

The CHC Journal

Vol. I
September 2021

The CHC Journal

Vol. I September 2021



Point of View

Dear fellow CHCians

I am indeed very happy to present the first volume of our very own CHC journal. It is a monthly journal designed solely BY the members, OF the members and FOR the members! Looking back on our journey, I recall the launch of Calcutta Heritage Collective, on the 16th of March 2018, with a request to all to "Take a Call" on how

we wanted to see our heritage; Destroyed, Decayed and Vanished, OR as Living emblems of a glorious past, connecting our Today and Tomorrow with our roots.

Since then CHC has been involved in a variety of activities spreading Heritage Awareness. We opened with a wonderful photographic exhibition of heritage architectural sites at an old North Calcutta Mansion at 48 Muktaram Babu Street, then undergoing restoration. World Heritage Day 2018 was celebrated in collaboration with Kolkata Port Trust. On this occasion Vikramjit Singh Rooprai spoke on "Who Owns Heritage". We hosted an interactive talk with Lord Bruce on the Scottish association with the city. Heritage Walks through Kumartuli, Burrabazar, Cornwallis Street, Metiaburz and other areas highlighting different periods of history of the city were conducted. CHC has also actively been involved with spreading Heritage Awareness amongst children by partnering with AKLF by hosting a Heritage quiz for school children. This has gone online during the pandemic years. A popular programme is our online talk shows on the Heritage Clubs of Calcutta which made waves in the media with both the leading dailies, Times of India and The Telegraph, featuring it widely. We look forward to carrying on with our commitment towards Restoration, Respect and Reuse of built Heritage, which are the CHC core values and mission.

My heartiest congratulations and best wishes to Vibha, Ipsita and Nikita for not only taking the responsibility upon themselves but also for designing an amazing journal! Not to omit mentioning Rajiv, whose presence is required in every activity of the Collective! Most of the segments covered here will be continued in each volume. All members, please do participate and partner with us in this endeavour.

Mukul Agarwal
Founder Trustee

The CHC Journal

Vol. I September 2021

The Bengal Story

A fabulous showcase of Bengal by **Baltazard Solvyns**. His paintings focus on Bengal. Pencil Drawings filled in with colour. Fascinating trivia. He believed that as a people we Indians hadn't changed in essence through the centuries. He has beautifully depicted the quintessential India.

<https://www.architecturaldigest.in/story/etchings-by-baltazard-solvyns-beautiful-showcase-of-bengal-1790s/>



Heritage in the News

- ❖ Pujas are round the corner. This fascinating story of syncretism in Bengal.
<https://www.telegraphindia.com/culture/the-gods-must-be-angry/cid/1825682>
- ❖ ASI breathes life into the Dutch settlement Chinsurah. To save, restore, reuse, conserve these artefacts, a part of our History, a legacy, roots of our origin
<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/kolkata/asi-breathes-life-into-17th-century-dutch-cemetery-at-chinsurah/article35654106.ece/amp/?fbclid=IwAR03sUNKpqhmuMj6-Jk2rHI-5Ey8nWQbNv9lvWUA6rjtnB1N9zMtZYxRS4w>

The CHC Journal

Vol. I September 2021



Conservation Trivia

What are Blue Plaques? What is the significance?



The famous Blue Plaque is an internationally recognized historical marker found all over Europe and elsewhere. Originally started in the United Kingdom, the plaques are permanent signs installed in publicly visible locations on buildings to commemorate either a famous person who lived or worked in the building or site or an event that occurred within the building.

It is made by vitreous enameling which is a process of glass coating on metal and has many useful properties. It is smooth, hard, anti abrasive, anti corrosive, durable, scratch resistant and has long-lasting colour fastness. Being durable and hardy vitreous enamel is the natural choice for these permanent markers.

Enameling is an old and widely adopted technology used in jewelry and decorative art. Since the 19th century, enamels have also been applied to many consumer objects, such as some cooking vessels, signages, storage silos etc. This process is intrinsically connected with Bengal. The forerunners were two quintessentially indigenous companies, Bengal Enamel and Sur Enamel. It should be imperative to initiate this international symbol of Heritage in Bengal. ~ *By Ipsita Ganguli*

We call for sponsoring Blue Plaques for Heritage sites of your choice.

Write to
contact@calcuttaheritagecollective.com

Let's Blue Plaque the city!

You ask - We answer

From house restoration to a part of Heritage we didn't know about but need to know. Write to
contact@calcuttaheritagecollective.com

Did You Know? It was 1942. The allied espionage knew that the Japanese air force identified Kolkata by the Victoria Memorial. This was a big problem. How do you hide a large magnificent white marble landmark of the city from the hawkish eyes of the Japanese bombers? Painting it black wasn't an option as it would spoil the marble permanently and it would be difficult to remove the paint after the war was over. The dark grey soil from the Hooghly river, and easy and unlimited supply of dark brown cow dung provided the solution. A mud-pack was prepared by the military engineers blending these two easily available materials, and the entire Victoria Memorial was covered by this special mud pack. This protected the marble, and successfully hid the building at night from the prying eyes of Japanese planes. The pack would of course had to be replaced every few days as it dried and peeled off the walls.

The CHC Journal

Vol. I September 2021



Member in Focus

Pradip Chopra, a renowned entrepreneur, educator and real-estate magnate is an ardent Heritage Conservationist. He serves as President of the Murshidabad Heritage Development Society and is one of the founding members of the Department of Heritage at MAKAUT. He is a member of the Calcutta Heritage Development Society, and has founded the Rajasthan Heritage Development Society. He has undertaken several restoration projects including that of Sir BN Sircar's

house in West Bengal and the Chopra School in Rajasthan. Mr Chopra also spearheaded the repair of Prince Dwarkanath Tagore's monument in Kansal Green Cemetery in London and got his bust installed there. He is now embarking on the restoration of Lord Canning's House, the First Viceroy of British India. Mr Chopra has also done invaluable work in documenting HeritageHis documentary films on The City of Joy Heritage walk, 1971 - India's finest Hour, Indira Gandhi, The Transfer of Power etc as well as the books authored by him such as the biography of Rakhaldas Banerjee, Murshidabad - the unknown wealth capital of the world, 11 heritage walks of Kolkata, Seherwali Regal vegetarian cuisine of Murshidabad, and these have been widely appreciated

If you would like a copy of any of Mr Chopra's interesting journals, email us at contact@calcuttaheritage.com

Members in the News

Navpreet Arora

"Fun on the streets"
Tripadvisors
Travellers
Choice Award
2021

Ipsita Ganguli

"Rooted, India
75, and We,
The People" a
poetic tribute
recently
published

Fun Trivia

Know your CHC member

Lets see how well you know the members

- An impressive aficionado and collector of heritage
- Maybe a connection with the first bengali newspaper, Samchar Darpan
- Sheds light for sure

Ans: Pradipta Bhattacharya

The CHC Journal

Vol. I September 2021



Down Memory Lane

2022 will be the 75th year of our Independence.

The patriots fought hard to gain our birthright and the various feudal states were united as the Republic of India. The Partition broke many hearts especially in Punjab and Bengal as there was a loss of personal connects, homes, memories which many left behind to start life anew on either side. We are all the same divided by a political rhetoric.

Down Memory Lane, from those days. We heard stories or shared some nostalgia or angst. Lets share some personal collectible, a photo, an object, a song. We would love to know about it.

Send your memories to contact@calcuttaheritagecollective.com

TIME

Time ticks on
Flowing into minutes , hours, days, years and centuries...
And change is the only thing real...

And yet,
Some fragrances linger from one century to another...
And some memories become tangible..

Like the million scratches on the jumping watch, which you must have worn
almost 100 years ago..

I still remember sometime in the later years of the last century, how you would
lay out the 50 odd watches on the table in the mornings and wind them...

And I wonder what you would say to the watches we wear today that measure
not just time but the steps we take and the calls we make

So here I am.. holding your jumping watch, the one you wore to school and
college, the one you gifted me when I started wearing wrist watches to school,
The watch that bear the marks of use
The marks of you... And maybe a couple of mine too...

And time ticks on..
As I hold my grandmother's delicate wristwatch with the solid blue meena
and border, thinking of her..

And I look at your pocket watch... I never quite remember seeing you wear that
But then maybe that one holds memories for you

What would you say Dada (Grandfather) to time flowing from yours to mine ,
through the two centuries that we embrace and through our Nation flowing from
subjugation to freedom.. and now clocking in 75 years of independence...

Does time really set us free?

Copyright ~ Ipsita Ganguli



The CHC Journal

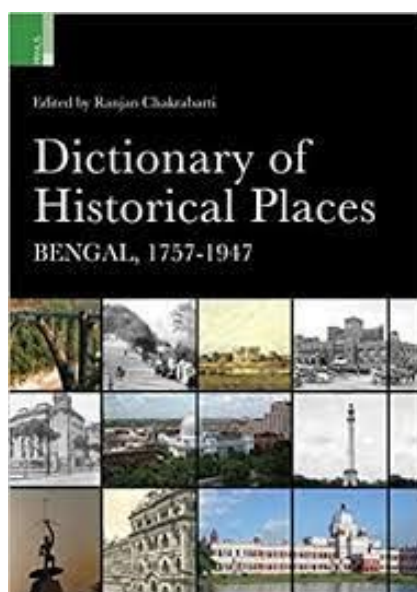
Vol. I September 2021



A Must Have for Heritage Lovers

Did you know that what was once the village of Ibrahimpur, now long forgotten, has now a well known University. We now call it Jadavpur!

Ranjan Chakraborti's book "Dictionary of Historical Places, Bengal, 1757 to 1947" is a must on the bookshelf of every heritage lover.



https://books.google.com/books/about/Dictionary_of_Historical_Places.html?id=TJ6hmwEACAAJ

This Month

September is Heritage Month in South Africa. They celebrate **24th September** as Heritage Day

2 September - Victory over Japan Day
V J Day (WWII)

10th to 19th September
Heritage Open Days
England

<https://www.heritageopen days.org.uk/>

September 15 to October 15 National Hispanic Heritage Month - America

27 September - World Tourism Day

Activity Update

Quiz: We are ready with the second edition of the Online Inter School Quiz. 2020 was the debut and a great hit. The students surprised us with their Heritage knowledge and all of us learnt a bit more. **First quiz of the month is on 8th September 2021**

Before the online version last year, we partnered with The Apeejay Lit Fest in the years 2018 and 2019. Arnab Bannerjee conducted the quiz with many fun elements. Again very few questions came back to the Quiz Master. The hallmark of a great Quiz! Indeed! Follow our SMM handles for updates.

Members are welcome to contribute for any of the journal sections. We would love to publish your articles/notes. Please message Vibha Mitra at **+919830933434** or send an email to vibhamitra@gmail.com

The CHC Connect



Mukul Agarwal : Publisher

Rajiv Soni: Advisor

Vibha Mitra: Editor

Ipsita Ganguli : Co-Editor

Nikita Kejriwal : Creatives