

Documentation of Bharuchi Vahora Community

[Golden Memories]

North West England - Section 1

Imtiaz Patel Varediawala Dip., MSc.

Imtiaz Patel Varediawala Dip., MSc. (Editor and Principal Researcher) – Imtiaz Patel Varediawala of Blackburn-UK was born in Palej-Gujarat-India and educated in Miyagam Karjan, Baroda-Gujarat-India and also in the UK. He has worked for Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council-UK, at Blackburn Museum and Art Galleries as the Development Officer for South Asian Arts for over ten years. He completed his Diploma in Islamic Studies from Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester-UK.

He has been working for the Local Health Authority NHS for over 22 years as the HIV Prevention and Community Sexual Health Development Officer with the responsibility to develop appropriate services and policies on sexual health for the Asian communities. He completed his MSc. in Public Health and Health Promotion degree from the University of Lancaster, Lancaster-UK.

He has extensive interest, experience and commitment in voluntary and community empowerment activities. He is a writer/editor/researcher of many subjects like South Asian Art, History and Culture, Community History and Heritage, Public Health particularly, HIV Health Promotion and Education, World Religions, Interfaith Issues, Indo-British Political and Historical Relations. He has been founding member and has been serving number of leading local, regional, national and international community and charity organisations in his various capacity, including UK Peace Mission, Blackburn Lions Club, Gujarati Writers' Guild-UK, Urdu Institute-UK, India League-UK, HIV/AIDS Overseas Programme-UK/India, ILM-UK, Vahora Voice UK, and Britasian Buzz Community Media Centre-UK. He is a freelance journalist and researcher as well.

He has edited many books, including “Bharuchi Vahora Patel-A Brief History”, in collaboration with the members of the Gujarati Writers' Guild-UK, “Journey-Documenting the History and Heritage of Pakistani communities living in Lancashire-UK” in collaboration with Dr A K Shakoor MBE, “Golden Memories – Part 1 - Documenting the History and Heritage of the South Asian Communities living in Lancashire-UK” in collaboration with Dr A K Shakoor MBE and group of volunteers. He was the Sub-Editor of the Community Bilingual Magazine “Navayug-New Era”, and Community Trilingual Magazine “Awaz-A Voice”. He is the Principal Editor of the Gujarati Section for the “Britasian Buzz Magazine”. He is the Programme Co-ordinator and Presenter for the B Buzz online TV Channel-B Buzz Community Media Centre-UK.

As a former councillor for Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, he has been very active in British politics and contested many elections, including parliamentary election and held responsible positions in respective British Political Parties. Imtiaz takes keen interest in South Asian history, art and culture, world politics especially political affairs of South Asia, education, Interfaith and multicultural dialogues.



**West Brookhouse
Community Association**

Striving for an Improved Lifestyle

GOLDEN MEMORIES – Documentation of Bharuchi Vahora Community –

Early Settlers – North West – England - UK

(Connecting Communities through History and Our Heritage)

Heritage Project-Blackburn-UK

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**“Golden Memories – Bharuchi Vahora Community-Early Settlers”
(Heritage Project – Blackburn – UK)**

(Connecting Communities through History and Our Heritage)

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**Imtiaz Patel with the Mayor of Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Cllr Zamir Khan attending one of the Heritage Project Event-Blackburn**

Project - Introduction and Acknowledgement:

By: Imtiaz Patel Varediawala Dip., MSc.

Heritage is something that everyone should value and see as an important part of themselves. The reason for this is that a person's heritage and his/her roots are a part of them, it is the very thing that has gotten them to where they are now and also predicts where they will be in the future. The spirit and the direction of the community are founded upon and reflected in its historic heritage.

The preservation of peoples heritage and memories about their past life is in the public interest so that its vital legacy of culture, education, traditions, inspirational values, economic and other useful information can be maintained and enriched for future generations.

There can be a different type of heritage such as cultural heritage, customs, beliefs, traditions, costumes, festivals, and even food heritage. Documentation, preservation and promotion of this type of heritage is important and the present generation should value and appreciate this as it provides an indication for their identity.

West Brookhouse Community Association (Blackburn-UK) is to promote the benefit of the community members without distinction of race, sex, ethnic, sexual orientation, disability or of political, religious or other opinions by associating with its relevant partners in a common effort to advance education, health and to provide facilities of social welfare with the object of improving the quality and condition of life.

In order to achieve our aims and objectives, we regularly organise activities like, workshops, debates, seminars, and discussion sessions. We host and organise innovative and creative projects like Suffering In Silence, Old is Bold, Sweet Life, Forget Me Not, and Can You Hear Me? These projects are aimed at young people, older people and women's issues empowering them with information, raising awareness including their confidence and involvement. The WBCA wants to create and sustain a society where all its citizens are valued, respected, happy and healthy. We are here to break barriers and build bridges.

"Golden Memories-Soneri Yadoo" project aim is to document and examine the experiences of older generations of Asians who were the

first settlers who mainly arrived from India and Pakistan and their very fascinating journey of settling through to the second and the third generation. The documentation of each story proved to be very valuable in helping each generation understand one another much better. The project proved to be useful for people from other communities to learn, understand and appreciate the Asian history, past, heritage and culture of multicultural Britain for more than 50 years contributing towards the growth and advancement. It has removed many myths and misconceptions about the migrant community and created community cohesion, particularly within the indigenous population.

We hope that this material would prove to be a useful resource. The researcher, the Project Worker, Volunteers, the typesetter, the designer, and the editorial team made every possible effort to reflect the true picture and sentiment of the participants in every story included in our final product, however, as a participant if you think that as a team we have not met up with your expectation or we have made any errors unknowingly, we would like to apologise, and perhaps we would welcome your feedback/observations for future improvements. Please complete the feedback/suggestion form and send it back to us on the postal address or on the email address provided.

We are thankful to our partner organisations Gujarati Writers Guild-UK, Gujarati Writers Association, Shama Asian Womens Group, Ethnic Minority Development Association, Older People's Forum, Institute of Urdu Culture and Literature, Council staff, staff and members of the voluntary groups, local councillors and community representatives, a number of volunteers Shabnam, Shahida, Hanifa, Zaki, Saleem, Faheem, Amrit Kaur, Hemangini, Saleha, Zainub, Rashid, Zakir, Nasar, Suresh Dabhi (artist), Ismail Lorgat (artist), BBuzz Community Media Centre-Bolton and

many more. Without their contribution, participation and hard work, this project would not have been successful and fruitful.

The Trustees and Members of the Advisory Board, Lord Adam Patel of Blackburn, Mr Yunus Natha, Mr Moosa Jangaria, Mr Vali Ahmed, Mr Imtiaz Patel Varediawala, Miss Hanifa Patel, Idris Natha, Elizabeth Zunder and others are pleased to offer their services for community development and thanking everyone for making this project successful. So many memories to cherish. Thank you all.



Village – Segva – Bharuch – Gujarat –India

British and South Asian Connection:

By: Imtiaz Patel Varediawala Dip., MSc

Many people living in Britain today have their origin in other countries. They can trace their roots to regions throughout the world, such as Europe, the Middle East, Africa, the Caribbean and Asia, including countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

Britain is proud of its tradition of offering welcome and safety to people belonging to different faiths and cultures. Britain is proud to be a multicultural nation accommodating all faiths, cultures and traditions.

After the Second World War (1939-45), there was a huge task of rebuilding Britain. There were not enough people to do the work, so the British government encouraged people, especially from the places with their historical link to come to the UK to help with the reconstruction.

During the 1950s, there was still a shortage of labour in the UK. The UK government encouraged immigration in the 1950s for economic reasons and to work in developing industries. Textile and engineering firms from the north of England sent agents to India and Pakistan to find workers.

The bulk of the North West of England's Asian's communities arrived during the 1960's, in the areas of Blackburn, Preston, Bolton, Accrington, Burnley, Nelson, Colne, Rochdale and Manchester in response to a call from the Commonwealth leader for workers to meet the demands of the labour shortage,

The voucher system gave opportunity for early settlers to arrange jobs and voucher for their relatives and friends. Most of the early settlers never came to settle here permanently, but things changed and they decided to settle here with their families.

The remaining stories will be told by our participants in relation to their remarkable journey from South Asia to Britain.



Blackburn with Darwen Old & New Town Hall, Blackburn