

## Beginning and End in S.L.B.C

T.Sri Skantha Rajah  
Nine Network (Aust) Pty Ltd  
24, Artarmon road,  
Willoughby  
NSW 2068  
Australia



Being my first Job as a Technical assistant Trainee, joined Radio Ceylon as it was known, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1966. To remember some of my Colleagues, James Corea, J.T.A Mendis, Late Gangodawilla, Late Wincy Perera, D.Somadasa, Sarath Gamage, Gamini Bandaranayake and Stanley John.

Worked for few months in the Studios and the Continuities mostly operational, and later was awarded to move into the Engineering Training School, under John Hunt from BBC London, who took over a position in charge of Training to enable Technical assistants to sit for the City and Guilds exams.

Working under John was fascinating, made me to understand deep on the practical side in Radio and electronics. Not to forget Mrs Sumithra Moonasinghe who took over from John in 1971. She didn't last long in SLBC, when the Training School was left without an Engineer Training for sometime. I was then asked to report to Mr. Rukmin Wijemanne (Australia) who was the Engineer Development. This was the most crucial time when a new batch of T.A Trainees were recruited and reported to the Training School for classes, where there was no Engineer Training. Mr. Wijemanne, Mr. V. Sahadevan, K.N. Gunawardene and I decided to conduct the classes (Theory and Practical) for the Intermediate Exam of the City & Guilds of London Institute, for Telecom Tech. Course.

I conducted on Semiconductors, Valve theory and circuitry with Practicals. This batch to remember namely, Thusitha, Lalith Hewage, Manel, S. Ramdas, K.S.D. Jayaratne and others a total of 21 trainees, who created a record in SLBC when completed the Certificate without a single failure. Later Mr. Shanthi Fonseka took over as Engineer Training, and K.N. Gunawardene joined as part of the Training programs. Late Mr. Buell wanted me to build an AM Transmitter without modulation for the purpose of field strength measurements, for a new project on couple of proposed Regional Transmitting stations. I designed and successfully built a 40 Watt CW Transmitter using an 807 output valve. The Transmitter was handed over to the Project Engineers. Mr. Buell congratulated me, and that afternoon I was called to his Office and was given a Transfer letter to Maho TX Station. This was a surprise. The very word he told me, "If you want a good future, move out from the Training School". I do still respect what he said was true. I moved to Maho Transmitters in November 1972. I worked under Bertram Dias, Tony Fernando, and later under Mr. W.D.G. Rabel who were in-charge of the Station. Some of my colleagues who worked with me were Thusitha Munindradasa, Marasinghe, D.P. De Silva and Thurairatnam.

After three years at Maho, I was transferred to VOA Receiving station at Seeduwa.

This experience was something different, as we were in between the SLBC and VOA administration. Worked with Thilak Mallawarchchi, Meril Botegue, Piyasiri Fernando, Don Percival, Ranjith Dias, H.A.L Perera and Engineer Nisanka Meegama. Mr. Meegama was one of the finest engineers, I have worked under. Thilak one of my good friends, have been very close to my Family too.

Besides this I had an opportunity to take part in the Cricket team that took part in the State services and Nationalized services tournaments.

My good friends Senerath Jayawardene, Sunil De Silva, Shanthi Jayaweera, Late Lal Herath, Shanthilal Nanayakara (Australia), W.D perera, and Ranjith Wickremasinghe were some of the leading outstanding cricketers in the team. I opened bowling with D.C.Pathmakeerthi, a dynamic left hander. Being the cricket secy and also captained the team for two years, we were the Champions in the Nationalized services B division in the year that I don't remember. Hope the Championship Group photo is still existing in the Control room.

My carrier changed from Radio to TV in 1979, when I moved from Seeduwa to ITN Pannipitiya, the first Colour TV station to broadcast to the Western province. Engineer Shanthi Fonseka and Hashim moved along with me to take over the Operations and Maintenance. Also we worked along with Mr.Rukmin Wijemanne and Mr.Hartley Fernando, who officially took over the station. I was sent to Germany in 1980 to follow a Television course in "Production Engineering" along with Shanthi Fonseka and Chris De Almeida. The course lasted eight months. I take this opportunity to thank the two joint Competant Authorities of ITN, Mr.T.Guruge and Mr. Sunil Abeysundera who have given me their best support.

After my return from Germany worked for few more months at ITN and was released to S.L.R.C to work as the O.I.C. Maintenance under Mr.Rukmin Wijemanne who was the D.D.G Engineering. Mr.Wijemanne was one of the Finest DDG's who took great care of the Engineering staff at S.L.R.C. Just to remember some of my good friends S.P. Jayasundera, Senerath Jayawardene, Wincy perera and Rohan Dias who worked with me at S.L.R.C.

Migrated to Australia in 1990 and now working as a Maintenance Engineer in TCN Channel-9 in Sydney, where I have just completed 20 years of service.

I take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues as I have enjoyed my tenure there and I appreciate having had the opportunity to work with you all. Thank you for the support, guidance and encouragement you have provided me during my time in S.L.B.C.