

Mr Tan Chin Wah

(1955)

Accession number : 1306
 Track number 130601
 Duration : 2:15:12
 Language / Dialect : English

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CD 1

Family background. Father started business in 1963. He began work there in 1972. Comparison of Chulia Street in 1960s and 1970s and in more recent decades. How goods from ships at port end up in Cheapside. Business initially sold machinery for rice milling. Everyday routine involving home, school and shop. Travelling from home in Dato Kramat to school and Chulia Street in family car, public bus or bicycle. Sense of discipline instilled by father. Buying food and drinks in school. Hanging out with gangsters in area around Carpenters' Guild.

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CD 2

Chulia Street, Muntri Street, Love Lane and Seck Chuan Lane had a gang each, divided by dialect groups. Aim of gangs was to protect community, not create problems. Gangs did not target schoolchildren. Protection money common but people not forced to pay. Respected each other's turf. Held talks to resolve conflict. Size of gangs. Ages of gang members and leaders. Lunch options with family. Description of layout of shop premises. How space in building was divided among tenants. Bulk of stock kept in a separate store.

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CD 3

Seven families, comprising over 30 people, lived in the three-storey shophouse. Main tenant is a hat maker. Front door was made of removable wooden panels. All tenants used same entrance. No worries about theft. More on family background. Places where family had lived. Years in school. Participation in sports. Interest in music and involvement with a band. Interaction with girls.

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CD 4

Products sold in shop. How businesses in the area get stock from each other when needed. Father started with nothing but was enterprising. He and brothers helped father but not paid. Description of neighbours and their businesses. What Tai Mun Lau signifies. Different sections of Chulia Street. Family continued with business during 1967 Hartal. Did not feel pressured to change to new currency. Sent home from school early during May 13 incident. Family was part of small Chinese community in Singora Lane, a largely Malay area. Had no problems as had lived there for years. Processions seen in Chulia Street and atmosphere created.

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CD 5

Continued with processions seen in Chulia Street and atmosphere created. His views on importance of passing down legacies through the generations. Memory of accident where friend was killed.

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CD 6

Continued with account of accident. Business moved to other premises in Chulia Street in 1980s. In 1992, bought the shoplot where father started and moved back. Special significance of shop is effort put in to make present achievement possible.