

# THE HERITAGE ISSUE

A Quarterly Newsletter by APTi South Asia

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*A Historic Preservation Podcast*



In conversation with Anuradha Parmar from the Urban Design Research Institute, on public-private initiatives in preservation.

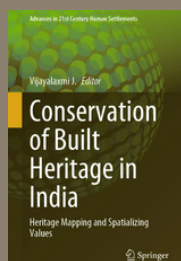
### • Collaboration is the new revival

*Institutionalizing Heritage*



The focus of this feature by Neha Parulekar from the RPG Foundation is on CSR and the large role this key aspect has played in the conservation of historic properties and heritage led regeneration.

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Featuring *Conservation of Built Heritage in India*, a book edited by Dr. Vijayalaxmi J., reviewed by Dr. Michael Tomlan, presenting several case studies.

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Khushi Shah provides a summary of the recently concluded WHV programme for youth in Ahmedabad old city.

### • Call for Opportunities

Jobs, events and more.



A unique, largely untapped resource in historic preservation of properties is engagement; whether it is between stakeholders, enlightening visitors what is at stake and involving corporates and private organisations into taking more ownership. Such collaborations have risen in the past decade but there is a need for creating more opportunities through collaborative efforts and advocacy. This issue of the newsletter establishes such connections by charting their individual journeys through unique initiatives.

To know more, start reading....

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<b>Tejal Shrotriya</b>	Events Coordinator
<b>Vishal Joshi</b>	Social Media Coordinator
<b>Brinda Gaitonde Nayak</b>	Vice-President and Editor
<b>Divya Gupta</b>	Chapter Advisor
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## South Asia

The Association for Preservation Technology International  
L'Association internationale pour la préservation et ses techniques

## *From the Editorial Team*

The theme for this edition of our quarterly newsletter, this time, is *Collaborations*. Or rather exploring the different forms of engagement that would garner support in the preservation field. This could be residents getting together to form associations to beautify their heritage precincts, or corporate organizations that have initiated cultural events or some grassroots level advocacy of historic resources through a cross-continent volunteer training programme. The collective effect of small gestures rippling into bigger movements of building restorations or nominations and urban renewals is tremendous.

With this theme in mind, in our podcast *Best Foot Backwards*, we speak with Anuradha Parmar, the Executive Director of Urban Design Research Institute. UDRI was instrumental in the nomination of the *Victorian and Art Deco ensemble of Mumbai* as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2018, amongst so many other pathbreaking initiatives in the city. Conservation Architect Neha Parulekar, from the RPG Foundation contributes her insights in the essay on *Institutionalizing Heritage*, by explaining the broader applications of Corporate Social Responsibility, and the nuanced approach by RPG in this. We end this edition of *The Heritage Issue* through the first-hand experiences by our very own Khushi Shah on the recently concluded World Heritage Volunteer programme that she conducted for over 10 days, immersing the participants in live workshops, educational sessions and site visits to historic properties. That we advocate the concept of collaboration and engage in it is pretty evident in the fact that 3 of the founders of the APTi South Asia chapter are based in the United States and 3 in India, with several others in varied occupations and nations that are contributors towards another small overture in this vast field of preservation.

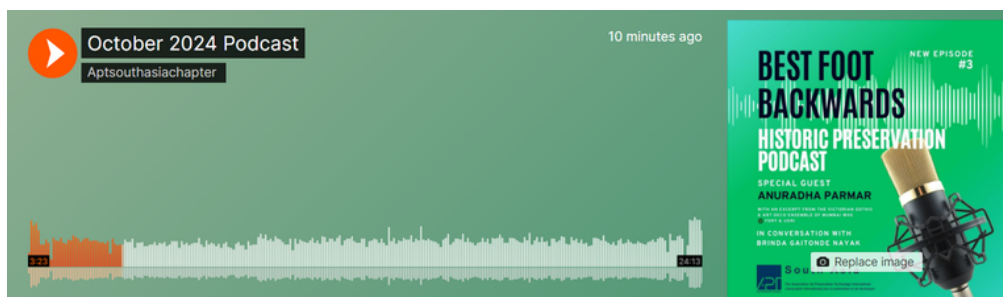
## *Brinda Gaitonde Nayak*



(Left) Our President Khushi Shah with Ananya Bhattacharya at the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee in New Delhi and (Right) Our Trustee Dr. Michael Tomlan with Khushi and Pavan Pedagadi earlier this year at Bengaluru University



In this issue of the podcast *"Best Foot Backwards"*, we proudly present the case of Mumbai. Its journey from historic structures fighting for survival in this fast paced city to finally the nomination of the Victorian and Art Deco ensemble in Mumbai as a World Heritage Site. In conversation with historic preservation architect Brinda Gaitonde Nayak, in conversation with Anuradha Parmar, who charts the historic path for this historic city.



[Best Foot Backwards Podcast | Shortened with Bitly https://bit.ly/3Q6R5N2](https://bit.ly/3Q6R5N2)

## *Collaboration is the new revival*

**Neha Parulekar**

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India, with its rich history, culture, stories, and architecture, is a gold mine of heritage. From UNESCO World Heritage sites to beloved local landmarks, the country stands out as a global destination for tourism. Yet, while heritage conservation is often seen as a niche sector within architecture, it offers some of the most intense experiences. As remarkable restoration efforts continue nationwide, we must pause and reflect: *Is our approach to heritage too limited?* While we celebrate and promote national monuments, it's time to move beyond a monument-centric view of heritage.

Exploring the various facets of conservation has been a rich experience in re-learning my roots while building a sustainable future for our heritage[1]. The 2024-25 budget reflects a significant investment in heritage, with 1,274 crores allocated to the Archaeological Survey of India for conservation efforts, 188 crores for libraries, and 2,479 crores for the tourism sector. These figures highlight the growing recognition of the importance of heritage preservation. However, while government funding plays a key role, the potential for collaboration with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives remains largely untapped.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) driven by family philanthropy and company values is niche and opens new avenues of addressing real needs in society albeit heritage being a small part currently. However, the Dus Spoke CSR Report 2024 has found that only 1.3% of the total sectoral spend of the country is through CSR, while the rest is through Government funding. While we know that a lot of monuments in the country are restored through CSR Funding, this fraction does not appear in the major spends. With a clear idea of what we wish to preserve, conservation as a sector and the broad wings of CSR need to be in a dialogue to understand the need for collaboration. What is the nature of this collaboration? Who are the various stakeholders involved? What is our larger goal?

At the RPG Foundation, through our initiative '*The Heritage Project*' (THP) we have been exploring these very questions for the past four years. Functioning as a stand-alone program for almost 4 years, the project soon broke away from the idea of funding restoration projects. This early understanding that restoration is cost-intensive, the program realized that funding restoration would limit the reach and the real message it wishes to send out into society. India's heritage is vast — spanning tangible, intangible, and natural forms—yet only a small fraction is recognized, let alone preserved. Our goal at *The Heritage Project* (THP) is to revive lesser-known sites through an inclusive model involving governments, communities, and corporates. Not only does this multi-stakeholder model bring inclusivity and a sense of pride but also leverages the strength of every entity involved—in terms of funding, outreach and income generation around the site.

[1] The Economic Times, dated July 23rd, 2024



## ART & ARCHITECTURE

Transform community spaces around heritage precincts



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Creating income opportunities for the local community as stakeholders



## ENVIRONMENT

Increasing green cover and restoring local biodiversity and ecosystem



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## EVENTS & EXPERIENCE

Offer engaging interaction with local culture & history for all ages



*Some of the initiatives of the Worli - Koliwada project undertaken by the RPG Foundation*

RPG foundation through its various programs be it in the space of education, heritage, regenerative agriculture or women empowerment is driven by few simple concepts - addressing actual problems on ground offering innovative solutions that can be scaled. Scale being the operative word here. The only way CSR or any other funding of a cause will be able to maximize its outreach would be if the project can be scaled to match the real need which requires collaboration!

Being cognizant that one entity cannot fund everything in the space of cultural and natural heritage in India, we realized that creation of prototype models for revival can encourage a deeper understanding and enable others to replicate them. A 'Transformation Model' can be created for various sites that need revival, including:

**Art & Architecture** - Transform spaces around heritage sites

**Community Development** - Create income generating opportunities for the local community as stakeholders

**Environment** - Increasing the right type of green, restore local biodiversity and ecosystem

**Events & Experiences** - Offer engaging interaction with the local culture and history for all ages

The Worli Koliwada- our site was our canvas to build a prototype which addresses all these aspects and create a replicable model.

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Located towards the northern tip of the erstwhile Worli island, the Worli Koliwada is home to native Koli population of Mumbai. Identified as an 'urban village' or 'gaothan' this four-square kilometre area is dotted with stories, culture, food, festivity and the stunning Worli Fort. Forgotten with time, this urban village functioned like any other part of the city. The role of THP in Worli Koliwada was to initiate a dialogue of revival with the local community, create a complete narrative with the help of extensive research of the local histories and plan need based interventions through collaboration. The expertise of the team, led by our director Ms. Radha Goenka, was utilised to make the plan for the Worli Koliwada Transformation Project. This was done with the help of an in-house research team with extensive groundwork conducted to understand various aspects of this settlement.



© RPG Foundation - The Heritage Project

*Heritage walks and information brochures curated for the events centered around the fishing village and its heritage-led regeneration providing research and economic opportunities*

The Worli Koliwada is a community driven site with Hindus, Muslims and Christians living in harmony praying to various female deities and protector Goddesses. The Golfa Devi, the guardian goddess protects the village and answers the questions of her devotees with the help of a very beautiful ritual where two silver pellets are placed on her shoulders and the relevant question is asked. If the left pellet falls the answer is 'no' and the right one falls the answer is a 'yes'. The fisherfolk do not set sail into the sea without the permission of the Devi. With grottos of Mother Mary draped in Koli Sarees and the two women saints prayed to at the Peer Durgah, the Koliwada captures the imagination of any visitor.

To share these and many more stories with the world, the strength of storytelling manifested into curated events and experiences for the visitor. These experiences include research books, a children's book, food walks, heritage walks, musical evenings and lots more to encourage visitation.



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Recognising that the community is the largest stakeholder at Worli Koliwada, it was realised that they can be encouraged to preserve their heritage if a sense of pride was instilled in them. The team identified the possibilities to set up micro enterprises for income generation in Koliwada. The 'Chefs of Koliwada' program (now a self-help group registered with the Municipal corporation) involved identifying women home chefs from within the community, train them to cook their local signature Koli heirloom recipes, and teach them to run a business. The ladies cooked in renowned kitchens such as the Masque in Mumbai, were taught how to take orders for events and even cooked for the Food Walks at the Koliwada. With various experiments, this group is now a self-functional unit with a trademark of the Chefs of Koliwada by THP. This model was also replicated in the Versova Koliwada located in the north of the city, which was a request from the Versova Koliwada inhabitants.



© RPG Foundation - The Heritage Project

*A koli fisherwoman (shown here) has proudly channeled her creative culinary talent to include some traditional recipes in her now thriving business and continues promoting this intangible form of cultural heritage through such initiatives*

We also identified youth in Koliwada as volunteers where they were trained by the team to conduct heritage walks. They were taught skills such as public speaking, body language, English training and narration with a script of the research. Their walks are now paid open events in the city promoted by THP on public platforms where they earn from the walks they conduct.

With the city facing issues with the AQI, reducing green and murky oceans it was realised that the environment is as crucial in the revival of any site. In the very dense Koliwada was a playground which was the only large open space for the community. Earlier a dump, this was a barren land along the sea where religious events occurred from time to time with heavy flooding in the rains. Refurbishing this open ground was planned using a two pronged approach: to eradicate the flooding and to create a green open space for all ages to use. The infrastructural interventions involved laying of underground pipes for drain off, natural stone pathways for walking along the periphery, seating in stone, and a cricket pitch. The Gora Dapkal Ground, owned by the local ward of MCGM (Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai) was then handed over to the ward for maintenance and now events, morning walks and community matches are a regular site.



*Beautification as part of the holistic targets of THP*

Another collaboration which we executed was the installation of an artificial reef one kilometre into the sea, off the coast of Worli. Fishing being the most practiced occupation of Koliwada, research showed that the fisherfolk would have to go out for days into the sea as the immediate waters did not offer a good catch. After various surveys, it was observed that the waters near the coast were not conducive for fishing due to waste disposal into the sea. Reefs provide a win-win solution that serves the environment by creating carbon sinks and by increasing biomass, they provide more fishing opportunities to coastal communities. 227 such modules were dropped into the sea which settle along the bed of the ocean- overtime developing a biofilm on their specially designed shapes which slowly bring in fish to breed on them, giving birth to a life cycle in the ocean. This project was done in collaboration with a Pondicherry based organization backed with a team of researchers and scientists as it is only the second project in the country to be implemented. After about 6 months of the installation of the reef, The Heritage Project will collaborate with IIT Mumbai to test the reef, the condition of the biofilm and other important parameters. This project would soon generate better condition for fishing for the locals and enhance the quality of the sea water. This model once proven could be replicated along coasts.

For any site to be open to tourism and visitation, infrastructure plays an important role in binding the various interventions and collaboration becomes crucial for such a large expanse of land. 71 heritage-themed streetlights were installed along the main road and all the by-lanes creating a sense of safety and accessibility for all. Informative and directional signages along all the important stops of the heritage walk created wayfinding without aid.



With increased visitation, and recognition the MCGM concreted the main road leading up to the fort creating accessibility for all. Maintenance of the streetlights was taken up by BEST. The MCGM also plans to illuminate the Worli Fort.



© RPG Foundation - The Heritage Project

*Eye catching and informationally rich signage along the settlement*

Within the community, art played a vital role in creating placemaking. Over 7 artworks in collaboration with renowned artists of the country were painted on walls of public buildings and open spaces. One such was the painting by artist Parag Sonarghare, named 'Aai', the portrait of a Koli woman on the walls of a men's gymnasium. The art depicted the power of a Koli woman who is key to the community- from looking after her home to selling the catch. Another such was a painting that depicts the life of Kolis, along the main fishing jetty. This was painted by the Aravani Art Project, a group of artists from the transgender community who went to Koliwada for a month and by the end of that month were painting art with the members of the community. All these spaces are backdrops to events, popular community spaces which are maintained by the community. Some artwork was also funded by other corporates in collaboration with THP. While creating prototypes for both cultural and natural sites, we are partnering with organisations such as the Bombay Port Trust, the MCGM, and many more.

True heritage revival requires a shift from isolated efforts to a model of collaboration that leverages the strengths of various stakeholders. Through partnership, innovation, and community engagement, we can scale impactful solutions and ensure that India's rich cultural and natural heritage is preserved for future generations.

*Book Discussion -  
Conservation of Built Heritage in India.  
Heritage Mapping and Spatializing Values*

reviewed by **Dr. Michael Tomlan**

**Edited By Vijayalaxmi Kashinath Iyer**

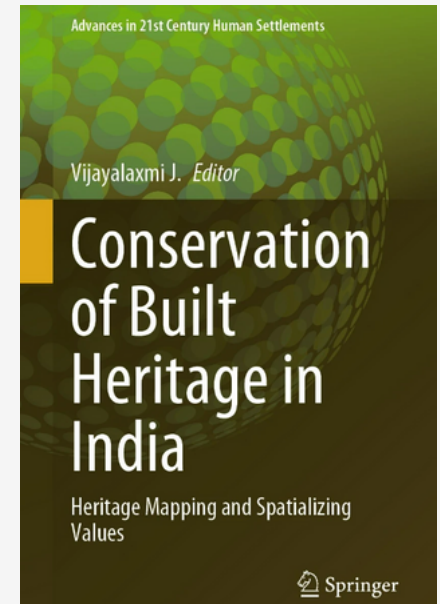
Singapore: Springer Nature, 2023. INR10,001.35/\$119 hardcover and ebook INR 7,480.00/\$89. 219 pages. ISSN 2198-2546 ISSN 2198-2554 (electronic) ISBN 978-981-99-8334-6; ISBN 978-981-99-8335-3 (eBook)

This text is one of several in the “*Advances in 21st Century Human Settlements*” series launched by Springer in 2014. These books discuss smart cities, sustainable development, and new urbanism in East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Africa.

The work contains the recent results of student field research conducted under the direction of Professor Vijayalaxmi Kashinath Iyer at the Department of Architecture in the School of Planning and Architecture at Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh. The editor provides the first chapter, an overview of the challenges, issues, agencies, and technological advances in Indian heritage conservation. She mentions Indian Arts and Crafts as important features in religious, folk, and commercial activities, although many government ministries are involved in different fashions to support them.

The remaining nine chapters are case studies of varying scales. They begin by examining the historic town of Padmanabhapuram’s tourism potential in Tamil Nadu. The documentation of the architectural, natural and cultural features with questionnaires engaged the residents inside the municipal boundaries. Both the tangible and intangible sites are illustrated in a series of maps promoting sustainable practices. Next is the case of Chikkajala Fort, located near Bengaluru, two acres with a small temple, a stepwell and two pillared halls built in different periods. All are photographed and drawn to demonstrate the urban encroachment. The next case revolves around the significance of the Chitnavis Wada in Nagpur, one of which served as the 18th century residence for the ministers of Bhosale. The features included the courtyards, doors, staircases, columns, and brackets, all suggesting respective adaptive use could follow.

Forts and temples abound in India. Typical of the defenses is the Gwalior Fort located in Madhya Pradesh. This case assesses the relationships between archival records and field studies, demonstrating its design to prevent the Mughal attack from the northeast. The maps and photographs here focus on the ramparts, gateways, moats, bastions, and merlons, an architectural marvel high upon a steep hill. The Orissa and West Bengal styles of architecture greatly influenced the temples of the Nagpur region. The next short research paper comments on the temple architecture during the Bhosale rule, assessing the contribution of the craftsmen to create the style of the period.



By contrast to the large and small monuments, most of the building fabric is termed vernacular, that is, more commonplace. In this case study, three buildings selected from Pathanamthitta, Kerala and Bangalore, Karnataka provided survey data. The survey included urban residents who responded to structured questionnaires to identify what they believed were the requirements modern lifestyle. The authors assumed this would help create design guidelines for new building construction. The eighth entry addresses the public perception of the significance of heritage conservation in promoting community well-being. The surveyors showed a positive correlation by sampling 106 teachers from the schools and colleges in Amaravati Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, using a questionnaire with the Semantic Differential Scale (SDS) and Likert Scale. Respondents felt 'happy' about cultural heritage and thought it promotes community well-being.

The ninth chapter extends the examination of people's opinions, using the Delphi method to avoid conflicts between experts and promote participation. In this case, a Chettinad mansion turned into a heritage hotel in Ramachandrapuram, Kadiapatti, in Tamil Nadu, is examined for its potential adaptive use after reviewing the physical, economic, functional, technological, social, and legal obsolescences. The final chapter is the joint effort of three students who evaluated the adaptive use potential of Victoria Public Hall in Chennai. The attempt, in this case is to take initiatives to reduce obsolescence to reduce future expenditures.

Taken as a whole, this is an admirable collection of student work, demonstrating exercises young designers can undertake to examine conservation alternatives. The students demonstrate their use of different software tools, like Maya and Rhino, to make the exterior model of the buildings, with mapping and photography. In the later chapters, some attention to public perceptions is posited as providing the acceptance of built heritage, adapting vernacular solutions to design, and assessing the built heritage for its potential for adaptive use as a protective mechanism. Sadly, Springer has priced the book out of reach for most students in Indian design programs, even in the digital version. Perhaps some libraries will make it more accessible.



## *Starting Young to care for the Old - UNESCO World Heritage Volunteer program*

**Ahmedabad through the lens of heritage**

**Khushi Shah**



The World Heritage Volunteers 2024 titled 'Ahmedabad: Through the lens of Heritage' was conducted by Khushtar Heritage Collective in partnership with APT South Asia chapter and other organizations in the Historic City of Ahmedabad. It was a highly engaging and educational event that aimed to immerse participants in both tangible and intangible aspects of heritage conservation. The program was designed to offer hands-on experience with various documentation technologies, combined with cultural performances and heritage walks to deepen the understanding of Ahmedabad's heritage. The event was spread over 10 days, incorporating a blend of expert-led sessions, practical workshops, and site visits.

The World Heritage Volunteers 2024 workshop commenced on 8th August 2024, bringing together 11 participants from both national and international regions. The workshop began with an introduction to Ahmedabad, setting the stage for participants to explore what makes the city a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The first day featured expert sessions led by prominent figures in the field of heritage conservation. Mr. Debashish Nayak, a renowned heritage management expert and a pioneer in the restoration and conservation of Ahmedabad's Old City, shared his insights on the city's historical significance. He was followed by Mr. Ashish Trambadia, Director of the Ahmedabad World Heritage City Trust, who discussed Ahmedabad's journey towards getting nominated as India's first UNESCO World Heritage City. Mr. Omkar Adhikari, an expert in heritage conservation and technology, highlighted the importance of hands-on training and the application of advanced tools like photogrammetry and 3D scanning, which would form a key part of the workshop.



The inaugural day ended on a cultural high note with a Performance Night, featuring various emerging artists of Ahmedabad. The performance beautifully encapsulated the essence of Ahmedabad's intangible heritage, blending spiritual music with its historical richness.



*Immersive cultural experiences offered participants an opportunity to connect emotionally with the city's heritage, setting the tone for the days ahead.*

On the second day of the program, participants embarked on a heritage walk through Ahmedabad's historic old city, a UNESCO World Heritage site. This walk was carefully curated to offer an immersive experience, allowing participants to explore the rich architectural heritage and the living cultural landscape of one of India's oldest urban settlements.

This was followed by the activity of manual documentation. Participants delved into manual documentation techniques, a fundamental skill in heritage conservation. This session emphasized the precision and methodical approach required to capture the architectural and cultural significance of heritage sites. The focus was on developing participants' abilities to systematically document urban environments, an essential practice for conservation, academic research, and architectural analysis.

The following day, the workshop continued where the participants were treated to an in-depth session titled "Case Study of Structural Assessment and Restoration of Pol Houses of Ahmedabad", facilitated by Mr. Mehul Shah. The session provided a thorough exploration of the unique architectural and cultural value of Pol houses, alongside detailed discussions on the methods and challenges of structural assessment and restoration.

The 5th and 6th days of the workshop were dedicated to Photogrammetry, where participants were introduced to a cutting-edge technology used to create highly accurate 3D models of heritage structures using photography. The objective of this session was to familiarize participants with the step-by-step process of photogrammetry and its application in heritage conservation. The training session was then followed by hands-on learning where participants captured their own pictures and modelled them into the software to create their own 3D structures.

On the 7th day, participants were given the opportunity to engage with advanced Lidar scanning technology and were introduced to Building Information Modeling (BIM). This session was designed to demonstrate how modern digital tools are transforming the field of heritage conservation, particularly in the areas of structural analysis and 3D documentation. Participants learned about the integration of Lidar-generated point clouds into BIM, helping them understand how to create detailed digital models for heritage management.



*Inside the vibrant courtyards of Ahmedabad Pol houses where participants got to engage in hands-on documentation, structural analysis and assessments.*

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This was followed by a session on structural assessment on day 8, which introduced participants to various methodologies for assessing the structural integrity of heritage buildings, with a special emphasis on timber structures and the use of non-destructive testing (NDT) techniques. Furthermore, in order to give participants a holistic approach on the tangible and intangible heritage, sessions were curated in collaboration with APTi South Asia Chapter. The Intangible Heritage Session offered participants a profound exploration of the cultural significance of traditional practices in Ahmedabad. This session emphasized the importance of intangible heritage as a vital aspect of cultural identity and community cohesion. Additionally, a block printing workshop was also organized for the participants to celebrate the beautiful art and crafts heritage of the city.



*Left: Participants at the block printing workshop*

*Right: Online session on World Heritage Sites and Intangible Cultural Heritage*

The program concluded with the inauguration of the exhibition attended by participants, facilitators, local heritage enthusiasts, and members of the community. The event concluded with an exhibition showcasing the work of the participants. The exhibition included photographs, 3D models, manual documentation, and block printing samples, representing the tangible and intangible heritage of Ahmedabad.



## *Call for Opportunities*

### **Pastforward 2024 conference**

Because preservation is an interconnected practice, PastForward 2024 sessions and speakers will address three biggest challenges: Creating Climate Resilience Through Historic Preservation, Ensuring a Representative Preservation Movement, and Encouraging Historic Preservation-Based Community Development.

Date: Oct 28 - 30, 2024.

Venue: New Orleans, USA

For more information, visit: [National Preservation Conference](#)



### **Heritage Documentation Training Grant**

The program is designed to empower individuals with new skills to preserve and promote cultural heritage as well as build capacity and adoption of digital documentation techniques within the cultural heritage community. Our goal is to disseminate best practices and reliable methodologies for capturing and processing 3D heritage data, empowering field practitioners to obtain precise datasets for diverse applications. Awardees are encouraged to carry these acquired skills into their local communities and professional networks, using them to address tangible conservation and restoration challenges or raise awareness of their local heritage.

Application Deadline: November 1st, 2024 at 11:59 pm PDT

Recipient Notification: November 15th, 2024

Training Cohort Begins: December 16th, 2024

For more information, visit: [CyArk Documentation grant](#)



## *APTi Events*



**Tuesday, July 16**  
**12:00 pm - 2:00 pm Eastern (US)**

*Presented by APT's Sustainable Preservation Technical Committee*

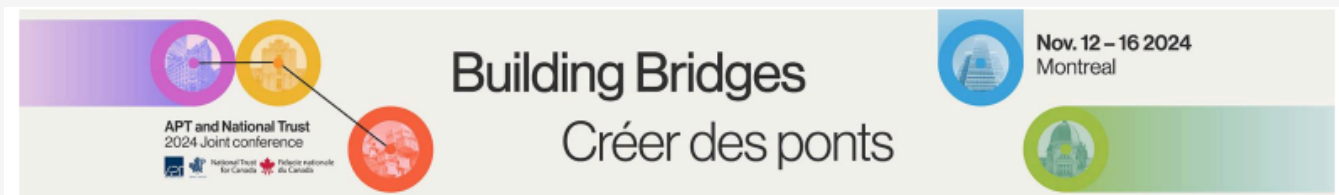
### **Technical Committee on Sustainable Preservation Webinar Series: Sustainable Repair and Retrofit of Historic Building Envelopes**

The webinar series will focus on assessment of deficiencies and treatment options for walls and windows, roofs, foundations, along with design and operational considerations for energy reduction, climate response and facade hardening retrofits.

Date: October 30, 2024.

Venue: online webinar

For more information, visit: [APTi webinars](#)



### **International Conference- BUILDING BRIDGES, Connecting cultures, places and practices**

The Association for Preservation Technology (APT), National Trust for Canada, and Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP) have joined forces, once again, to present this conference entitled Building Bridges. The conference will focus on connecting places, cultures, and practices in order to bridge the knowledge gap and gain new insights upon the ongoing challenges in historic preservation, climate resiliency, and social equity.

Date: Nov 12 - 16, 2024

Location: Montreal, Quebec, Canada

For more information, visit: [Montreal Annual APTi conference](#)

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