

# Reflections of My Life's Journey



Written together with **MemoryLane**



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# Foreword

As I sit down to pen these words, I'm filled with a profound sense of gratitude for the journey I've shared with Fedde. Over countless conversations and shared moments, I've had the privilege of delving into the rich tapestry of his life, and what a remarkable story it is.

Fedde's tale is one of resilience, love, and unwavering dedication. From his humble beginnings in a bustling kampung to his distinguished career in the Republic of Singapore Airforce, every chapter of his life resonates with determination and heart. His recollections of childhood adventures, the camaraderie of his Boy Scout days, and the thrill of his first bicycle ride paint a vivid picture of a life lived fully.

But it's not just the grand moments that define Fedde. It's the quiet strength he showed during health challenges, the pride in his voice when speaking of his children's accomplishments, and the sparkle in his eye when recounting tales of his beloved grandchildren. His passion for cars, particularly Volvos, and his commitment to community service in his retirement years speak volumes about his character.

What struck me most about Fedde was his ability to find joy and meaning in life's simple pleasures. Whether it was a family gathering for Chinese New Year, a weekend drive with fellow car enthusiasts, or an evening spent with his grandchildren, Fedde approached each moment with genuine appreciation.

His love story with Irene, spanning decades, is a testament to the power of partnership and mutual respect. Together, they've weathered storms and celebrated triumphs, creating a legacy of love that extends to their children and grandchildren.

As you turn these pages, you'll discover a man who has lived life on his own terms, guided by strong principles and an unwavering faith. Fedde's story is not just a personal account; it's a reflection of Singapore's growth, the importance of family bonds, and the enduring human spirit.

I hope that as you read about Fedde's journey, you'll find inspiration in his resilience, warmth in his family stories, and perhaps a bit of yourself in his experiences. This book is more than a biography; it's a celebration of a life well-lived and a reminder that every day is an opportunity to create lasting memories.

With admiration and respect,  
Genie, MemoryLane



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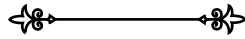
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↔ Section 1 ↔

# Intro

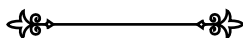


# Motivation

Writing my book is a deeply personal journey for me, centered around sharing my life story with my family. I believe that my experiences, memories, and lessons learned can resonate with them and strengthen our bonds. This endeavor is important because it allows me to leave a piece of myself behind, capturing moments that define who I am. It's a way to connect across generations and ensure that my story lives on within my family.

↔ Section 2 ↔

# Family



## Family

Family has always been the cornerstone of my life, a source of strength and joy that has shaped who I am. I feel incredibly blessed to have built a strong bond with my wife, Irene, and our three children—Andre, Grace, and Gable. Our journey together began when we met in our late teens, dating for nearly a decade before tying the knot on 1 October 1982. Our traditional wedding ceremony was truly memorable, filled with customs and rituals that set the stage for our lifelong adventure together.

The early years of our marriage were filled with both challenges and excitement. After a five-year wait, we purchased our first five-room HDB flat in Tampines Town, driven by our desire for self-sufficiency. Those years were not without their difficulties, especially with my frequent absences due to my duties in the Republic of Singapore Airforce. However, we were fortunate to have a caring neighbor who helped babysit our children, and my wife's unwavering support nurtured our family and shaped our children into remarkable individuals.

As our family grew, so did our traditions. Our monthly makan dates have become cherished rituals, with my children taking the lead in planning these gatherings. These occasions are filled with laughter, stories, and pride in their achievements. Celebrating the Lunar New Year together has always been a highlight for our family. The joy of seeing our family grow each year fills my heart

with warmth. We have a special tradition of Lo Hei after lunch, where three generations gather around the table to toss the Yue Sheng platters. It's a sight to behold, with brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts, and uncles all present, creating a vibrant atmosphere.

Reflecting on my children's accomplishments fills my heart with pride. Andre's significant achievements with the Singapore Economic Development Board, including being featured in the Straits Times and serving as a Centre Director in Japan, reflect the values we instilled in him. Grace and Gable have also carved their paths, each contributing to our family's legacy in their unique ways. The harmony in our family plays out in our daily lives, with everyone helping each other out when needed, whether it's babysitting, running errands, or sharing specialized skills and knowledge.

Our family has continued to grow and evolve. Andre married Clarice on 29 Nov 2015, and Grace married Daniel on 25 July 2015. These unions have brought new joy and love into our lives, expanding our family circle and creating new bonds to cherish.



*Yu Sheng prepared by my cousin, Ah Hua for  
Tossing which symbolises Good Luck and  
Prosperity*

Yet, family has also been a journey of profound loss. Losing my mother when I was around two years old left a void that shaped my understanding of love and loss. My father remarried two years later, and I gained four sisters and a brother, creating a larger family dynamic that has remained close-knit to this day. The bond we share is a testament to the love that has persisted through the years. Our childhood memories in our father's house in the Kampung at Telok Mata Ikan are filled with fun and laughter, reminding me of the joy of being surrounded by family.

The saddest part of my life has been the passing of my loved ones. My grandmother, who took care of me in my earlier years, passed away in September 1973 while I was serving my National



Service as a recruit. In April 1982, my eldest sister succumbed to pancreatic cancer after a few months of suffering. I remember the tears streaming down my face while riding my motorcycle home from Singapore General Hospital after visiting her. I had made a promise to her that I would be converted to Christianity one day, which I fulfilled on 1 April 2018.



*Our family house in Telok Mata Ikan*

The losses continued to shape our family. My second sister met with a tragic road accident in 1989, and my stepmother passed away on 16 May 1995 at the age of 56, after being diagnosed with nose cancer. The pain of losing my father on 18 January 2009, after suffering from a stroke for about 32 years, is still fresh in my memory. That date is particularly poignant as it was also my daughter's 21st birthday. We were celebrating her birthday at a chalet, and I had to sneak out quietly so as not to spoil the party atmosphere with the sad news.

Through these experiences, my relationship with my siblings has

been a source of strength. I have three older sisters, three older brothers, and four younger sisters and a younger brother. The bond we share is vital to my life. Their support during tough times, especially after the loss of our mother, has been invaluable. I remember promising my eldest sister that I would always do the right thing for our parents, which has guided my actions throughout my life.



*We visited our father regularly as he was staying with our mum and sister*

In 2018, I experienced a profound moment of connection when I converted to Christianity. Attending Sengkang Methodist Church with my wife, who is a Christian, has brought a new dimension to my understanding of family and faith. The timing of my baptism felt perfect, especially when I saw my niece's husband, Rev Dr Nathanael Goh, in the baptism pool who baptized me. It was a poignant reminder of the intertwining of family and faith, and how both have shaped my beliefs.

As we continue to create memories together, I remain thankful for the love that surrounds us. Each shared experience, from camping

trips to simple family dinners, strengthens our bond and reminds me of the importance of family in my life. I cherish the moments we spend together, whether it's embarking on self-driving tours or enjoying a meal prepared by a skilled chef with our catch from fishing trips.

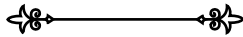
Our children have been the greatest joy of my life, filling our home with laughter and endless love. Andre, Grace, and Gable have brought such vibrancy to our lives. As our family continues to grow, with marriages and the possibility of grandchildren, I look forward to the new chapters we will write together. The love, support, and harmony we share as a family continue to be the foundation of my life, guiding me through both joyous and challenging times.



*Family gathering outside "LONG BEACH" for our monthly makan date. Joyful moments sharing stories and celebrating my children's achievements. Grateful for my wife's sacrifices.*



*A cherished family lunch at Spago, celebrating our achievements with a breathtaking view from Marina Bay Sands. Grateful for my wife's support and our journey together.*



## Children's Achievements

As I reflect on my children's achievements, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of pride and gratitude. Each milestone they've reached stands as a testament to their hard work and dedication. My wife has been instrumental in nurturing them, and I am deeply thankful for her sacrifices during my long absences due to my career in the Republic of Singapore Airforce.

Our family has a cherished tradition of gathering monthly for meals, where my children share their latest stories and accomplishments. These gatherings are not merely about the food; they are celebrations of growth and achievements. Hearing about their experiences fills me with joy and reinforces the importance of family bonds.

Andre, my eldest, has always been driven. He was awarded an overseas scholarship to study economics and industrial engineering at Columbia University in New York. His determination and passion for learning inspire me every day. I remember the day he received his acceptance letter; I could see the excitement in his eyes, and it reminded me of my own dreams when I was younger.

Grace, our middle child, graduated with a degree in English Literature from Nanyang Technological University and went on to earn a teaching diploma from the National Institute of Education.

Her commitment to education and her students is something I admire greatly. Watching her interact with her students, I see her passion for teaching reflected in their eager faces. It brings me immense joy to know she is shaping young minds.

Then there's Gable, our youngest, who pursued a degree in Computer Science Engineering at the National University of Singapore. He received an award for the NUS Overseas Exchange Program at Stanford University, a recognition of his talent and hard work. I remember how proud I felt when he shared the news with us; it was a moment that encapsulated his dedication and the values we instilled in him.

Each of their achievements fills my heart with pride. I often joke with friends that we welcomed a new child with every promotion I received, but in truth, it was my wife's unwavering support that helped us raise such remarkable individuals.





Columbia College  
Commencement Ceremony  
May 19, 2008

*Andre graduated from Columbia University in  
New York, USA*





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*Andre was featured in the Straits Times article  
on his scholarship award*

Head, Energy & Chemicals Industry Development Division, former Centre Director (Japan)

Bachelor of Arts, Economics & Operations Research (First Class Honours), Columbia University, US

As the lead architect of the Singapore economy, the Economic Development Board (EDB) continually shapes and transforms Singapore's economic landscape – developing industries and attracting the right mix of international investment that ensures the creation of good jobs to meet the aspirations of Singaporeans. In parallel, EDB develops its officers to dream, design and deliver strategies to grow and transform industries under their charge. EDB Scholar Andre Heng tells us how EDB has prepared him to play a part in shaping Singapore's economic future, both at home and abroad.

## GROWING AND TRANSFORMING SINGAPORE'S ECONOMIC FUTURE

By Koh Wanzel

*Andre posted to Japan as a Centre Director*



*Grace graduated from Nanyang Technology University and National Institute of Education.*

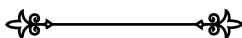


*Gable graduated from National University with  
an Overseas Exchange Program at Stanford  
University, USA.*

In 2015, we celebrated two weddings in our family—Andre married Clarice on 29 November, and Grace married Daniel on 25

July. Those days were filled with love, laughter, and cherished memories. Seeing my children start their new chapters with their partners was a beautiful reminder of how far we've come as a family.

In the end, their successes are not just theirs; they are a reflection of our family's love, commitment, and shared journey.



## Childhood Memories

Childhood memories are a blend of joy and hardship that shaped who I am today. Born on 28 February 1955, I was the youngest of seven siblings. My mother passed away when I was only two. I was taken care of by my grandmother and an auntie. My auntie used to tell me that I was very sickly when I was young, always throwing up and unable to hold down the formula milk that I was fed.

My father remarried my mother's younger sister whom we called Ah Yee. Ah Yee later gave birth to another five children. Together with my step siblings, there were a total of 12 children in our family. Growing up in a large family, we lived in a kampung house at Telok Mata Ikan, near Changi. I found solace in the simplicity of life, which offered endless adventures.

My father was a coconut trader.

He bought and sold coconuts within the region of Indonesia, Malaysia and also around Singapore. When my siblings and I were older at the tender age of around 7 to 8, we would followed our father or one of his workers to go round the plantations to buy and collect the coconuts. My father's workers would de-husk the coconuts and subsequently sold them to the provision shops or market stalls. The older coconuts would be sent to a factory to be processed into cooking oil. It is a labour intensive process running the business. My father was a very generous and caring businessman who loved his family and also took good care of his workers' families too. He would ensure the well being of

everyone with the kampung spirit, always buying food or drinks to share with them. He was a man of strong principles. We were very fortunate to have a father with such value and I also remembered this phrase from him: "It's ok to be cheated by people but never to be dishonest to people." My father also believed that a person's reputation was built on their ability to stand by their principles regardless of the situation. He taught me that living with integrity brings respect and peace of mind. These lessons from my father had left me an indelible mark on who I am today.

We were very sad that although he had worked very hard to provide us with the best possible support we needed, but he did not live to enjoy the fruit of his labour. He had a stroke at the age of 52 and passed away on 18 Jan 2009. He will be always remembered by all his loved ones.

Sadly I did not have any memories of my mother as she passed away when I was only two on the 18 Apr 1957 and according to her death certificate, the cause for her death was Thyroid.

We continued the tradition of visiting her niche at the Columbrarium every year during Chin Ming Festival to pay our respect.

Growing up in such a large family with so many brothers and sisters, my days were filled with laughter and camaraderie. Whenever we did not have to help our father, we would ride our bicycles to friends' houses and gathering for meals that turned into storytelling sessions. We created our own games like chate chate and top, forming bonds that still resonate today.

I remembered I got to know a young Caucasian boy, around my age, by the name of Mark Parson. Mark was the son of a Royal Air Force personnel posted to Singapore from the UK. We used to play together and make and designed our toys using whatever



scraps we could find. The most memorable toy we made together was a hovercraft made of wood glued together. Mark's father even got us an engine to propel the hovercraft. We even managed to operate the hovercraft in a shallow pond near his house.

Mark would always invite me to his house for meals. His mother would always prepared delicious western food for me. I tried fish and chips, steaks and various kinds of desserts and cakes made by Mark's mother which I otherwise wouldn't have had the chance to do so.

When it was time for Mark to go back to UK with his parents, he gave the hovercraft as a gift to me.



*Holding the toy hovercraft that we made.*

Although academics weren't my strong suit, I was captivated by how things worked. Dismantling gadgets brought me joy, and I relished the challenges of fixing them.

Living near the sea, I spent countless hours swimming, fishing, and canoeing. In our resourceful spirit, we built a canoe from wooden planks and canvas. One of the most terrifying and memorable moment of my life was the day my boat capsized. It



was a stormy night, together with my eldest brother, third brother, father and two friends, we were trying to steer our boat to my uncle's Kelong. Before reaching the Kelong, our boat flipped over, tossing us into the cold water. Luckily, we were very near to the wooden stilts of the Kelong, we clung tightly on the stilts, fear gripped us, but we were ultimately rescued by other fishermen who were working in the Kelong. The feeling of relief was indescribable. I suffered some cuts from the sharp shells which stung really badly yet the relief of safety overshadowed the pain. That experience taught me a great deal about survival, courage and unpredictable nature of life.



*Kelongs were common along the coastline in the  
70s*

Chinese New Year is one of the most important and joyful occasions for my family. The week leading to Chinese New Year was also the busiest time for our coconut business. We would often worked long hours, often into the night to meet the increased demands. Coconut was used in many traditional dishes during the festival and ensuring its availability was crucial for families preparing for their celebrations. My father and his workers worked non stop till the eve of CNY. We would also be roped in to help with the distributions of coconuts to the shops

and markets. We always envied other children who would be going out with their mothers to shop for new clothings. But we knew our father needed all the help to ensure his clients can fulfilled the orders of their customers for CNY. This involvement often strengthened the bond between us, giving us a sense of responsibility and pride in being able to assist with the increased workload.

I also cherished the sense of excitement, joy and togetherness Chinese New Year that I always look forward to every year. It was a grand affair, filled with the warmth of family connections and the excitement of cultural rituals like exchanging oranges for good luck and giving out of red packets.

One of my favourite celebration was the gathering of our large family for the reunion dinner on New Year's Eve.

The house would be filled with the aromas of delicious food being prepared throughout the day. I loved sitting among my cousins listening to the elders tell stories and offered their wishes for the coming year.

After the reunion dinner, we would stay up late, playing card games or watching the adults light firecrackers. They believed that the loud noise from the firecrackers would scare away evil spirits, ushering in good luck for the new year.

Another cherished memory was receiving Angbao or red packets from the elders. We would eagerly wait for the elders to distribute the Angbao. Each time I received a red packet from my relatives, they would offer blessings for health, success and happiness for the year ahead.

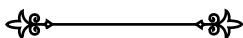
These Chinese New Year celebrations in my childhood were some of the most memorable times of my life. They reminded me of joy of surrounded by family members.



*Siblings and their children gathered at my  
second brother house celebrating Lunar New  
Year*



*Siblings, cousins, nephews gathering during  
Lunar New Year*



## My Highs and Lows

As I reflect on my life, one of the greatest joys has been watching my son, Andre, grow into the remarkable man he is today. Born in 1984, Andre has always had a vibrant spirit that fills our home with laughter and love. His journey has been a source of pride for our family, especially when he earned an overseas scholarship to study economics and industrial engineering at Columbia University in New York. That achievement was a testament to his hard work and determination.

I remember the day he received the scholarship; it felt like a dream come true. I was filled with gratitude for the opportunities he had and the future that lay ahead of him. Watching him leave for America was bittersweet, though. I felt a mix of pride and worry, as any father would. I knew he was ready, but the thought of him being so far away tugged at my heartstrings.

Andre's time at Columbia was transformative. He immersed himself in his studies and thrived in an environment that challenged him. The stories he shared about his experiences were nothing short of inspiring. I remember him telling me about the diverse perspectives he encountered and the friendships he forged. It was a world I had never known, and I felt blessed to hear about it through his eyes.

Andre joined Google later, where he truly found his calling. I had

the privilege of visiting the Google museum in San Jose while he was working in Google. He took our family on a tour, and seeing the incredible facilities and the welfare benefits extended to employees and their families was a memorable experience. We enjoyed lunch at the staff canteen, feeling like part of the Google family for a day. It was a proud moment for me as a father, seeing my son thrive in such an innovative environment.



*Attending Andre's Scholarship awards ceremony*

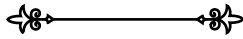
Yet, life has not been without its challenges. In 2002, I faced my own health crisis with the diagnosis of a pituitary adenoma. The long surgery and recovery were daunting, but my children stood by me, offering support and encouragement. Their strength during



those tough times reminded me of the bond we share.

As I look back, I am grateful for the highs and lows we've experienced together. The children's journey have been a beautiful tapestry of achievements, challenges, and love. I cherish every moment and remain thankful for the men and lady they have become.

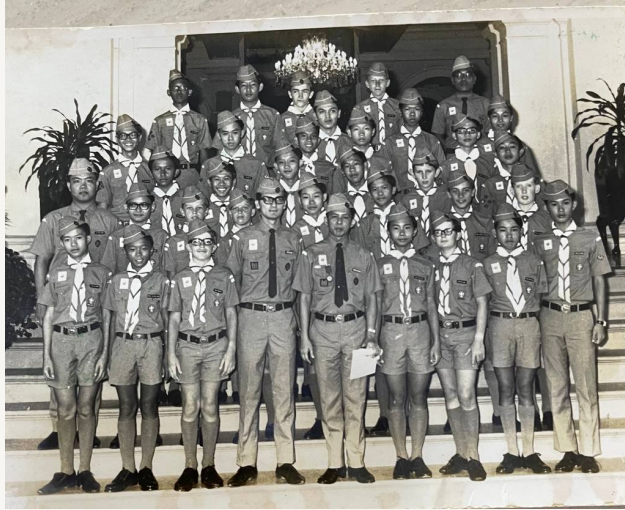




## Boy Scouts

Joining the Boy Scouts was a pivotal moment in my youth. The thrill of outdoor activities like camping and honing survival skills captivated me. Each year, we participated in a job week, allowing us to serve the community while raising funds for our movement. It was fulfilling to put our skills to use—cleaning neighborhoods, gardening, and washing vehicles.

One of my proudest achievements was representing the Singapore Scouts Contingent at the Second Malaysian Scouts Jamboree in Ayer Keroh, Malacca. The atmosphere was charged with camaraderie and friendly competition. Our contingent excelled, sweeping the Hang Tuah and Hang Jebak awards, which highlighted our hard work and dedication.

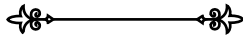


*Photo of the Singapore Scout Contingent  
participating the Second Malaysian Scout  
Jamboree taken at the Istana*

However, the journey had its challenges. I vividly remember the day I was set to leave for the Jamboree. I felt a mix of anxiety and disappointment, realizing I had no money for the trip. It was my eldest brother who stepped in, giving me \$50 without a moment's hesitation. His kindness reinforced the significance of family support, a lesson that has stayed with me through the years.

The Boy Scouts instilled in me invaluable lessons about community, resilience, and the bonds we share. Those experiences shaped my character and fostered a deep appreciation for teamwork and service. The memories of those days are etched in my heart, reminding me of the joy and pride that come from being part of something greater than myself.

## Chapter 7



# Grandchildren



*Nat, Evan and Ansel having a great bonding time together*



*Nat relaxing at Sentosa after a sumptuous lunch*





*Ansel ventured the tree top walk*



*Four generations of Rosters zodiacs attended  
the family dinner*



*Daniel's family with my mother in law.*



*Evan waiting for a sumptuous meal to be served*





*Andre's family having a picnic @ Melbourne park.*



*Having great family bonding @ Melbourne zoo.*

## Grandchildren: Our Joy

Andre and Clarice welcomed their first child, Evan in 2017 and with him came a wave of joy and excitement that touched

everyone. My wife, who had just retired, took on the role of caring for him during the first half of the week, from Monday to Wednesday, while his maternal grandmother looked after him for the rest of the week. This arrangement gave both sides of the family the chance to bond with Evan in his early years.

One of my fondest memories during this time was the daily routine my wife had developed. In the evenings, she would bring Evan to the MRT station, where they would wait for me to return from work. It became our little tradition—taking Evan on a short train ride before walking home together. Despite the simplicity of the activity, Evan's excitement never waned. His eyes would light up as we stepped onto the train, and those brief moments filled with laughter and curiosity always made me forget the stresses of the day.

Evan's early years were filled with love and care from both sides of his family, and his cheerful personality always uplifted those around him. Watching him grow and learn, I saw how much he enjoyed exploring the world around him.

Now, at 7 years old, Evan continues to impress us. He is attending Tao Nan Primary School, where his intelligence and curiosity have only grown. Even as a young child, he could read early, and his love for learning has expanded to activities like playing chess , learning about countries and memorising every country's flags and their locations. His sharp mind and eagerness to explore the world really amazes me.

Watching Evan grow into a bright, thoughtful child has been a

joy. He has a natural talent for learning and I look forward to witnessing the next steps in his journey.

Ansel, born in 2019, has been a joy to the family from the start, especially for his older brother, Evan, who was thrilled to have a little brother to play with. From an early age, the two boys shared countless moments of fun, often accompanied by their parents to the playground, where they bonded through play.



*Evan and parents visited the Birds Park  
@Jurong before it shifted to Birds Paradise in  
Mandai.*





*Ansel with Evan and parents in Hokkaido*

As Ansel grew older, he became influenced by Evan's curiosity and learning. Like his brother, he began memorizing the names of countries and their flags, demonstrating an impressive ability to absorb knowledge at such a young age. Ansel also developed a strong interest in construction vehicles and became fascinated with books about the solar system, a topic both boys love to explore.

Their parents, recognizing the boys' love for learning, always made time to read to them. It became a cherished family routine,

with reading sessions filled with laughter, discovery, and imagination. Weekends were often spent at the library, where Evan and Ansel would eagerly pick out new books to explore. This nurturing environment has helped fuel Ansel's growing love for knowledge, books, and exploration.

Ansel's relationship with his brother and his passion for learning continue to shape his early years, creating a foundation for future curiosity and growth.

Nathaniel, born in 2020, entered the world during a unique and challenging time. The COVID-19 pandemic drastically changed daily life, with restrictions limiting people to their homes for safety. As a result, Nathaniel spent most of his early life at home, surrounded by close family, unable to experience the typical outings or visits to parks and playgrounds.

Despite these limitations, Daniel and Grace embraced parenthood with joy, welcoming Nathaniel, their first child and our third grandson. With time, Nathaniel showed signs of curiosity and learning that mirrored his older cousins. Following in their footsteps, he developed a deep interest in construction vehicles, books, and the wonders of the solar system. Conversations with Nathaniel quickly became lively; once asked a question on these topics, he would launch into an enthusiastic discussion, sharing all he knew with boundless energy and curiosity.

By 2021, though some restrictions were still in place, Nathaniel continued exploring his favorite topics, learning about the world in his unique way. His ability to absorb knowledge and his excitement for discovery shone brightly, reminding us of the

resilience and adaptability children naturally have. Nathaniel's early years may have been marked by an unusual time, but his love for learning and his joyful curiosity continue to grow, creating a foundation for future adventures and discoveries.

Weekends have a special charm in our household. Each Saturday or Sunday evening whenever they are free, my grandchildren come over with their parents for dinner. It's a time filled with joy, laughter, and, of course, the lively energy that only young children can bring. As they step into the house, their faces light up, and the air fills with the sounds of their excited chatter.

Once they've settled in, they gravitate toward their usual routine: playing with toys and watching their favorite educational videos on YouTube. Their curiosity and hunger for knowledge amaze me, and I am always thrilled to see them engaging with topics like the solar system, construction vehicles, and various sea creatures. They'll sit together, eyes glued to the screen, absorbing information like little sponges. Their fascination with learning brings a smile to my face; it's clear that each one of them, in their own way, loves discovering the world around them.

As children will, however, they sometimes get into little spats. Perhaps one of them picks up a toy that another had their eyes on, or they disagree over a seemingly trivial matter. Voices may rise for a moment, and there might be a tear or two. But I don't interfere much, as I know that they're just learning how to navigate friendships and resolve conflicts. True to their nature, these little disagreements never last long. They soon find their way back to one another, giggling and playing together as if nothing happened. Watching them work through these moments

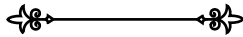
reminds me of the resilience and warmth in children's hearts—they argue and forgive all within the span of a few minutes.

When it's finally time for dinner, we gather around the table, sharing food and laughter. Seeing my children and grandchildren together fills me with a profound sense of gratitude. As they grow older, these weekends will undoubtedly become cherished memories for all of us.



↔ Section 3 ↔

# Career



## Republic Of Singapore Airforce

Joining the Republic of Singapore Airforce (RSAF) was a pivotal moment in my life. After completing my GCE O Level examinations, I stumbled upon an advertisement in the Straits Times, offering training for Teachers and Aircraft Technicians. My natural inclination towards technical skills and the promise of a higher salary for the Aircraft Technician course compelled me to take the leap. This decision laid the groundwork for a remarkable 35-year journey filled with challenges, growth, and profound experiences.

Enlisting for National Service, I quickly signed on as an Aircraft Technician. This marked the beginning of my ascent through the ranks, ultimately leading me to the position of Chief Technician. Throughout my tenure, I embraced various roles, including Section in-Charge, Flight Warrant Officer, and Officer in-Command. Each position brought its own set of responsibilities that tested my technical abilities and commitment to the RSAF.

One of the most significant events in my career unfolded during the Clark Airforce Base Detachment in the Philippines in 1991. The eruption of Mount Pinatubo was a harrowing experience that demanded swift action and decisive leadership. My immediate priority was the safety of my team; we worked tirelessly to retrieve high-value equipment while preparing for our redeployment back to Singapore. The efficiency of the RSAF's

contingency plan was nothing short of impressive. Within hours, we evacuated our personnel and equipment, landing safely at Paya Lebar Airbase.

Reflecting on that experience, I felt immense pride in the Airforce's ability to respond to crises. A month later, I returned to Clark as part of the Mission Assessment and Recovery team. The sight of the airbase, once bustling with activity, now blanketed in volcanic ash, was a stark reminder of nature's power. Despite the overwhelming sulfur smell, my team and I focused on assessing the damage. Our efforts did not go unnoticed; we received commendations from the Clark Airbase Commander, reinforcing my belief in the importance of our mission.



**ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES**  
**HEADQUARTERS CLARK AIR BASE COMMAND**  
Clark Air Base, Pampanga

24 October 1991

ODBC

SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation

TO: SSg Heng Hua Liang RSAF  
RSAF Philippine Detachment  
Clark Air Base, Pampanga

1. It is with distinct pleasure that I commend you for your laudable support and outstanding contributions to the mission requirements of Clark Air Base Command, AFP as members of the Republic of Singapore Air Force Recovery Team at Clark Air Base from 18 to 24 October 1991.

2. The extraordinary cooperation and working relations you have displayed bespeaks well of your discipline and enthusiasm worthy of emulation.

3. I am confident that you shall continue to render consistent outstanding service with the same zeal and dedication in all your future endeavors.

4. Congratulations and carry on the good work.

*Leopoldo S Acot Jr*  
LEOPOLDO S ACOT JR  
Brigadier General, AFP  
Commander

*Letter of Commendation from Leopoldo S Acot  
JR, Brigadier General, Clark Air Base, Philippines*

Throughout my career with the RSAF, I was honored to receive various awards and recognitions that acknowledged my contributions. One of my proudest moments was receiving the Efficiency Medal during the 2000 National Day Awards Investiture. I also earned the RSAF Outstanding Safety Award, the highest safety award given to servicemen who have contributed to prevent a catastrophic accident. I had highlighted a potential accident involving an aircraft, where the undercarriage would not be positively locked for landing due to a new

modification on the wing fairing. These recognitions were not merely personal achievements; they represented the collective efforts of my team and the values instilled in us by the RSAF.



*In the cockpit of RSAF F5*



*Participated in Overseas Joint Exercises*

As I transitioned to the Defence Science and Technology Agency (DSTA) after my time in the Airforce, I found a renewed sense of purpose in supporting the Army, Navy, Airforce, and Police Force. My role as a Senior Technical Officer allowed me to audit

work processes and safety standards, ensuring that our servicemen and women were equipped with the best practices. The meaningful nature of this work stemmed from my desire to share the extensive knowledge I had acquired over nearly five decades of service.



*Receiving the 2000 National Day Award;  
Efficiency Medal*



*Receiving the RSAF Outstanding Safety Award  
from RSAF Safety Officer*

Looking back, I feel incredibly blessed to have been a part of the RSAF. The camaraderie, the challenges, and the triumphs I experienced have profoundly shaped who I am today. I carry with me the pride of serving my nation, knowing that my contributions have made a difference. The lessons learned and the relationships forged during my time in the Airforce remain close to my heart, reminding me of the importance of dedication, resilience, and service.

My journey in the Republic of Singapore Airforce has been fulfilling, leaving me with cherished memories and a deep sense of gratitude for the opportunities I received. The Airforce taught me not only technical skills but also the values of teamwork and leadership. Each challenge I faced, whether in the heat of a crisis or the routine of daily operations, served to strengthen my resolve and deepen my commitment to excellence. The RSAF was more



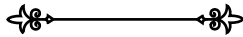
than just a career; it was a calling that shaped my life in ways I could never have imagined.





— Section 4 —

# Health Journey



## Pituitary Adenoma

In 2002, my life took an unexpected turn when I was diagnosed with a Pituitary adenoma. The tumor, measuring 3.5 cm, was a daunting presence that required immediate attention. I underwent a Transsphenoidal resection, an eight-hour operation that left me feeling anxious and vulnerable. Before the surgery, I was informed that one in twenty patients might experience a leak afterward. As fate would have it, I became that one.

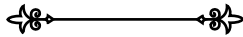
A week later, I found myself back in the operating room for a second surgery. The fear was overwhelming, and I genuinely thought I might not make it through. Throughout this ordeal, I clung to my faith, thanking the Lord for His mercy. The tumor's proximity to my optic nerves made complete removal impossible, so I had to undergo Novalis Radiosurgery to manage the remnants. I endured 28 sessions, each lasting about ten minutes, hoping for a miracle.

Six years after my initial operation, the tumor had grown to 1.3 cm, necessitating further treatment. In 2019, another MRI revealed that it had grown again, this time to about 1 cm. My neurologist suggested another surgery, but my elder brother recommended trying virgin coconut oil for its anti-inflammatory properties. After consulting with my doctor, who assured me it wouldn't harm even if not scientifically proven, I decided to give it a try.

I took virgin coconut oil daily for six months, and to my amazement, the next MRI showed only traces of tissue remaining. This unexpected turn of events filled me with joy and gratitude. Today, my eyesight is normal, free from the double vision that once plagued me. This journey with Pituitary adenoma has taught me to cherish life and appreciate the blessings of family and modern medicine.

↔ Section 5 ↔

# Interests



## Community Service

Community service has been a cornerstone of my life, especially after my retirement. It began when our church sought volunteers for the newly opened St Luke Elder Care Centre. I jumped at the chance, eager to give back to the community that has given me so much.

For over a year, I've been involved at the Active Aging Centre, and the experience has been incredibly rewarding. Witnessing the seniors smile and enjoy themselves during various activities fills my heart with joy. I prioritize their safety and comfort, ensuring every event is accessible and enjoyable.

One of my proudest moments was organizing a block booking at the Singapore Cable Car Station. This effort saved the seniors from long queues and allowed them to experience the ride without hassle. The management graciously accepted our request, and we distributed free tickets to each senior. It was a small act, but it made a significant difference in their day.

Reflecting on my Boy Scout days, I realize how those early experiences shaped my commitment to community service. We learned the importance of helping others through outdoor activities and chores. The highlight was representing the

## Singapore Scouts Contingent at the Second Malaysian Scouts Jamboree in Ayer Keroh, Malacca.

Every smile I see today reinforces my belief in the power of giving back. Volunteering has truly enriched my life, and I look forward to continuing this journey.



*Outing with the Seniors from SLEC Active Aging Center*



*Visiting Garden by The Bay*



*Cycling with the Seniors*



*Kayaking along the Ponggol River.*



*Certificate of  
Appreciation*

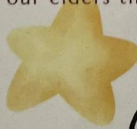
**MOON AWARD**

Awarded to

**FEDDE HENG**

For your outstanding dedication and unwavering commitment in serving our community. Your exceptional efforts in caring for and engaging our elders have made a lasting impact, exemplifying the true spirit of compassion and service.

Thank you for bringing light and joy to the lives of our elders through your contribution.

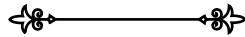


*CAI*

Cai Yinzhou  
Centre Manager  
Active Ageing Centre (Care) @ Anchorvale  
11th October 2024

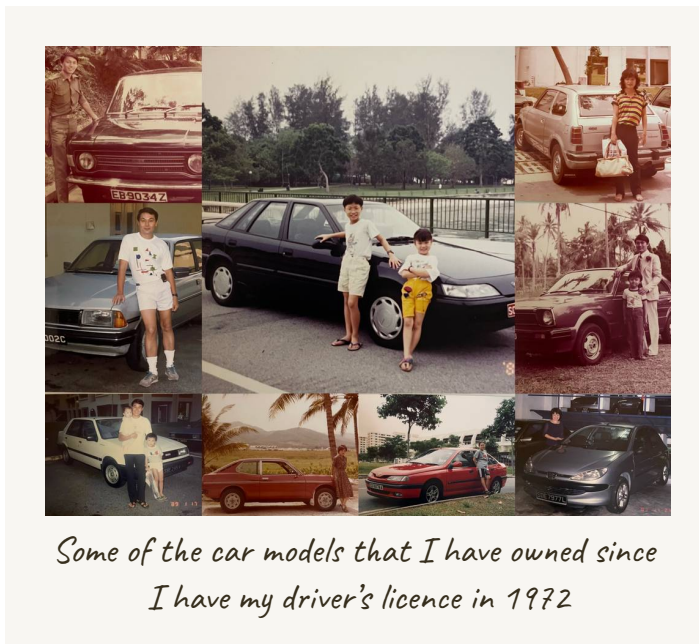
**St Lukes**  
ELDERCARE

*Certificate of Appreciation from St Luke's Elder  
Care*



## Cars

Cars have been a defining passion in my life since I got my driving license at 17. Over the years, I've owned more than 45 cars, out of which nine cars were bought brand new. The thrill of discovering a second-hand car, breathing new life into it, and then selling it for a profit is exhilarating. Friends often ask why I switch cars so frequently, and while I joke about needing the extra cash, the truth is that every car tells a story. Some journeys are smooth, while others require patience and perseverance.



*Some of the car models that I have owned since  
I have my driver's licence in 1972*

Being part of the Swedish Car Enthusiasts Singapore has been a highlight of my automotive journey. The Breakfast Drive Meets and our trips to Malaysia are not just about the cars; they foster a

sense of camaraderie and shared passion. I remember one memorable day drive to Kluang in Johore Bahru, Malaysia, where we were supposed to meet at two points of interest. Yet, most of us ended up lost. My GPS led me into a plantation, but the locals were incredibly friendly and helpful. One man guided me out, and I expressed my gratitude. At the exit, a policeman helped me get back on track.



*Seeking help for directions from the policeman  
after the GPS guided me through the plantation  
instead of the highway.*

Despite the bumpy dirt road, the kindness of the villagers made the experience unforgettable, bringing our club members closer together. My love for cars has taken me to international exhibitions like the Singapore Motor Show, the Frankfurt IAA, and the Tokyo Motor Show. These events are a feast for the senses, showcasing the latest technologies and safety features. I've always been captivated by advanced safety systems, particularly Volvo's City Safe, which alerts drivers to potential accidents and can even intervene if necessary. Technologies like blind spot

warnings and sensors such as LiDAR and Radar have left me in awe. At these exhibitions, Volvo models stood out to me, renowned for their commitment to safety and innovation.



*Gable and Daniel joined me for the breakfast drive to Yong Peng, JB, organised by the Swedish Car Enthusiasts Singapore*

In 2002, I took the plunge and purchased my first Volvo, the S60. Since then, I've transitioned through various models, including the S40 and back to the S60 DRIVE with a diesel engine. Currently, I drive a 2019 S60, and I cherish the experiences it has given me. I recall three instances where the City Safe system intervened, preventing potential accidents. On one occasion, I decided to test its top speed, and I was thrilled to find that the specifications were nearly achievable. The comfort, stability, and safety of Volvo cars are why I remain loyal to the brand.



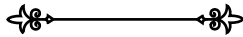
*The five Volvo's car models that I owned since  
2002*

As a car enthusiast, my dream is to visit the World of Volvo in Gothenburg, Sweden. The thought of exploring the birthplace of such iconic vehicles fills me with excitement. I hope to see both past and future Volvo models, especially the electric ones. Electric vehicles fascinate me, and I've even completed the National Electric Vehicles Specialist Safety Certification. The benefits of electric vehicles—zero emissions, quiet operation, and instant power—represent the future of driving.



I've had the chance to test drive some electric models, and I was particularly impressed with the Tesla Model Y and the Polestar 2. These experiences have opened my eyes to the possibilities of a new era in automotive technology.

Every adventure and challenge faced on the road has enriched my life and forged lasting memories. For me, it's not just about the cars; it's about the connections formed and the stories shared within the community. Whether navigating through a tricky plantation or exploring the latest innovations at a car show, each experience reinforces my love for cars and the bonds they create. The joy of being part of a group that shares my passion for the open road is something I treasure deeply.



## Memorable Moment Encountered

### Bus Driver

During our family trip to Las Vegas, one evening stands out in particular. After a long day of exploring the vibrant city, we boarded what we thought was the right bus back to our hotel. However, as the journey continued, we noticed the scenery becoming less familiar. Before we knew it, the bus had reached its final stop—the bus terminal miles away from our intended destination.

As the last passengers stepped off, the driver turned around, surprised to see us still seated. With a warm smile, he asked, "Are you folks lost?"

Embarrassed but grateful for his kindness, we explained that we had taken the wrong bus and now had no idea how to get back to our hotel. Instead of the frustration we feared, the driver cheerfully replied, "No worries! You're not the first to do that." Without hesitation, he restarted the bus.

As the city lights flickered in the distance, he took a special detour, driving us directly to the entrance of our hotel. The ride back was filled with friendly conversation as he shared stories of his time working in Las Vegas, making us feel at ease. His unexpected act of kindness turned what could have been a stressful experience into a heartwarming memory.



As we stepped off the bus and thanked him, he simply waved it off, saying, "I'm glad I could help. Have a great rest of your trip!"

His compassion and willingness to go out of his way for complete strangers left a lasting impression on our family. We'll always remember that kind-hearted driver who showed us the true spirit of Las Vegas beyond its glitz and glamour.

### SIA Pilot

While flying from Singapore to Switzerland with Andre on board the SQ flight, I heard the Captain announcement over the inflight radio system "This is Captain Chua Siak Kuan...i was so excited that I took a piece of paper to write a message to tell CPT Chua that I am onboard. I passed the paper to the flight stewardess. I was very happy to meet CPT Chua and he invited both Andre and I to the Boeing 747 cockpit. He explained to us the flight details and we had a photo taken. This incredible opportunity to meet a secondary school friend onboard and experience the flight cockpit while cruising at an altitude above thirty thousand feet was breathtaking.



*Andre will may ex classmate, CPT Chua, in the flight cockpit of the Boeing 747 cruising above the altitude of thirty thousand feet enroute to Switzerland in 1993*

### Andre "missing"

While Andre and I were touring Switzerland, at the city of Zemmatt, we nearly got separated from each other. We supposed to take a train back to Luzcen. The train ride was about a 2 hours. We boarded the train and I thought we will be hungry and decided to get some food as the next station is about an hour away. I told Andre to wait in the cabin while I go to get the food. I briefed him that should I missed the train, he would have to drop off at the next station and I would meet him there, as a contingency plan. After returning with the food, Andre was not at the train seat and the luggages were not at the place that I left him earlier. I was frantically searching for him up and down the six cabins of train. With God Grace and guidance, I found Andre with the luggages along the way, where I took to get the food.

I was anxious, angry and relieved. I asked him why he left the

train cabin and he replied that it would be better to wait for me at the train station platform then to miss me and wait in another station which will be more challenging as he is not familiar with. I controlled my anger and did not scold him but hugged him with great relief.

I have kept this incident a secret from my wife for more than a decade, fearing that she would not allow me to travel with the children. A very good lesson learnt and I will always share with my family to take care of one another wherever they are as the children may just wander out of sight.

### Riding the Skies: My Military Aircraft Experience

One of the most unforgettable experiences of my life came while serving in the Air Force. I have the rare opportunity to ride onboard the military aircraft—a moment that stirred a mixture of excitement, pride, and awe

Flight taken aboard military aircraft like, Chinook CH47, Super Puma, Bell Helicopter, Hercules Charlie 130, Skyvan, Fokker, Multi Roles Transport Tanker, KC 135 Tanker and C17. The experience onboard the Chinook CH47 helicopter with doors open at an altitude of 7000feet above sea level with the panoramic view of the sea and vast land scenery were breathtaking and the cool wind brushing against my face. It was a strange feeling almost surreal feeling, something most people only dream of experiencing Having the opportunity to go onboard the US Airforce KC 135 Tanker aircraft and witnessed the air to air refueling performed on the fighter aircraft was a dream that I never imagined I would have a chance to experience. Going on a joyride on the latest US Airforce transport plane C17 was another

great life experienced. I still remembered the sensation of stepping onboard the massive plane, the humming of the engine revving through the airframe at full throttle and the adrenaline coursing through my veins as it prepared for takeoff. Strapped into my seat, I could feel the aircraft slowly rumble down the runway, gathering speed before that exhilarating lift off from the tarmac. The flight was so smooth and we were above South China Sea within minutes.

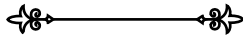
Those flights experiences remained one of my proudest and most awe-inspiring memories. It reminded me of the incredible things we are capable of when we work together, and of the privilege I had to serve my country in such a unique way.



*Aircraft from clockwise, Airbus A330 Multi Roles  
Tanker Transport, KC 135 Tanker, C17  
Globemaster and Chinook CH47.*

↔ Section 6 ↔

# Travels



## Riding Bicycle



Riding a bicycle has always been a vital part of my life, weaving through my childhood and into my adult years. I can still recall the joy of racing through the neighborhood with friends, playing games like chate chate, and feeling the wind on my face as I explored the world on two wheels. Those carefree moments forged bonds that have lasted a lifetime.

As I matured, my passion for cycling only deepened. One of my most exhilarating experiences was cycling across the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. The thrill of pedaling over such an iconic landmark was surreal, a dream realized that I had never thought possible. It was a moment that encapsulated the freedom



and joy that cycling brings.

Cycling has also become a cherished family activity. Our yearly vacations often included self-driving tours, where we explored at our own pace. I treasure the time spent cycling together, whether along scenic routes or bustling streets. Each ride reminds me that the journey matters just as much as the destination.

Participating in the annual OCBC cycling event from 2011 to 2023 has been a highlight. Covering about 40 kilometers, I ride through closed highways and tunnels, relishing the city's beauty without the usual traffic. Completing the ride in about 100 to 120 minutes has become a personal achievement, a testament to my commitment to staying fit as the years go by.

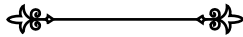
Every ride, whether a solo adventure or a family outing, reinforces my love for cycling. It brings adventure, joy, and cherished memories, reminding me that despite life's challenges, the freedom of riding a bicycle is a gift I hold dear.



*Cycling at night, feeling the thrill of the ride. The city lights remind me of my fitness journey and cherished family moments.*



*Cycling along Shears Bridge*



## Travel Destinations

Travel has always been a significant part of my life, offering me a chance to explore the world and create lasting memories. My journey into this passion began on my honeymoon, 2 October 1982, when my wife and I set off to discover Europe. Visiting cities like London, Brussels, and Venice was nothing short of magical, each destination presenting new adventures and breathtaking sights.

One of my fondest memories is from Switzerland, where we joined in a lively chicken dance. It felt like being part of a grand family celebration, surrounded by people from different cultures. The joy of that moment still warms my heart.

Our travels often involve self-driving tours, allowing us the freedom to explore at our own pace. A notable trip took us to New Zealand, where we fished at Lake Taupo. Despite the weather being less than ideal, we persevered and caught three trout with the help of a knowledgeable boatman. The highlight was enjoying our fresh catch at a local restaurant, where the chef prepared it in delightful ways.

Another unforgettable journey was our self-driving adventure from New York to Washington, D.C., with stops in Canada and at Niagara Falls. The drive was smooth, and we relished the famous crab cakes before arriving in D.C. Visiting the monuments near

the White House was a significant experience, filled with a sense of history and purpose.

## Cruise

I am very sceptical on going on a cruise in my earlier years after watching the movie *The Poseidon Adventures*, where there was a fatal fire onboard. But after the children were older, I started joining cruises to Klang and Penang in Malaysia and Ketchikan, Juneau and Sagway in Alaska. The Alaska cruise was a dream come true as I will never imagine that I could afford to visit Alaska.

We had the opportunity to join the Rockies tour after our cruise as the Princess Cruise starts and ends at Vancouver in Canada.

Enjoy the tour in the forested area, looking for bears, having sumptuous meals served with Alaskan seafood and going on the Yukon Pass was a breathtaking adventure. Learning how Salmon fish life cycles in the streams was an interesting way to understand how salmon evolved.

A dream of mine is to visit the World of Volvo in Gothenburg, Sweden. As a car enthusiast, I long to see both past and future Volvo models, especially the electric ones. My interest in electric vehicles led me to complete the National Electric Vehicles Specialist Safety Certification Course, deepening my appreciation for this evolving technology.

Through these travel destinations, I have forged connections, embraced new cultures, and developed a profound appreciation for the world around me. Each journey has enriched my life,

leaving me with stories to share and cherished memories to hold close.



*onboard the ferry from Dover to Brussels*



*Photos taken at Venice (top) and Mount Titlis (below).*





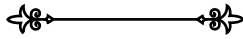
*Photos taken at the Olympic Park in Athen*



*Enjoying the "Chicken Dance" at a PUB in  
Switzerland*

↔ Section 7 ↔

# Others



## Thanksgiving

As I look back on the road I had travelled, the experiences I've had, the people I've met, I am forever thankful that my life has been a journey of growth, relationships and an unwavering pursuit of meaning.

First and foremost, I give thanks to God, the one who has guided me through every step of my life. Through all the highs and lows, I have felt His presence, providing me with the strength when I am weak, healed me when I was sick, wisdom when I was unsure and peace when I needed it most. Without His love and grace, none of what I had achieved would have been possible. For the gift of life, for the faith that sustained me and for the blessings, I am eternally grateful.

To my family especially my beloved wife, thank you for walking this journey with me. Your unconditional love has been my constant anchor.

You have been my greatest joy and my greatest support. Our memories together fill my heart with warmth and happiness. Thank you for all your love along the way.



*To my Beloved wife Irene: Thank you for the  
unconditional love and always being there for me*