



reorganisation it was obvious that librarians and assistants was this staff should receive a scientific relationship on the most modern lines. Therefore, Mr. Borden received sanction from the Government to open a class for men, and to admit therein six graduates of a university or men with higher educational degrees, and six undergraduates, on a monthly salary of Rs. 25 for one year and with a promise of a further year's successful training, men with qualifications to the higher grade of librarians of the Central Library, and men with lower qualifications to the lower grade. Although this library class was intended to train up a staff of librarians for the Central Library, yet word of the class had reached His Highness the Maharaja, who was glad to give the benefit of the training under the American Library system coming from any part of India.

# ધરોહર



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## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

### Heritage Week and More

The last quarter of the year was an exciting time for heritage enthusiasts. Good weather made it comfortable for us to come out of our homes and enjoy the surroundings and it is fortunate that the People's Heritage Week occurs in November when there is a nip in the air and clear skies that gives us a refreshing change. It's also that time of the year when we welcome the many festivals that our diverse population celebrates.

This year the Heritage week brought in a number of interesting events, some repeat and many new by the Heritage Trust. Our pages will bring you a glimpse of the many events along with the happy faces that enjoyed the experience. We have also had the regular Varsa ni Vaato as well as a special walk for children to explore the Churches in Fatehgunj to coincide with the Christmas festivities. Read more about these events as well as more interesting articles about heritage.

Amidst the good tidings, we also have some sad news. We lost two of our greatest supporters. Prof. Amita Verma, a founder member of our trust and former Pro-vice Chancellor of the M.S. University of Baroda breathed her last on November 8th, 2024. Mr. Rahul Gajjar, a supporter of our trust and an eminent Photographer who documented many of the heritage sites of our city passed away on November 13th, 2024. They will be greatly missed by all of us and we pay our respects to the departed souls.

As we ring out the year 2024 and welcome the New year 2025, Heritage Trust brings in more exciting events for you beginning with the Viraasat Lecture on January 8th, 2025, read more in our announcements and be sure to mark your diaries to join us.

Best wishes for a Happy and Prosperous New year 2025.

Avi Sabavala

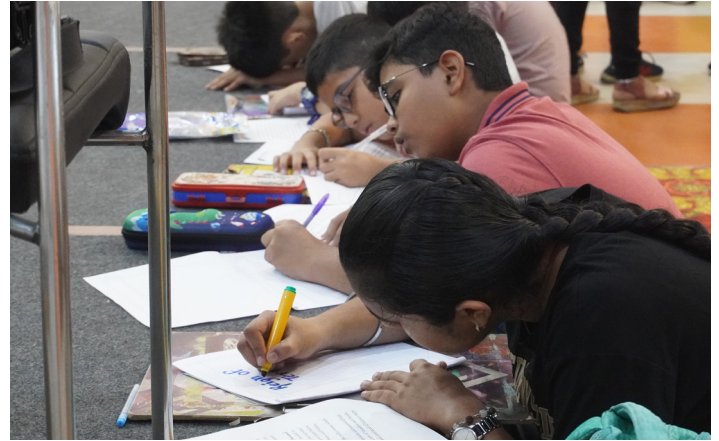
# Heritage Week **Events**

This year the Heritage Week was celebrated by Heritage Trust From 16th to 24th November, through a series of events aimed at honouring and preserving our city's rich cultural legacy. These events not only showcased Baroda's architectural, historical and culinary treasures but also aimed at nurturing deeper connection to the history that shapes the city's cosmopolitan identity.

## **Essay and Art Competition**

On the morning of November 16th, the Heritage Trust of Baroda joined hands with the Baroda Central Library for a heartwarming event dedicated to children. The day kicked off with a lively writing competition and was followed by a drawing competition, where the Trust happily contributed crayons to support the budding young artists.

The atmosphere was alive with laughter, excitement, and the vibrant creativity of talented kids showcasing their skills.



We extend our gratitude to the Baroda Central Library for their unwavering dedication to fostering creativity, reading, and writing among young minds.

## **Varsa ni Vaato 6**

The sixth edition of Varsa Ni Vaato, held on the evening of November 16th, was a highlight of our ongoing Heritage Week celebrations. This edition was made even more inclusive by welcoming registrations from non-members as well.

Our esteemed guest speaker, Dr. Rahul Bhagwat, enthralled the audience with engaging birdwatching stories, complemented by stunning visuals of birds in their natural environments. The interactive session offered valuable insights into Gujarat's diverse birdlife, their behaviors, and the ecosystems they depend on, including the crucial role of trees in sustaining wildlife.

Dr. Bhagwat's session underscored the importance of preserving and nurturing our natural heritage, leaving attendees with much to ponder.

Sriparna Seal



## The Heritage Trust Roadies: 17th November

The Heritage Trust organized a captivating two-wheeler tour to explore the historic treasures of Vadodara, covering a wide range of iconic sites. Highlights of the tour included:

Kirti Mandir, Countess of Dufferin Hospital (SSG Hospital), Old Collector's Building, a replica of Scotland's Balmoral Castle, Shiyapura Police Chowki, known for its intricate wooden architecture, Raopura Clock Tower, formerly Maharani Chimnabai Tower, Jubilee Baug featuring a Buddha statue and Stupa Gate, Tarkeshwar Temple, adorned with an old wooden structure, Champaner Gate, The beautiful Jharokha at Old Bhandra Kacheri, Panigate, Mandvi Gate, Ambamata Temple, The historic Old Mint, now functioning as a school. Public passage beneath the school, City Christ Church near Gendigate, Gendi Gate, Hazira Tomb, the resting place of Qutub-ud-Din Mohammad Khan, featuring Quranic inscriptions in Arabic, Koyali Stepwell, The Pratapnagar Stepwell, inscribed "Long Live Sir Sayajirao", Temples such as Sri Khandoba Bhagwan Mandir, Sri Bollai Aai Temple, and Shri Guru Sacchidanand Swami Maharaj Temple, Siddheshwar Talav, Navnath Temple.



Special mention goes to Shri Sameer Gaikwad, whose kind and soft-spoken demeanor enriched the experience. He provided fascinating historical insights into each monument and patiently addressed all queries. Heartfelt thanks to him for sharing his valuable time and knowledge, making the tour truly memorable.

Rajkumar Sharma, Usha Sharma

## Permaculture and the Land: 22nd November

The mention of the word forest conjures up a dark, dense wild impenetrable space that is filled with wild and wonderful green cover and scary sounds. But in reality, a forest is a complex ecosystem in which trees the prominent life forms. In that sense the 10,000 square feet space that you step into as you enter Savitri Urban Forest, is a little baby, even in human years and has a long way to go and grow.



But the sight of variegated trees and shrubs, lovely blossoming trees and chirruping birds as you step into this space on a cool winter morning is a balm to the soul. The story was told by the daughter Rajasi and mother Reena Raj Rastogi, to the group that had gathered at the event organised by Heritage Society of Baroda.

Located as it is, in a lane with bungalows and in front of a tall apartment complex, the area is obviously meant to have a built structure on it. That was the original plan, as Reena narrated, when they bought the land and broke down the earlier structure. The lockdown brought life to a standstill, and their plans of building a home in that land were put on hold. The rubble remaining their invited people around to dump their waste material there.

But meanwhile an idea germinated in Reena's mind and with the support of the family, she decided to convert it into an urban food forest. Her ambition was to set an example how even a small space can be converted to allow nature to thrive. Learning from online and offline sources, and pooling their knowledge of design and farming, in January 2021, the Savitri Food Forest was started by the family.



Today it has over a hundred species of plants, vegetables, herbs, shrubs, and yields fruits, flowers herbs and vegetables. Permaculture, as they explained it, is a concept of creating a permanent agriculture, recreating a small forest like ecosystem in a small space. It uses minimal resources and taps on traditional wisdom for soil fertility and pest control, with mulch, organic manure, and judicious paring of species that help each other to grow and thrive. The debris from the earlier structure was used to build pathways and seating spaces. The space is used for eco education, private music soirees, and school visits.

The variety of plants trees and shrubs bring in the birds bees and butterflies that not only make the place beautiful but also help to pollinate and propagate. As you go around, you learn the traditional ecological wisdom that planned for grains, beans and vegetables to be grown together, helping each other thrive and also providing a balanced meal to the farmer. A crop of maize grows tall, the beans are shorter but as nitrogen fixers, they capture the gas from the air and make it available as a compound to make the soil rich, while the pumpkin vine, spreads around below, helping to retain the soil moisture.

Margie Sastry

### **Workshop on the Baroda Library Movement for the kids of Srotoshwini Trust**

On the morning of Sunday, 24th November, Heritage Trust collaborated with the Central Library, Baroda, to host a meaningful workshop for the children of Srotoshwini Trust, an NGO established by Juin Dutta. Srotoshwini Trust is dedicated to educating underprivileged children, many of whom are orphans, and we were honored to contribute to their cause by organizing a special event to inspire these young minds.

The workshop, meticulously curated by our EC members Alka Smart and Advaita Jalan, featured an insightful lecture and interactive session that introduced the children to the rich history of Baroda, the concept of heritage, and the vital importance of preserving it.

For most of the children, this was their first visit to a library, making the experience even more profound. After the session, Librarian Bhavesh Dhonde led an engaging tour of the Central Library, showcasing its magnificent architecture. He also emphasized the essential role of libraries in fostering a love for reading and knowledge.

Adding further depth to the event, the children watched a screening of our short documentary on the Baroda Library Movement, which left a lasting impression on them. The workshop was graced by the presence of distinguished guests, including Dr. Sheetal Mistry, Chairman of the Standing Committee, and Dr. Pankaj Goswami, Director of Libraries for the state of Gujarat. To mark the occasion, we presented our publication, *Myths and Legends of Champaner*, to the esteemed delegates.

It was a truly inspiring and memorable morning, filled with learning, discovery, and the joy of making a positive impact on the lives of these bright young individuals.

Sriparna Seal



## Food Walks

The famous food walks by Adil Marawala are a highlight for the foodies of the city. He curated 2 walks, Baroda Triangle, a non vegetarian food walk in the old city on the 22nd of November and followed that with a vegetarian food walk, Raopura Retromance on the 23rd. These walks celebrated Vadodara's culinary as well as architectural legacy.



# Other happenings

## Vadodara Landmark Project

On 3rd December 2024, three additional historic plaques were unveiled at Kirti Mandir, SSG Hospital, and the Sayajigunj Clocktower as part of the Vadodara Landmark Project. With these additional plaques, the total number of signages installed has reached 23. These plaques are designed to inspire both appreciation and a deeper understanding of the historical and cultural significance of these iconic structures, serving as a reminder of the city's rich heritage.

## Curated tour of the Churches of Fatehgunj for the Rotaract Club of Baroda

On 22nd December, Heritage Trust joined hands with the Rotaract Club of Baroda, Sayajinagari, to take participants on a memorable journey through the historic churches of Fatehgunj.

The children had an enriching experience learning about the birth of Jesus, the significance of Christmas, and the architectural and cultural heritage of Vadodara's churches. The event featured animated presentations, enlightening talks by Church leaders, and reflections on kindness, honesty, and empathy.



Some key moments included:

- Father Aubrey Fernandes at the Shrine of the Mother of the Forsaken, sharing the story of Jesus' birth and the church's history.
- Ms. Sarah Prahlad Singh's animated session at the Centenary Methodist Church, encouraging reflection on values like kindness and empathy.
- Father Bhushan Bara at the Rosary Cathedral, explaining the significance of the Rosary and the Diocese's rich history.

This event not only offered an educational experience but also deepened our connection to the city's cultural and intangible heritage, embracing the spirit of Christmas.

Sriparna Seal

# The Tapestry of Industrial Vadodara

I made the transition from Mumbai to Vadodara, at a young age. It was around 1974-75, and I stepped in as a Trainee Officer with the Federation of Gujarat Mills and Industries (as it was then known). I was led to believe that Vadodara is a small and sleepy town. A pensioners' paradise. Admittedly it lacked the vibrancy and dynamics of a busy commercial metropolis of Bombay (now Mumbai).

I was a novice to the job involving trade and commerce. To beat the boredom and nitty gritty of trade and commerce I sought refuge in the sumptuous library of the Federation, a rich storehouse of information. Research students and faculty members of the M S University also used this library extensively, as it often received the latest bulletins and Government gazettes. Of the books and gazettes in Federation library is a story for another day.

Right now I would like to delve on the rich and variegated industrial scenario of Vadodara in those halcyon days.

That the Amins, Patels, Sarabhais, Shahs and Parikhs, amongst others, were the bulwark of industrial Vadodara is a well-documented fact. Yet, little is known that as early as in the 1960s, Vadodara was the hub of the dyestuff and paint industry. That Vadodara was India's leading exporter of spectacle frames. India's first co-operative industrial estate was founded in Vadodara. I have witnessed photos of late Ramanbhai Amin (then Chairman, Alembic Group), wearing a Sola topee and standing under the shade of a tree, reading the blue print of the Gorwa Industrial Estate (BIDC). While Vadodara and its surroundings already had well-known brands of textile mills such as Shree Dinesh Mills, Ambica Mills, Yamuna Mills, Petlad Bulakhidas Mills and Priyalaxmi Mills, not many know that Vadodara and its neighbouring districts were famous for production of edible oils, cleaning and packaging of food grains and pulses. Even fewer people know that Vadodara was a prominent producer and exporter of castor oil and its derivatives.

There were already big multinational engineering companies firmly established in and around Vadodara for decades. To name a few, ABB Ltd (a Swiss company), Fag Precision Bearings (a German company), Alstom (a French company), followed in the 1990s by Siemens (a German company), Bombardier (a Canadian company), and General Motors (an American company). There were two historical events that spurred industrial growth in Vadodara. The first one was the formation of Gujarat state (which included Saurashtra/Kathiawar and Kachchh) in 1960, removing the older Bombay Presidency 'mapping'. This led to investments flowing into Vadodara and its neighbourhood. The second event was the oil find in Ankleshwar leading to setting up of Gujarat Refinery, then India's biggest Refinery, and subsequently the setting up of large petrochemical complex, the Indian Petrochemicals Corporation Limited (now Reliance Petrochemicals), listed as one of the Navaratna corporations of the Indian Government.

As a result of the by-products and waste-products generated by the Refinery and IPCL, a large number of manufacturing and ancillary units engaged in using these products were established by local entrepreneurs, sprouting like mushrooms in the satellite GIDC industrial estates of Makarpura, Nandesari, Waghodia and Savli villages on the outskirts of Vadodara.

They manufactured chemicals, petrochemicals, plastics, packaging, Vadodara was the headquarters of the Gujarat Electricity Board (now bifurcated in four zonal offices), and the divisional headquarters of the Western Railways and the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC). The Gujarat Energy Development Agency (GEDA) was established in the city, under the Chairmanship of late Dr. Nanubhai Amin, founder of the Jyoti Group of Engineering Industries. Mention must be made of late Shri Indubhai Patel, of the Sayaji Iron and Engineering Works, who was behind the founding of the Samaj Kalyan Trust which was famous for its exemplary philanthropic activities in and around Vadodara as well as in helping the Baroda Citizens Council establish the United Way of Vadodara.

The influx of investors and entrepreneurs in Vadodara in the early 1970s and 1980s comprised, to name a few, the Shroffs, the Bhuvas, the Kadakias, the Dalmias, the Jajodias, the Kapadias, the Udeshis, the Chawlas, the Kheras, the Mehtas, and others who enriched the tapestry of industrial Vadodara. Most significantly, they brought in a culture of a cosmopolitan polity not to be found in Ahmedabad, Surat or Rajkot.

Apart from the industrialists and investors, Vadodara had a great tradition of contribution by the non-owners-technocrats and specialists. For example, the late Jal Patel, the managing director of Fag Bearings, contributed immensely to the industrial and cultural growth of Vadodara. The Managing Directors of ABB Ltd, Gujarat Carbon, and Miles India Ltd were permanent advisors to the trade and commerce bodies as well as social and cultural bodies in Vadodara. Interestingly, the late Dahyabhai Patel, President of Majoor Mahajan, a prominent labour union, was a co-opted managing committee member of the Federation, besides being the President of the Baroda Productivity Council for a couple of terms. While Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Surat experienced violent labour unrest, in the early 1980s, Vadodara was an oasis of industrial peace.

R C. Saxena (Advocate)

Trivedi & Gupta Advocates

*Disclaimer: The author has named some prominent individuals and surnames in the article merely as illustration. There may be many more names and surnames not mentioned whose contribution to Industrial growth deserve to be appreciated in equal measure. The author seeks pardon for such an omission.*

## The Solar Crucifix

On the morning of Diwali around 10 AM, I found myself at the Old CNI cemetery which is adjacent to the Shastri (Pandya) bridge and next to the Jyoti Gardens. This is a very old cemetery, perhaps the oldest Christian Cemetery in Vadodara.

A Cemetery can evoke different feelings. I have always been fascinated by the old graves. They are not at all practical. Some of them are planned in great detail with thought provoking statements on the grave stones, some are beautiful carved, some are adorned with statues of angels, figures etc. Some are works of art.

I don't know why someone would go through such great lengths but humans have a tendency to leave their legacy behind, something to remember them by, if not anything, then at least their graves can remind the visitors of them.

There are some old beautiful graves in this cemetery, in various shapes, various sizes, some have beautiful statues, some are intricate artworks. There is one grave over 6 feet tall which is pyramid shaped.

There is a SPECIAL grave at the old CNI cemetery. It is unique. After a lot of searching I could not find anything similar like this on the internet. I don't think there is something similar to this grave, anywhere on this planet.

This grave is not a big, not imposing like some of the really big ones. In fact, it would not be easily noticed if the cross on it was not INCLINED at an angle on the top of the grave. That's right, the cross on this particular grave is inclined, NOT straight. It is the inclined cross which makes the grave so special! You may find a grave with an inclined cross, even an inverted cross but not a grave with an inclined cross which works as a clock in the day time.

I noticed the name inscribed on the grave. It was of the resident 'James Sutherland'. Immediately, I remembered having seen this name on the plaque at the St. James CNI Church (Also known as the White Church), behind Convent school, Fatehgunj. The Church is at least 223 years old. It was dedicated to James Sutherland Esquire who was the Political commissioner of Gujarat. He was then the resident at the Court of the Gaekwads. I realized that the name on the grave must be of same person who name is mentioned at plaque at the CNI St. James church.

So this is the grave of James Sutherland. The grave, rather the cross on the grave structure is a Solar Clock! A SOLAR CRUCIFIX!!!

The Cross on the grave acts as the Shadow-maker! The horizontal arms of the cross are aligned East-West. The cross itself is made up of Sandstone.

Just think if it were made of the usual materials used in the other tombs, then the markings on the cross for noting the time would have disappeared by now. But they are very clear as my pictures reveal and they are very clear to this day. On the internet, I found out that the R. Walles in the year 1865 installed the clock in the cemetery to honour the 20th anniversary of James Sutherland's death.



The clock (cross), is a Solar clock, here the vertical arm of the cross casts a shadow on the horizontal arm of the cross. There are lined markings engraved on the horizontal arms. You can see the markings with greater spacing towards the edge of the horizontal arms and the spacing become narrower close to the vertical arm.

One can see the various hours in a day inscribed in Roman letters. These numbers are 'hours'. For minutes, check the lines inscribed between the numbers. The lined spacing are 5 minutes apart.

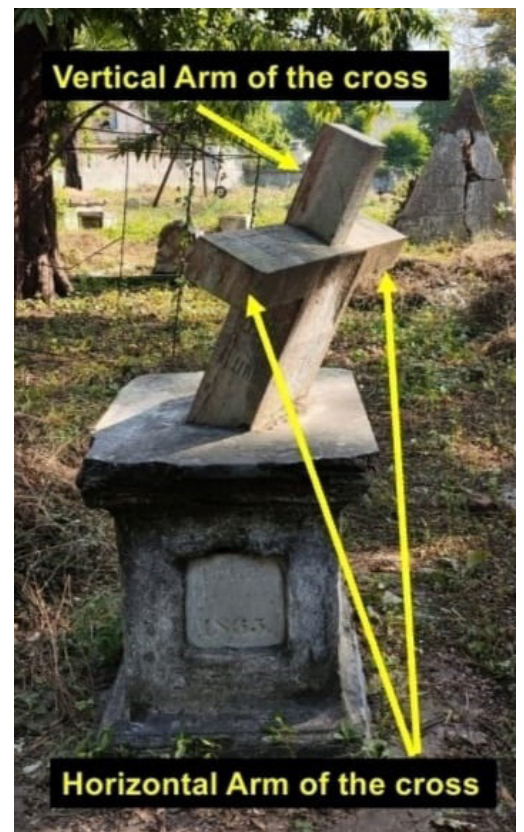
Notice the shadow of the vertical arm caused by the Sun on the horizontal arm. The shadow falling the horizontal arm gives the time at a given instant. The cross is tilted, inclined at an angle to as Vadodara is not at the equator. The vertical arm of the cross acts the 'style' of the Solar Crucifix as it is in Sun dial.

The most important thing required in making a solid device like this is making accurate markings for intervals or time. Those solid lines, clear to this day, the spacing between them tell a story! The person/s who designed this were learned and skilled engineers with knowledge of Astronomy. Students and laymen should visit this cemetery and study the marvel that is the Solar Crucifix. Before time and the lack of care ravage the grave completely, see it for yourself!

I would humbly request the custodians of this property to take care of this grave and cemetery in general. It is in a pathetic situation. Clean the area around the solar clock cross grave, clean the tomb and cross and put a banner nearby containing the history and science behind the Solar Clock Cross! Let people come and see! Or else, all this will bite the dust and will be lost forever!

Let the light shine!

Ashish Jaituni, Applied Physics Department  
Polytechnic, The M. S. University of Baroda



# Obituary

## Smt. Amita Verma

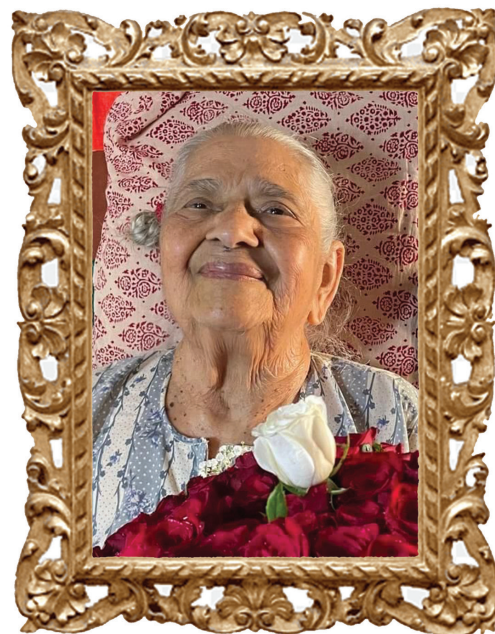
Honouring A Life Well Lived.

We pay tribute to Smt. Amita Verma, one of the Founder Members of Heritage Trust.

Vadodara city and all its Jewel Monuments were very close to her heart. She inspired and provided valuable guidance to all the Heritage Trust members from time to time. Belonging to a family of great Educationists and Social Workers, she was naturally drawn towards academics. She was a strong pillar of the Home Science Department of Maharaja Sayaji Rao University and The Bal Bhavan Society. Her dedication, wisdom and compassion has left an indelible mark on all the people who came in contact with her. She will live in our hearts forever, and through the institutions she helped nourish.

“In 1975 the Federation of Gujarat Mills and Industries hosted a national seminar on Television. Papers were written by experts from SAC, ISRO and other agencies. At that time there was only one experimental TV from Village Pij near Nadiad. I had to edit the papers submitted by experts. Amitaben Verma wrote a paper on the future of TV medium. On the future satellite TV she described it as “the teacher in the sky”. So long Amitaben, may you always remain a “teacher in the sky” for us all.”

Raju Saxena



## Smt. Amita Verma

1930 – 2024

## Shri Rahul Gajjar

A Life That Touches Others Goes On Forever.

Vadodara suffered a great loss with the passing away of Shri Rahul Gajjar, an ace photographer, digital artist, designer, an inspiring and creative soul and the "Sultan" of Champaner! His passion and love for architectural wonders of Champaner inspired him to establish OMESSA – Jewels.

Heritage Trust will always remember him for his contribution in putting Champaner on the UNESCO World Heritage Map and creating the wonderful coffee-table books on Champaner and Baroda. He will not only be remembered as an excellent artist but also as a wonderful and genial human being, and will be remembered through his art left behind for us to cherish.



## Shri Rahul Gajjar

1960 – 2024