

Speech by Mr Ng Yew Kang, President, Genealogy Society Singapore at the Launch of the Book 'The Chiang Family History – A Story of Three Cultures and the Then Kampong Chia Keng' on Friday 7 October 2022 at 5.15 pm at the POD, Level 16, National Library Building, 100 Victoria Street, Singapore 188065

Mr Eric Chua, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Social and Family Development, and Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, Mr Lee Tee Loon PBM, Chairman, Braddell Heights Citizens Consultative Committee, Dato Seri Dr Derek Goh BBML, Board Member of Teochew Poit Ip Huay Kuan, former Chairman of Braddell Heights Citizen Consultative Committee and a successful businessman, Mr Loo Chin Neng PBM, Chairman of Braddell Heights Community Club Management Committee, Mr Aw Chye Hwee, Chairman, Ee Hoe Hian Club, Ms Xu Yang Yuan, Board Member, Nanyang Khek Community Guild, Mr Eric Ng, Board Member, Kim Mui Hoey Kuan, Mr Tan Keng Leck, Immediate Past Chairman of Goh Loo Club and Deputy Chairman, Tan Ean Kiam Foundation, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good evening to you. On behalf of Genealogy Society Singapore, I extend a very warm welcome to you. Thank you for taking time to come witness this happy occasion in the early evening of a working day.

We are about to witness the fruition of the labour of love of Mr Bernard Chiang Kheng Joo. He has spent many years researching and compiling the family history of his large extended family spanning 3 countries and 3 different cultures – in China, Thailand and Singapore. He also recorded in detail his Singapore family's active and sustained participation in community service in Kampong Chia Keng and the Braddell Heights Constituency. The family exemplifies the valuable Kampong Spirit which we often lament has been lost among many in our country today.

He has dedicated his Book to support the Year of Celebrating SG Families organised by the Ministry of Social and Family Development. Led by his late father, the large and cohesive family is able to safeguard family wellbeing and perform community service wholeheartedly. The publication of this book further cements the relationship among family members, and place on record the good deeds they have done for posterity. The book is available for sale this evening at a concession price. It is a good opportunity to buy it now as you can get it signed by the Author.

Bernard's Book is the second in a series of books on family histories of Singaporeans of all ethnicities published or to be published by Genealogy Society Singapore. The first book was 'My Maternal Roots- A Story of Family, Faith and Freedom' by Mr Cyprian Lim. The third book scheduled to launch in mid- 2023 will feature the family histories of 12 Singaporeans who are Chinese, Indian, Bugis, Arab, Eurasian, and Peranakan. All three books have received grants from National Heritage Board which funds a maximum of 50% of the budgeted costs of production.

In publishing Singaporeans' family histories, the Society aims to encourage more Singaporeans to research and record their family histories. We note that many people in Singapore have little knowledge of their recent family history. If a family has at least four generations living in Singapore, it is most likely a fourth- generation member does not know

the life and times of the first- or second- generation members. He is also unlikely to know all his uncles, aunties, cousins, nephews and nieces. Writing family histories will help remedy the current situation, and allow extended families members to know one another, and the exact relationship among them. The process of compiling family history will foster better knowledge of family members, closer relationships and bonding. Such families are more likely to help one another in times of need. Closer knit families are the bedrock of a cohesive and united society. Family histories of Singaporeans also enrich the social histories of Singapore. It should therefore be celebrated.

The ancestors of many Singapore families did not leave any records or traces of their family histories. To compile one's family history, one can start with searching for whatever photographs, documents or artifacts they could lay their hands on. They can also talk to and video record family elders sharing their memories. The Genealogy Society Singapore can guide them in their task in compiling their family histories. They can join us as members to interact with a pool of highly knowledgeable members. Those who are interested to join the Society can sign up this evening as we have volunteers on hand to answer your queries. The Society is happy to lend a hand to people interested to search for their roots or compile their recent family history.

We hope to work with clan associations, community clubs, schools, trade unions, socio-cultural bodies, the media and any other organisations to encourage and help their members in compiling their family histories for their own benefits as well as for the benefits of their descendants. We appeal to foundations, firms and charitable individuals to help us in promoting genealogy and publishing Singaporeans' family history by donating to our Publication Fund.

Finally, I once again wish everybody a good evening and a restful weekend. Thank you.