

# **HERITAGE TRANSPORT MUSEUM**

**TAORU, GURGAON, INDIA**

**IATM - SKILLBRIDGE REPORT- SEPTEMBER -2016**

**Project Title – The Study of Managerial Aspects at a Transport  
Museum**

**Home Museum – Heritage Transport Museum, Taoru, Gurgaon**

**Host Museum – Verkehrsmuseum, Dresden, Germany**

**Host Museum Coordinator – Mr. Joachim Breuning, Director**

**Home Museum Fellow – Ragini Bhat, Curator**



## **Abstract**

The project has been conceived with the aim of study and research upon the functioning of transport museum, with special reference to Verkehrsmuseum (Transport Museum) Dresden. It entails the research upon the various functionalities going into the managing a transport museum. The emphasis is laid upon the collection management as well as the public programmes devised by the museum. The report covers the in depth detailing of the collections of the museum, information management system, education imparted to various target groups and the media of promoting various museum programmes.

## **Acknowledgement**

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**I would like to express my gratitude to the whole team of Verkehrsmuseum Dresden, all my colleagues, my parents and my friends.**

## **Introduction:**

History of Verkehrsmuseum (Transport Museum) Dresden

The Transport Museum of Dresden is positioned in the historical Renaissance building 'Johanneum', which was a horse stable of the Dresden castle. The purpose of the museum was first to display and store the collections of Saxon Railways, and the museum started in 1952.

Now the museum houses diverse collections about the transport History of Saxony, and also from some other parts of the world. The collection is arranged within the thematic spaces of museum.

The Museum offers an extensive range of public programmes for various groups of target audiences like small children and adults, it includes audiences with diverse interest. It also holds special exhibitions and interactive programmes with the visitors.

The Public relations department of the museum is very active and does the promotion of museums events, programmes and activities through print and social media.

The library and archives is a rich source of reference and research on the history of transport of Saxony and other parts of Germany. It has vast collection of rare old photographs, advertisements, prints, postcards, drawings, maps journals and books.

Hence, the detailed report presents a framework of the experiences, observations and the lessons learnt at Transport Museum Dresden during the time of fellowship. The meetings with different curators at the museum have been well coordinated, these gave me an insight into the core of the collections & archives, organization of the exhibitions, educational programmes and other public events. It also helped me to draw some

comparison with the collections at Heritage Transport Museum in order to widen the scope of research.

## **Study of the Collections at the Museum and the organization of the exhibition space:**

The Museum has a huge collection of Street transport, railways, aviation and water transport. The exhibition spaces are thematically arranged.

### **Street Transport**

The exhibitions begin with showcasing the history of street transport. The concept of the development of wheel is portrayed through a small animated video clip, and a big image of horse stable with horses. The image is the testimony of the era when the building was in use as a horse stable.

This section beautifully portrays the growth of street transport in a chronological manner. The shoes displayed at the beginning are symbolic of the travel through feet and the progress of roads for pedestrians. Light is thrown on the cycling industry with the coming of Velocipede in 1818. The display is contextualized in an interesting manner with the use of props like clothing for women influenced by the cycling industry.

The introduction to the automobiles begins with the replicas of the '**First's**', a steam car followed by another replica of Carl Benz's patented three wheeled automobile, which was the first petrol driven vehicle ever, and Daimler's petroleum driven Reitwagen. The street transport exhibition is further expanded by the display of the automobiles in the form of cars, motor scooters and motorcycles along with the memorabilia. The labels and the interpretation panels within the section highlight how social and economic factors started influencing the automobiles.

## Some Highlights:

The Great Depression, when various German automobile manufacturers faced hard times to sell the surplus vehicles.

The reconstruction period in the (GDR) East Germany, and its effect on automobile sale.

World War influence on the different modes of transportation and one fine example is the fold up bicycle used by Army during World War I.

The coming of the Berlin wall, and, mobility of people within the two spheres of the divided Germany.

The coming of modern modes of transportation in 1990s.



Street Transport



## Railway – Deutsche Reichbahn & Deutsche Bundesbahn

The Rail transport exhibition is designed to narrate the stages of development of Saxon and East German railways. The exhibits are in the form of original rail coaches and rail models, amongst them 'Muldenthal' is the oldest original steam locomotive, another highlight is the replica of the first locomotive built in Germany the 'Saxonia', and an interesting exhibit is created around Johann Andreas Schubert, the brainchild behind 'Saxonia'. One can also take note of the world's most powerful rail engine. This section takes one to

the era when Leipzig- Dresden railway line was introduced. This exhibition is supported by rare photographs and ephemera. Another important aspect covered in this section is the history of German Federal Railway (Deutsche Bundesbahn).



**Railways**



## **Air Transport**

The air transport section is another well conceptualized exhibition, which begins with the model figures of the pioneers of the aviation industry in East Germany pointing towards exhibits in the form of hot air balloon, Zeppelin airship, Glider (Lilienthal), monoplane and the creation of Lufthansa. The whole exhibition subsequently presents the chronology of air transport history through photographs, advertisements, memorabilia, and originals and replicas of aircrafts. Each and every object leads towards the stories of aeroplane becoming the means of transport. An important subject touched upon in this exhibition is the role of aviation industry in the World War II. There is also a separate section dedicated to the history of Lufthansa i.e. the use of aircraft for public transport. Apart from this, one can get hands on with some experimental interactive exhibits like 14 cylinder Gnome double omega rotary engine, it is really full of excitement to tantalize ears with its roaring sound. Another interesting display is of the old airlines advertisements from Germany.



**Air Transport**



## **Water Transport**

The water transport section covers the history of navigation in the state of Saxony. The models of the boats and ships form this display together with technical tools and machines.



**Water Transport**



## **Collection at the Depositories**

The Museum has a few depositories which are located offsite. The depositories are working as the storage houses for the collection which is not in the exhibition area. These depositories are accessible to visitors for the reference and research work on the basis of prior bookings, and these are checked and



maintained time to time. There is a huge storage area within the museum, which is used for keeping the collection of Uniforms and archival material.

### **Database Management**

The background information and research about the collection is stored in the Information management system called Museum Plus. The information is organized within the categories as per the theme and type. It forms an easy access tool for research and retrieval.

### **Children's Area for fun and Learning & Museum Education:**

In the museum there is lot of fun and education for children. The Traffic Garden allows children to drive the mini cars in a defined path with the help of mini traffic signals. The interactive display in the aviation section is a fun filled zone explaining the phenomenon of air, apart from that there is another children's activity space educating about the phenomena of speed and friction and the mini railway track with the engine moving over this. A fun space has been designed for the very young kids, which attract their attention with the design and colour scheme. Special guided tours are conducted both for children and adults as well. Schools groups are provided with special educational kit after the tour, this kit can be used by school teachers to test the understanding of the children about museum. There are a lot of fun activities carried out by the museum educators, one of the interesting activities amongst them is the creation of small cars out of the used water bottles. For the outreach work, museum has collaborations with University, schools and art institutions.

## Children's fun & learning space



## Public Relations:

The public relations department performs the three different activities i.e. Social media coverage, Event management and Marketing. The lobby area on the ground floor of the museum is used for the events. The different programmes of the museum and the events are promoted through social media on Facebook & Twitter, and the website is multilingual. Several events organized during the month of August and September were the Steam Ship Festival, Sachsen Classic 2016 (the car rally), the museum participated with its Car 'Hillman Minx', Dinner and museum visit for the railway company, a talk around the special exhibition – Migration, and Education Day at the museum,

in the education day different companies organized the kiosks in the museum and gave the counseling about the job prospects in them. The department is also responsible for the creation of the brochures, catalogues and other promotional materials. The museum also gets support from the Automobile companies like Audi, Volkswagen etc for promotion.



Sachsen Classic



Organizing Event for a group

### **Library & Archives:**

The museum has a huge collection of books and archival material like postcards, posters, photographs, maps brochures and pamphlets. The database of the books and archival documents is managed within the Museum plus. The books are based on the history of transport in Germany and other parts of Europe. And the archives are a rich source of information about

the transport history and the impact of certain social, political and economic events on the progress of transport system in Germany.

### **Special Exhibition – Migration:**

The museum also had a special exhibition titled ‘Migration’ going on. The exhibition presents the storyline emphasizing the role to different vehicles like railways, steamships, carts etc. in the migration of people from one place to other. Exhibition throws light on the individuals and their stories, why and from where they migrated.

The display is laid using the models and the real vehicles that have been part of the process of migration. The subsidiary materials like photographs make it more comprehensible. In each of the displays one can find the heart touching story of each individual. And the display is accompanied with the recorded interview of the person. The exhibition presents an overview of the migration taking place on global level.



**Some glimpses from Migration Exhibition**

## **Other Transport Museums Visited during the Project:**

**Depository of Deutsche Bahn Museum Nurnberg** - It houses the old locomotives and railway carriages and the interesting collection of railway tracks.

**Auto museum Nossen:** It houses the huge collection of the European automobiles, the visit to the museum was organized by the team of Verkehrsmuseum Dresden in order to take the details of MZ Bikes which shall be part of the upcoming exhibition about the MZs.

**August Horch Museum Zwickau:** The museum and the adjacent areas were part of former Audi factory. Family Horch Mansion is located right next to the factory. The exhibits and the artifacts are placed in the time reference background and scenes taking one into a journey through time. It presents the story of the formation of 'Auto Union' of DKW, Horch, Audi and Wanderer.

**Zugferde Museum** (Draught Horse Museum) Near Hamburg – The Museum has the collection dealing with horse stables, the research is focused on the use of draught horses in trade, industries, post services and military.

### **Outcome:**

As a result of the experience gained at the Verkehrsmuseum Dresden, and the other museums visited in Germany, the practical solutions will be integrated within the working modules of various departments at Heritage Transport Museum. This learning exchange programme opens the scope for further exchanges between the museums in terms of exhibitions, workshops and publications.