



Dr N Varaprasad
Chief Executive
National Library Board

Foreword

The Art of Letter-Writing is close to extinction. With email and text messaging as the main means of communication today, letter-writing of the personal kind has gone out of fashion. The expression of thoughts, emotions and reflections through carefully chosen words and phrases has become an anachronism in this fast-paced world.

But think again? Has it really? What are blogs then? Aren't they personal expressions in a written form? So perhaps the Art has just taken a different form.

In compiling these multi-lingual collections of letters of grandparents to their grandchildren, NLB has sought to retrieve this art form, and at the same time, create a book of collective wisdom to be passed down to future generations.

Hence, I applaud all the letter writers who have contributed to this book, including those letters who may not have been selected. I hope they will share letters with their grandchildren anyway. For the letter writers featured here, my sincere thanks for sharing your legacy with the rest of the world.

In reading those letters, one has to do it slowly, allowing the words to reach through below the surface understanding. Effort and time should be taken to understand the subtext, connect with the emotions, and reflect on the contents.

A book such as this brings together knowledge and wisdom, words and insights; it reconnects our old and young people and preserves the oral history and heritage of our nation that would otherwise be lost.

NLB is proud to be a champion of legacies for our future. I hope that one day when it is my turn to be a grandfather, I too will be able to share my story and thoughts in a letter, leaving my experiences for my grandchildren.

The National Library Board – an inspiring beacon of lifelong learning, bringing knowledge alive, sparking imagination and creating possibilities for a vibrant and creative Singapore.