



# Foreword

from Wearnes Centennial  
Organising Committee Chairman  
Royston K S Tan



Sold its first motorcar,  
a seven-horsepower  
Oldsmobile.



Inaugurated a bus service  
on 1 July to run between  
Johnston's Pier and the  
Botanical Gardens.



Became a public company on  
23 November under the name of  
Wearne Brothers Limited with  
a capital of \$275,000.



Purchased Ford Motors  
(Burma) Limited in Rangoon.

**H**ow do you condense the full legacy and rich heritage of Wearnes in just 100 short stories? This seemingly impossible mission was accomplished, with the help of over 50 Wearnes staff, associates, former colleagues and Directors, and of course, the Wearne family, who shared with us many anecdotes, stories and photographs documenting Wearnes' development, innovation and achievements over the past century.

We are one of the few corporations in Singapore to survive 100 years. During this time, Wearnes has weathered many crises: two World Wars, the Oil Crisis in 1973, several economic crises and most recently, the SARS crisis in 2003. But with each crisis, Wearnes emerged stronger and more resilient. While it has undergone several transforma-

tions since it first started business on 1 April 1906, one thing has not changed, the ability of Wearnes to continually adapt and reinvent itself to meet the challenges of a dynamic business environment. The Wearnes story is one of adaptability and flexibility, a dominant theme in the hundred short stories presented in this book.

When I was first tasked to chair the committee for the Wearnes Centennial Celebrations, which kicked off with a gala dinner on 1 April 2006 for some 1,000 guests and staff, I was overwhelmed by the challenge. I knew it would be a daunting task to put together a year-long series of activities that would reflect the proud legacy of Wearnes, not just its achievements, but also the tough battles it has had to face in the last 100 years.

It has been a walk down memory lane for me as we ploughed through the archives and

official documents to uncover interesting facts and stories. It has also been a nostalgic journey for colleagues and former staff who were interviewed for the stories, as they reminisced about their working life with Wearnes. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our interviewees who made this book possible.

I would also like to thank the editorial team, Debra Soon, Lee Siew Hoon, Anthony Leong and Serene Soh for putting this book together. Special thanks also to the Wearnes Centennial Organising Committee members Alice Chan, Chan Heng Pong, Daisy Cheng, Corinne Chua, Tiffany Lim and Tan Chee Yong for their efforts in making the year-long celebrations a success.

We hope that you will be inspired by "The Hundred Short Stories That Make Us Wearnes".



Walter Wearne, son of Charles Wearne, joined the company.



Malayan Motors opened its doors in Orchard Road.



Set up an assembly line for model T Ford, producing as many as 15 cars a day.



Foster Wearne, Charles Wearne's other son, became the Company Secretary.

Universal Cars Limited formed to handle Ford operations.