

President's Memo

by Jim Pierce

Who is That Guy?

Well, now after that momentous occasion of being elected President of ACI, things are beginning to settle down. For those of you unable to attend the General Session at the recent Institute convention in Denver, I repeat my sincere "thank you" for electing me as your President. When you reach this position and consider who your predecessors are, it is indeed a humbling experience. I am honored to have this opportunity.

As I moved around the country during my career, I was able to get to know many of you. However, the vast majority of the membership may well wonder "Who is that guy?" For some of you that may be just a rhetorical question and you don't care; nonetheless, here's a brief resume of your new President.

My affiliation with concrete began during my time at Purdue University. My professors were great instructors and, perhaps just as importantly, they also encouraged students to participate in standards development organizations. Looking back, I see how significant this was in developing my awareness of the value of such organizations to my future work and career. As ACI members, perhaps we all need to encourage this same participation among students and co-workers with whom we have regular contact, to enhance both their professional growth and the quality of our organization.

My practical experience with concrete began with the New York State Department of Transportation. Though my first job was with that "black concrete," I quickly moved to a portland cement concrete paving job. This was only summer work, but so important in developing my knowledge base.

After completing my military obligation, I started working for the Bureau of Reclamation in its Concrete Laboratory. By participating in research and many pre-construction investigations for several large dams and other structures, I began to accumulate more fundamental knowledge of concrete technology. My supervisors and colleagues at the Bureau were invaluable in my continuing professional development and education. During this time, I also began doing "behind the scenes" work for some ACI committees.

After several years with the Bureau, I decided I needed to broaden my perspective in the field of concrete and started working for Martin Marietta Cement as a technical service engineer. The director of technical services at that time was very supportive of my participation in ACI and I became an official member. I was a little timid at first (I'm sure there are many who wish I still retained that trait!) and was mostly just an observer, primarily attending committee meetings to learn from others.



A downturn in the construction industry prompted my return to the Bureau of Reclamation and the Concrete Laboratory in Denver. Our branch chief understood the advantages of ACI participation and supported active involvement — even to the extent of limiting his participation so others could expand theirs. During this tenure, I became very involved in ACI activities, mostly via technical committees.

As you can see, I was fortunate to have many mentors and supporters along the way. It was this unselfish technology transfer that made it possible for me to have a successful career. This same philosophy is very evident throughout ACI and readily explains why I believe ACI's members are its most important asset!

Together the membership can accomplish great things. The Institute's needs and goals are too vast for any individual to accomplish alone so, as I look forward to the year ahead, I also look forward to your help.

In future memos, I plan to discuss some of ACI's important issues including membership, chapters, and our strategic plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim". The signature is stylized and cursive.

President's Memo

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ACI's Connectivity

First, a quiz for you. Did you really miss being able to read a President's Memo last month? Due to my travel schedule, my "other job," and a flooded basement, I missed the submittal deadline for the June issue. If you believe the President's Memos are an asset to *Concrete International* and to you, or at least interesting, please let me know. Or, if you believe the June issue was better because it didn't have a memo from me, please let me know that too. Now on to this month's memo.

ACI International is fortunate that its state of connectivity is very viable and broad-based. My dictionary defines "connectivity" as being joined or linked together. ACI International is linked worldwide through its members, chapters, and Affiliated International Societies (AIS).

ACI's membership represents 132 countries. The majority of these members come from North America, but if the Canadian and U.S. membership were excluded, the rest of the world still has more than 20 percent of the total ACI membership. Quite a statistic, and ACI must continue making efforts to increase its membership, both domestically and internationally.

Another facet of connectivity is the linkage to the Institute's 85 local chapters. Chapters are formed to bring together regionally those individuals and groups who are interested in concrete and want to discuss and disseminate technical information. Most chapter members, however, only focus on the local perspective. This local networking is vital to these members, but just think how much stronger ACI International would be if all chapter members fully participated in ACI's work. Of course, ACI must demonstrate that membership is beneficial to chapter members. An equally important corollary is that the chapters would be stronger if ACI International members fully participated in their local chapters. There is strength in numbers — financially and in accomplishing work. ACI needs to increase its membership to enable ACI to continue and to broaden its mission. However, as noted above, that won't happen without demonstration of the benefits an individual can derive from active par-

ticipation. One of my goals this year is to find ways to stress these benefits in order to reverse the declining membership trend the Institute is currently experiencing.

The third form of linkage for ACI is through the AIS. These are a recent venture and were established to permit ACI to seek liaison arrangements with existing concrete-related organizations to: 1) promote concrete knowledge worldwide, 2) develop or reinforce ACI's image as one of the leading organizations in the world for concrete information, and 3) increase international awareness, membership, and publication sales. Currently AIS are established with the Concrete Institute of Australia; New Zealand Concrete Society, Inc.; Concrete Society of Southern Africa; Korea Concrete Institute; and Instituto Chileno del Cemento y del Hormigon (Chile). It is still too soon to judge the effectiveness of this connectivity, but during June I was privileged to personally witness the AIS relationship in South Africa. At that time, I spoke about concrete (of course) and ACI in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, and Durban in South Africa. More about this trip another time.

Let me return to some more discussion about chapters. I believe chapters are very important to ACI's future. Chapters represent a knowledgeable reservoir of talent for ACI. In return, ACI works hard to maintain connectivity with chapters; viz, through the domestic chapter roundtables and the international chapter visits. The roundtables are conducted to bring together chapter officers in an area to assist in the development of the officers, exchange ideas with other chapters, update chapters on ACI's activities, and improve communications between the chapters and the rest of the Institute. I've participated in four of these roundtables and found them to be very effective in accomplishing the state objectives. In addition to these roundtables, I have been a member of four chapters. Each chapter operates in its own way as desired by the membership. Although styles differ, every chapter seeks to improve concrete technology, technical competence, and construction, and shares this purpose with ACI International. Doesn't it make sense that the ACI International and



chapter membership should be coincident?

On the international front, past president Emery Farkas, Bill Tolley of the ACI staff, and I just returned from a trip where we witnessed internationally connectivity firsthand. We visited chapters in Taiwan, the Philippines, Thailand, India, and France and presented lectures on hot weather concreting (it was an appropriate topic), admixtures, durability, repair, and the Institute itself. In all, we met with nearly 1200 — the largest total attendance for an international chapter trip. Bill Tolley thought the high attendance was because of him; however, it really represents the international quest for ACI's knowledge. The reception ACI received on this trip was very similar to that experienced on two previous trips and was phenomenal! Each of the host chapters welcomed us in their own way and overwhelmed us with their hospitality — a reflection of the high regard people around the world have for ACI International. ACI is well-recognized internationally — now we need to capitalize on this recognition and garner more members. It would help if you extend a friendly greeting and an offer of assistance to the next potential international member you meet.

Connectivity is vital for ACI's growth and we must continue working to improve these present linkages. Through roundtables, international visits, and chapter memberships, I have had contact with a large percentage of ACI's 85 chapters. During this year as President, I plan to visit as many chapters as possible — working to enhance our connectivity. Already, I have plans for four more chapter visits and two roundtables — I hope to see you there.

I believe chapters are essential to ACI's longevity!

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President's Memo

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The Road to ACI's Second Century

Bob Mast in his President's Memos in September 1995 and March 1996 gave some insight into how ACI was developing a plan to build on its successes, examine its weaknesses, and launch activities to ensure ACI's continued success and contributions to concrete technology.

Just to refresh your memories, the Executive Committee selected 12 members representing various segments of ACI's membership and three staff members to be "locked up" in Dallas, Texas for three days last December for a preliminary meeting to develop a strategic plan for the Institute. It was a very hard working group, and our output was optimized by the skillful facilitation of Mel Hensley. The planning group produced a preliminary strategic plan with some old and some bold ideas. The plan embodied individual ideas, feedback from members, and background data provided by staff. Then in March at the Denver, Colorado convention, the planning group met for a day with the Board of Direction and the four about-to-be new Board members to refine the preliminary plan. The refinements enhanced the plan and built upon the initial major goals.

In this month's memo, I'm going to present an initial look at this plan for ACI's second century. The plan evolved after a thorough examination of ACI's strengths and weaknesses, and opportunities and threats, sometimes called "S-W-O-T." The group enumerated ACI's critical issues as follows:

- Public demand for higher quality, more durable concrete structures is loud and clear.
- Faster assimilation of new materials and technology into codes and standards and ultimately into practice is paramount.
- Development of universally applicable standards of quality is needed.
- Electronic communications capabilities must be exploited.
- Intense competition exists from other organizations willing to take advantage of the opportunities.

ACI needs to meet these critical issues head-on with effective solutions.

The first examination made by the planning group was of ACI's chartered purpose. The group concurred that ACI's purpose had not changed, and the Institute's work still was to further engineering and technical education, scientific investigation, and research; to develop standards for design and construction incorporating concrete and related materials; and to promote improved technology, technical competence, and design and construction. ACI has been successfully accomplishing this mission since its origin and must build upon this success as we move to the future. ACI wants to become the world's premier developer and disseminator of information on concrete structures and facilities. The plan to move us forward has four major goals:

- 1) Increase ACI's strength in membership and financial resources,
- 2) Foster progress through education, technology, and research,
- 3) Enhance recognition of the Institute's role in improving concrete construction domestically and internationally, and
- 4) Improve and accelerate the technology transfer process to all levels of the industry.

Each of these goals incorporates certain ideas to ensure ACI's continued existence, stability, and growth.

Success in achieving these goals depends upon strong and enthusiastic involvement of the entire ACI membership in the six major initiatives recommended by the planning group and the Board. Some of the challenges will be implemented right away, while others are long range and necessarily will need a sustained effort over a number of years. Vice President Dick White is now developing an implementation scheme and action plan.

The six major initiatives (and a comment about each) are:

1) *Develop and implement electronic communications with the public, domestic members, and international members and organizations; provide electronic dissemination of publications.* ACI staff has already developed a home page for the World Wide Web. The address is: www.aci-int.inter.net.

2) *Produce more practical publications.* There is a need to build upon and expand the successful craftsman series and publish more "how to" information.

3) *Improve the attractiveness of ACI membership.* ACI must insure that membership benefits equal or exceed membership costs.

4) *Improve ACI's national and international leadership position in standards and codes for concrete.* As the secretariat for Technical Committee 71, International Organization for Standardization (ISO), ACI has started work on this initiative.

5) *Expand activities in certification.* Build upon the philosophy that certification equals quality.

6) *Accelerate the technology transfer process.* The recent use of innovative task groups appears to be one avenue to help in this initiative.

Finally, if our plan is "on the mark" and everyone becomes involved in implementation activities, the outcomes the Board expects include:

- An improved financial condition to the extent that liquid reserves are restored after completing the new headquarters building,
- Worldwide acceptance of ACI International as evidenced by increased international memberships and increased international use of ACI products and services,
- An improved attractiveness of ACI International to members and potential members through appropriate benefits and services, as defined by members' needs,
- Timely production of new documents and services principally through electronic communications, and
- Formation of new committees and missions which demand durable concrete as the standard.

Substantial progress toward better constructed facilities can be achieved through the force of a stronger, revitalized ACI International. Please join us in making this plan a reality!



President's Memo

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Hospitality

As mentioned in previous memos, I've been very lucky in terms of opportunities to visit ACI's international connections. Visits to Central and South America, the Middle East and the Far East, and most recently to South Africa were fascinating. The different cultures that exist around this world create quite a mosaic.

During our ACI International chapter visits, the host chapter makes all the local arrangements and covers our resident expenses. This also was true for my visit to our Affiliated International Society, the Concrete Society of Southern Africa (CSSA), one of our five new AIS's.

Each year, CSSA invites an international speaker to address its members at the annual presentation of the Fulton Awards for excellence in the use of concrete. This year's competition had 17 entries divided into two categories: building structures and civil engineering structures. The winners were announced in Johannesburg, and then similar presentations were made in three other cities. I spoke at each of the presentations, addressing more than 600 attendees. It was an impressive competition and an honor for ACI to have been selected to provide the guest speaker for this, the 17th annual event.

But the focus of this memo is to reflect on the warm and enthusiastic hospitality extended to us on our international visits. People were so generous with their time.

How often are we equally generous with our visitors to ACI meetings — both domestic and international visitors? We shouldn't appear to be too busy with our own affairs to extend a warm welcome. Many of us are very busy, but think of the friendships we might develop and the assistance we might provide to a new member or visitor by including them in our groups.

Now, don't misunderstand me — we do lots of good things during our ACI meetings and I believe when asked specific questions we do respond with the best answers we have available. What I'm concerned about is going beyond that polite response and truly providing some proactive hospitality. It can take on many forms — be creative.

A surprising concern I have heard raised at Chapter Roundtables is the apprehensiveness of many first time attendees at an ACI meeting. Recently, during Student Day activities, mentors were arranged for the students. Perhaps we should also be doing that for those attending their first or second ACI meeting. With respect to our international visitors, have you ever asked one or two of them to join you for lunch or dinner? Committee chairmen — have you ever invited an international visitor to join you for the President's reception? Would you be willing to help? If so, please let me know.

As I mentioned, I've been the recipient of others' hospitality and perhaps am now a little more cognizant of what it means to "strangers" when they are received and treated in an enthusiastic and generous way. From my recent trip to



South Africa, I will always remember one host who sacrificed a three-day weekend to be sure I saw some concrete (of course!) construction activities. And a husband and wife who insisted on showing us the sights of Cape Town even though a major storm had damaged the roof of their home the previous day. In every instance, their very pleasant response was: "It's a pleasure." There are numerous similar examples of people generously giving of their personal time during our trips to Central and South America, the Middle East, the Far East, and Europe.

Now I know this was not because I'm a nice guy; it's because I represented ACI. The Institute is recognized worldwide, and we represent worldwide members. ACI members can help the Institute become more representative domestically and internationally by encouraging others to become members and then by making them comfortable and welcome.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim". The signature is stylized and cursive.

P. S. The tally thus far on whether you missed the President's Memo in June: one voter did not miss it but two voters, one unofficial and one official, did. So, I guess I'll continue writing. Remember, you had a chance!

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An Investment for the Future

To spread the fun of preparing President's Memos, I am following Bob Mast's initiative of providing others "an opportunity and a challenge." This month, Bert Weinberg, chairman of ACI's Scholarship Council, an agency of the Concrete Research and Education Foundation (ConREF), stepped forward to describe an important part of ACI — the scholarship program.

The ACI scholarship program, Bert explained, started with the \$1000 Thomson Fellowship, named in honor of a past ACI president and funded by a bequest from his widow. The program has grown dramatically since its inception over 20 years ago and now includes 28 fellowships worth \$61,000 annually.

Each year, six \$3000 endowments are available for first and second year full-time graduate students in any concrete-related field, such as design, construction, and material science. Candidates from around the world are eligible to compete for these but the studies must be completed in an accredited program in Canada or the United States. These six scholarships for graduate students are:

- Two ACI Fellowships funded by the Institute, one by contributions from ACI members made through their annual dues statements and the second from the Institute's general revenues. You might want to consider this option of assistance because your contribution directly supports and encourages a deserving student. (ACI pays all administrative costs.)
- The ACI/W. R. Grace Fellowship, endowed by the firm of that name, a major manufacturer and distributor of chemicals for concrete construction. It is the first ACI industry-sponsored fellowship, and demonstrates W. R. Grace's commitment to the concrete profession.
- The Katharine and Bryant Mather Fellowship, endowed with income derived from the Mather Symposium on Concrete Durability, held in Atlanta in 1987.
- Two fellowships recognize V. Mohan Malhotra and Stewart C. Watson, both Honorary Members of ACI. The Malhotra award is restricted to studies in concrete materials science and the Watson award is limited to students with an interest in concrete joints and bearings.

Other Institute scholarships are intended to aid undergraduate students. For senior students majoring in concrete construction, there are two \$1000 scholarships in memory of Peter D. Courtois, a long-time member of ACI who was very active in technical committee work. The funding came from many of his friends after Mr. Courtois' death in 1992.

In 1994, Schwing America, Inc., inaugurated a program of honoring 19 of its long-time dealers by letting each of these dealers select an engineering school and then establishing a \$2000 scholarship named for the dealer being honored. These awards, administered by ACI, are for full-time senior students in a concrete-related field. One of these dealers is

further honored by an additional \$3000 graduate fellowship for a first- or second-year full-time graduate student in any concrete-related field. For the ACI/Schwing America awards, only students at the school selected by each of the dealers are eligible to apply. The selected schools are located in Canada, Mexico, and the United States. Announcements of these awards are sent in August each year to the schools involved and applications are evaluated by scholarship committees in the ACI local chapters where the involved schools are located.

Annual announcements of the other awards are also sent in August to all accredited engineering schools in Canada and the United States. Applications (available from ConREF offices) are due at Institute headquarters about two months before ACI's spring meeting. (For the 1997-98 academic year, the due date is February 1, 1997; the spring meeting is April 6-11 in Seattle, Wash.) The applications for awards are reviewed and evaluated by Weinberg and other members of the Scholarship Council. The selection of awardees is finalized at the spring meeting, and the winners are then notified.

Through the years, the ACI awards have been an important help to many outstanding students. Although the Institute receives many applications from excellent candidates each year, the Scholarship Council believes it would be beneficial to ACI to have a wider distribution of applicants. There are many engineering schools from which applications are rarely or never received, and this is where ACI members and local chapters can help, by publicizing the availability of these awards. A great aspect of the scholarships is that eligible candidates only need to submit a single application. Announcements are sent each year to civil engineering departments and financial aid offices. You can help by submitting to ConREF the name and address of a faculty member specializing in concrete and this name will be added to the mailing list. Your help could be important to students attending the school in your area.

In view of the many outstanding candidates who apply each year, ConREF and the Scholarship Council are actively looking for sponsors of additional awards. A concern is that available funds for some of these awards will be exhausted within the next few years. Information about sponsorship of an ACI graduate or undergraduate fellowship is available from ConREF offices at ACI headquarters. Think about it — invest in the future!



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim".

President's Memo

by Jim Pierce



What Has ACI Done For You Lately?

Anual membership renewal notices are currently being mailed out by ACI to many of us on a calendar year system. Some of us will automatically write a check for the dues, renewing our membership. However, many of you also will assess the "value received" before writing the check. Hopefully, you will write the check after your assessment. As noted in the title, I'm going to use this space in this issue to reflect on "What ACI Has Done For You Lately" and hopefully dispel any questions you might have about the worth of your membership.

ACI provides many benefits to most, only marginal benefits to others. Perhaps those that only receive the marginal benefits are also only marginally involved in ACI's activities. I'll discuss the benefits I see as important and, in my value system, they are the reasons why I will "automatically write a check for the dues" — that is, if my account is solvent.

Foremost in ACI's kit bag is its publications, or the "family jewels" as past president George C. Hoff described them in one of his monthly memos. Publications come in many different forms: *Concrete International*, the ACI Materials and Structural Journals, codes and standards, committee reports, state-of-the-art reports, guides, standard practices, special publications, symposium proceedings, education and certification committee documents — to name a few. As you know, you receive *CI* and one of the technical journals as part of your dues payment. Everything else is discounted for members — buy a lot, save a lot. The important benefit though is that these publications help you stay technically current because you have access to the latest technology. Active committee participation is also readily available, providing ACI members the opportunity to be involved in the development of these documents and learn about their background. Additional help in staying current is available through the educational seminars. And the fees for these seminars also are discounted for members. This year with the new ACI 318 Code, the Education Department has arranged seminars for many locations and dates. Please check with the Membership Services Department to register for the next Code seminar in your area.

I find the networking opportunities almost priceless. ACI permits you to very readily broaden your array of contacts. You can meet knowledgeable people with whom you can discuss and solve mutual problems. Networking provides visibility for you and your organization. In these times when almost everyone is looking for additional opportunities, this could be very helpful. Being involved with a leading technical society will help you develop into an industry leader. Take the opportunity to be an author and describe your latest job, whether you're a contractor, designer, or researcher. We need to do a better job of transferring technology that will benefit the industry.

ACI has a portfolio of adjunct benefits as well. You can obtain group health and life insurance policies with economical premiums. And you can choose the coverage that is right for you from six high-quality plans — Term Life, Disability Income, Comprehensive Healthcare, Excess Major Medical, In-hospital, and High-limit Accident. Recently, an ACI Gold Card became available and requires no annual fee. Membership also will permit you to garner discounts on car rentals.

Some other benefits of ACI membership are perhaps not quite as visible, or as tangible to you at the moment. ACI maintains the secretariat for the primary concrete technical committee in the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). This allows the Institute and its membership to be at the forefront in developing international standards relating to concrete. Such worldwide standards would then be familiar and readily understood by ACI members.

An exciting new effort is underway through ACI's Concrete Research and Education Foundation (ConREF) that will ultimately benefit you as an ACI member. In recent years, funds to accomplish needed concrete research have largely disappeared. To maintain ACI's cutting-edge knowledge of concrete technology, research must continue. In order to help ensure that this happens, ConREF is establishing a Strategic Development Council (SDC) for the purpose of fostering applied research and technology development on concrete and its applications. The SDC will gather together key materials firms in the concrete industry, along with contractors, designers, and representatives from government and academia, to encourage the establishment of consortia of those with similar research or development interest. The SDC will be member-led and member-controlled; its focus will be to speed the process of bringing research into practice. The key to this concept is that ConREF, through ACI, has a direct linkage to codes and standards committees that can make implementation of research results much more expedient.

I am out of space and time, and there are still more benefits to being a member of a premier concrete knowledge organization that could be described. Hopefully, these are sufficient reasons for you to "write a check." I think membership is a real bargain — and remember the benefits are multiplied when you actively participate in the Institute!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Jim". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a dark ink on a light background.

President's Memo

ACI's Chapters — Ahead to the Next Century

by Emery Farkas,
Chairman, Chapter Activities Committee

Thanks to President Pierce for giving me the opportunity to discuss chapter related issues in my capacity as chairman of the Chapter Activities Committee (CAC).

The importance of chapters to ACI International is indicated by two facts. First, most ACI presidents deal with the activities of the chapters in at least one "President's Memo" during their tenure. Second, many of the CAC chairmen during the past 15 years were either past presidents of the Institute or became presidents after service as CAC chairmen.

I would like to review the progress of the chapters from 1986 when I was ACI's president to the present.

In 1986, we had 72 chapters; at the conclusion of the New Orleans convention in November this fall, the number stood at 85, more than a 17 percent increase. Of these 85 chapters, 32 — nearly 40 percent — are located outside the United States. And 25 of these 32 are outside of North America. It is obvious that ACI's future growth potential is international with respect to chapters.

We should also be proud of the fact that two chapters — in Japan and the Republic of Korea — began as ACI chapters but grew into independent organizations. Today, these exist as the Japan Concrete Institute and the Korea Concrete Institute. Although ACI lost two important chapters in the process, we now have very close cooperation with the two institutes representing nations with the highest per capita use of concrete in the world.

Ten years ago, ACI had 6200 chapter members; this number has grown to 12,630. The largest chapter is in Peru with 1340 members, with students as a large majority. The second largest chapter in terms of membership is Maharashtra, India, with 670. This is just another indication of the international focus of ACI.

In addition, the Institute has student chapters, the first of which was established at Wentworth Institute in Boston in 1982, which are supervised by the local chapter in the area. Earlier this year, two new student chapters were authorized in Mexico and at the recent New Orleans convention another one at the University of South Florida was approved. This brings the number of student chapters to 13.

Chapters have played an important role in ACI's certification program. Since the program's inception, chapters have joined in on the local sponsorship and have been involved in both the training and the examination phases.

In 1988, ACI established an awards program to recognize the efforts of chapters. There are two categories of awards — excellence and outstanding. In that first year, no chapter received the excellence award, the highest honor, but four captured outstanding citations. At the Denver convention earlier this year, 11 chapters took home excellence recognition while 13 others were classified as outstanding.

One of the most successful of U. S. and Canadian chapter activities is the program of roundtables, held two or three times a year on a regional rotating basis. Typically, 10 or 12 chapters are represented by one or two officers at these roundtables. The one and a half-day meetings provide chapter representatives with an opportunity to meet ACI officers and staff but more importantly to exchange ideas, establish lines of communication, and learn from the successes and failures of each. During 1996, two such roundtables — the 47th and 48th such events — were held. ACI also provides support for the international chapters by cosponsoring one-day seminars. A visit to each international chapter by ACI officers is attempted every four years; the event earlier this year was one of the most successful with six seminars held and attended by 1165 individuals.

In 1996, we started an experiment to hold a "chapter forum" once a year during a regular Institute convention. The president, the CAC chairman, and staff represent ACI in providing an exchange of technical information and guidance to chapter officers. These forums give chapter representatives an opportunity to discuss concerns and ideas of importance to them. The feedback from the first such meeting in Denver was very positive and we are looking forward to future forums, including the second one scheduled for the April 1997 convention in Seattle, Wash.

The future success of ACI International in some respects is tied to chapter activities. We hope that through the hard work of the chapters, more and more of their members will "move up" to ACI International membership status. Many of ACI's active members became involved at the chapter level and then moved into the international activities. We are hoping this trend will continue.

In summary, chapters are very important to ACI. We thank all of you who have been active in chapter activities for your contribution to the Institute's success and encourage others to do the same.

President's Memo

by Jim Pierce

The Year 2104 — and Beyond!

ACI was conceived in 1904 by Messrs. Brown, Gammon, and Given, when they met to discuss ways of improving concrete block manufacturing. Later that same year, this single purpose was extended to cover all the various uses of cement to bring about a better knowledge of the art.

This group became the National Association of Cement Users, which was formally organized and conducted its first convention in January 1905. Its objective was:

"...to disseminate information and experience upon and to promote the best methods to be employed in the various uses of cement by means of conventions, the reading and discussion of papers upon materials of a cement nature and their uses, by social and friendly intercourse at such conventions, exhibitions, and study of materials, machinery, and methods, and to circulate among its members, by means of publications, the information thus obtained..."

In 1913 the name of the group was changed to the American Concrete Institute, to better describe the breadth of the organization's aims and interests.

Our predecessors truly had foresight. ACI's purpose today remains essentially unchanged; however, additional measures are needed to enable the Institute to continue to contribute to the world of concrete technology for decades to come.

The special feature in last month's issue of *Concrete International* gave you a glimpse of the physical facility that will house ACI for a good portion of the next century. This remarkable structure is the culmination of abundant contributions of time and money by a lot of members and employees.

It was an honor to be part of the dedication ceremony for the new headquarters building, which itself makes a bold statement about the Institute's vitality. The staff, too, appears to be exceedingly happy with their new surroundings and their investment in the building. With a very pleasant setting for its work and with room for expansion, ACI is set physically for the start of its second century.

Another measure that the Board of Direction deemed necessary to get ACI positioned for the future is the strategic plan. I discussed the Plan's content in my August 1996 President's Memo. (You remember it, don't you?)

As you read through the Plan on the following pages, you will note that the basic context of the Plan has not changed much from my discussion in August. The essence of this first iteration of the Strategic Plan is that the Institute must stabilize its membership and then implement actions to increase its membership and revenues. The six major initiatives were developed to help accomplish the four major goals.



ACI has made many important contributions to the concrete industry through publications and other forms of technology transfer. However, fortunately, the times are changing. Members are continually developing new and better ways to accomplish the Institute's mission, which requires some "investment." Therefore, we first must develop new revenue sources, or enhance existing ones to finance needed program changes, improvements, and expansions. This Strategic Plan and future versions of it are intended to establish Institute priorities and fix guidelines for budgetary decisions and staff efforts to get ACI to the year 2104 and beyond.

In addition to the Plan's text in this issue, there are over twenty additional initiatives that the planning group and the Board identified as worthy of future consideration. These ideas will be reviewed as the Strategic Plan is revised during the next few years. The Board intends this Plan to be a "living document," changing and refocusing as ACI members' needs change.

Please take a few minutes of "quiet time" to read the Plan and reflect on how you can help make it happen. Collectively, we can do so much more!

Let me know what you're going to do to help ACI realize its goals and get to 2104 ... and beyond!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, which reads "Jim". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

President's Memo

TAC and the Technical Committees

by James K. Wight
Chairman, Technical Activities Committee

As chairman of the Technical Activities Committee (TAC), I thank President Pierce for this opportunity to address the ACI membership and add some thoughts to those that appeared in my President's Memo in the October 1995 issue.

It is exciting to be the chairman of TAC, and to have been involved with the technical activities of ACI for the last 23 years. Although I initially wanted to attend ACI conventions because of the excellent technical sessions, I soon realized that the real excitement often arises during the meetings of ACI's technical committees.

At one of my first conventions, I wandered into a meeting of the former Committee 326, Shear of Reinforced Concrete Members. Seated around the meeting table were some of the "big names" in the design of concrete structures, debating the proper value for the concrete contribution to the shear strength of reinforced concrete beams with low percentages of longitudinal steel. Clearly, some of the committee members had spent many hours preparing for that meeting and that debate.

Although no decisions were made then or later to change that part of the Building Code, the debate was exciting and educational. While it doesn't happen during every convention and not in every committee, I have personally experienced several exciting ACI technical debates and disputes over the years.

Every one of our technical committees is handling interesting and challenging problems. You can join this excitement and have an impact. The only cost to you is the personal time and effort required to really get involved with the technical issues being addressed by the committee.

The potential benefits to you, as a professional in the concrete industry, should be obvious. There are also many potential benefits to your employer. Your organization can open a "window" into the latest concrete knowledge and contacts can be made that could return benefits of considerably more value than the cost invested to attend conventions.

As the Institute continues to grow, it is essential that all technical committee members and committee chairmen subscribe to the standards that have given international

recognition to the technical work of ACI. This is a challenge for all ACI members. The existing core group of active ACI committee members is mostly male and aging. The Institute needs to attract active young members to bring new thoughts and energy to ACI.

An added complication is that this transition is occurring at a time when our technical committees need to work more efficiently to quickly move new technology into practice. To achieve this, committees need to reap the benefits of electronic communication. E-mail should be used to exchange agendas, minutes, and drafts of documents. Also, committees should consider working with ACI headquarters to set up a home page to post committee mission statements and goals, and generally advertise for new members. With proper safeguards, procedures can be established for using web sites to post documents that can be accessed only by committee members for voting, editing, and submitting comments. This is where ACI needs to go and we need a broad spectrum of talent to get there.

TAC is central to this discussion. A major responsibility of TAC is to guide and assist ACI's technical committees and their chairmen. We are working with ACI headquarters to assist committees in obtaining electronic versions of their documents and setting up guidelines for electronic communications within committees. We are updating the *Technical Committee Manual* (TCM) and providing more training for committee chairmen. The TCM is "the book" on how to manage an ACI technical committee; TAC believes this manual is very helpful now and is trying to make it even better.

Also, extra emphasis on critical topics is always beneficial. Thus, TAC is developing half-day training sessions for committee chairmen at ACI conventions. Our first session was at the Denver, Colo., meeting in March 1996; the second is scheduled for the Seattle, Wash., convention in April this year. Active participation by the majority of technical committee chairmen will be beneficial to the success of the committees and the Institute.

ACI and its technical committees face many challenges in the near future. I urge you to get involved and help us surmount those challenges. The pleasure will be all yours.

President's Memo

by Jim Pierce

Thanks for the Memories

I have lots of good memories from this very short year as president. It's been a privilege that only 72 others have had since ACI was founded. As president, you get an appreciation for those who do the work that maintains ACI's reputation as one of the leaders in concrete technology. A multitude of "active" members work diligently to get the educational and technical documents written and their member-written articles in the journals and *Concrete International* keep the membership updated. Also important are the "inactive" members who enable ACI to continue its work with their financial contributions through dues and purchases. Additionally, our very professional and competent staff, overseeing the printing, sales, and distribution of publications, is also essential to the Institute's success.

I learned a lot more about other parts of ACI that help ensure its success. The Convention Department has done another outstanding job during my tenure with two great conventions in New Orleans (By the way — I still have some beads available!) and the other in Seattle in April. ACI's certification program continues to rapidly expand its beneficial impact on the construction industry. Certification income now is a significant part of ACI's budget. The staff in Member Services provides outstanding customer service to all who call. Within budget constraints, ACI is making progress moving into the electronic age. As you know, we have CD-ROM products available, publishing hardware and software, a worldwide web site, and we are getting ready for committees to establish their home pages and conduct business electronically.

Chapters and Affiliated International Societies (AIS) are also inherent to ACI's success. (The formation of AIS' was authorized about two years ago so that the Institute could expand its cooperative efforts with concrete societies in other nations.) Both chapters and AIS' work hard to enhance the Institute's knowledge base and technology transfer efforts. This year three chapters, two student chapters, and one AIS were formed — a good indication to me that ACI is vital in the concrete industry.

Another major accomplishment this year was the establishment of a Strategic Development Council (SDC) as an agency of the Concrete Research and Education Foundation (ConREF). SDC provides the concrete construction industry the opportunity to form consortia to accomplish jointly needed applied research. ConREF and ACI will serve only in a facilitating role to provide the necessary network.

And, of course, don't overlook those engineering, educational, and editorial activities that have been so vital since the founding of the Institute nearly a century ago.

As I reflect on the year (although it went so fast some of it is a blur), I am thankful for the opportunities I had to accom-



plish things for ACI. My tenure began with the Denver meeting in March 1996 when we convened a workshop with the Board of Direction and the Strategic Planning Group to finish a strategic plan for the Institute. This plan is just the start in providing plans that can be linked to the budget process — to be sure ACI's resources are being used to provide the organization its members want. The plan's goals will change as the members want them to change.

Then there were the visits to chapters, international and domestic. I've written before about the impressive enthusiasm displayed by chapter members around the world. My visit to the AIS in South Africa was another highlight. The South Africans will be hosting a Fédération Internationale de la Précontrainte (FIP) meeting in March. I encourage ACI's prestressed concrete industry members to attend the meeting to see what really great hosts they are.

To have our new headquarters building formally dedicated and open for business was a special accomplishment this year for members, staff, and all the donors who made it possible. It is a tangible sign of our pride in our organization.

Thanks for the memories! It's been a fantastic year and I deeply appreciate the opportunity to have served as your president. Thanks for your support and the efforts you have expended on behalf of ACI. Thanks to the staff for their continued support and help. Finally, thanks to my employer who granted me the time to serve as president. Working together, ACI has made significant progress this year. But, of course, there is much more to be done to keep ACI a leader in the concrete industry. Good luck, Dick.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim". The signature is stylized and cursive.