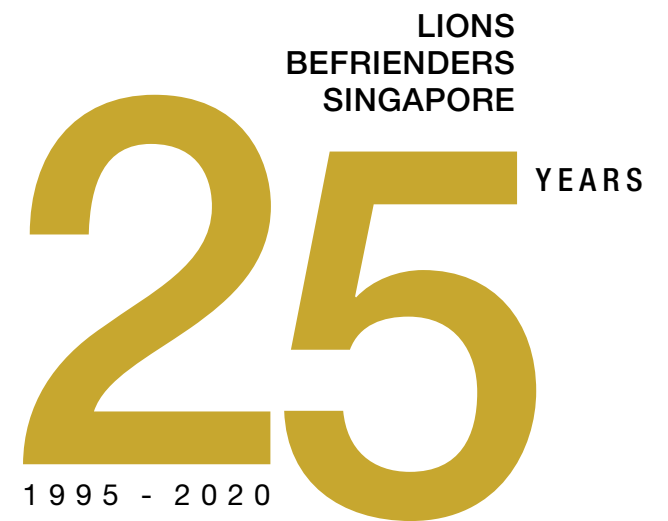


25 YEARS  
1995 - 2020

Honouring Our Past, Embracing Our Future





Honouring Our Past, Embracing Our Future



*Connecting Seniors,  
Enriching Lives®*

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## Our Beginnings

Singapore's senior befriending service programme was a pilot project started by the then Ministry of Community Development (MCD)<sup>1</sup> in 1982.

With their many years of experience caring for seniors, the Lions Clubs were chosen by the Ministry to take over the programme in 1995. With the vision of many helping hands, the Lions Befrienders (LB)<sup>2</sup> came into being.

Through the Lions' extensive network, LB recruited volunteers, provided comprehensive training and introduced new programmes to meet the evolving needs of the seniors.

Since inception, LB has extended friendship, support, and aid to tens of thousands of seniors across Singapore. Their well-being has also been enhanced by the fruitful collaborations between LB and corporate organisations and community partners.

Today, connecting seniors and enriching lives continues to be the cornerstone of LB's work and we will continue this legacy for many more years to come.

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<sup>1</sup>MCD on subsequent mentions

<sup>2</sup>LB on subsequent mentions



## Vision

A nation where every senior is active, healthy and happy.

## Mission

To provide friendship and care for seniors to age in place with community participation, enabling them to enjoy meaningful and enriching lives.

## Core Values

These values are represented by the acronym CIRCLE.

- **Commitment** – We pledge to give our best to enrich the lives of those we touch
- **Integrity** – We uphold trust and accountability in all we do
- **Respect** – We honour the individual's rights and beliefs
- **Compassion** – We serve with kindness and openness
- **Leadership** – We inspire and empower change for a better future
- **Empathy** – We listen, we feel, we care

## Tagline

Connecting Seniors, Enriching Lives





## Message

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### **Past District Governor Lion Anthony Tay PPA, BBM**

Chairman  
2019-2023  
2005-2008

It is indeed my honour and great pleasure to be able to celebrate Lions Befrienders' 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with the publication of Lions Befrienders' first coffee table book commemorating its 25 years of community service.

Having been part of the team that signed the MOU in 1995 with MCD, I am greatly heartened by its remarkable growth from a befriending service programme of 3 Lions Clubs (LCS North, LCS Serangoon Garden & LCS Stamford) in 1995 to what it is today - a pro-active and effective Advanced Tier Social Service Agency offering 19 different programmes providing holistic care to seniors in Singapore. This coffee table book is a tribute to the warm-hearted and steadfast commitment of the many volunteers helping our seniors age in place gracefully in society and the invaluable support from our corporate partners and government ministries given to Lions Befrienders.

In the words of William J Clinton:

"Volunteering is an act of heroism on a grand scale. And it matters profoundly. It does more than help people beat the odds; it changes the odds."

I hope this coffee table book of Lions Befrienders will inspire more volunteers and corporate partners to support and continue to support Lions Befrienders on its journey to meet our seniors' needs of tomorrow.

Lions Befrienders would not be where it is today without the resourcefulness, co-operation, commitment and continual support of LB's corporate partners' networks, donors, ministries, Lions Clubs, and our committed staff throughout these 25 years. On behalf of the Management Board and Committees, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude and heartfelt thanks to you and for your relentless support and invaluable contributions.

Together, Lions Befrienders will grow in strength and continue to position itself as one of the forerunners of the Social Service sector.

My commendations and gratitude to the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary book committee members for sparing no effort to ensure the success of Lions Befrienders' first coffee table book.

Mr Lim Boon Heng, Chairman of Temasek Holdings (Pte) Ltd has graciously agreed to officiate the launch of the Lions Befrienders' first coffee table book – its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Book *"Honouring Our Past, Embracing Our Future"* on 16 December 2021 at the Lions Befrienders' Training Centre.

It is indeed our honour to have Mr Lim join us in this event. On behalf of Lions Befrienders, I would like to sincerely thank Mr Lim for gracing this significant event.

Lastly, my sincere appreciation and heartfelt thanks to Her Excellency, President of the Republic of Singapore, Madam Halimah Yacob and Mr Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Health for taking time off from their busy schedules to pen their encouraging congratulatory messages for Lions Befrienders' first coffee table book.







## Foreword

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### **Madam Halimah Yacob**, President of the Republic of Singapore

Lions Befrienders has been serving the community over the past 25 years. I am heartened to see how the Association has been working hard with public agencies and other community organisations, to better serve Singapore's ageing population.

Lions Befrienders has grown in strength and professionalism since it took over the reins of the Befriending Service programme from the Ministry of Community Development in 1995. Since then, Lions Befrienders has helped many seniors age in place and with dignity. Its innovative programmes, including friendly talent competitions and family bonding events, have been instrumental in helping our seniors stay active and fulfilled. Recently, Lions Befrienders also launched a virtual befriending service to encourage seniors to go digital and continue socialising safely. This has helped to overcome the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This commitment to serve seniors, especially during the pandemic, is highly commendable.

Many challenges lie ahead as more Singaporeans become silver-haired in the coming years. There will be higher demand for healthcare and aged care services. Coupled with the trend of declining family sizes, we could be faced with potentially weaker support systems. At the same time, there are many opportunities to translate greater longevity into longer years of continued learning, active engagement and contribution to society. Organisations like Lions Befrienders will play a key role in helping us chart this future.

My heartiest congratulations to Lions Befrienders on its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Thank you for all these years of enabling our seniors to lead meaningful and enriching lives. I am confident that Lions Befrienders will continue to partner the community to improve the lives of our seniors as they age gracefully.



## Foreword

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### Mr Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Health

Over the years, Lions Befrienders has done good work by building strong community-based support for our seniors. The number of befriendees has increased by more than three-fold, from about 1,500 in 1995 to 4,700 today. This is supported by a strong pool of some 1,400 volunteers, who are devoting time and energy to reach out to and engage lonely seniors.

Beyond befriending, Lions Befrienders has enriched the lives of seniors through health and social support services. Lions Befrienders has not only provided home personal care services for homebound seniors with care needs, but also operated Senior Group Homes for seniors without family or a caregiver to look after them. These efforts have enabled older Singaporeans to age with dignity in the community.

Lions Befrienders has shown great courage throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, going the extra mile to carry out essential home visits for seniors at risk of social isolation. To ensure safe distancing, they adopted tele-befriending, including partnership with hospitals to provide telemedicine consultation, and in the process helped seniors stay connected and engaged digitally. My appreciation goes to all the staff and volunteers at Lions Befrienders for your contribution over the years.

Your work will become more important, as our population ages. A good initiative is to bring more seniors in as volunteers, to help fellow seniors. Today, Lions Befrienders has a group of some 50 volunteers aged 70 and above who remain as active givers to the community, providing care and support for their peers. Let's continue to promote senior volunteerism.

My heartiest congratulations to Lions Befrienders on your 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and I wish you many more successful years ahead.

# In Retrospect

## Shiva P Banerjee **PBM**

Founder Chairman  
1994 - 1999

In the early 1990s, one of our goals as a board member of the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) at the time was to intensify the involvement of more Lions Clubs in the social service sector. Auspiciously, I was approached by both NCSS and MCD to propose to the Lions Clubs International (LCI) Movement in Singapore to take over MCD's 12-year Befriending Service programme in 1993.

Making full use of this opportunity and encouraged by some of the senior Lions leaders, we set up a pro-tem committee in 1994 comprising members of the Lions Club of Singapore (LCS) North, Serangoon Gardens, Stamford and four other Lions in their individual capacity to manage that programme. It was later renamed the Lions Befrienders Service Association (LBSA) in 1995.

Setting up LB was not without its challenges. The pro-tem committee had to concentrate its efforts on increasing the participation of more Lions Clubs. It also faced the daunting and unfamiliar task of supervising 722 befrienders

during their bi-weekly visits to 1,459 befriendees. As most of the befrienders were housewives and retirees who did not understand English, communication became an issue.

In spite of these difficulties, we were determined not to let this noble programme slip away from the Lions' purview. To motivate the befrienders and monitor their direct and unsupervised service delivery, LB brought in the expertise of a field commander in 1996—retired Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) of the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), Joseph Cheong, who put in place an effective operational structure to monitor the befrienders' work and grow the programme.

It is an honour to witness LB's tremendous growth 25 years after its inception. I gratefully commend the successive Management Boards and the staff of LB for their vision, commitment and relentless efforts in taking the programme to greater heights under the guidance and support of the government of Singapore and growing support of the Lions Clubs in Singapore.



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1. Address by Founding Chairman Shiva Banerjee at the opening of the LB Centre (Bukit Merah View) in 1995    2. Founding Chairman Shiva Banerjee at the MCD press announcement in 1995  
 3. Founding Chairman Shiva Banerjee presenting an award at the LB Appreciation Lunch & Award Presentation 1996    4. Founding Chairman Shiva Banerjee posing for a photo with the Boys Scouts  
 5 & 6. Founding Chairman Shiva Banerjee distributing red packets and goodie bags at a Chinese New Year luncheon

## Lion Chan Chee Keong PBM

Chairman

1999 - 2003

As head of publicity on the pro-tem committee in 1994, organising the official launch of LB fell on my shoulders. Working with a public relations consultancy on a small budget, my team managed to get the story of the befrienders and their befriendees into The Straits Times in 1995. It was a good beginning for LB.

Taking over the chairmanship from PCC Lion Shiva Banerjee in 1999, I resolved to continue demonstrating LB's social impact on the ageing population to Singapore's Lions. With the assurance that LB would be funded largely by government subsidies and public donations, many Lions Clubs eventually participated in LB's projects and went on to affiliate themselves with LB's three sub-centres at the time.

Our efforts to convey LB's effectiveness also received due recognition. In 2002, LB was conferred the Merit Award for best volunteer management system by the National Volunteer Philanthropy Centre (NVPC), presented by then Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong.

I am deeply grateful for the partnerships forged during my Chairmanship—Singapore International Airlines (SIA) for planning weekly games for the seniors and their generous donations, DHL for assisting in the food distribution for the Befriendees, and Metro and Isetan for being integral logistics partners during the festive seasons.

After stepping down, I continued serving on LB's Management Board and as an Advisor to the Ang Mo Kio Senior Activity Centre (SAC)<sup>1</sup>. I assisted in the development of a new befriending handbook, *Befriending Resource Guide*, in 2014.

A befriender myself to an 85-year-old befriendees for the past five years, I have found it a thoroughly enriching experience. I am confident that if individuals were to play their part in spreading kindness, Singapore would become a more compassionate and gracious country.

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<sup>1</sup>SAC on subsequent mentions





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1. Lion Chan Chee Keong at a hamper distribution event in 2003 2 & 3. Official launch of Club Sunday in 2000 4. Lion Chan receiving the Merit Award plaque from then DPM Lee Hsien Loong at the National Volunteerism Award 2002 5. Lion Chan Chee Keong presenting a token at the Senior Citizens' Week celebration in 2001 6. Lion Chan Chee Keong at the official launch of Health Express in 2003



## Past District Governor Lion William Kwok

Chairman  
2003 - 2005

I was approached by LB's Founding Chairman PCC Shiva Banerjee to take over the LB chairmanship in 2003. Having completed my term as District Governor of our Lions District 308-A1 by then, I readily accepted the offer.

LB had an impressive 1,200 befrienders and 3,800 befriendees under its wing when I took on the Chairman's role. It had a very committed and capable staff led by Executive Director, LTC (RET) Joseph Cheong and a Management Board that consisted of dedicated Lions, some of whom later became District Governors. It was also privileged to have well-known personalities such as Dr Anthony Loh and Mrs Linda Koh, who joined as Associate members.

My biggest priority as Chairman at the time was to optimise the participation of as many Lions as possible and demonstrate how LB's services were complementary to the Lions Home For The Elders' efforts in providing care for the seniors.

By the end of my two-year term, most of the Lions Clubs had gone on to support LB, with some serving on its Management Board or the Boards of the six Senior Activity Centres (SACs) run by LB island-wide. I am proud to have overseen the opening of three of these centres—Buona Vista SAC in 2003, Ang Mo Kio SAC in 2004, and Bendemeer SAC in 2005—during my term as Chairman of LB.

LB would not have come this far without the sacrifice and commitment of its befrienders. My deepest gratitude goes out to them for making the lives of the seniors more meaningful in their twilight years.



1 & 2. PDG William Kwok at the official opening of LB Buona Vista Centre in 2003 3 & 4. PDG William Kwok at the LB Appreciation & Awards Presentation 2003 5. PDG William Kwok presenting a token to Mr. Chan Soo Sen at the LB Charity Golf 2004 6. PDG William Kwok at the LB Appreciation & Awards Presentation 2004

## Past District Governor Lion David Lee

Chairman  
2008 - 2011

Having served as LB's Vice-chairman for three years, stepping into the role of Chairman felt like a natural next step as I wanted to continue serving LB and further its cause.

When I took on the role of Chairman in 2008, LB faced the uphill task of providing eldercare to a rapidly growing ageing population. We had to hire more staff and expand our pool of befrienders and volunteers to meet this high increase in demand. By March 2010, as a testament to our hard work, LB had successfully reached out to over 12,000 seniors and recruited and trained over 2,800 befrienders since its inception in 1995.

LB continued to flourish and won several awards like the Non-Profit Organization Award for Volunteer Management by the NVPC in 2009 and the Outstanding VWO Award (Collaboration) and Outstanding VWO Award (Innovation) by the NCSS in 2010 and 2011, respectively.

Adopted by MediaCorp's Capital 95.8FM radio station in 2009, LB was also able to publicise its programmes and actively promote fund-raising activities. As a result, we enjoyed extensive media coverage over the next three years.

One of my fondest memories as Chairman involved my study trip to various community homes in the Netherlands and the UK led by Mr Lim Boon Heng, the then Minister in the Prime Minister's Office. I gained a lot of meaningful insights into how these homes cared for the elderly during my time there.

I hope that LB will continue to adapt and grow with the times to remain relevant to the needs of our ageing population. I am confident that with our continued efforts, LB will set the gold standard for more individuals to come forward and do their part for the seniors.





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1. PDG David Lee at the Befrienders Coordinators Retreat in 2011 2 & 3. PDG David Lee receiving the Non-Profit Organization Award for Volunteer Management by the NVPC in 2009 4. PDG David Lee receiving the Outstanding VWO Award (Collaboration) in 2010 5. Celebrating LB's 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at the Appreciation & Awards Presentation in 2010 6. Study trip in Netherlands led by former Minister Mr Lim Boon Heng

## Lion Richard Koong

Chairman  
2011 - 2015

I had the pleasure of serving on LB's Management Board in various capacities including Secretary, Treasurer and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-chairman since 1996. Upon encouragement from my fellow Board members, I took up the chairmanship of LB in 2011.

During my term, we focused our efforts on the more pressing items on LB's agenda—increasing its staff strength and restructuring its office premises at Bukit Merah View. These changes were necessary to accommodate LB's expanding services and respond to the government's call for more service delivery at the community level.

As LB continued to grow, it was appointed Cluster Operator of three residential zones by the MSF as part of the Senior Cluster Network concept introduced in FY 2014/2015. LB's key role was to facilitate the integration and provision of services to more vulnerable seniors within these appointed zones.

When I think back on my years of service, three moments stood out for me. The first was the official opening of the Ang Mo Kio Neighbourhood Link (NL)<sup>1</sup> by

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in 2006. The second was the visit by Dr Tony Tan, the then President of Singapore, to our Bendemeer SAC to launch the President's Challenge Volunteers Drive in 2012. The President's visit helped to further raise the profile of LB significantly in the social service sector. The third was when LB was awarded the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Rural Development and Poverty Eradication Leadership Awards 2015 for providing islandwide services for seniors to age in place by integrating them with the community and enabling them to enjoy more meaningful and enriching lives.

Serving LB has given me the opportunity to meet many like-minded community service-driven individuals over the years. I am especially heartened to see even seniors joining us as volunteers to serve other less fortunate seniors. I am also grateful for the support of our volunteer befrienders and the Lions in our District, who have given many years of their time to support LB's cause.

I hope to see stronger government support for LB in the future so that it can evolve into a more holistic health and social care provider for seniors and continue to expand its outreach across Singapore.

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<sup>1</sup>NL on subsequent mentions





1. Mr Lawrence Wong, the then Acting Minister for Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) at the International Volunteer Day 2012 2. Launch of President's Challenge Volunteer Drive in 2012  
3 & 4. Lion Richard Koong at the official opening of the Ang Mo Kio NL in 2006 5 & 6. Lion Richard Koong at the official opening of Ghim Moh SAC and Tampines 434 SAC in 2013



## Lion William Loh

Chairman

2015 - 2019

Even though I have been an active member of the Lions Clubs for 18 years, I only started serving on LB's management board as Vice-chairman from 2011 before assuming chairmanship in 2015. My time at LB led me to realise that there were approximately 4,000 befriendees with limited access to LB's programmes because they lived far away from its SACs. Together with fellow management committee members and our befrienders, I started an outreach initiative to invite these isolated seniors to be a part of LB.

To actively engage this group of seniors, we invited them for regular charity lunches and brought in students, volunteers and members from the Lions Clubs to perform and interact with them. We also engaged them through the "Happy Steps" initiative, an LB interest group that encouraged befriendees from different parts of Singapore to walk together. Slowly, as the awareness of this group of befriendees grew, more Lions Clubs in our District began reaching out to them as well.

Constantly improving itself for its seniors was also one of LB's priorities. Plants and wall murals were added in SACs to create a vibrant and homely feel—an idea adopted from LB's learning journeys to the senior homes in Finland and Japan.

I am happy to have overseen the launch of the Home Personal Care (HPC) programme—a service for vulnerable seniors to continue living well at home under the care of trained professionals. I am also proud to have introduced "experiential befriending", where volunteers are invited to meet and interact with seniors in their homes. Most of these volunteers eventually stayed on as befrienders.

Seeing the smiles on the faces of the seniors when they enjoyed activities and programmes we prepared for them was my biggest takeaway. Forging ahead, I hope that LB will be able to take on and serve the growing needs of the new generation of affluent seniors in the coming years.



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1. Lion William Loh presenting an art piece to Minister Gan Kim Yong at LB Charity Golf 2019 2. Group photo at the Lions Charity Show 2016  
3. Lion William Loh at the Kinderland Group cheque presentation ceremony in 2018 4. Lion William Loh sounding an air horn to start the 2019 Befriending Walk 5 & 6. Official opening of LB SAC at Clementi 366

## Past District Governor Lion Anthony Tay PPA, BBM

Chairman

2019 - Present

2005 - 2008

I was proud to be part of the pro-tem committee in 1994 and had the honour to sign the MOU, on behalf of three Lions Clubs (LCS North, Serangoon Gardens and Stamford) with the then Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCD) in 1995.

Looking back, setting up Lions Befrienders (LB) was very challenging. We had to increase Lions Clubs' and seniors' participation and at the same time recruit more volunteers. LB's volunteer strength then was only 722. As the Chairman of the then Volunteers Co-ordination Committee, we were faced with the highly challenging tasks of recruiting and increasing volunteers. Back then, LB did not enjoy its prominence of today. The committee had to work hard to publicise LB to the masses in order to recruit more volunteers:

- 1) I have helped to create the LB's name in Chinese – “狮子乐龄之友协会” to increase appeal and resonance among the Chinese majority of seniors and members of the public.
- 2) LB was promoted on Channel 8's “Good Morning Singapore” show.
- 3) We pioneered outreach to all Lions Clubs to obtain support of members to volunteer with LB.

- 4) We organised LB's first Befrienders Appreciation Night at Orchid Country Club. Now known as LB Awards and Appreciation Night, it has become an annual event which volunteers look forward to with much anticipation.

What encouraged the committee to soldier on was the impact that LB was steadfastly making to help our seniors age in place gracefully.

During my term as Chairman in November 2005, we focused on strengthening our volunteer base and its expanding befriending programme – the bloodline of LB.

We launched the Management-Befrienders Get-together Sessions to engage volunteers. I am glad that these sessions have continued till today as they are a good means to strengthen the relationship between LB management and our volunteers.

The Befriending Walk and Volunteers' Family Day for volunteers which was initiated as part of the expansion of LB Befriending Programme has also become an annual event.

I left office in 2008 to stand as Vice District Governor to continue my passion to serve as a leader in the Lions Movement. I was successfully elected and went on to become District Governor in 2009.

As a past Chairman, I stayed concerned about LB and stayed up to date on its developments. My passion to serve remained strong and in November 2019, I was re-elected to the office of LB Chairman for the term of 2019-2021.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic rearing its ugly head in Singapore during early 2020, it still managed to turn out to be a notable year for LB. The management and staff took this unprecedented challenge in its stride. We achieved much and our collective response to the pandemic is something we are proud of.

- Since 2020, LB's partners network has increased by another 150 corporate partners and 2,890 donors. They took on more befriending activities outside the usual scope of services.
- LB was one of the few Social Service Agencies (SSAs) to convert 50% of its Senior Activity Centres (SACs) into Active Ageing Centres (AACs) on AIC directives. With this conversion and due to its service boundaries being expanded, the number of seniors under LB's care has grown to more than 7000 and still counting.
- Anchoring care with technology, LB together with partners developed the i-OK@LB – a non-invasive well-being system, and F.A.C.E (Facial Analysis Correlation of Emotions) programme to enhance seniors' well-being.
- During the pandemic, reaching out to seniors through online platforms complemented existing volunteering methods. There are now more than 100 organisations and approximately 2,500 people who have embarked on virtual volunteering with LB.
- LB is the first SSA in Singapore to launch elder-friendly tours for seniors with LCS New Central, Tourism Rainbow 2021 and a coalition of tour agencies with the redemption of SingapoRediscover vouchers.

- For the first time, LB received full corporate sponsorship for its first van. It will be used to meet the transportation needs of LB.
- Media coverage in 2020/2021 was at an all-time high; LB had more than 250 mainstream media coverages. LB also received invitations to seminars and webinars to share insights, practices, and experiences. These media coverages served to further elevate LB's public profile.

I am heartened by and proud of LB's remarkable growth to what it is today—a pro-active and effective SSA with support from the majority of Lions Clubs and the public in Singapore.

On 31 March 2021, LB achieved the Advanced Tier of Institutions of Public Character (IPC), a category awarded to only large IPCs. Today, LB is also one of the leading SSAs in preventive eldercare especially in areas of innovation and digitalization.

LB would not have been able to attain its success today without our important support networks and dedicated staff. My sincere appreciation and heartfelt thanks to all our supporters and staff for your unrelenting support and contributions over the past 25 years.

Together, let us continue to be a united and committed force working towards building an inclusive community for seniors in Singapore. "Connecting Seniors and Enriching Lives".





**1 & 2.** PDG Anthony Tay at MOU signing with MCD in 1995 **3.** PDG Anthony Tay at LB's first Befrienders Appreciation Night in 1995

**4 & 5.** PDG Anthony Tay hosting Prime Minister Mr Lee Hsien Loong at the inaugural Befriending Walk in 2007 **6.** PDG Anthony Tay posing with staff and volunteers at the LB Family Day 2007





1. PDG Anthony Tay hosting Dr Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment and Ministry of Transport at Mei Ling Active Ageing Centre in January 2020
2. PDG Anthony Tay receiving the SG Cares Community Partnership Grant by MCCY in March 2020
3. PDG Anthony Tay hosting PCF's CEO, Mr Victor Bay at the launch of the Show and Tell session in December 2020
4. PDG Anthony Tay signs MOU with Korean Women's Association in Singapore in January 2021
- 5 & 6. PDG Anthony Tay presenting a token to Temasek Foundation's Chief Executive Ms Woon Saet Nyoon at the launch of F.A.C.E programme in June 2021; taking a group photo with guest-of-honour, Mr Eric Chua, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Social and Family Development and MCCY



# Impact by Numbers

1995

## Befriending Services

**1,459**

befriendeds served  
by 722 befrienders

**71**

befrienders  
attended 5  
training sessions

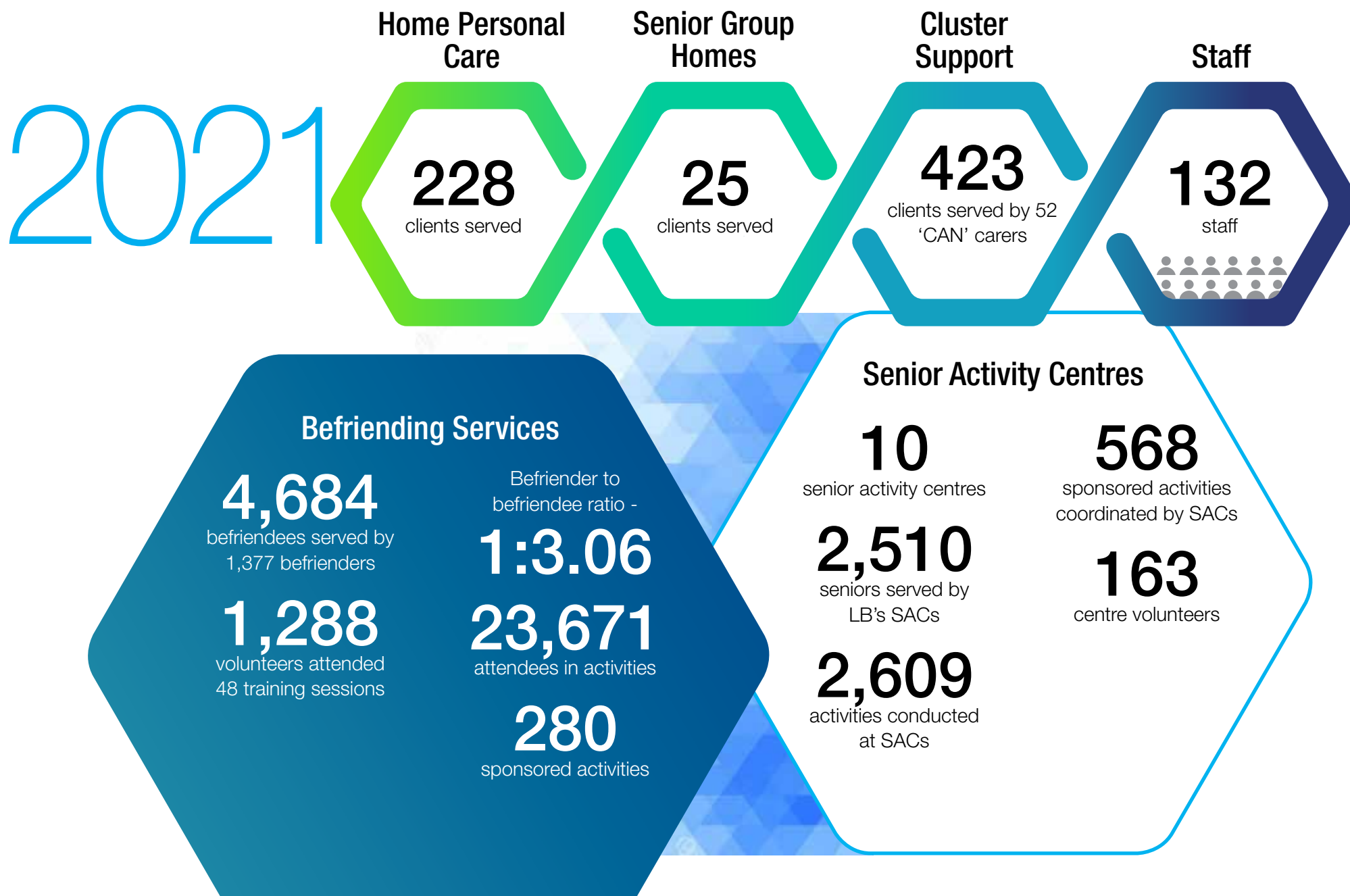
Befriender to  
befriended ratio -  
**1:2.02**

## Staff

**5**

staff





# Milestones

## 1995

- Formation of LBSA
- Opened LB Centre at 130 Bukit Merah View
- Launched Befrienders Appreciation Night

## 1999

- Opened Ang Mo Kio Service Centre

## 2002

- Accorded the Merit Award for Best Volunteer Management System
- Opened Social Service Centre (Sembawang)

## 2004

- Opened Neighbourhood Link (Mei Ling)

## 2007

- Opened Neighbourhood Link (Bendemeer)

## 2010

- Conferred NCSS Outstanding Voluntary Welfare Organisation Award (Collaboration)

## 2000

- Opened first Senior Activity Centre (Mei Ling)

## 1997

- Launched LB Training Room
- Launched LB website

## 2003

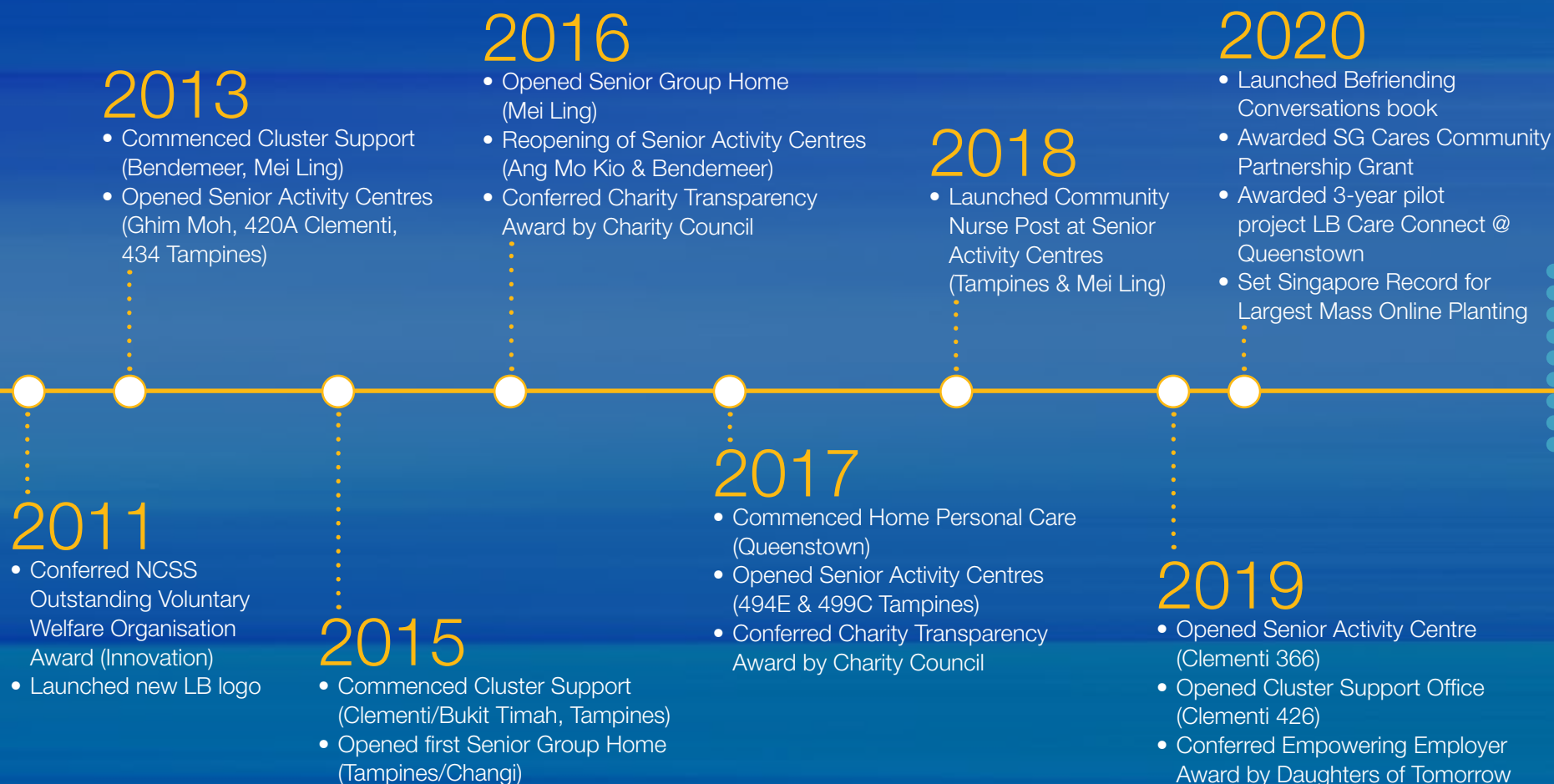
- Opened Senior Activity Centre (Buona Vista)

## 2006

- Opened Neighbourhood Link (Ang Mo Kio)

## 2009

- Conferred Non-Profit Organisation Award for Volunteer Management



# Highlights of Our Journey

25 Years of Serving Seniors

# 1995



The Lions Clubs formed the Lions Befrienders Service Association after taking over a volunteer service for seniors formerly managed by MCD.



Mr Abdullah Tarmugi, then Acting Minister for MCD, officiated the opening of the first Lions Befrienders Centre at 130 Bukit Merah View on 22 July.





We held our first  
Befrienders Appreciation  
Night at Orchid Country  
Club on 8 October.



# 1996



All befrienders received identification cards.



A new buddy system was introduced that allowed new befrienders to be paired with more experienced peers during befriending sessions.



We conferred the first LB Awards at the 1996 Befrienders Appreciation Lunch and Award Presentation to recognise befrienders and befriender coordinators for their contributions.





A new training room was opened on 31 January which became LB's base for conducting courses, workshops and social programmes.



# 1997



Our website became operational on 1 May. We also upgraded our database management system the following month to facilitate report submissions and data monitoring.



The Metro/Lions Befrienders Charity Drive resulted in massive media publicity and the recruitment of 350 new befrienders. At the end of the campaign, Metro department store donated \$250,000 worth of household and essential items for LB beneficiaries.





# 1998

Club Sunday was launched as a regular programme on 1 March to allow befrienders, befriendeds and the community at large to bond over a hot meal and activities like music therapy, pet therapy, games, performances, movies and more.





# 1999

Our Ang Mo Kio Service Centre opened on 2 October. Then Deputy Prime Minister and Member of Parliament (MP)<sup>1</sup> for Ang Mo Kio GRC Mr Lee Hsien Loong officiated the event.



<sup>1</sup>MP on subsequent mentions



# 2000



Some 500 participants took part in our Charity Walk-A-Jog on 28 May at MacRitchie Reservoir.



Launched on 10 September, SIA Club Sunday encouraged the staff of Singapore Airlines to volunteer alongside befrienders, Lions and other contributors.





Our first SAC at Mei Ling opened on 26 November. Then MP for Tanjong Pagar GRC, Mr Chay Wai Chuen, officiated the event.



# 2000





# 2001

We celebrated Senior Citizens' Week with the theme "Empowering Our Elders" on 25 November.



2002



We raised a total of \$312,000 at the first Lions Befrienders Donation Draw on 24 March. Funds were used to improve operations at our SACs and Social Service Centres (SSCs).



On 4 June, via a joint initiative called Veggie Express, volunteers from DHL International and LB packed and distributed fresh fruits and vegetables and dry rations to 425 disadvantaged seniors each week.







On 27 November, LB won the Merit Award for Best Volunteer Management System in the National Volunteerism Awards conferred by the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC).



Then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence Dr Tony Tan officially opened the LB Social Service Centre in Sembawang on 15 December. This centre registered a strong following of 131 befrienders and 524 befriendees post-opening.

2002



# 2003



On 18 March, we launched the DHL Health Express, a chair exercise series to help seniors maintain an active lifestyle.

The Buona Vista SAC was officially opened on 23 November by the then Minister for the Environment and MP for Holland-Bukit Panjang GRC, Mr Lim Swee Say.







# 2004



LB debuted Befriendee Talent Month, an inter-centre friendly competition for the seniors to showcase skills ranging from bowling to karaoke.



Through two major charity golf tournaments organised by external organisations, LB raised over \$63,000.



Mei Ling NL was officially opened on 28 November by Mr Chay Wai Chuen. Since then, the NL has organised lifelong learning courses for seniors and promoted volunteerism.

2004







# 2005

For the first time in our history, we embarked on an island-wide media campaign to raise public awareness of LB. The campaign, which ran from 13 October to 4 January the following year at 20 MRT stations, was sponsored by Singapore Mass Rapid Transit (SMRT) Corporation and Dentsu Singapore.

# 2006

Prime Minister Mr Lee Hsien Loong officially opened our Ang Mo Kio NL on 27 May. Over 200 guests graced the event.







To encourage long-term befriending, LB launched Adopt-A-Region, a project allowing schools and corporates to plan regular activities for befriendees in a specific region over a minimum of six months.

# 2006»

We conducted our first joint Flag Day with the Lions Home for the Elders on 30 December and raised more than \$83,000 from the project.





# 2007

Dr Lee Boon Yang, then Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts, officially opened the Bendemeer Neighbourhood Link on 26 May. A charity dinner, held in conjunction with the opening event, raised \$60,000 in aid of beneficiaries of the NL.



We held our inaugural Befriending Walk at Bishan Park on 4 November to promote intergenerational bonding. The Befriending Walk has since become a yearly highlight on our calendar.







The first LB Family Day on 2 December gave befrienders an occasion to unwind and spend quality time with their loved ones.





# 2008



From 7 to 8 March, we participated in the Seniors' Fair, organised by the Central Singapore Community Development Council and National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre (NVPC). Our staff and volunteers shared about LB's services and sold handmade items, raising \$2,300 as a result.

In our continual drive to enhance professionalism in social service, we introduced Volunteering 101, a Volunteer Programme Management System manual for all volunteers, on 22 March during the Befriender Coordinators' Appointment Ceremony. The manual detailed programme policies, job descriptions for different volunteer positions and performance review criteria.







We co-hosted our first Joint Appreciation and Recognition Nite 2008 with the Lions Home for the Elders on 1 November. The event recognised corporates, schools, Lions Clubs and befrienders for their outstanding contributions.

2008



We celebrated the fifth anniversary of the Bendemeer NL on 1 June. Lion Henry Tan, PBM, then District Governor for Lions Clubs International District 308-A1, was the guest-of-honour.





# 2009

Our Befriender Coordinators' Retreat took place overseas for the first time, in Malacca from 8 to 9 March. The event was an opportunity to discuss new ways of recruiting befrienders and improving befriending practices.



We celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mei Ling NL on 28 March, with 500 guests in attendance.



We participated in the Young Changemakers Conference organised by the National Youth Council in July. Through the conference, we let students from various schools know about our programmes and explore collaborations.



We celebrated the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ang Mo Kio NL with a nine-course dinner, table games and karaoke for 300 guests, which was graced by Er. Lee Bee Wah, then Member of Parliament for Ang Mo Kio GRC.

2009





We were proud to receive the Non-Profit Organisation Award for Volunteer Management at the annual National Volunteerism & Philanthropy Awards on 21 November. The awards recognise organisations that have set benchmarks for excellence to encourage giving in Singapore.



Mr Anthony Teo, President of Harvard Business Club of Singapore presented the HBS Club Scholarship Award to PDG David Lee, in conjunction with LB winning the NVPC Non-Profit Organisation Award.



Lion Goh Boo Han, then Executive Director, attended the sponsorship of a course "Strategic Perspectives in Non-Profit Management" at Harvard Business School in July the following year.



# 2010



On 30 May, we partnered ComfortDelGro in a five-year Home Improvement Programme (HIP) for over 500 seniors in one-room rental flats. In addition to purchasing household items, the HIP fund went towards organising outings for seniors and other fund-raising efforts.



At this year's Befriending Walk on 25 September, we entered the Singapore Book of Records for 810 participants potting plants at one location.





The National Council of Social Service (NCSS) presented LB with the first NCSS Outstanding Voluntary Welfare Organisation Award 2010 (Collaboration). The award recognised our efforts to engage seniors through extensive partnerships with corporations, grassroots organisations, schools and other VWOs.



We celebrated our 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a 100-table banquet—the largest event since inception—at the Raffles City Convention Centre on 4 November. The night of fanfare was attended by Lions Clubs members, befrienders and networking partners.



# 2010



# 2011

We won the NCSS Outstanding VWO Award 2011 (Innovation) on 7 September.



About 80 donors and fundraisers graced our Networking Cocktail Reception on 4 March at The Pines. Top donors unveiled donor plaques, which were then displayed at our SACs as a mark of recognition for donors' support.





Through the LB Golf Challenge Trophy 2011 at Raffles Country Club on 28 October, we raised over \$128,000.

# 2011

LB's new logo was unveiled on 5 November, signifying dynamism and a service-oriented outlook. The original logo was designed in November 1997.





# 2012

Launched on 26 May, the YMCA-Central Singapore CDC SpringClean Programme aimed to create clean and safe homes for 440 seniors including LB beneficiaries for over three years.



Former President Dr Tony Tan launched the President's Challenge Volunteer Drive on 1 September at our Bendemeer SAC. There, he interacted with our seniors and visited some of their homes.







LB's Flag Day 2012 on 22 September raised a record-breaking \$73,000 through the work of 1,163 Lions, students, staff and volunteers. It was the highest amount raised from street collections in the history of this event.



Some 600 seniors enjoyed a day of carnival fun, food and shopping at the first Lions Befrienders Carnival on 3 November at Yio Chu Kang Community Club (CC). The event was supported by Yio Chu Kang Women's Integration Network and Yio Chu Kang CC.

2012





LB co-organised the International Volunteer Day event on 24 November with the YMCA of Singapore and Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities. Together, we rallied over 6,000 volunteers and 70 charitable organisations to celebrate the spirit of volunteerism.

2012



# 2013



We started our first Cluster Support at Bendemeer in January by providing case management services to frail and vulnerable seniors living in rental flats. As a Cluster Support facility, the Bendemeer SAC supported three to five regular SACs in the vicinity.



On 19 January, we opened our fourth SAC at Ghim Moh. Chief Advisor to the SAC and MP Mr Christopher de Souza was the guest-of-honour.





LB's fifth SAC was opened at Blk 420A Clementi Ave 1 on 6 April by MP and Chief Advisor to the SAC, Mr Arthur Fong. We entertained our 200 guests with performances put up by centre volunteers and seniors.

# 2013

At our first Befrienders Day on 24 August, we paid tribute to all befrienders and celebrated their contributions to seniors in the community.







Our 6<sup>th</sup> SAC opened its doors at Blk 434 Tampines St 43 on 19 October. Mr Baey Yam Keng, MP for Tampines GRC and Chief Advisor for the SAC, officiated the event.



# 2013



We started Cluster Support operations at LB's SAC at Mei Ling Street in December. Staff reached out to frail seniors through referrals from partners, including the hospitals and SACs run by other VWOs.





Mei Ling SAC celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> year on 22 August.



At our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary cum Appreciation & Awards Presentation 2014 on 18 October, 119 awardees were recognised for their contributions to LB.

2014





Some 300 seniors, volunteers and stakeholders came together on 12 November to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ang Mo Kio SAC.

2014





In July, we started Cluster Support services at Tampines and Changi via LB's Tampines SAC.



# 2015»



We raised an all-time high of \$103,000 through street collections on Flag Day on 22 August, surpassing the previous record of \$90,000.





In September, we opened our first Senior Group Home (SGH) at Tampines.

2015



In conjunction with the International Day of Older Persons on 1 October, we launched the Silver Bow Campaign. Donors donned the silver bow to pledge support for purposeful ageing.



Through the first Lions Charity Show held at Mediacorp on 24 January, LB managed to generate awareness of disadvantaged seniors in the community and the behind-the-scenes work done by volunteers. The live show raised \$1.57m for LB.



# 2016



We opened our second SGH at Mei Ling Street in January.







At the inaugural Lions Befrienders Amazing Race on 9 April, our befrienders teamed up and raced across the island to complete challenges. Kudos for a job well done!



We celebrated the reopening of Bendemeer SAC on 18 July with unique drums and dance performances by our seniors.

The reopening of Ang Mo Kio SAC on 4 September was a lively event with drums and robocoach exercise performances by seniors at the centre.

2016

2016



We launched the Giving Tree, a new donation campaign for organisations and individuals, at LB's annual Appreciation and Awards Presentation on 21 October. 174 volunteers and donors were honoured at the event.



On 9 November, LB and Metro jointly entered the Singapore Book of Records for the largest gathering of people wearing silver bows. A total of 275 people donned the sparkling accessory on 9 November as part of the Silver Bow campaign.





# 2017

The highly anticipated Silver Bow Charity Dinner on 17 February was an eventful night filled with rousing performances and a charity auction of beautiful art and calligraphy pieces. We raised over \$184,000 to support our ongoing work for more than 5,000 seniors.



Clementi SAC turned five on 21 May.





LB started Home Personal Care (HPC) at Queenstown on 22 May. The programme enables seniors to age in the comfort of their home while the HPC team helps with their daily tasks such as feeding, dressing, medicating and exercising.



On 25 October, we launched Cluster Support via our SAC at Tampines Blk 494E and opened a new SAC at Tampines Blk 499C.

2017



On 15 November, we were one of 41 charities to win the Charity Transparency Award by the Charity Council for the second year running.

# 2018



In collaboration with Changi General Hospital, we launched the CareLine 24/7 tele-befriending service for seniors in Tampines. Through the hotline, they can access help even after office hours.



Our annual Flag Day on 25 August saw a record turnout of volunteers. It resulted in an unprecedented amount of \$300,000 raised from street collections.



To help manage chronic diseases among the seniors, LB partnered with the respective Regional Health Systems (RHS) to set up the Community Nurse Post (CNP) at both Tampines and Mei Ling SACs between May and July.





# 2019

The LB Charity Golf Tournament and Charity Dinner held on 8 March at the Singapore Island Country Club were a rousing success. Generous donations from golfers and diners helped us exceed our fundraising target to sustain existing programmes and implement new initiatives to benefit the seniors.



Singapore Lions Clubs marked 60 years of community service in Singapore by organising a carnival at the Singapore EXPO Convention and Exhibition Centre on 16 and 17 February. LB beneficiaries were invited to the event for a day of food, games and shopping.







We officially opened our latest SAC at Clementi Blk 366 and Cluster Support Office at Clementi Blk 426. Chief Advisor to Clementi SACs and former Senior Parliamentary Secretary Dr Tan Wu Meng was the guest-of-honour.



On 19 May, LB was awarded the "Empowering Employer" trophy at the Employer Appreciation and Awards ceremony by women-centric charity organisation Daughters of Tomorrow.

2019



Mei Ling SAC turned 20 on 5 September. We commemorated the occasion with a night of games, songs and food with 280 seniors from various SACs.



On 9 October, the Joyful Percussion Drum Band from Ang Mo Kio SAC was invited to perform at the Community Chest Awards Ceremony at the Istana.





2020»



In February, LB published *Befriending Conversations*, a book of stories from 20 seniors who recapped their trials and tribulations during Singapore's early years. Accompanying the book launch was an art exhibition held at library@orchard in collaboration with the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts.

We were awarded the SG Cares Community Partnership Grant by MCCY on 4 March. The grant strives to promote more community-driven ground-up initiatives and partnerships among community partners.





2020



In July and August, LB partnered with DBS Bank to launch Singapore's largest-ever Virtual Befriending @ SAC with 1,000 volunteers, a way for seniors to stay socially engaged during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The beneficiaries of LB continued to have access to essential primary health services across 2020, thanks to a telemedicine initiative we implemented in partnership with nine government restructured hospitals.





On 2 June 2020, LB was also one of the few Social Service Agencies (SSAs) permitted by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) to reopen the SACs on the first day of the post-circuit breaker period.



In November, we launched over 30 contactless donation terminals island-wide as part of fund-raising efforts during the pandemic. This innovative project was undertaken in partnership with fintech firm GivePlease and the Government Technology Agency (GovTech).



Over 180 DBS volunteers and LB seniors across 10 SACs broke the records and made it into the Singapore Book of Records for participating in the most significant mass online planting on 20 November.

2020

# Unsung Heroes

## A Desire to Serve

**Jennifer Seng**

LB Volunteer

“If you ask me why I volunteer, I do it because helping others comes naturally to me. I grew up in a large three-generation family. Taking care of one another was routine for us,” reflects Ms Jennifer Seng, a dedicated befriender for over three decades.

A seasoned altruist who is no stranger to hard work, Ms Seng often went beyond the call of duty. When a befriender under her care had passed away, she voluntarily took on the caregiving role for the befriender’s two mentally challenged sons.

“As both brothers are mentally challenged, I made daily calls and visited them often to check on their living conditions, making sure they had regular meals and household necessities. There were times I would rush over to their house to search for the older brother who often went missing around their neighbourhood,” she recalls.

But her commitment doesn’t stop there. She worked with the brothers’ medical social worker for their medication and monthly appointments with IMH. Till today, she continues to visit the surviving older brother weekly in the nursing home.



Although Ms Seng concedes that caring for lonely seniors, especially those who are mentally challenged can be very stressful, she believes the outcome is worthwhile. “When you realise your actions uplift the community; your words encourage, motivate and inspire others, you know that you have made a big difference.”

As for aspiring volunteers looking to walk this path, Ms Seng has this to say, “Age, status or qualification should not deter anyone who wants to volunteer and serve. Just come, get involved and journey with us to discover true joy and inner peace.”

“*When you realise your actions uplift the community; your words encourage, motivate and inspire others, you know that you have made a big difference.*”

For her exemplary dedication in helping others, Ms Seng was conferred the Healthcare Humanity Award (HHA) in 2017 by Dr Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State for Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources and Ministry of Health.



## An Indomitable Spirit

**Linda Koh**

LB Volunteer

Even at 83 years old, Mrs Linda Koh, an active befriender since 1982, has no intention of stopping. The energetic volunteer still busies herself organising food distribution twice weekly to needy seniors living at Kim Tian Road—an initiative she started over three decades ago.

“As long as I can help, I am willing to do it. I will probably continue until I stop walking,” shares Mrs Koh earnestly.

Besides food distribution, she also taught handicraft skills to seniors at the Tiong Bahru Community Centre in 1984—a volunteering stint that brought her closer to the seniors under her care.

“I wanted to do something more for them after they told me they enjoy good food and outings,” she explains.

To fulfil their wishes, Mrs Koh and her team of volunteers organised annual luncheons, birthday parties, monthly outings to places of interests, and the celebration of Chinese festivals in Singapore—stopping only in 2020 due to COVID-19.

Also concerned for the safety of seniors who lived alone, Mrs Koh collaborated with the Active Retirees’ Association (ARA) in 2007 to install battery-operated fire alarms in the homes of vulnerable seniors living island-wide.



“*The smiles and greetings from the seniors are enough to keep me volunteering week after week.*”

But that’s not all she did. The resourceful volunteer sought the help of meal ration sponsors like Zouk, Bo Tien Welfare Services Society and Tang Gah Beo Temple to fund the twice-weekly food distribution. She also introduced Le Champ (South East Asia) to LB, who remains one of our valued sponsors today.

Having left no stone unturned in her befriending duties, Mrs Koh acknowledges that volunteering can have its challenges. But like any positive person, she chooses to focus on its rewards. “The smiles and greetings from the seniors are enough to keep me volunteering week after week. These gestures show me how much they appreciate what we do,” she says.

For embodying the true spirit of volunteerism, Mrs Koh was conferred the Long Service Award (35 years) in 2018.

## Volunteering His Way to a Healthy Purposeful Life

**Ho Koon Thye**

LB Volunteer

It is safe to say Mr Ho Koon Thye is somewhat of a legend among volunteers and seniors of LB. The 82-year-old has been a befriender since 1984, when the service was still under the purview of the then MCD.

“The group was small and I was the secretary then. We visited old folks, cleaned their homes and helped take them to the doctor,” recalls Mr Ho, whose volunteering experience started in the 60s when he and a few friends regularly brought food to Samsui women living at Upper Nankin Street, now known as Chinatown.

The early years of being a befriender were among the most memorable for the sprightly retiree because it called for resourcefulness and physical grit.

Mr Ho and his fellow volunteers approached affluent merchants to donate food items and funds for the programme, an effort he said required “thick skin”. Also, at a time when there were only lift landings on selected levels at HDB blocks, befrienders became accustomed to stair-climbing to reach residents, often carrying heavy bags of food or trash if they did any spring-cleaning.

But Mr Ho had few complaints for his purpose was crystal-clear. “When I was born, my family was very poor but I was lucky enough to be adopted by a



“*When I was born, my family was very poor. I knew at a young age that if I had the ability, I had to help the less fortunate.*”

businessman who provided me with education. I knew at a young age that if I had the ability, I had to help,” he says.

Over 30 years on, Mr Ho is still actively serving seniors with LB, keeping in regular touch with over 100 seniors in Geylang Bahru and Bendemeer. “If not for COVID-19, I’d be visiting them every day. Now we can only speak on the phone,” he says.

Despite his age, Mr Ho continues to take the stairs on home visits. “All the running around has given me strong legs and a strong heart! Volunteering is good for health,” he half-jests, adding, “I only hope to stay healthy for as long as possible so I can continue volunteering.”

## 通过志愿服务 收获健康和意义

### 何昆泰先生

狮协义工

说82岁的何昆泰先生是狮协志愿者和年长者当中的传奇人物一点也不为过，因为他当志愿者的经历，要从上个世纪的60年代说起。

当时的何先生定期和几个朋友送食物给住在南京街上段（现在的牛车水）的红头巾。为了帮助那些年长者，何先生和他的伙伴必须“厚着脸皮”向富商筹集食品和募款。而早年的组屋并非每一楼层都有电梯，他们经常得扛着一袋袋沉重的食物或清理出来的垃圾上下楼梯。

这段考验他们的应对能力和体力的志愿服务，至今最让他难以忘怀。过程虽然辛苦，但何先生因为有明确的目标而毫无怨言。“我出生在一个很贫穷的家庭，幸好一个商人收养了我，并让我受教育。因此我从小便认定，只要有能力一定要帮助别人。”

从1984年起，何先生便已是友伴志愿者。“当时我们的团队很小，我们探访年长者，帮他们打扫住家，还陪他们去看医生。”



“我出生在一个很贫穷的家庭，因此我从小便认定，只要自己有能力一定要帮助有需要的人”

经过了30多年，现已退休的何先生依然精神抖擞，积极和狮协100多个住在芽笼峇鲁和明地迷亚一带的年长者保持联络并为他们服务。他略带遗憾地说，“如果不是冠病疫情，我就可以天天探望他们，现在我们只能够通过电话联系。”

年事已高的何先生在进行家访时仍然走楼梯。他打趣说，“从前到处奔走，我的双腿和心脏都很强壮！志愿服务有益健康，我希望能一直很健康，才能继续当志愿者。”



## Meet the Multitasker

### Siew Phoi Chee

LB Volunteer

No task is too big or too small for Mdm Siew Phoi Chee who commutes to LB's SAC at Mei Ling Street every weekday to lend a hand.

It was a serendipitous start to Mdm Siew's volunteering journey with LB. Over 20 years ago, after a qigong session at Mei Ling, her attention was drawn to a bustling new SAC nearby.

“*For as long as I can, I will continue to help. I just really enjoy the activities and the work with LB!*”

“I walked in to take a look and started to help out ever since!” recalls the sprightly 84-year-old.

Though Mdm Siew lives at Commonwealth, she takes the bus every day to the Mei Ling SAC, doing her best to chip in wherever help is needed. She has done everything from accompanying seniors for medical appointments, haircuts and shopping errands to helping out at group craft lessons, preparing breakfast and even mending seniors' worn-out clothing.



Though COVID-19 has put a temporary stop to group activities, she continues to connect with the seniors at Mei Ling over the phone or sometimes does door-to-door visits to check on their well-being. “If they need any supplies, I can help to buy them since some of the seniors are not mobile,” she says.

“I’m really glad to be able to contribute since I can still walk,” says Mdm Siew, who has grown close to many of the seniors she helps. “I know all of them here, and I’m sad whenever someone passes away.”

Having witnessed the challenges of seniors and the transience of life through her work with LB, Mdm Siew has learned to cherish life even more each day. She remains energetic and optimistic by “not overthinking” and simply taking each day as it comes. “For as long as I can, I will continue to help. I just really enjoy the activities and the work with LB!”

## 因为付出 所以珍惜

### 萧佩珠女士

狮协义工

萧佩珠女士除了周末以外，每天都从联邦区的住家搭巴士前往美岭狮协乐龄活动中心当义工。多年前她在美岭街打完气功，附近崭新热闹的乐龄活动中心吸引了她的注意。“当时我只是想进去看看，没想到一看就待了20多年！”

“只要我还有能力，我就会继续帮忙，因为我真的很喜欢狮协的活动和工作！”

84岁的萧女士只要能力所及，无论大小事她都愿意尽力帮忙。例如陪同年长者看医生、理发或采购用品，或是在活动中心协助进行团体手工活动、准备早餐，甚至是帮年长者缝补衣服。

虽然冠病疫情迫使团体活动暂停，萧女士仍然通过电话和活动中心的年长者保持联系，偶尔也会上门探望，关心他们的近况。热心的萧女



士说，“有些年长者的行动不方便，如果他们需要什么物品，我还可以帮他们采购。”因为经常来往，萧女士和许多年长者都成了朋友。

“趁我现在还能走动，我很乐意帮助别人。因为都是认识的人，当有年长者过世时我也感到难过。”

目睹了一些年长者所面对的困难和人生的无常，萧女士更珍惜生命的每一天。她“不多想”，让自己保持活力，以乐观的心情迎接每一天。她笃定地说，“只要我还有能力，我就会继续帮忙，因为我真的很喜欢狮协的活动和工作！”

## More Than a Decade of Valuable Takeaways

### Justina Teo

Assistant Director, Special Projects & Development,  
Befriending Services

“When I moved to the Operations department to be a befriending executive in 2011, I was known as ‘Jiak Gan Tang’ because my Mandarin was weak and I could not speak dialect!” recounts Ms Justina Teo excitedly. “But thanks to my supportive colleagues, my Mandarin is better now.”

Improvement in her language skills was not the only takeaway for the Head of Befriending Services. Over the past 13 years, Ms Teo has had the privilege of learning from experienced colleagues who taught her the ropes. “I am an introvert who appreciates structure but my mentors reminded me I needed to be flexible and adapt to the changes on the ground.”

“*I was fondly known as ‘Jiak Gan Tang’ because my Mandarin was weak and I could not speak dialect!*”

Besides mentorship, Ms Teo is also grateful for the overseas opportunities—visits to senior homes in the Netherlands and New York—which have helped



her grow professionally. These trips taught her valuable tips on how to empower the elderly through self-care initiatives.

Although humbled by the grace she has been shown, Ms Teo has quite a few credits to her name. In 2020, she wrote the book *Befriending Conversations* and a research paper called *The Mechanisms of Befriending*, which was later condensed into an eight-step guide for LB’s internal use.

Ms Teo and her team also took on the enormous task of equipping 300 befriendees with smartphones and trained them to use the phones following the Circuit Breaker in 2020. “We wanted to equip our seniors quickly and thanks to our telehealth collaborations with the hospitals, our seniors can now access medical care through their phones instead of visiting the hospitals in case of another lockdown,” she adds.

Proud to still be a part of the 130-strong workforce in LB today, Ms Teo shares her aspirations for its future: “Loneliness hits everyone, whether rich or poor, so I hope LB can continue serving the needs of a new generation of lonely seniors regardless of their socioeconomic status.”



## Going the Extra Mile

### Stephanie Goh

Senior Manager, Cluster Support @ Bukit Timah/Clementi

“There’s no single set of skills that matches perfectly to every case,” says Ms Stephanie Goh emphatically.

The senior case manager would know, having handled over 100 cases as part of her work for Cluster Support (Bukit Timah/Clementi) over the past six years. A good case worker, she says, needs to unravel the many layers of issues that isolated seniors are facing and look for the right resources to improve their situation.

Ms Goh recalls working with an ill and debt-ridden beneficiary three years ago. “The senior was estranged from the daughter and felt really stuck,” she says.

But through patience—it took four to five visits for the senior to warm up to the team—and the will to help solve the senior’s financial troubles, Ms Goh managed to resettle the senior in a smaller flat. “She managed to get cash from selling her larger flat and now has enough to retire. She also became happier and more motivated to go for medical appointments,” Ms Goh shares.

Such is the effort that Ms Goh was willing to go to make an impact in the lives of the seniors. Despite the backbreaking work, she feels energised by the interactions she has with the senior folks.



“*Training the next generation of case workers is the social responsibility of my job.*”

“I enjoy the interactions. It’s not routine admin work. If you don’t have passion for this job, it’s hard to continue,” says Ms Goh, who today has the same fervour for social work as she did when she first joined as a befriending executive in 2009.

In fact, the energetic case manager cannot foresee a day when she truly retires from the sector. Instead, she hopes to stay connected and train the next generation of case workers, saying, “I’ll do that as much as I can if they want to learn. It’s the social responsibility of my role.”

## Growing with LB

### Emily Ong

Assistant Director, HOD of Eldercare (Active Ageing Centre)

Ms Emily Ong is a familiar face at the LB office. For most of the last 12 years, the volunteer management veteran has been devising more and better ways to upskill and improve the experience of LB's volunteers.

It was a far cry from her first job in an engineering firm. "I was talking more to machines than humans," she jests, but in seriousness, entering the social sector has allowed her to do more than she ever imagined.

“*We all need each other so we can make the community a better place.*”

One of the most important milestones in her career was creating a volunteer portal with the team in 2019, which contained their personal details, training records, hours and more. This was quite a notable feat, considering the volunteer management team was not trained in IT.

But the effort was worth it. "It reduced a lot of manual tracking. We saved many manhours as a result," Ms Ong recalls.



Over the years, she has also gone on trainings overseas to pass on new knowledge to volunteers. In Australia, a suicide intervention course taught her how to better extend help to seniors with suicidal thoughts. And while visiting nursing homes in the Netherlands, she learned about empowering seniors by giving them a choice of daily activities.

Plus, Ms Ong and her team have pushed the creative envelope with volunteer bonding events, having organised myriad activities like online karaoke and carnivals.

For all that she has done, Ms Ong reckons she has grown immeasurably herself because of the volunteers. "I've met many people, from consultants and healthcare professionals to market aunties. Everyone taught me something," she says.

Today, she is tackling a new challenge, heading the recently launched Active Ageing Centre. While the learning curve is steep, Ms Ong is grateful for the opportunity to try her hand at managing operations.

"My life in the social sector can be likened to a seedling in the soil. I grew because of my interactions with volunteers and the trust that management put in me," she reflects.

# Our Seniors Our Inspiration

## A Friend to Everyone

### Charlie Cheok

LB's Client

Mr Charlie Cheok, a 92-year-old befriender, understands all too well the power of a smile and a simple greeting.

For the past seven years, Mr Cheok has been a befriender under LB's care. However, the affable senior has been lighting up the faces of other residents in his neighbourhood with his warmth and open-heartedness.

From sharing surplus food rations with his neighbours in his one-room rental estate to offering lonely seniors a drink when he spots them downstairs, Mr Cheok is generous as he is empathetic.

“It's really nice to have someone to talk to and who shows care and concern.”



“I understand the loneliness that some seniors feel, especially if they are unable to walk, so I'll just ask them about their day and start chatting.



Over time you get to know them,” says the divorcee who is estranged from his children and receives financial assistance from the government.

Yet the active senior prefers not to dwell on the negative; instead, he focuses his energies on staying active. He goes for breakfast at the nearby coffee shop daily and takes a walk around his neighbourhood as often as he can, not allowing his weakened knees to deter him. Before the pandemic, he even volunteered at the nearby SAC, leading other elderly folks in song and movement.

Positivity goes full circle as he has gained friends around the neighbourhood. He has also become an endearing befriender to LB's befriending executives who have worked with him over the years.

“My befriending executive Sally has been wonderful. It's really nice to have someone to talk to and who shows care and concern,” Mr Cheok says of the weekly check-ins he receives. Pre-COVID, he also participated in group activities like workouts with LB.

Growing up as a Boy Scout with a sense of service, Mr Cheok believes every person can positively impact a senior's life. “Young people can just go up to a senior and say hello or smile. It'll make a difference.”



## For the Love of Florals

### Tan Soo Hua

LB's Client

Crafting at the Bendemeer SAC has brought Mdm Tan Soo Hua immense joy and gratification, and she is looking forward to doing more of it.

For over 16 years, Mdm Tan has been a frequent visitor to Bendemeer SAC. Every day before the pandemic, after finishing her chores at home, the retiree would head to the centre to enjoy a day of group activities with friends in the neighbourhood.

"The centre closes at 6pm and we would only leave at five-plus!" the 89-year-old says with a hearty laugh.

From arts and craft and karaoke to excursions and festive parties, Mdm Tan relishes her active social life at the SAC. But what has really stuck is her newfound skill in handcrafting delicate flowers using stockings and other materials.

"They engaged a Korean teacher who taught us how to make all kinds of flowers like orchids, roses and carnations," says Mdm Tan, who even helped to create a batch of them for fundraising some years ago. "It takes time and effort to finish each product but I just love the process," she says.

Though the pandemic has now limited her time at the SAC, Madam Tan still makes it a point to visit the centre once or twice a week to exercise with other



“The SAC closes at 6pm every day and we would only leave at five plus!”



seniors. "I miss the old days of hanging out here. The staff here have been very good to me," she reminisces. But even without an instructor, the senior has been able to craft occasionally with supplies provided by the SAC.

It seems nothing can dampen the spirits of this optimistic senior who credits her good health to her light-hearted outlook on life. For now, she simply takes each day as it comes and looks forward to the future where she can once again gather with all her pals at the SAC.

## 89岁的花样年华

### 陈淑花女士

狮协受益者

对陈淑花女士而言，在明地迷亚狮协乐龄活动中心做手工是一件充满乐趣和满足感的事，让她总是满心向往。

这16年来，陈女士可说是该活动中心的常客。在冠病疫情发生之前，她每天做完家务便会到活动中心和社区里的朋友一起参与当天的团体活动。现年89岁的她笑着说，“活动中心6点关门，我们总是5点多才肯离开！”

从参加美术手工活动、卡拉OK、郊游到节庆聚会，乐龄活动中心让陈女士拥有活跃的社交生活，其中最令她着迷的是她在那里学会利用丝袜和其他材料制作精致的手工花。

“活动中心请来一位韩国老师教我们制作各种花卉，如胡姬花、玫瑰和康乃馨。制作每一朵花需要很多时间和心血，但是我很享受这个过程。”几年前，陈女士还帮忙制作了一批丝袜花协助筹款活动。

回忆起往日的时光，陈女士说，“我很怀念以前可以常常在活动中心逗留，这里的员工都对我很好。”现在，她每个星期还是到活动中心



“活动中心6点关门，我们总是5点多才肯离开！”

走动一两次，和其他年长者一起运动。即使没有老师指导，陈女士偶尔还会利用活动中心提供的材料制作手工。

乐观的陈女士把自己的健康归功于她洒脱的生活态度。她以平常心对待每一天，期待着未来能再与她的伙伴们在乐龄中心相聚。

# Friends Beyond Borders

As LB expanded its programmes and outreach over the years, it received many prominent visitors from overseas. Dignitaries from the LCI visited LB often as a continuous show of support for its cause. LB also hosted foreign delegates, volunteers and students from all over the world to promote the exchange of cultural information and share best practices in the eldercare sector.

These visits were pivotal in promoting cross-cultural awareness and providing our seniors with the opportunity to meet and socialise with friends of different nationalities.

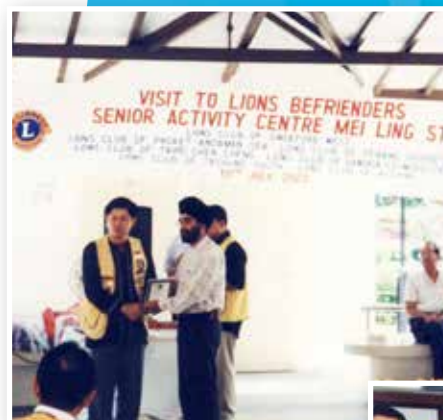
## 1997

Our Taiwanese counterparts, on an observation visit to our office at 130 Bukit Merah View.



## 2002

Lions members from six Lions Clubs in SEA—Phuket Andaman Sea, Penang Georgetown, Taipei Chen Cheng, Bangkok Cosmopolitan, Taichung South and Kluang visited Mei Ling SAC on 19 July and interacted with our seniors.





# 2009



As a show of support for our work, LCI 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President Sidney L. Scruggs III and his spouse, Lady Judy, visited LB's Ang Mo Kio NL and the home of one of our clients on 15 February.



Immediate Past International President (IPIP) of the International Association of Lions Clubs, Lion Mahendra Amarasuriya and his wife Lion Kushlani, graced our Ang Mo Kio NL on 8 May and had a dialogue session with fellow Lions from Singapore.



On 16 August, Ang Mo Kio NL hosted 10 Japanese students on a Lions Youth Exchange Summer Programme. Along with some local Leos, the students and their host families played games with 30 of our seniors and entertained them with a Japanese song.



# 2010

LCI 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Lion Tam Wing-Kun paid a special visit to our Bendemeer NL on 19 February and met with our seniors.



We hosted the Lions International Stamp Club Board Members— Immediate Past President Jan Pieter Bal and Secretary Micha Gelber at our Ang Mo Kio SAC on 24 June. They also dropped by the home of one of our clients.



# 2011



Led by China's Dalian DG Lion Tang Jie, the China Dalian Lions Clubs visited Ang Mo Kio and Bendemeer SACs on 23 and 24 November.



1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of LCI, Wayne A Madden, dropped in at our Ang Mo Kio SAC on 28 September.



A visit by Lions Club Freyung-Grafenau am Nationalpark to our Ang Mo Kio SAC on 7 March.





# 2012



Members of the Belgium Lions Club were guests at our Ang Mo Kio SAC on 9 April. Ms Fernandez Evelyn Enid, a regular senior at our centre, was thrilled to receive these friends from abroad in her home.

# 2013

Our Tampines SAC welcomed LCI President Lion Barry Palmer on 19 July. Our seniors performed a song for him and presented him with a handmade bouquet in honour of his visit.



2013



Members from LCI Districts 386 and 389 China were guests at our Tampines SAC on 11 November.



A visit to our Clementi 420A SAC by the Lions from China took place on 4 January. They also looked in on a few seniors staying in rental flats near the centre.



# 2014



Lions from Guangdong Lions Clubs dropped by our Bendemeer SAC on 21 June and interacted with the seniors through the activities held at the centre.



LCI President Robert (Bob) E. Corlew visited our Ang Mo Kio SAC on 8 December.



Beijing delegates from the Singa-China Association visited our Clementi 420A SAC on 7 December to learn more about LB's operations.







# 2019

We hosted delegates from the Guangdong University of Foreign Studies on 22 August and shared with them about LB's programmes, the Lions Club of Singapore and Singapore's eldercare sector.



On 6 September, volunteers from the Hong Kong Red Cross taught seniors from our Ang Mo Kio and Mei Ling SACs innovative exercises and handcrafting using towels. Our seniors posed proudly with their artwork and mingled enthusiastically with their newfound friends.

# Serving Our Seniors (1995-2020)

**LB provides holistic development and support to seniors, ensuring that they are socially, emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually engaged.**

## ■ Befriending

Since 1995, befriending has remained as one of LB's core programmes—reaching out to seniors residing in one or two-room HDB rental flats with limited or no family support. The programme's primary objectives are to enable seniors to age in place with community assistance, reduce social isolation and provide access to contacts and sources of help. These are achieved through weekly home visits by trained volunteer befrienders who provide social and psycho-emotional support to these seniors while monitoring their wellbeing and living environment. Seniors are further engaged through active ageing activities like the annual "Befriending Walk" launched in 2007, which has become an integral part of the programme.

## ■ Senior Activity Centres (SAC)

LB's first SAC in Mei Ling Street was officially opened in 2000 to reduce the social isolation of lonely and vulnerable seniors living in nearby HDB rental flats and to improve their quality of life. Today, there are a total of five SACs in Ang Mo Kio, Bendemeer, Tampines, and two in Clementi serving seniors from various socioeconomic profiles, promoting active ageing, and facilitating coordination of community-based support services. Seniors visiting these SACs can enjoy a myriad of centre-based activities such as karaoke, arts and craft and exercise sessions in a cozy and receptive environment. SACs also function as communal spaces for seniors to socialise with peers.

LB was invited to expand its services beyond serving residents living in rental flats to include those residing in purchased apartments too. As such, LB converted five SACs in Ghim Moh, Mei Ling, Clementi, and two in Tampines into Active Ageing Centres (AACs) in May 2021.

## ■ Active Ageing Centres (AAC)

An AAC is a drop-in social recreational centre that supports seniors living nearby with prompt access to quality care, opportunities to connect through recreational activities in the community.

AACs provide a range of services from active ageing programmes such as exercises, arts and crafts, games, and gardening; befriending and buddying services to provide social support for seniors through home visits and phone calls. In addition, AACs avail information and link seniors to community resources such as grants and support schemes.

Centres also welcome seniors who wish to volunteer by helping with centre activities, visiting other seniors, or running errands for them.

### ■ Home Personal Care Programme (HPC)

HPC is a step-up service offered to vulnerable seniors requiring assistance at home and/or help in supporting caregivers' duties. Under this service trained professionals provide care and assist seniors in performing Activities of Daily Living (ADL) such as feeding, dressing, showering, exercising and light housekeeping, doing recreational activities, grocery shopping and vital signs checking. This is to minimise preventable hospitalisation and/or premature institutionalisation to allow them to live with greater independence in their own homes. After a successful pilot run in the Clementi/Bukit Timah and Tampines/ Changi areas in 2017, this programme is now offered at over 30 locations across Singapore.

### ■ Senior Group Homes (SGH)

The SGH programme adopts an assisted living model for frail seniors by enabling them to co-reside in designated HDB rental flats retrofitted with elder-friendly features. Developed and funded by MSF in collaboration with HDB, LB now runs the SGH programme at Tampines/Changi and Mei Ling Street which was started in 2015 and 2016 respectively. Seniors are referred by the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) and are offered comprehensive support through services such as meals on wheels, medical escort and transport and home nursing care. These services empower seniors to live independently within communities and gave them more autonomy over their lives. The co-residing arrangements prevent social isolation and provide seniors with easy access to social support services.

### ■ Senior Cluster Networks (SCNs) Cluster Support

In 2015, LB was appointed by MSF to run SCNs in three zones—Clementi/Bukit Timah, Queenstown, and Tampines/Changi. Vulnerable seniors within these zones who require continual assistance but have limited, or weak

family support are identified and placed under this programme. Services such as casework management and social support through monitoring and counselling, are carried out for these seniors in collaboration with other SSAs and the Caring Assistance from Neighbours (CAN) carers. Each SCN Cluster Support manages up to five SACs within their designated boundaries. Seniors requiring additional assistance are also identified through this support network and referred to other relevant social service agencies.

### ■ Communities of Care (CoC)

LB's CoC is a structured framework established by the AIC to build networks and collaborations among service providers to offer accessible healthcare services and social support in the neighbourhood. LB's CoC focuses on nurturing a strong and dependable care system for seniors to enable them to age in place in the community with the support from befrienders and neighbours.

The system was introduced in Queenstown in July 2020 to cater to about 2000 seniors living in the Mei Ling Street/ Stirling Road precincts. It has since extended its reach to around 600 seniors residing in both HDB rental and purchased flats. It has also collaborated with 17 community partners such as social services, grassroots, healthcare, government and volunteers.

LB's CoC has streamlined the referral process with community partners to ensure that holistic and timely care is provided to maintain the physical, mental, social-emotional and healthcare needs of the seniors. Thus, these measures will empower seniors to age in place with improved assistance from the community and secure the future Community Care System which is population-centric, proactive and integrated.



# Our Vision for Tomorrow



Since it started in 1995, LB has been committed to its core mission - helping seniors in Singapore to age well in their own communities. This is demonstrated in its many programmes and services that have provided seniors with friendship and care.

In 2020, LB began integrating more of its programmes and services to ensure seniors—regardless of their housing type, income or frailties—receive a full suite of relevant and customised services to develop them in five wellness domains - physical, social, emotional, mental (cognitive) and spiritual (having a purpose in life). This was in response to the government's call for more holistic support in the eldercare sector to slow down the decline of seniors, delay institutionalisation and secure a good quality of life for them for as long as it is feasible.

However, the difficulties brought on by COVID-19 and the circuit breaker that followed triggered a relook at some of LB's approaches in supporting its seniors. To tackle future challenges of a similar nature and to ensure that every senior continues to be well-served by its programmes and services, LB rolled out the following initiatives.

## 1. Empower Seniors Through Innovation & Technology

LB started its digitalisation journey in June 2020 after recognising that seniors are increasingly isolated due to the restrictions during the pandemic. LB initiated several creative innovations that harnessed technology to connect seniors with others online. Encouraging seniors to adopt technology and learn to use digital tools helps them to keep up with the changing times and to live meaningfully during the pandemic, especially with safe distancing measures which are likely to stay. These initiatives to bridge the digital divide between seniors and technology will be progressively implemented from June 2020 to January 2021.

- Phase 1: To help seniors overcome the fear of technology via virtual befriending, training and equipping them to connect to other seniors and a larger pool of volunteers and befrienders. To achieve this, seniors will be provided with tablets at LB centres and smartphones to be used at home.

- Phase 2: To provide seniors with 24/7 access to essential hardware, software and Wi-Fi.
- Phase 3: Seniors to leverage on technology to connect to healthcare providers, especially nine public hospitals from three Regional Health Systems via telemedicine and teleconsultation.
- Phase 4: To use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to help in the early detection of emotional and mental health issues among seniors. This allows LB staff to provide them with timely support and intervention. One of these initiatives is the Facial Analysis Correlation of Emotions (F.A.C.E.) programme, a collaboration with Temasek Foundation which uses AI as a supplementary tool to virtual counselling. LB will employ this programme during one-to-one and group counselling sessions as well as during community screenings for better care planning.
- Phase 5: To use the i-OK@LB programme to empower and enable seniors to stay well and do daily self-reporting to update LB staff on their general wellbeing. This fosters greater independence among seniors who live alone. The system will also remind seniors to take their medications and encourage them to be responsible for their own wellbeing. This is crucial in preventing crises and undetected deaths. Plans for further enhancements to the programme will include timely prompts to seniors to exercise, play cognitive games and connect with friends.

## 2. Improve Quality of Care through Capacity & Capability Building

### a. Internal & External Training for Staff

LB has consistently developed its capability and expanded its capacity to adapt to the rapidly changing conditions of today and the foreseeable future. Besides external training in specialised areas such as counselling and casework management, all staff will also undergo on-the-job training and reskilling to equip them with relevant skills that will translate into better quality of care for seniors. Training topics include geriatric care, mental health, rehabilitation, physiotherapy, nutrition and alternative treatment such as traditional Chinese medicine. LB also engages staff through workgroup discussions to brainstorm

fresh, innovative ideas to promote active ageing and improve its programmes and services in line with its vision and mission.

### b. New Training Centre

LB's new Training Centre at Block 163 Stirling Road was officially opened on 11 September 2021. It is a place for volunteers to bond and attend training. With the emphasis on capacity building and enhancing the capability of its volunteers, LB aims to improve the quality and consistency of services for our seniors, increase awareness of its programmes, and advocate greater understanding and empathy in the larger community towards eldercare needs.

### c. More Structured Support for Caregivers

LB will extend its services to the helpers and family members of seniors to provide holistic support for them. These caregivers will be trained on important skills such as counselling and caregiving. They will also be given access to sources of help should they require more support with their duties.

**d. Collaborations with researchers from universities** in over 20 research projects to pilot innovations in eldercare, including those to meet existing and projected needs of seniors. LB has moved towards a data-driven and evidence-based culture to advocate and lead in preventive eldercare.

## 3. Forging Ahead

From its humble beginnings as a befriender programme serving Singapore's pioneer generation to an organisation providing comprehensive and holistic care to seniors from all walks of life, LB has made tremendous progress over the past 25 years.

It will carry on building on its strong foundation and work hand in hand with volunteers, community, corporate partners and the government to pursue its vision - a nation where every senior is active, healthy and happy - for many more years to come.

# Acknowledgements

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We extend our heartfelt thanks to all for their support and contributions in making LB a success over the past 25 years, as well as the individuals who made this commemorative book possible.

## Lions Befrienders' 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Coffee Table Book Committee

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