

**SPEECH BY DR BALAJI SADASIVAN, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE ARTS, AT  
THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF "YESTERDAY ONCE MORE: A POSTCARD  
EXHIBITION", 30 JANUARY 2007, 7.00 PM AT SINGAPORE PHILATELIC MUSEUM**

Mr Daniel Teo, Chairman, Singapore Philatelic Museum Board,  
Professor Cheah Jin Seng, donor of early picture postcards of Singapore,

Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good evening.

It is my pleasure to join you this evening for the official opening of "Yesterday Once More: A Postcard Exhibition".

- 2 These days, we are often introduced to new emerging technologies that show us how we can communicate with one another, even across the globe, almost instantaneously and in an affordable manner. We marvel at technologies that bring us information in ways that we could only dream of a decade ago. Today, we have interactive digital media, wireless broadband, Bluetooth, IPTV, PDAs and IPODs. Technology has brought the world much closer.
- 3 In the world of postal communication, technology has also made its mark, for example, Optical Character Reader, Barcode Sorting, and Delivery Barcode Sorting, and brought enormous advantages, and savings, to both postal authorities and to the public. The postal system will not be as efficient as if it is today had it not embraced technology.
- 4 In the midst of this technology buzz, it interesting to find that an almost 150-year old product is still alive and well. This is the humble postcard. The postcard has

proven to be a survivalist. Postcards started off as a convenient and economical way of communication. People sent simple messages to one another via the postcard from all over the world: from birthday and season greetings to simple hellos or to convey good or bad news to relatives and friends back home.

- 5 Eventually, postcards made its way into a tourist's travelling kit, which resulted in a further boost to its popularity. Most of us, on our travels abroad, must have mailed postcards to our families and friends or even to ourselves, as mementoes of our holidays. Looking at pictures of popular tourist attractions like the Great Wall of China, the Eiffel Tower and Buckingham Palace help us reminisce happy times. Even the Singapore River and Merlion have found their way to the covers of postcards sold in numerous souvenir shops here.
- 6 Postcards are more than a means of communication. Postcards like the rest of philately, serve firstly, as windows to the world. Also, postcards are a part of our national heritage.
- 7 Picture postcards from all over the world, especially those that come with great colour photographs, transport us in an instant to faraway places that we might otherwise not have known or visited. Similarly, picture postcards of Singapore bring exciting facets of our little island and our life to the world at large.
- 8 To Singaporeans, especially our young, collecting local postcards can be a novel and affordable way to get to know more about places and people in our midst. Postcards that reproduce scenes or events of days gone by tell what it was like back then, just like history books or Wikipedia. Today's exhibition is a fine example of how a collection of postcards that spans a period of almost 50 years and across two centuries of Singapore's history, is able to bring home so vividly how it was like for our forefathers. For this, our special thanks go to Professor Cheah Jin Seng for his kind donation of one of his labours of love to the Singapore Philatelic Museum.

- 9 As postcards usually contain a simple greeting or a message from the sender, it is a great way to express our thoughts and feelings to one another, especially on special occasions.
- 10 In conclusion, I would like to commend the SPM Team for presenting the “Yesterday Once More: A Postcard Exhibition”, and for organising the “Send A Postcard Competition” for schools.
- 11 I hope that SPM will continue to create more exciting and innovative programmes for Singaporeans from all ages and walks of life to enjoy and to have a deeper appreciation of our vibrant heritage.
- 12 On this note, I am pleased to declare this exhibition open.

Thank you.