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Not your typical Asian dad

The late Tan Chin Tuan was a warm, generous man who was loved by all

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Singaporeans from all walks of life gathered yesterday at a Grange Road apartment for the wake of the late Tan Chin Tuan.

The prominent banker and philanthropist, who died on Sunday at the age of 98, also received fond words from rival bankers.

UOB chairman and chief executive officer Wee Cho Yaw recalled the times when he had worked closely with Mr Tan, or Tan Sri, when the four local banks got together to form the International Bank of Singapore in 1974.

"Besides being an astute banker, he was one of our pioneer entrepreneurs, expanding OCBC's reach to insurance. Without his cross-holding efforts, OCBC would not be what it is today," said Mr Wee in a statement.

"When I was invited for tea with Tan Sri Tan in January this year, I was impressed by his clarity of thought and his recollection of past events. I had gone to get his support for the Chinese Language and Culture Fund. He responded with a generous donation of \$500,000."

Mr Tan started off as a clerk in OCBC at the age of 17 and rose to become its managing director and chairman. He retired in 1983.

Defence Minister Teo Chee Hean told Today that Mr Tan was "kind" to his father: "After the war, he gave my father a job in OCBC. My grandfather is also an old friend of his."

But it was probably one of Mr Tan's two daughters who summed up the man best.

Madam Tan Kheng Lian, 71, said of her father: "He was an upright, honest and principled man. Even though he was very busy, he made time for the family. He was very warm, unlike a typical Asian father.

"We kissed him good night every night."