



The CHC Journal

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Nava Kailash Temples at Kalna. Image credits: Mukul Agarwal

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Point of View

My point of view Heritage is inheritance but that is just a dictionary point of view. My point of view encompasses the gently flowing Hooghly, the chaos of Colootollah Street, the aroma of kebabs from the legendary 23 and 24 Hogg Street building, the tea and toast of Share Market, the wide expanse of the Maidan gazing brazenly at the mammoth marbles of the Victoria Memorial, the music of the different languages spoken, the applauds in Star Theater, the solemn tarpan rites at Babughat, the forgotten warehouses of the East India Company on the right bank of the river, 14 Theatre Road - my home for 24 years, number 10, 12 and 6. Each building whispering its own story forgotten yet so vibrant. Calcutta's

heritage does not stand frozen in time. Its dynamism is more like a lingering waft of a forgotten perfume pushing its way through the noxious fumes of the concrete malls, standing on destruction and dissipation of splendid beauty. The city has so much to see so much to experience almost in every lane. To restore and preserve this epic labyrinth of invaluable treasure we have to respect what is ours and this is where CHC nudges in with its regular awareness creating initiatives for the Greens and Silvers. Familiarization with the cities offerings, I firmly believe, continuous and persistent follow-ups will stoke the interest of some segments of our society to uphold and conserve our built heritage. Thereby we can create a historical city centre and showcase Calcutta as a glorious open air museum internationally ~ **Mimi Mahapatra**

Down Memory Lane My Grandmother's Sewing Case - Anjum Katyal



For as long as I can remember, this intricately and delicately woven bamboo container has lain on my mother's table, full of her sewing paraphernalia. It had first belonged to my mother's mother, and she too had kept her threads, yarn and needles in it. It came from Burma, where my grandfather, a geologist, had been posted for some time. My mother has many memories of childhood trips to Burma, including playing with ruby dust! This box, which has travelled through miles and years, holds many memories too. I love basketry, and am fascinated by the detailing and finish, so much finer than any bamboo work I see nowadays. I have told my mother that this box should come to me, eventually. Perhaps I too shall store my threads and yarns in it. But whatever its use, its outstanding craftsmanship deserves to be cherished.

Guest Column

The task of a proper interpretation of Indian Heritage is tough as it covers a huge spectrum of 4 distinct lineages. Prehistoric heritage mainly manifested through cave paintings or palaeonthropological interpretations; Proto-historic heritage as evidenced through excavations opening up reconstruction through seals, figurines, pots, etc; Historical heritage post the Indus Valley civilization period which again has the three dimensions of Pre Colonial, Colonial and Post colonial heritage. From the tourism point of view - anything which is visible is saleable, so my passionate endeavour has been to explore and expose the " heritage roots of India through several routes" and this made BAUL Foundation curate and ideate several types of research based walks and theme events encompassing the entire gamut of both architectural heritage and its associated bespoke legacy as well as the immense industrial heritage of India belonging to Railways, Ports, Jute, Tea, Insurance, Banking and Engineering verticals



• Respect • Restore • Reuse

Samrat Chowdhury is a passionate travel enthusiast and a visual storyteller, Calcutta University topper and a National Scholar with Post Graduate with diversified interests

ranging from wildlife, ecotourism, heritage and experiential travels with a drive and flair for circuit based sustainable tourism. Overall hotel, tourism hospitality experience of 25 years including 14 years with ITC WelcomHeritage. Currently Co-Chairman of the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) National Tourism Expert Committee. Co-Founder & Mentor of BAUL Foundation to create awareness for heritage and culture and has been a pioneer in organising several programs on industrial heritage.

The Bengal Story

Bengal was the cradle of renaissance and the birthplace of enterprise. Some of the biggest companies of the British Raj, ITC, Hindustan Lever, Tatas functioned from Calcutta. Bengali entrepreneurs were some of the richest in the country. R N Mookherjee, Hair Oil manufacturers, Pharmaceuticals, Bengal Chemicals, Duckback were all big names from Calcutta. Time and tide swept away these valuable offices and with it started the decay of our state. The European Legacy remained with the Corporates in their lifestyles, clubs, races, Polo Matches and the very Sahib way of living. The " Calcutta Boxwallahs ", an enduring legacy. Read on for some insights

<https://swarajyamag.com/economy/the-forgotten-entrepreneurs-of-bengal>

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/look-back-in-wonder-the-calcutta-boxwallahs-mellow-autumn/articleshow/87954664.cms>

Members are welcome to contribute for any of the journal sections. We would love to publish your articles/notes. Please message Vibha Mitra (+919830933434) or Ipsita Ganguli (+919831283192) or send an email to contact@calcuttaheritagecollective.com

Know your CHC Members



Sumita Roy has been staying active during the pandemic via her involvement with organizations including the Ladies Study Group. As current president, she has had the pleasure to host NR Narayanamurty, Usha

Thorat, former Deputy Governor RBI, Dr. Kuashik Basu, former chief economic advisor and other eminent personalities. Given her background in Economics she has enjoyed the online talks focussed on current economic challenges. She has enjoyed living in a heritage home – the original ancestral home in Behala of the Roy family. 'Ambica Mandir' is named after her husband's great grandad Rai Bahadur Ambica Charan Roy who served as the chief translator in the Calcutta High Court. He also built three additional great homes for his sons - one of those buildings now houses the State Archeological Museum. She has added to the house, collecting art from contemporary Bengali artists. Her other activity during the pandemic was helping Probir write the House of Roys, a 400-year family saga in the backdrop of the Bengal Renaissance which connects her family story with bengali heritage.



Vinita More was born and brought up in the beautiful, historical town of Tezpur in Assam. She shifted to

Kolkata due to insurgency and political disturbance in Assam and has lived here ever since. As a serial entrepreneur, she has an experience of 25 years of leading and scaling up businesses. Her latest venture is developing a Neo-Banking App called FinPrompt which is a Calendar cum Reminder App for all Personal Financial Obligations, Payments and Renewals. She is an active member of Rotary Club of Central Calcutta, Ficci Ladies Organisation, WICCI, Council for Fair Business Practices and President of All Kolkata Chapter for Cinema. She enjoys traveling, learning about different cultures, reading books, chasing sunsets, trying out all kinds of cuisines (vegetarian), and cooking healthier and easier versions. She is a board gaming enthusiast and loves playing with great competitive spirit with young, vibrant gamers in the city.

Congratulations!
CHC member
Dr. Rupali Basu
on receiving the
Vivek Jyoti
Samman Lifetime
Achievement
Award.
Well deserved!



The Nawabs Calcutta



CHC member Vibha Mitra's article
<https://countrysquire.in/2022/02/23/the-nawabs-calcutta/>

CHC Heritage Tour Ninety Nine kilometres from Kolkata, on the banks of the Bhagarithi, is the town of **Kalna**. Once a famous riverine port from where silk cotton and grain was traded, Kalna was a seat of learning during the 19th century. Later it was a prominent centre of Arabic and Persian learning. The royal



families of Burdwan built the terracotta temples between 1739 and 1849. Locally available laterite soil was used to make the bricks. The temple architectural style is characterised by sloping roof surfaces. The walls are imbedded by baked clay panels of geometrical patterns, floral decorations, war scenes, people, everyday life and scenes from the Mahabharata and Ramayana.

Panchratna Temples: This is a group of five small temples of differing sizes, arranged in a linear pattern. Set on low plinths, these temples look like huts of villages. The imposing roofless octagonal structure of the Dolmancha and Pratapeshwar Temples were used for organising religious

ceremonies before and during the Doljatra. The Pratapeshwar built in 1849, is raised on a high platform and is a single tower shikhara style temple. Nava Kailash or the 108 Shiva temples were built in 1809. There are 74 temples in the outer circle and 34 temples in the inner circle. Each wall has splendid terracotta work, depicting episodes from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

The workplaces of the **weavers** of fine muslin, the jamdani and the tant dot the city of Kalna. Each centre is churning out masterpieces and maintaining the heritage of the silk trade of the area. They make



dreams for us to wear. Painstakingly concentrating on their work for long months to weave a single jamdani or a couple of months for a Tant. Fine muslin, upto 900 count is woven. Light as a feather and soft as a fresh petal. Some of the bigger weavers have orders from across the world and yet, I felt, that the majority need our support to keep this traditional and heritage art alive ~ **Rajiv Soni**



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