

To support:



Indian Association Zürich

Sixty Years of Swiss-Indian Friendship!

Indian summer festival 2008

Integral Coach Factory at Perambur

It goes years back, me playing as a little boy with my grandfather Mr. Walter Braem with his model railway in his cellar. He was addicted to railways and loved it – railway was his life – globally he knew all about it and worked and travelled in the field. I loved his stories.

The most fascinating part was always when he told me about the years he spent in India, setting up the **ICF “Integral Coach Factory”** at Perambur back in the fifties. He did the mission for (Waggonfabrik Schlieren) M/s Car and Elevator Manufacturing Corporation Ltd., Schlieren-Zurich (Switzerland).

The picture full stories - how he travelled to- and explored India, having thousands of people building a factory “ICF”, living in a different climate and thinking of my mam playing with elephants.

The day when he got visitors of his Indian work mate, family Swarup, I knew it - I will travel to India – I have to learn more about it and I have to see “his factory”. This was driven at the time his friends visiting our family in Switzerland. I was touched by them, so friendly, openhearted people, the colour of their beautiful saris.... they told me about the variety of flavours and spices.



In Nov. 1996 I was ready for takeoff after finishing my studies and working at the same time. I took my mother along to Calcutta to visit her school friends. I contacted the Family Swarup in Jamnagar and Mumbai for assistance to arrange a visit at ICF. I told them about my unspoken childhood commitment to my grandfather, which passed away in the meantime to visit “his” factory.

After a visit in Jamnagar and Mumbai it was arranged –Time and date was fixed. I had this letter in my hand and carried it carefully with me around in India. It was the key to my commitment.

Government of India
Ministry of Railways
(Railway Board)

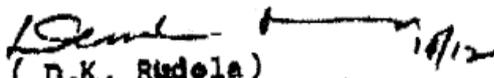
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New Delhi, dt. 11.12.1996.

The General Manager,
Integral Coach Factory,
Madras.

Sub: Permission to foreign nationals to visit
Indian Railways Installations.

This office has no objection to the visit of Mr. Lukas Baumann from Swiss Car Elevator Manufacturing co., Gohliran, Zurich at ICF/Madras on 13.12.1996 from Political/Security Angle. It is also advised that relevant areas to be shown be decided at your own level and no photography be permitted as per extant security instructions.


(D.K. Risdola)
Director Mech. Engg. (PU),
Railway Board.

When I finally arrived in Chennai/Madras – travelling as a backpacker - I stayed at a friends place and had just to provide my address to ICF to let them know where to pick me up. - I did so – Early morning hectic in the house the mother of my friend running into my bedroom: Lukas - Lukas - The ministers' limousine and escort is in front of the house. I felt embarrassed. No one told me about this!

My Indian friends dressed me up - and - off I jumped in the Limo and hit the road. At ICF the CEO invited me for tee and cakes. I had a little present ready for him and brought a personal photo album with me to show him. Before I got a chance to hand it over he introduced me to all the people waiting next door.

Photos got taken - and he presented on a big wall with photo prints - the history of ICF - photos of my grandfather from day one till the production was running. Suddenly he told me that some pictures are missing of a couple of important visitors and of several occasions. I showed him my little photo album which I brought along. After he had a closer look I got the biggest hug ever. This was his response and I had no clue what's happened to him. He found photos in it to fulfill the ICF history wall. He copied the photos of



ICF was inaugurated by the then Prime Minister of India Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on 02 Oct 1955. Production began in a modest manner in 1955 with the manufacture of seven third class coach shells. Today the coach factory produces more than 1100 coaches of more than 170 varieties.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Mr. Walter Braem (CEO), Mr. K. Sadagopan (CAO), Mr. Shri Lal Bahadur Sastri (Minist of Railways) Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru the Prime Minister

Such as of, Dalai Lama, as one of H.R. the Duke of Edinburgh receiving the Silver Coach Model handed over by Shri K. Swarup, Chief Mechanical Engineer. It made me very happy to be a little teeny part of my grandfathers ICF story.

After all, I got a great tour by Limousine passing through all, actually some of the production halls. They showed me the old part of my grandfathers set up such as the latest technology, the school and hospital.

This day will stay in my mind. India is an aspiring country with great possibilities as you see at example of ICF.

Me being based back in Switzerland, after my time in India and working in Australia, it is nice to run and establish the fund boutique of the Swiss Private Bank E. Gutzwiller & Cie, Banquiers, Basel, (founded 1886) which used to have business ties with India as well. This was in 1883 by Carl Gutzwiller. This allows me having the exiting thoughts of establishing sooner or later again business with India to keep up the tradition of our forefathers. It's nice to have close family friends in India to keep me posted in regards of opportunities for Gutzwiller FUNDS in India.



Actually I planned to stay in India one month; I ended up with enjoyable three months. Time runs different - tee tastes better – fascinating culture – proud people – delicious food – incredible landscape and architecture –

Lukas Baumann 1996