



NEWS LETTER

FEBRUARY 2022

Issue No.46

ASSOCIATION OF PAST EMPLOYEES OF SINGER

112, Havelock Road, Colombo 5.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Members,

My task of writing a message for this edition of the Newsletter has been made much easier by a New Year message received from Zubair Hassen, All what I wanted to convey to our beloved members has been conveyed in the following message;-

Quote: The year 2021 has been challenging in many fronts. Many people lost their livelihoods and many lost their loved ones, As we enter the New Year, let us say 'adieu' to these challenges and welcome the New Year with a hope'

Amongst all these challenges, there were reasons to be grateful. Grateful for the lives that were saved, lessons that we learnt and the wisdom we gained. We learnt that we need to slow down. We learnt that we need to work with nature not against it. We learnt the importance of our family. So many lessons we learnt this year. Let us pray that the coming year ends the misery and challenges and be hopeful that together we will make the New Year beautiful'

Unquote.(Message to Whatsapp by Zubair on 31.12.3021)

The first case of Corona Virus in Sri Lanka was confirmed on 27th January 2020 after a Chinese woman from Hubei, China was admitted to the infectious disease hospital, Angoda. Subsequent to this detection, the Government imposed a ten day knockdown islandwide to curb the spread of Corona cases. Since then, knockdowns were imposed on and off throughout the years 2020 and 2021 resulting in the activities of Sri Lankans, including social gatherings, meetings, sports events and performing religious obligations being canceled. Even those who lost their lives due to natural reasons such as old age, sickness and accidents had to say 'good bye' to their family members, friends and relations within 24 hours of issuing the death certificate. Schools and Universities were closed and had to resort to 'on line' learning. Trade and Business Establishments too were subjected to restrictions and they too suffered an unexpected loss in revenue.

If I continue to write on the impediments experienced by Sri Lankans as a result of this Corona Virus, I will be using all the pages of this Newsletter. I will therefore conclude this editorial by just informing our members that your Association, APES too suffered the same fate as other social organizations, postponing and finally cancelling

several indoor and outdoor activities planned by the Executive Committee due to the Covid 19 monster immigrating to Sri Lanka from China.

Let us pray and hope that 2022 will be an year with a silver lining in a dark cloud and pave the way for a pre 2020 era.

WE WISH ALL OUR MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES GOOD HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND PROSPERITY IN THE NEW YEAR AND MANY MORE YEARS TO COME.

G.C.Wasalathanthri

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING –February 2022

The 20th Annual General Meeting of the Association of Past Employees of Singer was held on 20th February, 2022 at Janaki Hotel, Fife Road, Colombo 05 with the participation of 91 members as against 96 at the 19th AGM. The significant feature of this meeting was the presence of 22 non members who arrived to be enrolled as members,

thus increasing the number of participants to 113. In addition, 05 special invitees including the present Chairman of Singer Group Mr. Mohan Pandithage and the CEO of Singer Mr. Mahesh Wijewardena graced the occasion along with Mr. Rohan Kulasuriya, Mr. Aruna Colombage and Mr. Kapila Perera. The Actg. President Mr. Nelson Mendis at the outset welcomed all members who were present and thanked them for participating despite being exposed to Corona, Omicron and Dengue virus which was spreading rapidly. However, the Organisers took every possible safety measures to ensure that every one left the venue unaffected. Continuing the Actg. President requested members present to observe two minutes silence as a mark of respect to the departed members. He also paid a glowing tribute to late Mr. Bertie Fernando who was the beacon light

of the Association for 20 years guiding the Association with devotion, commitment and sacrifice. He also thanked Mr. Mohan Pandithage, the incumbent Chairman and the ever green Mr. Mahesh Wijewardena CEO who was a tower of strength for the Association for their presence which will no doubt encourage and boost the morale of the membership to support the Association by actively participating in the activities planned for the current year.,

The President next invited Mr. Mohan Pandithage to speak a few words. Mr. Pandithage in his address to the members said he was extremely happy to be present at this AGM and was pleased to note the progress made by the Association in bringing past employees under the umbrella of A.P.E.S. Continuing he said he was impressed with the activities conducted by the Association in the past which was hampered during the last two years due to the Corona virus spreading throughout the island. Furthermore he said Hayleys Group has been selected as one of the best Companies even during the Pandemic due to Singer and thanked Mr. Mahesh Wijewardena for Singer's contribution. Concluding his address, he said he would render whatever assistance possible to foster the praiseworthy activities of the Association and wished the Association every success in its future endeavours.

The day's proceedings culminated with a fabulous Raffle Draw where valuable gifts such as a Microwave Oven, Jug Kettle, Rice Cooker, Iron, Toaster, Blender (all donated by Channa Pathirana), a Hopper Pan (Mrs. Keerthi Warnakulasuriya) 5x Large Boxes Ritzbury Chocolates (Samith Perera) 4X Rs.2000/= Gift Vouchers(Saddique) and Rs.15000/= Gift Vouchers(Association Funds) were offered as prizes. The Raffle Draw was followed by a fellowship and a grand lunch thoroughly enjoyed by the members who were present. The celebrations did not end there. Whilst the gentlemen lost no time to quench their thirst with the free flow of the 'hot stuff', the ladies exhibited their dancing talents to the music provided by the young DJ Ruwan Kasturiarachchi .

As a token of appreciation an umbrella with the SINGER logo was given away to the members who attended the meeting.

The 20th Annual General Meeting was a tremendous success despite the threatening pandemic. Finally, I wish to thank all the participants on behalf of the Executive Committee.

IT WAS GRAND SHOW OF SOLIDARITY BY THE PAST EMPLOYEES OF SINGER

Wasalathanthri

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - 2022

Office Bearers

President	:	Mr. Nelson Mendis
Vice Presidents	:	Mr. Russell De La Motte Mr. Kumar Samarasinghe
Secretary	:	Mrs. Nilanthi Palihawardena
Assistant Secretary	:	Mrs. Kaushaliya Murugadason
Treasurer	:	Mr. Nasser Majeed Mr. Zubair Hassan

Committee Members

Mr. Gamini Wasalathanthri
Mr. Lasantha Perera
Mrs. Judith Vannitamby
Mr. Ruwan Kasturiarachchi
Mr. Damith Jayasena
Ms. Keerthi Wijekulaooriya
Mr. Manjula Wijemanne
Ms. Sriyani Weerasinghe

THE VICTORY MARCH OF THE 19th COVID BRIGADE

From a lab in far Wuhan
Whence this march last year began,
To fulfill Satan's master plan
And grab the soul of foolish man

Vaccines will stop us not
More crafty Doctors' devious plot;
Protection is what we got
Bestowed by Satan's lot

"Pencillin" is only a name
Resting on its fame;
To us it is so lame
It cannot change our game

We can march with speed of light
Since every fool will hug so tight
A casual friend he meets on sight
And help us spread without a fight

A Hi-Fi party is what we ask
For, where no one wears a mask
Making so simple our task
While they in glory happily bask;

Our marches will not cease
at borders or the mighty seas,
at the Kremlin, White House or ELYSSEE
Until our Master says he is pleased;

By: **T.Vanniasinkam**

A POINT TO PONDER

As all of us are aware, the present chaotic situation created by health hazards and economic hazards in Sri Lanka and many other countries has suppressed human lives with depression and frustration. Due to the widespread pandemics such as Covid 19, followed by certain other varieties, people became desperate with high cost of living and struggle to live amidst never ending problems, especially elderly people like us who are deprived of usual social gatherings such as outings with colleagues and now confined to homes with humdrum lives. We feel the pinch more than the younger generation. They also suffer from severe stress no doubt. Yet, they have time ahead to look forward to a better world.

Well, lately I realised that I must change my gloomy attitude and foster positive thoughts to revive the declining energy. To my relief, it worked and now I do not get perturbed over unhappy events taking place in our society or other countries which are beyond our control. So dear

colleagues, my opinion is that we should try to remain calm with the help of our respective religions and live a meaningful life by cultivating good habits of loving kindness and care until we leave the Departure Lounge for the final journey bidding adieu to all.

Pushpa Fonseka

THE CASE OF THE TIGER ATTACK ON COLOMBO

BY T.V. PERERA

I crouched against the wooden panels of a closed shop as bullets whizzed past me with vicious cracks and thudded into the brick wall a mere five feet away. With no intention of getting shot and killed in this injudicious encounter, I did not dare move although perilously exposed to the world's most dreaded terrorists - the LTTE tigers. The firing stopped as suddenly as it began and on taking a cautious look, I saw the muzzle of a gun being drawn back from the window of the St. Philip Neri's church, in the heart of Pettah. This frightening experience was not perversely a holiday in hell, it was a spa for my sensations. The then Group Personnel Manager Gamini de Silva assigned me to collect certain documents from the chairman's secretary, and having left the Singer factory I was on my way to Chatham Street when at the Regal Theatre halt the police barred the bus from entering the Colombo Fort area. I nearly choked in fury on learning that the LTTE was attacking Colombo (Colombatakotigahanawa) but bravely walked ahead, only to meet stern policemen near the Lake House roundabout who were not there to mince words, and there certainly were no frills on their orders. I drowned my thoughts of picking up the cricket-ball-like round stone I noticed close to the pavement to fling at the LTTE tigers, and quickened steps along D.R. Wijewardena Mawatha to cut across the Fort railway station and thereby get to the Singer Sri Lanka office, only to find the ticket counters, platforms, and even the gates at the station, deserted. A milling crowd had converged on the railway station verandah with all heads turned towards the bo-tree junction from where a pall of thick black smoke arose; evidently buildings on fire. My eyes rested on a policeman in a bath of sweat, uttering a string of curses and blasphemies as he paced the verandah. His damp shirt was stuck to his body, beads of perspiration rolled down his face and his eyes were wide with fright. A lovely target for the LTTE tigers, he seemed to have already seen death. I watched him for a minute before pushing my way through the crowd onto Olcott Mawatha. Although there were some curious people, some gazing at the burning buildings and some at the looters nearby, the road was completely deserted of motor vehicles.

I was at this very spot some years back, at the time Governor General William Gopallawa in his immaculate white national suit and contrasting black gloves unveiled the statue of Colonel Henry Steele Olcott after whom Norris Road in the Pettah was renamed. The GG's security escort was a mere unarmed police inspector who rode in the front seat his car, but that is a time buried and forgotten with the years.

Across the road, shops whose owners form a miniscule part of the big bourgeoisie spawned by the market economy and the prevalent consumerist lifestyle had put up shutters while looters of Victoria Hotel carried away bottles of liquor. Pettah thugs, armed with iron rods blocked and chased back a car which came past Chalmer's Granary. On spotting the dark, burly, bearded men inside, there were shouts of 'koti, koti' and stone missiles being hurled at the fleeing vehicle. A Frenchman, carrying a half-size carrom board came up to me and enquired as to how he could get to the airport. I directed him to the Central Bus Stand but doubted if he could find any form of transport in the midst of the upheaval.

Suddenly the sound of crackers rendered the air. It was the overwhelming and startling burst of gun fire. Instantly there was panic, chaos, and shouts of '*Kotivedithiyanawa, duvapalla, duvapalla*', as people shrieking at the top of their voices ran hither and thither for their dear lives screaming hysterically. The security of the city was marked by the fact that there was not even a policeman to counterfire. I too ran for cover and crouched against the closed shop wall on which bullets were now making pockmarks, and came out well after the firing ceased.

Minutes which seemed like hours passed, before a war tank rushed in and halted near the Fireworks Palace at Front Street junction. As troopers jumped out, by-standers shouted that the LTTE tigers were inside the church. The soldiers took cover behind light posts, their rifles aimed at the church and awaited firing orders. A second armoured car sped towards the bo-tree junction. At this crucial moment, the loud speakers at the railway station blared that the last train would leave in 10 minutes time followed by the announcement that a curfew will be imposed in half an hour. I rushed to the train leaving the soldiers to deal with the tigers and closed my mind to flinging a stone at the LTTE terrorists.

In office the following morning, everybody talked excitedly about the tiger attack on Colombo. When I apologized to GPM Gamini de Silva for failing in my mission, he brushed it aside to say how happy he was to see me in one piece. His secretary Damayanthi Maligaspe described the more ghoulish spectacles graphically and the higgledy-piggledy chaotic situation that prevailed in Ratmalana, which was of entrancing interest to me. When news broke out that the LTTE was attacking Colombo, all hell was let loose and everybody fled in a state of abject terror. The two carriage-way Galle Road converted into a single and was a chock-a-block with vehicles travelling non-stop, bumper to bumper in the Moratuwa direction. And all the while, I had been in the midst of a vicious grip of Velupillai Pirabhakaran's LTTE tigers.

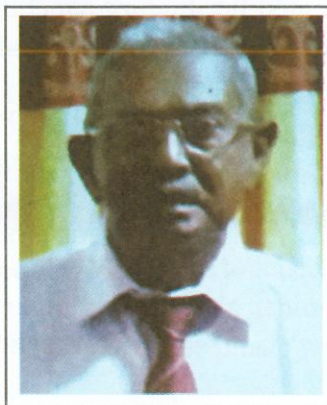
Appreciations

As most of you are aware, another Singer Legend Mr. A.M.M.Nissar passed away on 5th August 2021 after a brief illness. Late Mr.Nissar was a founder member of the Association of Past Employees of Singer and held the important position of Treasurer from the very inception i.e: from 24th June 2000 upto January 2019.

He was entrusted with the task of managing the finances of the Association due to his vast experience at Singer Head Office, first as an Accounts Clerk and thereafter as the Budget Manager. I am aware he worked late into the night, preparing the Annual Budget to enable the Management to submit the Budget proposals to the International Group Headquarters prior to the deadline. It is with such commitment and dedication that Mr. Nissar performed his duties as the Treasurer of the Association. His motive always was to add Rupees and Cents to the Association Kitty and this was clearly seen at every Annual General Meeting held when at the time Raffle Tickets were sold, he was at the forefront, walking the length and breadth of the hall selling raffle to members,

He was also an active member of the Association participating in all the activities held indoors or outside and rendered valuable service to the Sports Club as its Treasurer.

Mr. Nissar is no longer with us but the indelible impression he created as a loyal employee of Singer, a perfect gentleman and a true friend will



MR. A.M.M.NISSAR

Gone from our sight, but never from our hearts" linger in our minds for many more years to come. Even though it is rather late in penning these few words of appreciation of late Mr. Nissar, I will be failing in my duties, if I do not express our heartfelt condolences to Mr. Nissar's wife and children. We know it is difficult to overcome the grief experienced by the sudden demise of Nissar but they can console themselves by knowing that his contribution to Singer has been well appreciated by the members of the Association of Past Employees of Singer. Every living being on earth shall taste death. None can deny the fact

REST IN PEACE IN JANNAH.

G.C.Wasalathanthri



MRS. VIJITHA JAYAWARDENA

I will commence writing this appreciation quoting the Condolence Message I sent to the Legends of Singer on 25th December, 2021

"Flowers bloom and fade away but the fragrance emanated from them linger for sometime. Vijitha was one of those flowers emanating fragrance of love and kindness to all friend and foe but left us leaving sweet memories of cordial relationship' May she Rest in Peace".

It is with profound sadness that we record the demise of yet another Singer Legend Mrs. Vijitha Jayawardena on 24th December, 2021. Vijith joined Singer Industries in 1978 as Secretary to the Factory Manager. In 1992, she was transferred to the Singer Head Office in Chatham Street and served in the typing pool until she was promoted as the confidential secretary to the Finance Director. She earned this position due to her hard work, dedication and commitment.

She joined the Association of Past Employees of Singer in the year 2000 at the request of late Mr. Bertie Fernando and was immediately appointed Assistant Secretary which position she held till 2015. Even though she resigned from the committee on health grounds, she continued to attend most of the Association activities, especially the AGM and rendered whatever assistance required without any hesitation. She also exhibited her literary capabilities by contributing numerous articles to the Newsletter both in poetry and prose. This is how she described our former President late Mr. Bertie Fernando in the memorial edition of the Newsletter:-

' Active, Personable and able is HSB
Representing a battalion of One Seventy(170)
Ever ready and willing to help the APES committee
Simple but steady, a Commander carefree
Developed career from Junior Mgt. to Middle and Senior latterly
Ending up as Director and Consultant you see
Now retired, still so busy as head of Past Employees"

Vijith you are no longer with us but you will be remembered for your simplicity, friendliness and good human qualities. We appreciate very much the contribution you made towards the Association.

' May Peace be with you in your eternal and easy rest"

Whilst blessing you a peaceful rest, we wish to express our deepest sympathies to her family members and niece Himani and her family members.

Gamini Wasalathanthri

Sunil Perera

An entertainer par excellence

The untimely demise of Sunil Perera, versatile singer, musician, composer and entertainer brings back a flood of memories. As Managing Director of Zenith Advertising in the '90s, my team and I had associated very closely with Sunil, who was

introduced as a brand ambassador for the first time to promote the Singer range of audio and video products.

It was indeed a challenge to establish Singer as a quality electronics brand competing with reputed global brands dominating the market in Sri Lanka. It was against this background that Sunil was identified as the ideal fit to strengthen the brand's presence and create a stronger bond with the Sri Lankan consumer since he was very much a hit with the masses.

It took a great deal of convincing to get Sunil to agree as it was the very first time that any agency or company had approached him with such a proposition. He was reluctant to appear in any TV commercial since he was too shy and self-conscious. However, after much convincing he agreed to appear in the first-ever TV commercial featuring him as the brand ambassador for Singer Electronics which incidentally clinched a Gold at the Annual Advertising Awards.

The outstanding jingle composed by Sunil with simple, powerful and meaningful lyrics touched the hearts of Sri Lankan consumers across all social strata and was sung in his own inimitable style. 'Anang-Manang Mama Kiyanne Ney, Singerta Samana Kisiwak Ney, Ganna Singer, Masuran Wati, Gaththoth

Singer Wardinney, GaththuAyataThawaWeradila Ney, Ganna Singer, MasuanWati'. The catchy melody still resonates in our minds though two decades have gone by. The testimonial from Sri Lanka's

larger-than-life music legend Sunil Perera elevated the brand to the role of a 'lead singer' in the country.

Quite unassuming despite his unparalleled achievements, Sunil Perera, the musical genius, captivated music lovers across generations with his inimitable, powerful voice for over five decades

. Those who had the luck to know him will swear that he's one of the most down-to-earth celebrities they have ever met because he doesn't have the typical celebrity attitude and is always in the mood to have a normal conversation.

He did not lose touch with the common man despite his rise to stardom. He was outspoken against social injustice, corruption, racism and suppression of democracy both on and off stage and much of his music reflected unconventional ideas and viewpoints. He was such an amazing person to be around – very kind and cheerful with a positive aura and could always light up a room with his light-hearted conversations.

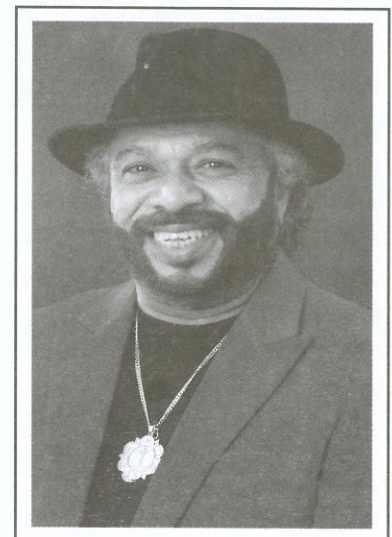
An extraordinary man, singer and human being who helped so many people and touched so many lives not just with his music but with his generosity and wisdom. His music, his style, his genius endeared him to millions of fans as he carved a niche for himself and the band 'Gypsies' in the music world.

This heartfelt tribute is a token of our love and admiration for Sunil, an entertainer par excellence and a great friend of Zenith Advertising. For someone like Sunil, there is no death. He is so much part of the Sri Lankan society. His powerful voice will echo through the ages. His is only an enduring legacy that will live long even after we have passed away.

May he rest in peace and may his family have the strength to get through this difficult time.

Felicia and Team

Ex Zenith Advertising



Newspaper article sent by Mr. HemakaAmarasuriya'

TRIBUTE TO A SUCCESSFUL POLITICAL HERO

1. I saw a scraggy loafer
Slinking through my gate
Went up to him to discover
He was a Candidate'
 2. Two years have passed since winning
Comes he to electorate
Shows off his Benz and grinning (For bouquets or brick bats the writer can be reached at
Which makes one expectorate
 3. For him the Tender meeting
To keep his pocket brimming
For me the daily weeping
Fighting the cost of living
- 'homervan2@hotmail.com)

T.Vanniasinkam

The Zeitgeist communicate is a defining spirit or mood of a particular period of history as shown by the ideas and beliefs of the time by a role model Mr. Hanuka Amarasekera among the

is there.

On behalf of the entire team of the 'Zeitgeist' communicate from overseas, we express our sincere wishes for your's efforts at the annual AGM meeting, today. We appreciate everything that you have done over the past several years and extending professionalism and dynamism. We are proud ourselves on your hard work and dedication to making critical projects and a timely newsletter by Mr G.C Wasalathanthri, Editor to keep us on our toes and focused. As always, we are counting on you to go the extra mile.

Wish you all good wishes for your interactions and a safe, wellness and health. Also, please extend our thoughts to Mr Hanuka Amarasekera, our role model.
Elmo Joseph - Member APEC



Zeitgerst

NEW MEMBERS

318 Mr. D.B. Wijesundera	325 Ms. Ranmalee Silva
319 Mr Rohan Lewke	326 Mr. H.D.G. Moragoda
320 Mrs J.P. Ajith Kalyani	327 Mr. N.P. Nalliah
321 Mrs. Rosemarie Vincent	328 Mr. Ananda PereraManorathne
322 Mr. ThasanSathiyamoorthy	329 Mr. Lalith Yatiwella
323 Mr. D.M.C.Dissanayake	330 Mrs. R. Saro Dissanayake
324 Mrs. Uline Tennakoon	331 Ms. Asha U. Wijeyesiri

OBITUARIES

4th Aug. - Mr. M.H.M.Nuhman

5th Aug. - Mr. A,M,M, Nissar

24th Dec. - Mrs. Vijith Jayawardena

2. CRICKET QUIZ - ANSWER & RESULTS

Question - Who was the famous Australian Cricketer, a Fighter Pilot by profession, who played under Bradman?

Answer - KEITH MILLER

We received correct answers from two members namely Nelson Mendis and MahendraAmarasekera. Congratulations to both.

Regards

Wasalathanthri

Next Newsletter

We propose to publish the next Newsletter in May/June 2022 subject to availability of sufficient articles to fill in at least 6 x A4 pages. Therefore, please send your articles for publication NOT LATER THAN 20th April 2022 to the following:

G.C.Wasalathanthri
6A,6th Lane,
Pagoda Road,
Nugegoda.

MR. G.C. WASALATHANTRI
6A, 6TH LANE,
PAGODA ROAD
NUGEGODA.

Email: gwasalathanthri@gmail.com