



EASTERN RAILWAY
ASANSOL

HERITAGE

UNCOVERED

A Glimpse into our Past





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Foreword



“A concerted effort to preserve our heritage is a vital link to our cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational and economic legacies – all of the things that quite literally make us who we are.”

Railways in Asansole : Early days

It was Saturday, 3rd February 1855 that the first train made its inaugural journey between Howrah and Raneegunge, connecting seat of imperial power and port to coal fields, and ushering economic development in the region. Railways would catalyze and spur coal production in entire coal bearing area covering mines of Raneegunge , Giridih, Jharua and Palamu , bringing prosperity and growth in the region. Small sleepy villages would be transformed into thriving industrial centers accelerating rapid urbanization proving the prophecy of Lord Bacon :

There be three things,” says Lord Bacon, “which make a nation great and prosperous, a fertile soil, busy workshops, and easy conveyance for men and commodities from one place to another.” “Railways are, assuredly, next to the invention of printing, the most powerful instrument of civilization that the ingenuity of man has ever devised.”

The route to Raneegunge was the experimental line sanctioned by Dalhousie, Governor General as the original plan of EIR was to lay track between Howrah and Delhi, via Rajmahal, following the course of the Ganges, by the route, which is now known as the loop line; an interesting case of main line turning into loop line.

Construction of Railways by East Indian Railway company ,was one of the largest infrastructure projects ever undertaken in the world those days, which became not only a great money spinner for the overseas investors with its smart guaranteed returns but also proved to be a great strategic decision for the Company.

It is interesting to note that first ever use of Railways in rushing military reinforcements at the time of Santhal rebellion took place at Raneegunge only. Troops would be rushed from Calcutta to Raneegunge by Rail before being dispatched to Dinapore, Allahabad, Cawnpore and other cities during first war of independence tilting the balance in favour of East India Company. Railways proved to be a mighty force multiplier as movement of troops and ammunition could be done in the same day between Calcutta to Raneegunge, which would earlier take 8 to 10 days.

Lord Dalhousie had envisaged that, this Railway scheme would prove advantageous in enhancing internal security. It would

enable the government to bring immediately the *“bulk of its military strength to bear upon any given point” to an extent that was “physically impossible” at the time.*

Surprisingly EIR was pioneer in running time tabled goods train, which even now, IR is finding difficult to emulate and unable to juggle the fixed schedule of goods trains in time tables of coaching trains in routes highly saturated with regular introduction of new coaching trains.

One mixed train, consisting of goods wagons and one first class carriage, would leave Howrah 8.30 P.M. every night and would reach Raneegunge 6.35 A.M everyday, the first incidence of running time tabled goods train in the world. Similarly, in down direction the goods train along with first class carriage would start from Raneegunge at 8.30 P.M. every night and would reach Howrah at 7.40 A.M.

EIR was also operating ferry services to Calcutta with matching timings for all trains services starting from Howrah, except for mid night trains, for the benefit of passengers, one of the early pioneers of intermodal transport service in the world.

Rowland Mcdonand Stephenson was the first agent of EIR in India; the company office was at 29, Theatre Road Calcutta and not at Fairlie, which was office of a trading house and much later after the liquidation of the company, it would house the EIR, after being acquired in 1879. From Theatre road, Agent's office was shifted to Writer's buildings Dalhousie Square in 1860s, and it was called East India Railway House.

Asansole became centre of Railway operation in the region, eclipsing Raneegunge, the original Rail hub. It was upgraded to Divisional Headquarter in 1922, encompassing the geographical area of present Dhanbad Division. Coal mines and Railways transformed Asansol subdivision from wilderness to one of the busiest industrial centres of the country.

EIR provided land and buildings for local schools like St. Patrick, E.R.Boys' High School, municipality, church and virtually constructed the entire Asansole town. Asansole steam loco shed had distinction of being the largest locomotive shop in Asia during the period.

Railways not only provided speedy and cheaper mode of transportation for coal but were also one of the largest producers and consumers of the coal, setting benchmark for production and rate for the industry. Though the coal was discovered in 1774, but, production and dispatch of coal from Raneegunge coal fields remained sluggish for 80 years, till the Railway tracks were laid in the region.

East Indian Railway Company collieries not only ensured a steady supply of coal against the vagaries of market production but also helped the Company to make a substantial saving in fuel component of the working expenses, turning EIR into most efficient & lowest cost Rail carrier in the country. Average load of goods train for EIR was 109 Tonnes, highest in the country. Average profit on each ton per mile was 6.672 pies, the highest amongst all Rail companies in India.

The Revenue account of EIR for the half-year ending 30th June 1855, showing the operations of the line, from Howrah to Raneegunge was quite encouraging. The gross receipts were two and a half lakhs of rupees, while the expenditure was under a lakh and seventy thousand, leaving the profits some-what over rupees eighty thousand. Earnings from the experimental line

proved the prophecy of lord Dalhousie, which he had written in famous minutes of July 4,1850,outlining his vision and future course of Railways in India :

“The object of that experiment is to prove, that, not only that it is practicable to construct Railway in India as engineering work but that such Railway was constructed will, as commercial undertakings, afford a few remunerative return on the money which has been expended in the construction”

Introduction of East Indian Railway brought a reliable and large communication network in the coal belt and Bengal as a whole for the first time as the East India Company Government had not adopted any constructive policy regarding the development of communications.

The entire stretch between Burdwan and Raneegunge, which falls within territorial boundary of present Asansol division, had initially only two stations, Mankoor and Panaghur and it continued till 1861. Between 1861 to 1867, four more stations (Asansole, Sitarampore, Burrakur and Undall) were opened in Asansol area.

Construction by EIR was done at very rapid pace; it was a race against time, a construction against all odds amidst extremely challenging field conditions: swampy land, rivers prone to flood, onslaught of diseases wiping out more than 4000 workers a month, for some weeks no less than eight to ten percent of the workers employed died weekly and massive disruption during freedom struggle. Average deployment of men per day in year 1890-91 by EIR was more than 1lakh 18 thousand persons as excavators, brick makers, brick layers, sawyers, carpenters, blacksmiths and laborers. Sacrifices of these unsung heroes, who laid down their lives for building Rail infrastructure, have been sadly buried in the footnotes of history. It is said that each sleeper of EIR track was laid only after burial of a man in the embankment.

The Indians, who had honor of being first station masters of Paanagurh (Nobinchunder Mookerjee was first station Master Paneghur) and Mankaar (B. Mookerjee was first station manager Mancoor), have faded from public memory. We want to highlight such great pioneers, who had played a key role in Railway operation those days.

Eastern Railway's Asansol Division had embarked on ambitious task of identifying and preserving our rich Railway heritage especially those majestic living Railway buildings waiting with a bated breath to tell their stories. A number of such buildings having priceless architecture, after decades of neglect and abandon, were on the verge of demolition but could be salvaged and restored just in time.

First heritage walk was organised on 28th November, 2018 in Asansol followed by three more heritage walk on 3rd February, 23rd February and 18th April 2019 after 163 years of coming of Railways in the area, to create awareness of our legacy, to underline the unique role of Railways in shaping the growth of the region and to embark on the journey to preserve our rich heritage. Asansol Division publically commemorated the event, involving all our stake holders and brought our glorious heritage to the fore, as the historic day, the 3rd February, the dawning of Railway age in the region, has sadly been forgotten by most of Railway men and general public alike.



P. K. Mishra

Divisional Railway Manager,
Eastern Railway, Asansol



Divisional Railway Manager's Office, Asansol

Heritage Conservation Initiatives of Asansol Division:

Asansol division has launched various heritage conservation Initiatives as part of our commitment for conservation, preservation, and sustainable development of Railway heritage.

Key features are :

1. Self financing model of heritage development by ploughing back earnings from institutes and community halls.
2. Identification of all railway heritage structures, artefacts, memorabilia, furniture ,clocks and planning their restorations .
3. Restoration of Railway institutes and resurrecting them as our cultural and social hub.
4. Restoration of heritage buildings and using them as community halls, clubs, scout dens, heritage resorts, offices ,gang huts etc.
5. Use of abandoned heritage structures and restoring them at low cost for alternate use as financially cheaper and viable option against high cost new construction.
6. Old abandoned heritage buildings which had become den of miscreant activities were restored and put to productive use.
7. Involving all stake holders in restoration efforts as part of our shared legacies.
8. Adaptive reuse without disturbing unique architectural attributes.
9. Creating and stimulating awareness amongst all stakeholders for preservation of cultural heritage



Durand Institute, Asansol



WALK PAST THE RAILWAY HERITAGE



Vivekananda Institute (Durand Institute), Asansol

Set amidst the lush surroundings in the company of mahogany trees, Durand Institute with its majestic tower kissing the azure skyline was the landmark of the town. A social and cultural hub, a place to unwind, a place to relax after day's hard work, a home away from home for Europeans.

The Institute, one of oldest Institutes in India, was set up in 1878 and was named as European Institute in 1915 and rechristened as Durand Institute in year 1925 in the honour of Sir Mortimer Durand, Architect of Durand line. After independence, it was renamed as Vivekananda Institute in year 1987.

With large teak panelled dancing hall, swimming pool, billiards and card rooms, library, tennis and badminton courts, bar room, it was abuzz with social, cultural and sports activities.

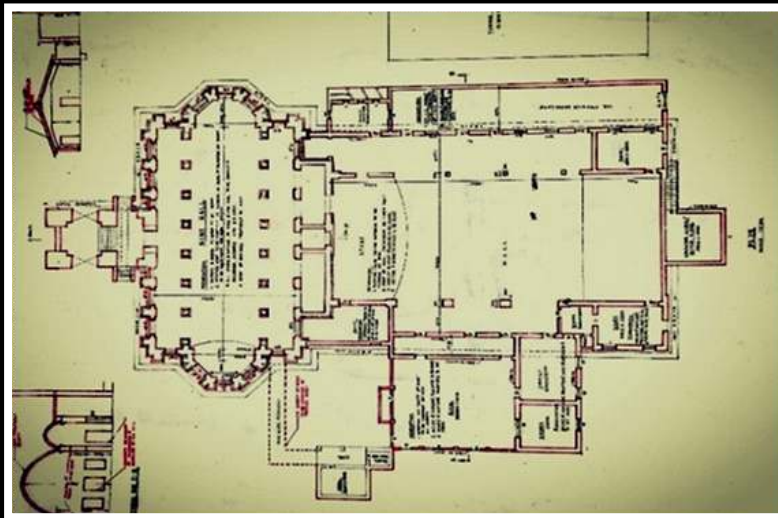
Evenings were full of fun; kids swarming all over the places, youngsters running and sliding along the chalked dance floor, cacophony of housie (Bingo), gramophone blaring lively tunes and catchy numbers, animated discussion amongst members quenching their thirst in bar would suddenly come to an end and people would join the dance floor for waltz, foxtrot and other dances in rage back home then.



This Institute was very popular among the high officials of E.I.R., right from Calcutta to Saharanpur, and they craved to dance in the sophisticated dance hall during the Christmas festival. The entire floor was made of Burma Teak! However, entry to this Institute was restricted only to the Europeans.

Indians found entry only after Independence. There was dress code too which continued till sixties. After Independence, this was used as cinema hall where famous Hollywood films like Ben Hur, Ten Commandments etc. were projected. This remained as a cultural hub even after independence.

The Institute suffered a benign neglect and decline after large scale migration of Anglo Indians post Independence and slowly it degenerated to a marriage hall or a venue for occasional official functions.



The Tower is 22 meters high from the ground level.

It is attached with four small spires.

The outer width of the tower is 6 meters and the inner is of 3.8 meters.

Oval shaped hall is 31.33 meters and the width 13.72 meters.

There are 8 square pillars and a total of 16 square pillars.

Cross section with Mini Hall with Portico and Tower

We wanted to revive its old glory, retribute its grandeur and restore it as a centre of social and cultural activities of Asansol.

It is said that a concerted effort to preserve our heritage is a vital link to our cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational and economic legacies - all of the things that quite literally make us who we are.

It was heartening to see the progress almost on daily basis and finally the mighty edifice could be restored back to its old grandeur on 15th August, the day India had a tryst with destiny.

NESTLED IN THE TYPICALLY DOMESTICATED GOTHIC CUSPED ARCH NICHE INSIDE
SIMILARLY ARCHED PORTICO IS THE COPPER PLATE WAR MEMORIAL INSCRIPTION



Work involved extensive repairs, touch of weather coat all around, painting with aesthetic colour scheme, construction of sprawling garden and green lawns, air conditioning of mini hall, refurbishing of interiors, restoring back the teak panelled wooden floor and fitment of modern lightings, diffused lighting on the exteriors, an art gallery show casing all the heritage photographs and rare documents of the era for a walk down the memory lane.





Old Bar room has been renovated and developed as a Lounge-cum-Digital Gallery providing recliner sofa sets. A large 58" LED TV has been provided for audio-visual odyssey in a comfortable environment.



Subhas Institute (Indian Institute), Asansol

Situated by the side of G. T. Road, the Institute is one of the major landmarks of Asansol and is the first Indian Institute, an Institute for the Indians. The Institute which is the second Institute, after Durand Institute, is one of the heritage structures of Railway, which was set up in 1915 to meet the recreational demands of the Indians. The Institute became functional in the year 1917.



Later, on the eve of independence the Institute came to be known as 'Subhas Institute' after the great freedom fighter of India, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. In its initial days the Institute also organised cultural and sports events.

This Institute started cinema shows in 1925 with the help of Arora Studio. Later, with the Independence movement catching up, the Institute became a centre of patriotic activities. Some sources suggest that patriotic activities like holding secret meetings etc. used to be organized in this Institute frequently.

In 1961, to celebrate the birth centenary of Gurudev Rabindra Nath Tagore, the national poet and Nobel laureate, right hand portion of the building was extended, consisting of a large reading room and a library where the entire stock of twenty five thousand books of the Institute were transferred. The work was completed in a record time of only nine weeks and the portion was named after him as “Rabindra Bhawan”. The Bhawan was inaugurated by S. J. Khagendranath Dasgupta, the then Minister, Works and Building, West Bengal in presence of the then Divl. Superintendent, Asansol (Now DRM/ASN) & President of the Institute, Mr. Mathews on May 6th, 1961.

Though the structure does not have the grandeur like Durand Institute, still its appealing structure with rich heritage and cultural history cannot be ignored.

The building with its simple architectural style attracts the eyes of the visitors. The pentagon shaped entrance, the insignia of EIR, duly engraved on the top portion of the building, the engraving at the stage 'Institute for Indian Staff' and the most important rotating stage made of Burma teak – are some unique things for which the Institute boasts for.



Start of Revival Story: The Railway heritage structure of more than 100 years that has witnessed many colourful and memorable moments of pre-Independence and post Independence era, was demanding for thorough renovation and restitution work which was realized by



Sri P. K. Mishra, DRM/ASN. Sri Mishra, along with his team of energetic and dedicated officers and supervisors, took the initiative to renovate the Institute, keeping the essence of the heritage look of the Institute intact. Accordingly, a comprehensive renovation plan was finalized after detailed discussion with all stake holders and restoration work was kick started in mid of December'18. It is said that a concerted effort to preserve our heritage is a vital link to our cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational and economic legacies – all of the things that quite literally make us who we are.



Work involved extensive repairs, touch of weather coat all around, painting with aesthetic colour scheme, refurbishing of interiors with textured paints and wood paneling, doors and windows were attended and wooden blocks will be replaced quite symmetrical to the older one for a walk down the memory lane.



Chittaranjan Institute (Indian Institute), Andal

Chittaranjan Institute, Andal, previously known as Indian Institute, Andal was established in the year 1938. It is located at the very approach of Andal Railway Township opposite to Andal Post Office and near Eastern Railway High School, Andal. Another Institute located at Hospital Colony, Andal was better known as European Institute. In the year 1948, European Institute and Indian Institute were merged and renamed as Chittaranjan Institute, named after great freedom fighter of Bengal, Deshbandhu Chittranjan Das. The Institute was registered under Subdivisional Sports Association, Asansol. Regular football tournaments were also organized involving most of the nearby Sub-divisional teams which includes Teams from Kolkata too. Once Mohun Bagan Club took part in one such football tournament played at Gear Ground, Andal. During the period from 1950 – 1975, Indian movies were projected in this Institute (better known as Savitri Talkies) as a part of recreation for the Railway family members. The renovation work of Chittaranjan Institute, Andal was taken over and has been completed in two months' time. The renovated Institute was rededicated to the nation by Sri P. K. Mishra, DRM/ASN on 30.11.2018





Tagore Institute, Sitarampur

The building was constructed prior to independence of India by the British for amusement and recreation of the British nationals. The Tagore Institute was in the past a hub of cultural activities. Dramas were staged and cinema shows used to be shown on festival seasons. Seasonal games of football and cricket were played in the playground of Tagore Institute on a regular basis. Amongst the most prominent of tournaments that have been held, the name of Akhil Memorial Challenge Shield football tournament comes to mind. After independence, the Club was named as Tagore Institute. A major portion of the Institute was given on lease to private party to run cinema hall. Tagore Institute is a landmark of the place. After renovation, it has become a hub of cultural activities once again.





Lal Bahadur Sashtri Institute, Madhupur

Lal Bahadur Sashtri Institute at Madhupur was inaugurated after thorough renovation at a cost of Rs 5 lakhs. It was constructed in the year 1921 and was called Cosmopolitan Institute, common institute for Europeans and Anglo Indians. After death of Hon'ble Ex. Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, it was converted into Cultural Institute-cum-Library. Main hall, where movies were screened earlier, was renovated and now used for hosting Cultural activities. Badminton Hall of size 50 x 15 Sq. Mtr., library and change rooms have also been renovated.





Asansol Station

The first train to Raneeunge made its inaugural run from Howrah on Saturday, the 3rd February 1855, the day forces of technology were unleashed with introduction of Railways in the region to fulfill economic and military aims of East India Company. After the opening of the Railway, the prosperity of Raniganj was assured (Paterson, 1910).

Raniganj became the terminus of the Eastern Indian Railway. With the increase of the demand of coal, more space was required for administrative use, setting up of sub divisional office and staff quarters etc. However, the land owners class of Raniganj, the Rajas of Searsol were not interested in giving land for building of Railways at that time.



Rail station was built up at Asansol as the local landlord and the owner of capital, the Rajas of Panchakot (Cossipore, Adra) sold a vast area of jungle land then known as "Shergarh" to the EIR. Asansol was a part and parcel of Shergarh. The Raja's gave land for building the Railway station, now one of the busiest stations of India.

In the mid eighteenth century, the then King of Kashipur awarded his two brave soldiers Nakari Roy and Ramkrishna Roy the Jagir of Asansol Mouza in the Damodar river valley of Shergarh parganah for successfully defending the Bargi (Maratha) invasion. The old Asansol station was built in the year 1863-64. With the increase of rail movement, the Asansol station was shifted from its previous locations to its present place in 1885 with 3 platforms. Later in 1889, the line between Asansol and Damodar stations measuring 7.43 Kilometres was linked to transport coal and forming a part of the Asansol-Adra section of the Bengal Nagpur Railway (BNR), thus increasing number of platforms to four. At present, the total area of Asansol Station is 34,462 Sq. M.

Freemasons Hall/Asansol

The Freemasons Hall in Asansol named as the Lodge Pioneer was built on a piece of land of East Indian Railway. The construction of the Lodge was completed in 1874. The architecture of the building is a beautiful blend of robust design and elegance.

Since then the Lodge Pioneer has been under the District Grand Lodge of Bengal which is directed by the United Grand Lodge of England.

This solidly built, two-storey, beautifully designed lime-mortar and stone hall follows the domesticated Gothic Style of architecture characteristic of many colonial buildings in India. Even after so many years, the splendor of its square columns and cusped arches immediately attracts the eyes of the passers-by. The registration number of this Hall is 1490 EC (EC stands for the English Constitution).

Previously in this Freemasons Hall the Lodge of St Marks (668 E.C) used to function which is now closed. The Chapter Prudence (1490 E.C) had also been operating from here.



Heritage Structure of Freemasons Hall

Bungalow No.8, Asansol (Old DS's Bungalow/ROTC)

A grant of Rs. 94,694 was given for construction of a larger Railway station, officers colony in 1880. A new Bungalow of Divisional Superintendent was built in 1880 Bungalow No.8, at the junction of Drysdale Road and Domohani Bazar Road. In 1928, it was converted into training centre of IRTS probationers. Shri Anoop K. Jhingron, an IRTS officer and Ex GM/Western Railway, while recollecting memory of his earlier days of his career has mentioned “When we were appointed, we were asked to report to the office of the General Manager, Eastern Railway at Calcutta. On the very day we joined, we were dispatched to Asansol.

At Asansol a centralized training Institute known as Railway Officers Training Center (ROTC) had been set up, due to the efforts of Mr M S Gujral, a legendary Railwayman, erstwhile Divisional Superintendent of Asansol. The Institute was located in a beautiful bungalow which used to be the residence of the DS. The building had been modified so as to be able to accommodate twenty odd probationers. We had been allotted different zonal Railways, but had our training together”. This continued till 1971 IRTS Probationer Batch and now this Bungalow is being used as Residential Bungalow of Sr. Scale and Jr. Scale Officers.



Heritage Structure of Old DS's Bungalow/ROTC

DRM's Office, Asansol

This division formed in 1925 has been historically connected with the Railway revolution in India. Soon after formation of Division, a new Divisional Office was constructed at Drysdale Road, Asansol shifting from Bungalow No.205. The first DRM (the then DS) was Mr. W H H Young (8.11.1926 to 10.3.1929). The Western Part of Annex Building to existing DRM's Office Building was built in 1958.



DRM's Bungalow

In 1928, DRM's Bungalow shifted from ROTC (Bungalow No.8) to its new Location at the junction Drysdale Road and Domohani Bazar Road near Ashram More. New Bungalow for Divl. Supdt. was made with more space, comfort and architectural excellence on the lap of lush green environs. The DRM's Bungalow Complex has an area of Approx. 561.69 SqM. It has a lush green lawn at the entrance, encompassing road for entry and exit.



DRM's Bungalow in 1909



DRM's Bungalow – as of now

Environment protection has been given a special thought. Lot of greeneries; fruit bearing as well as shady trees have been provided. The entrance has been given an old architectural look with beautiful wooden blocks and brick tiles. Almost 100 years old doors and windows are still in good condition and remind us about our architectural excellence which prevailed at that time. Roof has been so designed to make it heat proof even when concept of AC was far away.

Beautifully designed wooden blocks have been provided all along the varandah area to protect the room from rain ingress in an aesthetic way. The first occupant (the then DS) of this Bungalow was Mr. W H H Young.

DRM's Bungalow



District Training Park, Bharat Scouts & Guides, Asansol

The two Bungalows earmarked for Doctors remained vacant for long time. These Bungalows were unused for quite long time and the condition of the same was getting from bad to worse. To revive these two colonial architectural beauties of the Division, it was decided to restore and use it for activities of Bharat Scouts and Guides of Asansol District.



Heritage Structure of Scout Den, Hospital Colony, Asansol

Eastern Railway Higher Secondary School, Asansol

This school, situated by the G T Road, was constructed in 1898. The grand structure of the school has a lot of story to speak about. After a few decades, since the railway transportation was shifted from Raniganj to Asansol, a lot of native Indians flocked to Asansol for employment. But they had no school nearby to get their wards admitted and neither they were interested in traditional education imparted in Toll and Madrasa. In 1886, a few enthusiasts started a school in an abandoned out-house at Old Station Colony. A few years later, the school was shifted to present Loco Colony at a premise called Tiffin Club. With the influx of students, the school was again shifted to Gol Ghar – an abandoned Recreational Centre by the side of G T Road (Gol Ghar is still in existence within the compound of Head Post Office, Asansol). Though the school was running successfully, it was not having any affiliation; therefore, a permanent building with all required infrastructures was constructed in the year 1898 at the present location of the School. In the very next year, the School got the affiliation upto Class-VIII under the name “East Indian Railway High English Indian School – by Calcutta University”. At that time, the School looked like a perfect “C”, the façade facing the G T Road, a huge play ground looking to the south – both without any obstruction. The ambience was well lighted and airy. Primarily,



there were eight class rooms, a big hall, rooms for “manual” classes or craft classes. The staff pattern at the initial stage, consisted of one Hd. Master and three Teachers, First Teacher, Second Teacher and Third Teacher and three Pundits, First Pundit, Second Pundit and Third Pundit. The School Managing Committee was headed by one Medical Officer who was the President and Secretary of the School Managing Committee, one person of the rank of Dy. Magistrate as the Vice President and Asstt. Secretary and two persons were nominated by the Divisional Head (Railway). Babu Raghunath Nayek was the first Head Master of the School (1900-1913). In the year 1932, the School was equipped with Science Laboratory which was the only one in the then Burdwan District.



Eastern Railway High School/Primary Section/Asansol

Eastern Railway mixed Primary School is one of the oldest English Medium Schools in Asansol. It was established in 1905 by East India Railway to impart primary education to the wards of the employees of the East Indian Railways. It was earlier known as Anglo-Indian Railway School.

Indian Schools of all the province and the Railways, the syllabus as well as the text books of all the Anglo-Indian schools were made identical in 1953. Upto 1965 only persons of British origin were entrusted to be posted as headmistress of the school.

Mrs. N Srikanth took over the charge of Headmistress of the school and she was the 1st Headmistress of the School from Indian origin. In 1967, the School was renamed as Eastern Railway Mixed Primary School. From the very beginning of its establishment till date it is an English Medium school.

Till 1976, warden's training of civil defence was also imparted in this school campus. Data of all the students studying in the school in respect to their caste and financial condition, Qualification of the teachers, basic infrastructures etc were annually sent to the Govt. by the School Management.



Burlington - Old Railway Hospital/Asansol



Soon after shifting of Railway Transportation Headquarter from Ranigunj to Asansol in 1863, necessity of establishing a full-fledged Railway Hospital was felt to cater the medical requirement of the existing staff and officers. Accordingly, the original East Indian Railway Hospital Building was constructed in the year 1869 and was known as the “Burlington”. Subsequently, two more buildings came up in 1907 and 1921. It had Surgical Ward, Medical Ward, Operation Theater, Laboratory, X-Ray Unit and Mortuary.

It was a solitary hospital of the region and served the medical need of railway men and their family members of entire Asansol division.

It was a referral hospital and also served Royal forces during second world war.

The sprawling building has been constructed in Gothic style with arches and slanted tiled roof spanning 748 square metres. It comprises twelve big rooms, large central hall and one operation theatre. Roof is constructed with lime ferros binding and stone masonry. Corbel design has been made on roof railings.



The hospital was subsequently shifted to a new building in 1966 and Burlington was converted into residential quarters of medical staff.

As a fitting tribute, the iconic structure has been renovated on its sesquicentennial anniversary after 150 years by the division.

The building which once was an important land mark and pride of the city had fallen to hard time with its dilapidated look and crumbling structure.

The entire building complex was thoroughly renovated and given a new lease of life.

Work involved complete repair of damaged roof with APP water proofing, inside and outside repairing, attending damaged tiles and weather coat painting of entire building.



Old Curved tiles used for sewerage have been carefully preserved and are still in use.

Rain water harvesting and terrain water harvesting have also been developed.

The entire area was spruced up and a beautiful garden along with lawn has been developed to recreate the old ambiance.

New electrical wirings were done and diffused lighting was provided to accentuate its architectural aesthetic.





The renovated building majestically overlooking the Grand Trunk road, with its enchanting color scheme and architectural elegance has been resurrected as city landmark and its restoration is being widely appreciated by local populace and media alike.

Bungalow No.39 at Raniganj

The iconic Bungalow No 39 at Raniganj, official residence of Engineer in-charge for laying Railway tracks between Raneegaunge and Burdwan section, was constructed during 1853. Mr. C. S. Adley, Assistant Engineer was probably the first occupant of the Bungalow.

In the year 1861, Mr. W. Bourne was posted as District Engineer at Raneegunge and Burrakur extension and he stayed in that Bungalow.

The Bungalow is located at Kalka end of Raniganj Railway station near Municipality Building and it is made in old colonial architecture of slanted tiled roof, thick walls plastered with lime and brick mortar and granolithic flooring.

Subsequently the bungalow was converted into the official residence of Station Master Raniganj. The bungalow was lying vacant since last three years and was in decrepit condition and whole campus was covered with wild vegetation and city refuse.

The building is planned to be used as Supervisors' Rest House and Scouts' Den.

Charles Coles Adley, second son of the Rev. W. Adley, was born on the 10th of Sept, 1828. After acting for eighteen months as an Assistant Engineer on the Burdwan division, and for a year as Resident Engineer on the construction of the Raniganj division, he was appointed Superintendent of the Telegraph Department of the line.



AEN/Andal's Bungalow

AEN/Andal's Bungalow No.19-A/B is one of the most beautiful heritage buildings of Andal. The condition of the Building is still good and this has been renovated and inaugurated on 30.11.2018. This will be used as Rest Room.



PWI/Andal's Bungalow No.19-A/B

In continuation to the efforts for preserving age old legacy of Eastern Railway, Asansol Division has revived and renovated another Heritage Structure "PWI/UDL BUNGALOW" to its original glory. The bungalow was constructed in the year 1914 with a cost of Rs 10,870/-. With plinth area of about 2159 sq. ft. It has 3 rooms of size 15'x16', 16'x18' and 15'x16' with a large sprawling garden in front. The roof is typical European style sloping with pucca lock tiles. The Renovation work included petty repair of plaster and distemper from inside and outside, painting of woodwork and steelwork, pathway in the courtyard, changing kitchen and sanitary fittings etc. The cost of renovation of such an Important heritage building has come out to approx. Rs 1 lac only. The bungalow is currently being used as office for Crew Lobby staff.



Railway Officers' Club, Andal

Railways Officers club Andal was started today in recently renovated heritage building ,the original European institute Andal which was sadly forgotten and was languishing in oblivion.Andal ,the hub of operation and Railway activities of the division ,was lacking a proper officers club.The present club, part of area control office, was grossly inadequate and dingy.A spacious and beautiful heritage building sprawling over 3580 sq feet built up area , constructed in year 1908, the original European club,was converted into Railway officers club after thorough renovation at a cost of Rs 1.5 lakhs.It has two big halls ,seven rooms ,verandah and lawns.



CYM Office, Sitarampur

In 1865, the line was extended upto Sitarampur. It was later on converted into a major junction as line on GC was extended upto Gaya-Mughalsarai and on mainline, it was extended upto Jhajha - Patna gradually.

CYM Office constructed between the platforms is still in good shape, proudly erect and witness to all the events of last 100 years. The last CYM/Sitarampur was Shri Kamta Prasad.



CYM/Sitarampur's Bungalow

In 1865, the line was extended upto Sitarampur. It was later on converted into a major junction as line on GC was extended upto Gaya-Mughalsarai and on mainline, it was extended upto Jhajha - Patna gradually.

The CYM was an important post at that time at Sitarampur which used to involve lot of operational activities and used to control/co-ordinate with other Deptts. As a result, it was decided to construct a Bungalow over the Platform itself so that CYM is able to oversee the functioning of station and yards round the clock. It was believed to be the best location for accommodation at Sitarampur with trees and beautiful garden giving a serene picture of the station. Time passed by and the occupants as CYM/Sitarampur keep on changing.

The last occupant was Shri Kamta Prasad and after his retirement the Quarter is lying vacant and abandoned. And now, it has been decided for restoration and utilise the Grand Building as Supervisors' Rest Room-cum-Training Centre.



Block No. 51, Sitarampur

Block no 51(type-II, 8 units) double storied railway (6240sqft) has a glorious heritage. It was constructed in 1932 at STN in front of railway ground. It is a very old building with huge rooms and has evidence of the colonial architecture. It was fully occupied by railwaymen. The building was thoroughly renovated. Broken doors and windows were repaired . Now this building is standing proudly in its heritage look.



PWI Office Sitarampur

PWI office STN, constructed in 1932, is a silent percipient of the growth, speed & design of railway track since British era. Building walls were damaged and thus, it was patch repaired and coloured washed to bring back its heritage look in a nominal cost of Re. 30000/- only



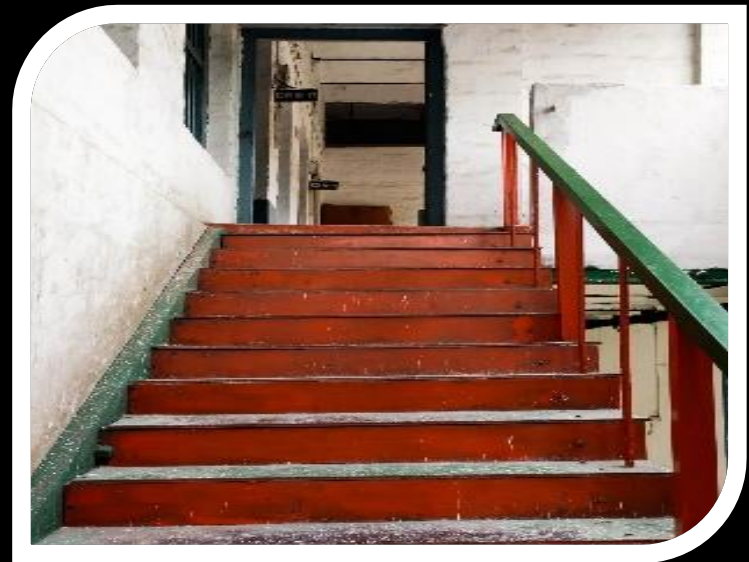
Restoration of Steam Drivers' Running Room at Asansol

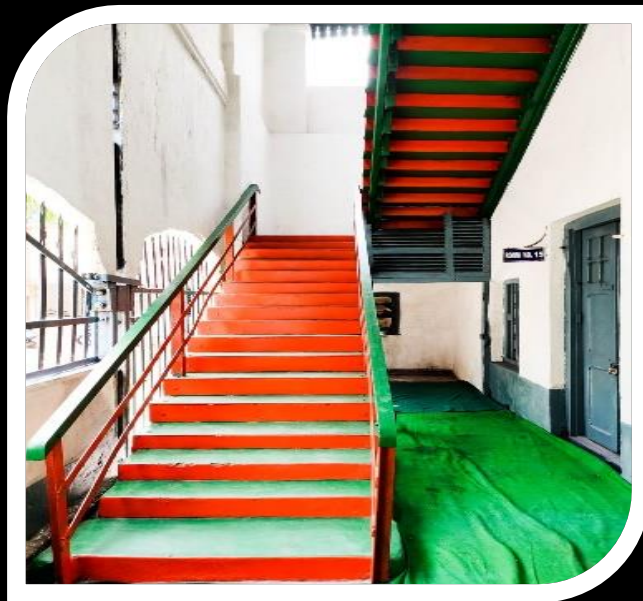
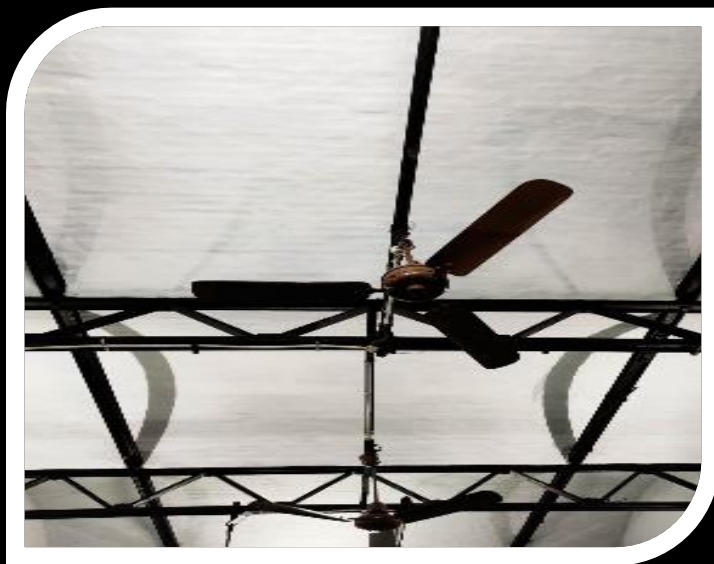
One of the oldest steam drivers running room of EIR has been renovated. Building was in dilapidated state and was in urgent need of attention. Ground floor was thoroughly renovated, and hall has been converted into Gymnasium for crew.

The building has been constructed over vertical iron beam matrix an unique architectural design of the period and it is solitary such type of building in Asansol.

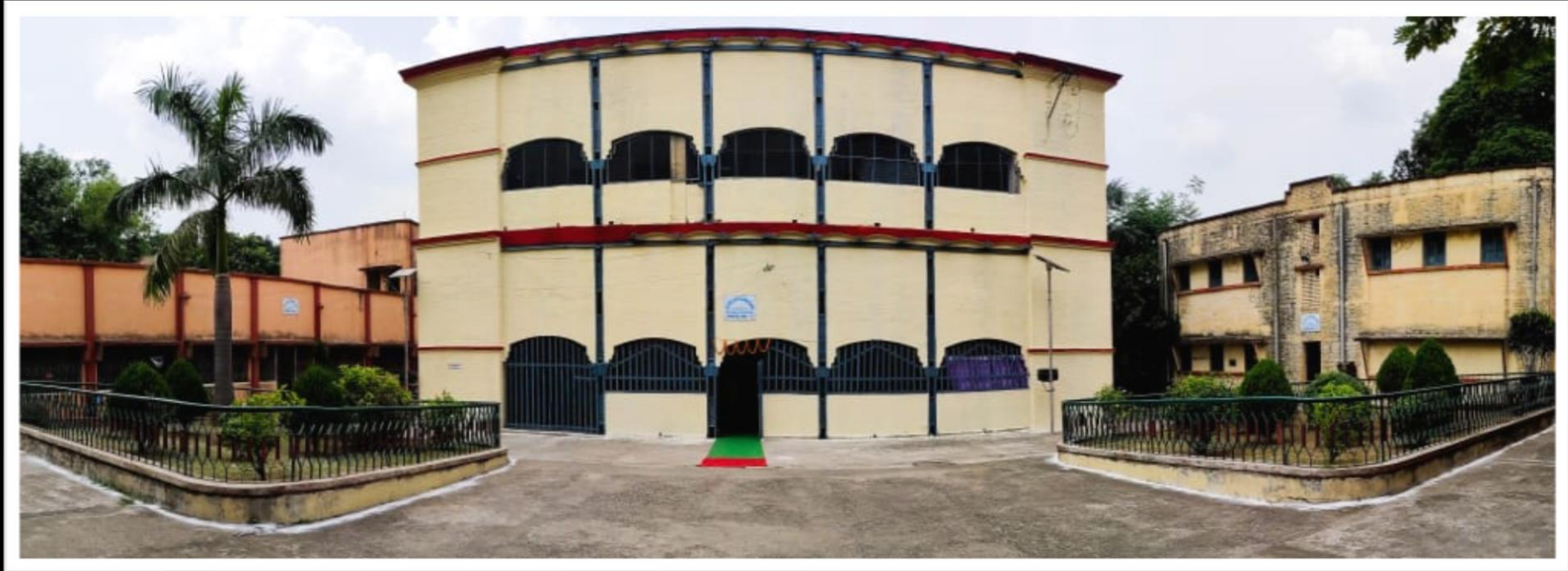
We have been able to restore the ground floor, facade, staircase and roof after extensive repairs.

First floor renovation will also be completed shortly





**Structural sections manufactured in
1885 are still corrosion free**





Health Unit/Sitarampur

Health unit /STN is a very old railway structure, constructed in 1932, having a heritage look and built in approx. area of 2890sqft. It was in severely dilapidated condition mainly the inside & outside wall. Repaired using wall putty & colored with acrylic paint to return its heritage look.



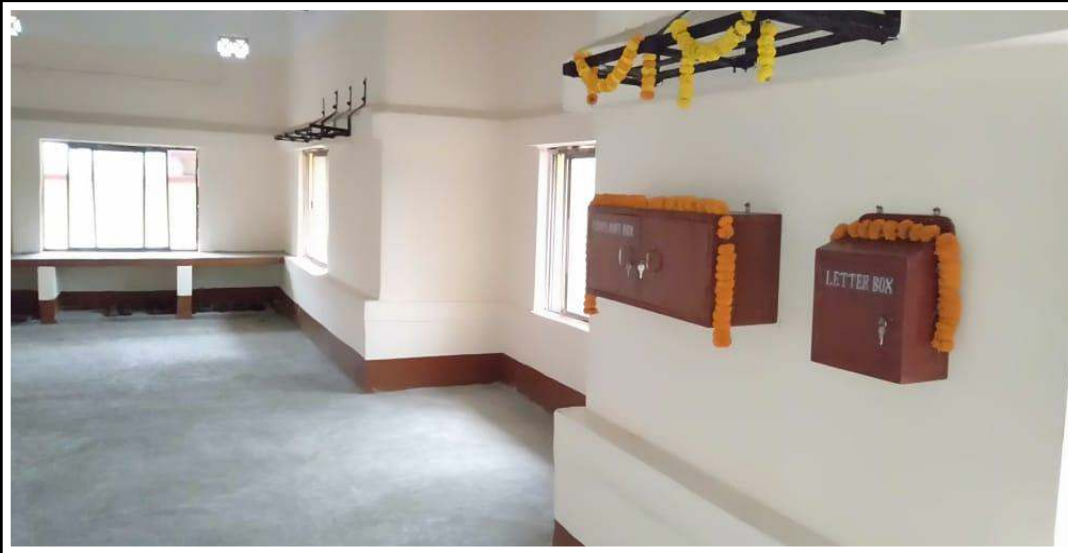
Loco Foreman/Sitarampur's Bungalow

Once Asia's Biggest Steam Loco Shed was located at Sitarampur station. Loco Foreman Sitarampur used to be the most important supervisor in those times. His Bungalow was located at a prime location in Sitarampur. The Building has now been renovated fully keeping its heritage look and architecture intact.



Heritage Building turns into Gang Hut at Sitarampur

A Gang Hut has been built at Sitarampur by renovating old East Outer Cabin Room. This cabin was lying vacant after shifting of Empty Yard to new Cabin. The abandoned decrepit cabin of Sitarampur, a heritage structure constructed in year 1874, had become den of miscreant activities. Total area of the gang hut is 40 Sqm at the first floor of the old Cabin. Total cost of renovation work is around 60,000/-. It is spacious, airy, full of natural light for comfortable living and is cost effective and genuine utilization for adaptive reuse.



Mugma- Kalubathan- Chhota Ambana- Station Buildings

These are one of the oldest station buildings of Asansol Division in Eastern Railway. Station buildings are the same buildings which were constructed during the commissioning of the section by EIR. Subsequent attention and repairs have luckily not disturbed the original character of the buildings. One can see the distinct architectural attributes: slanted roof, thick mortar brickwork, chimney and louvre window shutters full of old world quaint charm.



Mugma Station Building



Chota Ambana Station Building



Kalubathan Station Building

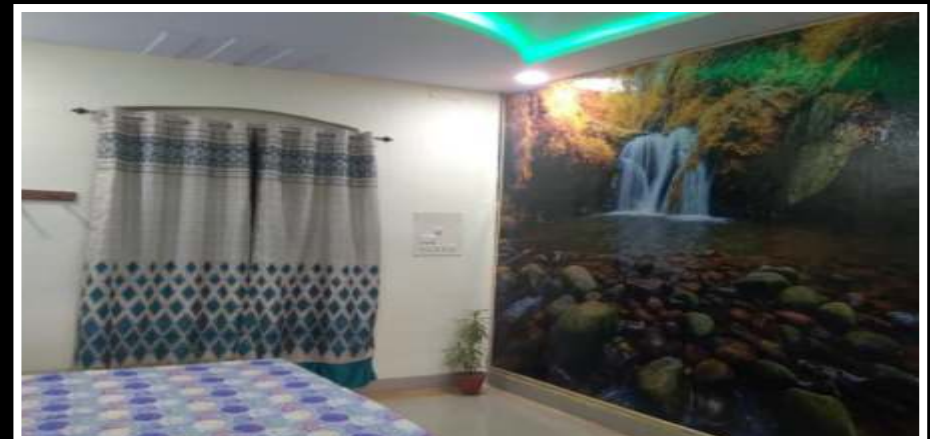
AEN Bungalow, Madhupur

AEN bungalow Madhupur, an important historical building constructed in year 1910, has been thoroughly renovated . The sprawling bungalow comprises of four big halls , six living & store rooms , eight rooms for support staff and a garage. A huge garden of sixty thousand square feet surround the bungalow. Roof has been treated with APP to arrest water seepage from roof and building has been renovated keeping its heritage look in tact. Bungalow is having one very old rwh pit and one soak pit for treating all discharges from bungalow.



AEN Office Madhupur

One heritage building, housing AEN office on ground floor and ORH on first floor, has been renovated in Madhupur. Earlier, It was club for Europeans with wooden dance floor, bar and rooms for cards & billiards. In 1966, the building was converted into AEN office cum ORH. An old annexe building houses a library named as Faniswarnath Renu pustakalaya. A mini forest and garden of size 80*40 sq. mtr surround the building giving whole area a verdant look.



53 No. Block Madhupur

Block No. 53 in Madhupur Railway Colony is an old heritage building which was in damaged condition. It has been fully renovated. The building was meant for the use of European employees since its construction around 1935. It consists of four units of type III quarters each of 210 sq.mt. area.



Old Running Room, Madhupur

Madhupur was Operational Hub and major railway township during Steam Era in Mainline Howrah – Patna route where crew for all the train would sign off and fresh set of crew would take charge. Large Running Room was constructed for providing rest to Train Crew.

This Running Room was lying abandoned since 1998 and was almost going to be dismantled. Now, it has been decided to revive this Old Running Room into Rest House Complex and convert it into First Heritage Resort of Eastern Railway where Railwayman as well as Railway Passengers can take benefit of healthy climate of Madhupur as it was famous in its early days.



Old Running Room, Madhupur

Before Renovation

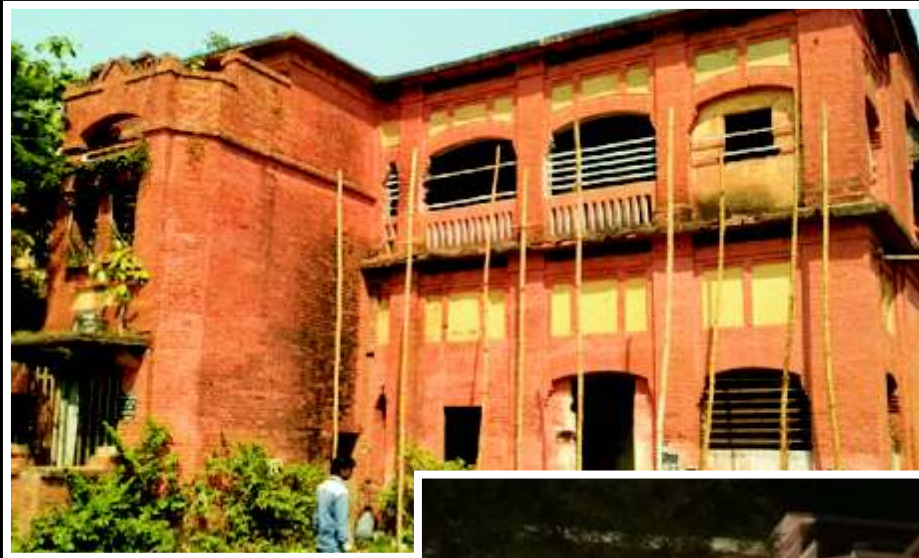


After Renovation



Block No. 61, Old European Institute, Madhupur

The two storey building (Block No. 41) in the heart of the Railway township Madhupur reminds us the legacy of colonial era as it was the European Institute at Madhupur which was later converted into Inspectors' Quarter and Rest Room prior to 1929. This structure has been renovated and converted into Community Hall and re-established as a hub of cultural activities



Heritage Structure of Old European Institute, Madhupur before & after renovation

Madhupur Heritage Well

At Madhupur station, there is an ancient well inside the station premises which is more than 100 years old. The internal diameter of well is about 14 feet and is of 35 feet depth. It's water is supposed to be therapeutic and residents of hundreds of villages of that area use water only from that well, sarkari kuan or Railway kuan. It's water was reported to be transported to the house of many jamindaars and the then bureaucrats. Special arrangements were made by EIR to transport water to Kolkata for them. It also serves the water need of the station to some extent. The Division has renovated the well in pattern of Bawris of Rajsthan and erected a plaque describing its rich heritage. A shed having complete heritage look has been provided on the top of the well to protect its water from being wasted away.



Heritage Structure of Madhupur Well

Maheshmunda Station Building

Maheshmunda, a small hamlet tucked in Madhupur - Giridih section. A place, where time has stood still. A place, which still is in nineteenth century, resolute in its steadfast refusal to change, retaining the flavour of Raaj.

Station building is the same building which was constructed during the commissioning of the section by EIR. Subsequent attention and repairs have luckily not disturbed the original character of the building. One can see the distinct architectural attributes: slanted roof, thick mortar brickwork, chimney and louver window shutters full of old world quaint charm.

It is fascinating to see the arrangement for distribution of water, a recess was made in wall for water pitchers and Pani Pandey, the watermen.



Heritage Well of Maheshmunda

At Maheshmunda station, there is an ancient well inside the station premises which is more than 100 years old. The internal diameter of well is about 14 feet and is of 35 feet depth. Its water is supposed to be therapeutic and residents of hundreds of villages of that area use water only from that well, sarkari kuan or Railway kuan. Its water was transported to the house of Tagores in Kolkata and it is said that Prince Dwarka Nath Tagore would drink only water of this well. Special arrangements were made by EIR to transport water to Kolkata for them. The Division has renovated the well in pattern of Bawris of Rajsthan and erect a plaque describing its rich heritage.



Heritage Structure of Maheshmunda Well



Renovated Heritage Structure of Maheshmunda Well

The unfinished task to be completed soon ...

Qr. No. 205, Station Road (Old DS's Bungalow-cum-Office)

The year 1863 should be mentioned as significant in the space-economy study of Asansol city. In that year, Railway was extended from Raniganj to Asansol old station area and the HQ was shifted from Raniganj to Asansol. Railway quarters shot up to accommodate the Railway employees creating an urban atmosphere with the architecture of red brick buildings in a planned style.

At that time the two officers i.e. Divisional Vehicular Supdt. (now DRM) and Sr. Supdt. of Works [now Sr. DEN(Co-ord)] lived in bungalows situated on the road leading from the present station to the G.T. Road near the Nazrul Sarani. They used to run their offices from their bungalows. However, with the increase of its business, a full fledged DVS (DRM) Office was set up in that two storey building in 1880 on the west side of the present station road. And a new Bungalow of Divisional Superintendent was built in 1880 – Bungalow No.8. The building at present serves the purpose of staff quarters.



Heritage Structure of Old DS's Bungalow-cum-Office

Old MS Bungalow, Asansol



Heritage Structure of Old MS Bungalow, Asansol

This is one of the Unique Heritage buildings available in Asansol Division. It has got ample items loaded with lots of heritage values. With the shifting of Headquarter of railway transportation from Raniganj to Asansol, necessity was felt to build quarters and bungalows for staff and officers in a planned architectural style with red bricks in urban atmosphere. The original East Indian Railway (EIR) Hospital Building complex was established in the year 1869 and was better-known as the Burlington. The Bungalow for Medical Superintendent (MS) was constructed at that time near to the hospital so that he can rush to the hospital even at odd hours in case of emergency. Subsequently, two more buildings came up in 1907 and 1921 at the same premises. One fountain existed in the front portion of the Bungalow.

Illuminating the Grandeur and Aesthetics



Illumination of Asansol Station and development of Gardens in circulating area have been done as a part of Asansol Station Redevelopment. Illumination of the entire station facade has been carried out at a cost of rupees 4 lakhs departmentally with only 1400 watt load against the estimates of rupees 35 lakhs plus by professional agency with 6 to 8 thousand watt load. Lighting has been planned to accentuate architectural elegance and aesthetics of the heritage building. Sprawling Lush Lawns have been provided in the circulating area to make it verdant, serene and converting into green oasis amidst urban cacophony and chaos. After having the estimates and colour scheme of professional agencies who wanted to give the station facade a garish night club look at an astronomical cost, the Division decided on a design, an eclectic mix of Venetian and Viennese lighting style at a low cost to improve upon its old look with heritage beauty.



Sprawling lush lawns in the Circulating Area



Colour Fountain with Vertical Garden



Round Colour Fountain in Circulating Area



DRM Bungalow



Old European Institute, Madhupur



DRM's Office, Asansol



Vivekananda Institute (Durand Institute), Asansol



Subhash Institute (Indian Institute), Asansol



Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute, Madhupur



Tagore Institute, Sitarampur



Chittaranjan Institute, Andal

Tilottoma : The Heritage Engine

The old Heritage Engine “Tilottoma” has been relocated to a better zone, got painted afresh matching the actual colour scheme of century back locomotives and the same has been suitably provided with LED lighting for its better exposure to the passengers/general public. Like the Vertical Garden, this has also become an attractive Selfie Zone.



Revival of Heritage Clocks

In our Division, six such vintage clocks majestically ticking away were spotted, one is in DRM's chamber, one is in Meeting Hall, one in official Residence of DRM and one is in Chamber of Sr.DFM, Sr.DSTE and one in Control Office. A drive was launched all over Division for tracing, cataloguing and preserving such priceless heritage relics and five priceless relics lying in broken shape and dysfunctional for last fifty years were discovered which were restored and proudly displayed in all over the Division.

It was quite a challenge to repair these clocks as arranging spare parts & technical expertise, skill sadly lost, is onerous. But the perseverance and never say die attitude of Railway men finally prevailed and amongst all odds we could successfully salvage them. These clocks are having Mahogany frame- 12-13" dia drum space type bezel, shrew printed dials.



Time is a brisk wind, for each hour it brings something new... but who can understand and measure its sharp breath, its mystery and its design?



The Trophies



Colvin Athletic
Challenge Shield



Coal Field Open
Championship Cup
Tennis Singles

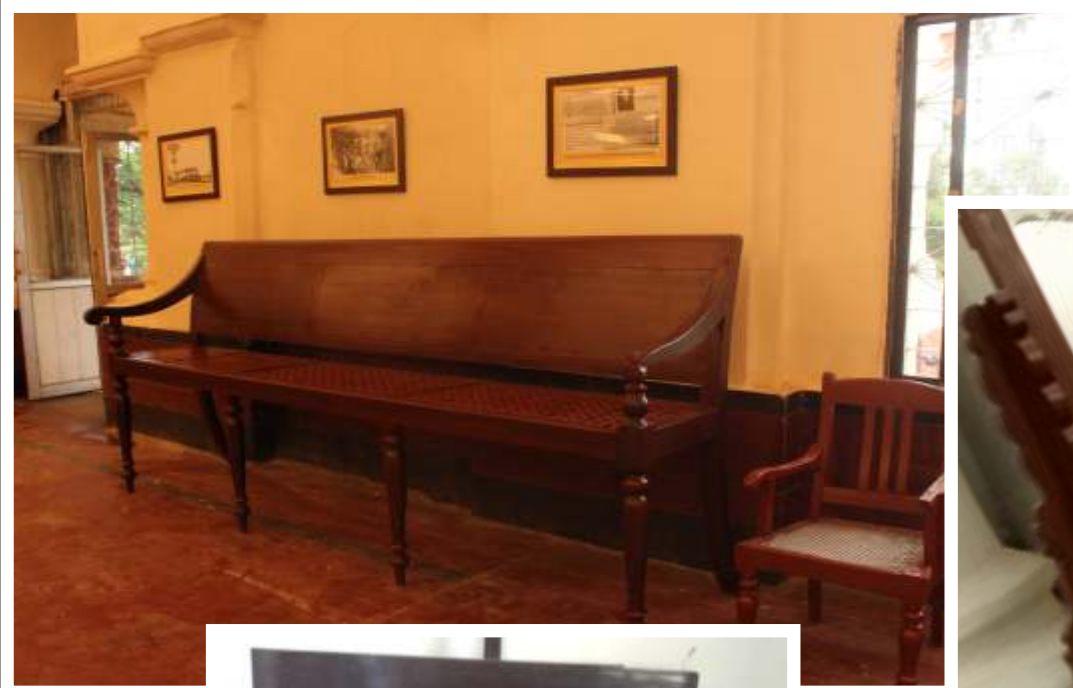


Tagore Challenge Cup
Men's Tennis Doubles



The Yule Football
Challenge Cup

Re-varnished Furniture of Colonial Era



Nomenclature Boards for Colony Roads

Efforts were made to provide dedicated name boards for all roads in the Railway premises, colonies, station area etc. to clearly educate people about their destination. The original names of the roads in the colonial era have been found out from our records and the same have been restored. Nomenclature boards for the colony roads with the colonial names have been displayed at the prominent junctures.

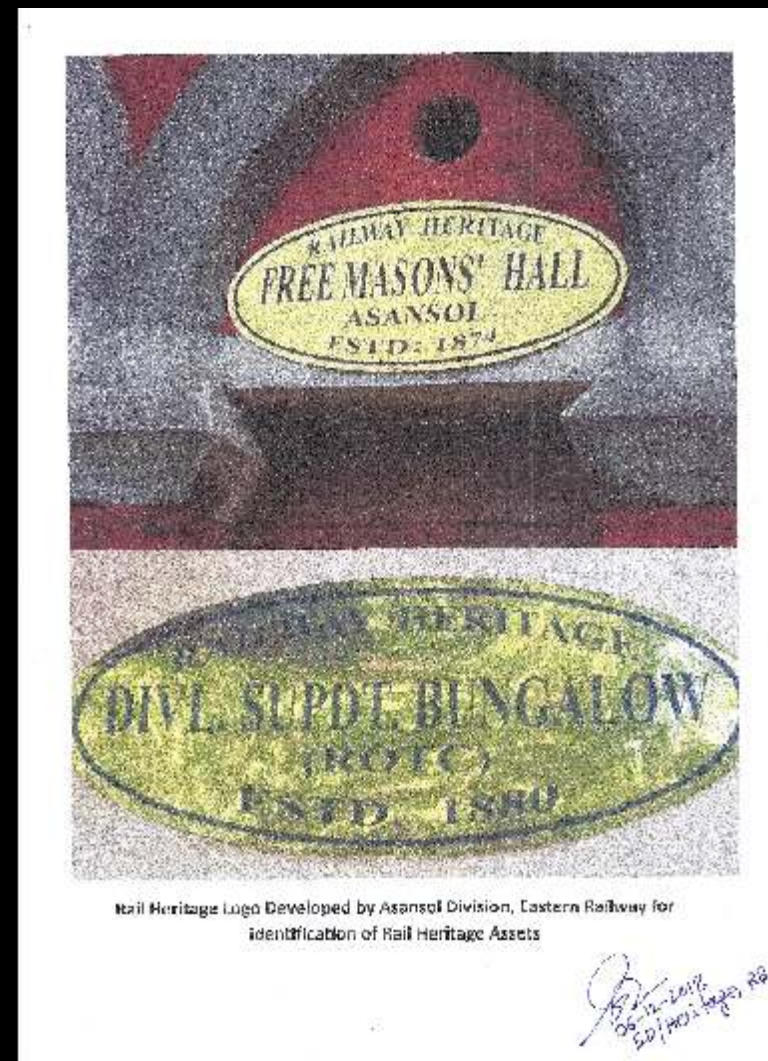
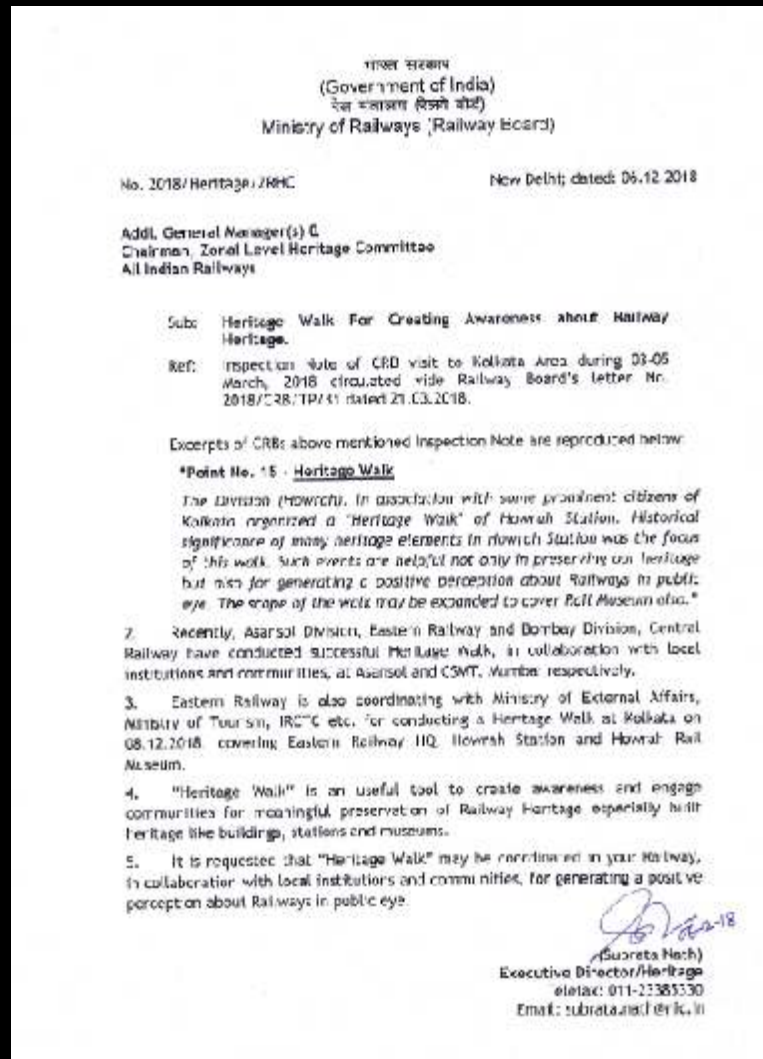


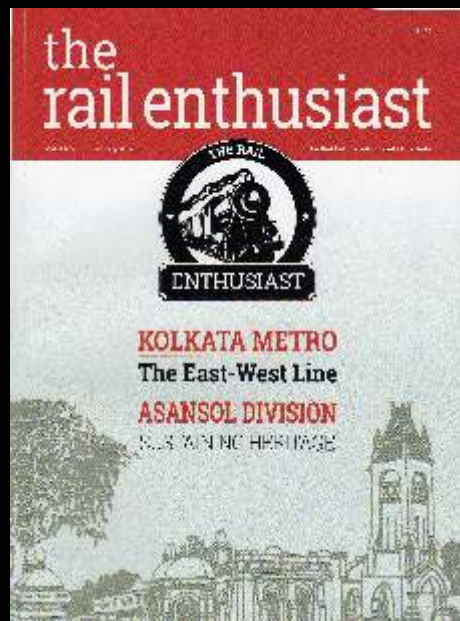
The Heritage Walk



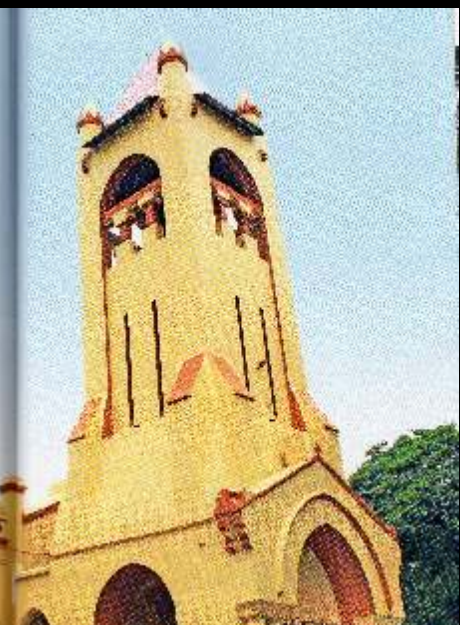
As a part of mass awareness campaign and to observe World Heritage Week, *Maiden Heritage Walk* was organized on 28.11.2018 to make people aware about heritage structures covering eight heritage sites, viz DRM's Bungalow, Bungalow No.8 (Old DVS Office cum residence), Asansol (Old DS's Bungalow/ROTC), Qr. No.205, Station Road (Old DS's Bungalow-cum-Office), Asansol Station, DRM's Office, Asansol, Eastern Railway High School/Primary Section. On this day, heritage was on the centre stage. As many as 200 people, including Railway officers and their families, members of Rail Enthusiasts' Society, representatives of Print & Electronic Media, Professors, teachers and students from schools and colleges participated. The success of the first heritage walk gave a renewed impetus and enthusiasm. It was a pleasant revelation. Two more heritage walks

were organized on 03.02.2019 and 23.02.2019 covering the other important heritage structures in Asansol division. The success of the heritage walks received recognition and accolades from various sources. The Rail Heritage Logo for identification of Rail Heritage Assets developed by Asansol division got all India recognition.





Glimpses of Heritage based Coverage & Recognition



Glimpses of Heritage based News Items published in various News Papers

The Statesman

Asansol div of ER gears up to pay tribute to WWI heroes of East Indian Railways

DEBAJYOTI CHAKRABORTY
ASANSOL, 12 NOVEMBER

As global leaders gathered in Paris to commemorate the centenary of the end of World War I, the Asansol Division of Eastern Railway is also paying tribute to the war heroes of the East Indian Railways (EIR). There are two Asansol connections with World War I history.

One of them set amidst the lush surroundings of mahogany trees is the Durand Institute with its majestic Tower. This is a landmark of Asansol, which has been an important township and divisional headquarters of EIR on the Howrah-Delhi route.

In a way, Durand Institute is Asansol's version of 'India Gate' in New Delhi, set up as a memorial for Indian soldiers who actually fell during the first Great War. The epitaph at the entrance of Durand Institute now rechristened Vivekananda Institute still bears the names of soldiers

In a way, Durand Institute is Asansol's version of 'India Gate' in New Delhi, set up as a memorial for Indian soldiers who actually fell during the first Great War

who lost their lives during World War I.

The tall tower pointing towards the sky was dedicated to those departed souls.

The famous tower with the War Memorial Copper Plate, commemorating the sacrifice of railway men in the war is 22 metre high and four 18.5 metre-long spires adorn its top," said noted railway historian, Kalishankar Bhatnagar.

Talking to The Statesman, Mr Prashant Kumar Mishra, divisional railway manager of Asansol said that recently the oldest European Institute in Asia has been restored and measures taken for the preservation of its heritage.

"The institute suffered neglect and decline after large scale migration of Anglo Indians post-independence and slowly it degenerated into a marriage hall. We tried to revive its old glory and restore its grandeur," Mr Mishra added.

In a letter to the DRM, Asansol dated 5 October, the chairman of the Railway Board, Ashwani Lohani, fully backed the efforts to restore the old heritage of Durand Institute.

The history has been chronicled inside and the dazzling ultra-modern lights on the iconic tower now bring back old memories.

There is another famous person who was born in Churulia on the outskirts of Asansol town and had World War I connections.

Towards the end of 1917 poet Kazi Nazrul Islam joined the Army. He was posted at Karachi after he joined the 49 Bengal Regiment. His life in

the army lasted about two and half years from the end of 1917. During his tenure from an ordinary soldier Nazrul Islam rose to become a havildar (battalion quartermaster). During his stay in the Army, Nazrul learnt Persian from the regiment's Punjabi moulvi, practised music with other soldiers with passion for music to the accompaniment of local and foreign instruments and at the same time pursued literary activities in both prose and poetry.

Nazrul's stories and poems written at Karachi cantonment were published in different journals - his first prose writing *Baundhul Apnakahtini* in May 1919 and first published poem *Mukti* in July 1919.

"In fact, it was at Karachi cantonment that Nazrul's literary activities truly began. At the end of first world war, Nazrul Islam returned to Bengal and started his career as a litterateur-journalist in Kolkata," recalls Kazi Rezaul Karim, nephew of the poet.

Heritage Railway well from where Tagores got water, to get a boost

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
ASANSOL, 11 SEPTEMBER

The Asansol Division of Eastern Railway has planned to renovate the heritage railway well situated at Maheshmunda station from where drinking water used to be transported to the Jorasanko Thakurbari, some 273 kilometres away at Kolkata on the pattern of the Bawris of Rajasthan.

The water of this ancient well has therapeutic values and residents of hundreds of villages in the adjoining areas will use water from this well.

Talking to The Statesman, Mr Prashant Kumar Mishra, divisional railway manager (DRM) of Asansol informed that the renovation of the railway well in pattern with the Bawris of Rajasthan and erecting a plaque describing its rich heritage is his brainchild.

Few months ago, he had been on a visit to Maheshmunda, a small hamlet tucked in Madhupur-Gaidighat section. Special arrangements used to be made by the then East



Indian Railway Company (EIR) to transport the water for the Tagore's house in Kolkata. It is said that Prince Dwarsaka Nath Tagore would drink only water of this well, the DRM said.

"It is a place where time has stood still. A place which still is in the nineteenth century, molate in its steadfast refusal to change, retaining the flavour of the Raj era. The East India Railways constructed the station building and you still see the distinct architectural attributes: slanted roof, thick molar brickwork, chimney

and loose window shutters. All of which would quite charm," Mr Mishra added.

He was fascinated to see the arrangement for distribution of water, a system was made in well for water pickers and Puri Pandey, the waterman.

Puri Pandey was a unique concept at railway stations before the advent of hand pumps, bore wells and piped water supply. Water was stored in large round earthen pitchers and Puri Pandey with a small can fixed on long handle, would give passengers measured quantity of water



to quench their thirst in summer. Those were the days when mineral bottled water and mobile had not invaded in our life, Mr Mishra added.

The station is still having a rudimentary interlocking with long hand operated levers, in-house gsm, to keep you in perfect form, he added.

These relics of the past are now staring into oblivion with the sanctioned work of panel interlocking and optical fibre cable laying. Another era would come to an end.

A notice prohibiting photography in station premises

and portable under defence of Indian rules, is proudly displayed on the station wall, and another reminder of the bygone era at the corner of the station made settle picture taking easier.

It should be noted that a number of famous Bengalis used to stay at Gaidighat, which is about 19 kilometres away from Maheshmunda, like Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose, Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore (who wrote *Shantiniketan* in 1904) and Oscar award winning film director Satyajit Ray, who has sketched his favourite fictional character Professor Shankar from here.

The Bawris are one of the old methods of rain water management and is extremely popular in Rajasthan.

In older days, people used to build deep step wells into the ground. The water would be stored in these wells for longer time because they are very deep and the evaporation is less.

After its completion, it is likely to become a major tourist attraction.

Asansol walk dips into rich heritage of Eastern Railway

DEBAJYOTI CHAKRABORTY
ASANSOL, 29 NOVEMBER

Many Europeans and Anglo-Indians whose grandfathers and great-grandfathers worked with the East Indian Railway (EIR) have expressed interest in coming back and retracing the lives and works of their forefathers.

"It will be a win-win situation for all if that happens," said Mr Sanjoy Mookerjee, former finance commissioner of the Railway Board and member of the apex committee on railway heritage conservation.

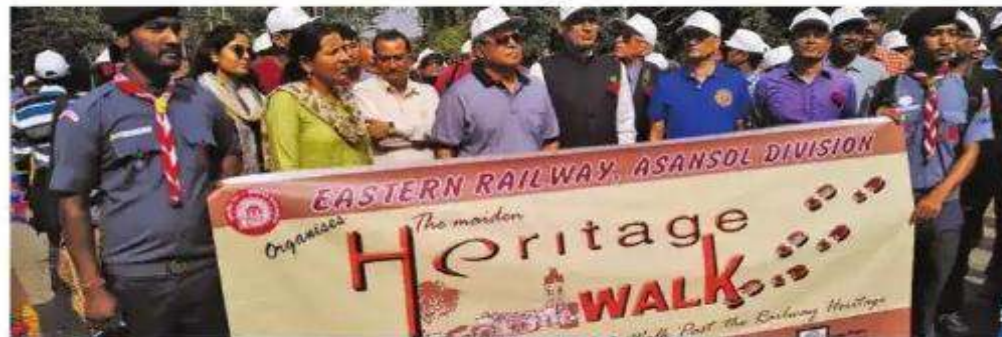
A Railway Heritage Walk is being organised in Howrah Division on 8 December, in which many such people have evinced interest to participate," said Mr Mookerjee.

The Asansol Division of Eastern Railway organised the first ever Heritage Walk organised by any division of

Indian Railways here yesterday.

Mr Sanjoy Mookerjee, Mr J.L. Singh, former general manager of Rites, retired Justice Soumitra Pal, chairman of the State Administrative Tribunal, Partha Pratim Mitra, chief economic advisor to the government of India, Prashant Kumar Mishra, Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) of Asansol, Dr. Achyutanand Jha, senior security commissioner of Asansol Division among others took part in the Heritage Walk from Railway Officers Rest House to the historic Durand Institute in the morning along with local people and railway employees.

Later Mr Mukherjee released a coffee table book, *The Living Heritage* on the Durand Institute and a brochure, *Preserving the Past for the Future*, published by Asansol Division



of ER.

A documentary film 'An Ode to Durand Institute' was also released.

Speaking on the occasion Mr Mookerjee said that there is a need for society to preserve and restore the heritage of the Raj era of the East Indian Railways for the sake of the coming generations.

He said that there was a time when 1,100 steam locomotives used to run in the country, which has come down to 300 at present, though many such engines are still operating in England.

Mr. Prashant Kumar Mishra, DRM of Asansol said that a Heritage Committee has been formed

under the leadership of Mr. A.K. Burnwal, ADRM of Asansol. "We are planning to revive the old glory of 26 heritage buildings under Asansol Division by March 2019. They include Durand Institute, Chittaranjan Institute, Subhas Institute, Tagore Institute, Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute, Freemasons

Hall, DRM Office and Bungalows, Maheshmunda Station Building and well, Khabathan Station Building etc. In fact the first Heritage Resort of Indian Railways will come up at Madhupur," the DRM added. Most of these buildings are about 150 to two hundred years old.

He also said that the Time

Table sheet of the first train between Howrah and Raniganj that ran on 1 December 1855 has been digitalised, along with photographs, sketches and other important maps and documents of the colonial era.

"We have also paid tributes to the first engineer of EIR, George Turnbull, and have proposed to set up a guided tour, museum, digital museum, cafeteria, Toy Train Ride, Souvenir Shop at the premises of the Durand Institute which has been rechristened as the Vivekananda Institute in 1987 and the first European Institute in India which will be opened for both national and international tourists," Mr Mishra added. Write-ups on the famous personalities who have stayed in and written about the area have been published, including on Sir Rudyard Kipling.

Glimpses of Heritage based News Items published in various News Papers



Bengali Daily – “Ei Somoy”



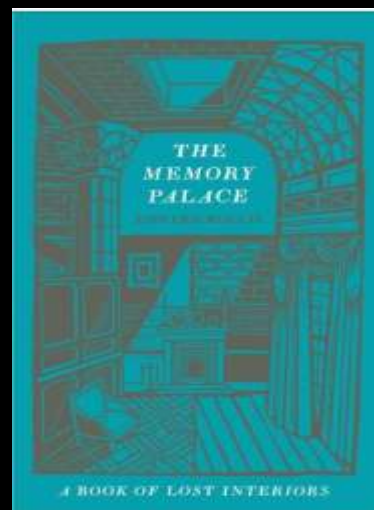
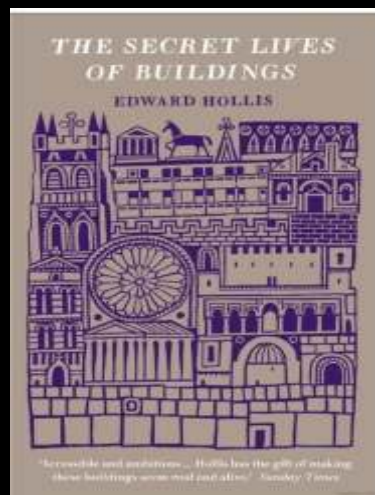
The visit of Prof Edward Hollis to DRM/ASN's bungalow- a Heritage Site



Prof. Edward Hollis studied Architecture at Cambridge and Edinburgh Universities; and practiced as an architect for six years, first in Sri Lanka, in the practice of Geoffrey Bawa, at that time the 'grand old man' of Sri Lankan Architecture, famous for his garden of follies and ruins at Lunuganga; and then in the practice of Richard Murphy, well known for his radical alterations to ancient and historic buildings in and around Edinburgh.

Edward's research interests include the ethics and aesthetics of building re-use and creative writing. His books of stories *The Secret Lives of Buildings* and *The Memory Palace: a Book of Lost Interiors* were both nominated for the Samuel Johnson Prize for literary non-fiction.

In 2012, Hollis became Deputy Director of Research across Edinburgh College of Art. He is now Director of Research ECA, working across the school assisting staff in developing research interests and projects of their own.



Prof Edward Hollis visited DRM/ASN's bungalow, now a Heritage Site (built in 1928) over a High Tea hosted by DRM P. K. Mishra himself on 5th March, 2019. The professor was fascinated by the sprawling bungalow which had kept its magnificent heritage value intact. He took a guided tour of the entire bungalow and appreciated the Heritage Team's efforts in renovation and restoration of all heritage structures in the division. The get together was also attended by the members of the Heritage Committee of ASN div and some chosen members of Kazi Nazrul Islam University, Asansol.



Indian Railways' Heritage Charter (2018)

INDIAN RAILWAYS' HERITAGE CHARTER (IRHC) (2018)

Preamble:

This Charter outlines the commitment of the Indian Railway Administration to restore, preserve and conserve century old rich railway heritage of India.

Objective:

This Charter aims at providing guidelines for Conservation, Preservation, Restoration, Repair and Maintenance of Historic Railway Assets, so as to enable posterity to enjoy and gain knowledge of the past technologies and processes, which have been used during various stages of construction and development of rail-based transportation in India.

Definitions:

- **Heritage Railway Assets** - These include historic and preserved railways, tourist railways, tramways and railway museums, historic fixed and rolling stock, fixed and moving structures and equipment currently in use or otherwise, archival material, drawings, designs and prototype models.
- **Preservation** - The process of keeping a heritage asset safe from decomposition or quality degradation by proper maintenance.
- **Conservation** - The process of stabilising the condition of a heritage asset without undermining its inherent historical or qualitative value in any way.
- **Restoration** - The process of rehabilitating or reconstructing a heritage asset in substantial measure, to regain its previous or original state.
- **Capacity Building** - The process of imparting specialised and customized training to Railway officials for meaningful preservation and conservation of railway heritage assets.

Articles:

- **Article 1:** Scientific and technical skills with facilities required to preserve and ensure safety of historic railway assets should be employed for heritage preservation. Where necessary, traditional skills should be redeveloped and nurtured.
- **Article 2:** Operation of historic and heritage assets using traditional operating procedures and facilitating their presentation in the public domain is essential for larger appreciation of India's rich railway legacy.
- **Article 3:** The preservation and conservation philosophy of heritage railways and assets located in public spaces should encourage participation of stakeholders and community. A metallic plaque/logo of standard design displaying 'railway heritage logo' should be provided on each of the

heritage assets for easy identification and community appreciation. Railways should also organize various activities for creating heritage awareness among community through events at stations and through media.

- **Article 4:** The restoration process of railway assets is highly specialised; this requires understanding of the original designs and specifications, so as to retain and reveal the functional and historical value of such assets.
- **Article 5:** For conservation or restoration of heritage railway assets, the use of original material and techniques is of great importance. If this is not possible due to reasons of safety, legislation or availability, appropriate contemporary substitutes should be carefully identified and documented as part of the conservation or restoration plan.
- **Article 6:** If contemporary safety equipment is required for securing heritage assets, the same should be provided aesthetically and be clearly marked.
- **Article 7:** Wherever later modifications are necessary or missing parts are required to be replaced as part of restoration projects, such modifications need to be visually and materially as near as possible to the original.
- **Article 8:** Preservation and restoration of archival material is a very delicate task. Special skill and utmost care is necessary to preserve such priceless documents by using modern techniques and to bring them to public view. For this, appropriate capacity building measures for railway officials should be undertaken.
- **Article 9:** In view of the steam locomotive being the starting point of railways worldwide and the most visible heritage asset, its preservation and conservation needs special attention. Railways should ensure that the few steam locomotives that are still available in the country be preserved, preferably in working condition or in full steam. Special attention should also be paid to retaining and maintaining operational and maintenance skills as well as equipment for the steam locomotive wherever available. Sufficient staff needs to be engaged as trainees at locations like the Heritage Steam Shed at Rewari to learn and imbibe skills with regard to the steam locomotive.
- **Article 10:** The process of identification, preservation and conservation of railway heritage assets should be mainstreamed as regular activities of the railways.

Conclusion:

Indian Railways are at the crossroads of massive technological, operational and structural change, where old ways are giving way to the new. At this juncture, it is important that uniform guidelines are formulated, which will herald holistic preservation of Railways' priceless legacy across the country. Such an initiative needs to be systematically planned and recorded so as to enable long term sustainability of heritage assets through proper conservation and maintenance over time. This charter aims at fulfilling this vision.

Preserving the past for the future..!!

