secretary Chandrani Gunawardena's 'jolly walk' Samad was enraptured with her walk as true femininity aroused him.

Samad was a strong supporter of the Pakistan Cricket Team but showed very little interest in others. On the day the Sri Lanka team led by Bandula Warnapura in 1982 was to play its first official limited overs match against Pakistan in Lahore Samad predicted 'Sri Lanka will get a good thrashing'.

Seizing the opportunity, I strongly maintained that Sri Lanka will win and egged him on to bet. Perhaps due to his loyalty to Pakistan, on persuasion Samad agreed to hold a bet. Underdogs Sri Lanka beat the formidable Pakistan team which comprised reputed players Javed Miandad, Zaheer Abbas, Abdul Qadir, Imran Khan, Saleem Malik, Moshin Khan and Mudaser Nazar.

The following morning, a dejected Samad who strolled into the office came straight to me looking as dragged as a half-drowned cat. He carefully looked around to ensure that no one was watching, and proffered a ten rupee note being the bet I had won. Samad had for once broken a principle he firmly abided by!

2. OPERATION HOTEL GALAXY

B.H. Dharmasena, an amiable character with a ready smile and charming talk, made friends easily with everybody. He was one who clawed his way up from the roistering, boisterous bottom rung of casual employee, to tread the rainbow of Charge Hand in the Assembly Line. Hailing from Matara, like most Southerners he was enterprising and also strove hard to prop himself into the Colombo elite. Although it was with difficulty that he picked up some English by attending night classes, he ensured that his two children received English Medium education and became inordinately proud of them.

While Film Star Sonia Disa's husband P.D. Karunaratne was with me one Saturday in the 1980s, Dharmasena approached us and enquired for a good place to dine that weekend, and unhesitatingly we recommended the newly opened Hotel Galaxy at Ibbanwela junction. The next Monday Dharmasena was back with complaint that although the food was good, the bill amounting to Rs.300 for 10 persons was excessive. Suspecting a miscalculation he requested me to write to the Hotel management seeking refund of the excess amount which I did after efforts to convince him that the bill was more than fair, failed. However, I made sure that the letter given to peon G.N. Fernando for posting, ended in the waste bin.

A couple of days later, Karu brought a newspaper clipping of an advertisement of the hotel and we went into operation., in the process I becoming a partner in crime. Karu photocopied the hotel's headpiece complete with logo and made a perfect letterhead on which I typed a letter to Dharmasena apologizing for the inadvertent computation error of the bill and offering 'On the House' dinner to the same pax as a good gesture on the part of the hotel management.

On receipt of the letter Dharmasena was as pleased as Punch and his cup of happiness spilled over at the prospect of a free dinner at this Star Class hotel. That weekend his party made their way to Hotel Galaxy for the second time. It was a masterful, monumental, mastodon of a meal. The jewel in the crown was the waiter presenting the bill at the end and Dharmasena joyfully responding by submitting the complimentary dinner letter to a baffled and confused waiter. One is inclined to draw a veil over the event that immediately followed especially as Dharmasena is no more with us, but doubtless in some great cloudy boudoir in the sky.

It should be said that he did not speak to either Karu or me for several days, but when cooled down with time, said that coming out of the hotel he realized that the whole episode was an act of a middle-class God in the form of yours very truly.

Sent by T.V. Pereira

Proverbs to Ponder

1. Four things cannot come back. The spoken word, the lost opportunity, the sped arrow, the past life (Persian proverb)
2. Six feet of earth makes all men and women equal (Italian proverb)
3. A jar's mouth may be stopped, a man's cannot. (English proverb)
4. Death does not take the old, but the ripe (Russian proverb)
5. When the elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers. (African proverb)
6. The melon seller declares his melon sweetest. (English proverb)
7. After the ship has sunk, every one knows how it might have been saved. (Italian proverb)
8. One kind word can warm three winter months. (Japanese proverb)
9. The Ruler proclaims the good news himself and he sends out his servants to announce the bad news (Serbian proverb)
10. Tomorrow is often the busiest day of the year. (Spanish proverb)

WHAT REALLY CAUSED THE "TITANIC" TO SINK? - By Eugene M. de Silva

On reading Padma Edirisinghe's article 'Mysticism of Egypt, I was reminded of the mummies in the pyramids by force they came across a mummy of a young woman. That mummy looked as if the dead woman was really sleeping and not dead. Later the research workers found out that the body of the dead woman was of a royal lady who took to witchcraft by studying from several texts on magic. It was said that the lady was not really dead but that she had swallowed a magical potion which put her into the throes of suspended animation. Lord Carnovan took very little notice of the story and brought the body to England and it was kept in the British Museum for people to see.

The Mummy

Huge crowds came to see the mummy. They went past the open sarcophagus which was left in the centre of a special room cleared of all other objects which were earlier there. On the first night of the display a watcher was asked to sit by it and guard it. In the morning when the other guards went to that room the guard was found dead on the ground. The next night the door of the room was closed and two guards sat outside and guarded it. After sometime they heard a light noise inside the room as if someone was walking in it. One guard said "Let us open the door of the room and see who is walking inside." Then he took the key and went to open the door. The other man who was a weak character felt deeply afraid and ran away from the place. The next day the other guards as usual, went towards the room where the mummy was kept and found the door ajar. They were stupified to find the dead body of one guard on the floor inside. The other guard who came back now told a concocted story: how he went for a call of nature and found his colleague dead when he returned. The guards informed the British Museum's higher authorities who decided to call off the visits to see the mummy.

Catastrophe

They kept the door where the mummy was closed. A wealthy American who heard of the mummy visited the Museum authorities and asked them whether they would sell him the mummy together with the sarcophagus and offered \$75,000 for it. The authorities were relieved. They accepted the offer. The American wanted to exhibit the mummy in the States. He was happy to hear that the 'Titanic' was leaving for America in a couple of day's time. He booked a passage for the mummy in the hold. A few days later the 'Titanic' left England with the passengers who were unaware of the mummy in the hold. The rest is history. The 'Titanic' sank with the mummy which was never recovered.

What happened to it nobody knows but those who knew that the witch's mummy was on board the ship believed that it was the witch who had caused the Catastrophe! I came to know this story from an elderly gentleman who worked in the British Museum when I was learning plant preservation techniques there in the 1960s.

Sent by Romauld Fernando

BIRTHDAYS

We wish Happy Birthday to the following members who are celebrating their birthdays in the months of May. If we have missed any one please let us know to update our records



MAY

Jasmine Arseculeratne	04th
Edmund Silva	11th
Nihal Gunatilleke	11th
Vijitha Jayawardena	12th
D. Harsha Kumar	14th
Lalantha Heart	14th
Kalyana Dhirasekera	20th
A.E. Hulangamuwa	24th
Dilip Wickremasinghe	29th
Sarath Liyanage	31st

JUNE

Salinda Samarakoon	01st
Hugh Samarasinghe	03rd
Zubair M Hassen	04th
Irene Indraratne	10th
Irangani Dhanapala	14th
Wincent Dabara	18th
Janaka Kaluhendiwela	19th
A.J. Pigera	19th
Priyath Salgado	26th
W.W.A.R. Ravindra	28th
Sanath Jayasuriya	30th

NEXT NEWS LETTER

We propose releasing our next Newsletter in July 2015. Please therefore send in your contributions to reach us by 30th June addressed to:

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Nugegoda.

E-mail: gwasalathanthri@gmail.com

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