

**Launch of Letters from Grandma and Grandpa
Sunday 25 November 2007, 9.15am
Grandparents' Day, Asian Civilisations Museum Empress Place
Guest of Honour, Mr Lim Boon Heng, Minister, PMO's Office**

**Speech by Dr. N Varaprasad
Chief Executive, National Library Board**

Good morning,

Mr Lim Boon Heng, Minister, Prime Minister's Office,
Dr Aline Wong, Board Member, Council for Third Age,
Mr Henry Quake, Chief Executive, Council for Third Age
Mr Michael Koh, Chief Executive, National Heritage Board,
Mr Phua Kok Tee, Chairman, NLB's Advisory Panel for Seniors
Mrs Susan Chan, Chairman, Letters From Grandma and Grandpa
Distinguished guests
Grandmas and grandpas
Ladies and gentlemen
And grandchildren

A very warm welcome to the launch of 'Letters from Grandma and Grandpa'. I am very glad to see all of you here on a Sunday morning. Empress Place is the perfect place for the launch of 'Letters from Grandma and Grandpa'. It has a strong sense of nostalgia and is where all our forefathers first touched the shores of Singapore.

At a time when Singapore's population is aging, it is even more pertinent that we acknowledge where we come from and the people who have made what we have today possible. Truly, this is a project that would not have been possible without our grandparents. Every letter published in the book contains cherished words from one generation to another. It is also the collective wisdom of grandparents who have lived a full life and have collected rich experiences.

It is our wish that the letters will build stronger bonds between generations and become a platform where our grandparents' contribution to future generations

can be collected. In that sense, the 'Letters from Grandma and Grandpa' will become a part of Singapore's history – a collection of how certain life skills and values have shaped people's lives and how that is shared and passed on from one generation to another. These letters capture Singaporeans' thoughts and feelings on important values, such as family and heritage, respect for the elders, generosity, love, courage and responsibility. It becomes a legacy for all future generations of Singaporeans and will become part of Singapore's rich culture and heritage. It will promote a sense of identity, rootedness and community as Singaporeans, young and old, share their life values and beliefs that make them who they are.

And now, we must thank all the people who have made this project possible. First and foremost, we must thank the letter writers, each and every single grandparent who took the time and effort to sit down and write for their beloved and cherished grandchildren.

We must also thank the co-chairpersons of this project, Mrs Susan Chan and Mr Phua Kok Tee, and the members of the various selection panels for providing direction and advice.

Our efforts and their hard work have received funding support from MCYS, Council for Third Age (C3A) and the MICA Innovation Fund.

Lianhe Zaobao, Berita Harian, Tamil Murasu and 938LIVE have all come together to support this multi-racial, inter-cultural and inter-generational project as media partners.

Panpac Education has also given their support to this project by publishing 'Letters from Grandma and Grandpa' at a special rate for this community project. Design Vizio has gone beyond the call of duty for the designs that you see in the book.

I would like to also thank the editors of the 4 books and the translators who translated the letters. Thank you all for your contributions.

Finally, on behalf of all of us here, I would like to especially acknowledge Mr Chan Soo Sen, the person responsible for creating Grandparent's Day so that once a year, we are reminded of our grandparents and their contributions and influence in our lives.

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

Thank you.