

History

The Concrete Society was formed in 1966 to address the increasing need for a single organisation embracing all those interested in concrete whether as designers, contractors, research workers or suppliers of materials and services. After discussions between representatives of four existing bodies concerned with concrete (the Reinforced Concrete Association, the Prestressed Concrete Development Group, the Pavings Development Group and the Formwork Development Group) The Concrete Society was incorporated as a non-profit making company limited by guarantee on 28 July 1966.



On its formal inauguration, on 13 October 1966, the Society took over the work of the four organisations, by then in the process of dissolution, in order both to carry on their work and to extend it to cover the entire field of concrete technology and use.

The history of The Concrete Society is embraced in the words of our second President, P. F. Stott, that appeared in the Society's first annual report in 1967. An extract follows:

'This first formal report of The Concrete Society is an occasion for more than simply reviewing The Society's activities during the year and a half following its incorporation. It is an opportunity, also, for assessing the considerations that brought The Society into being initially, and its success in meeting the needs it was set up to serve.

That there was a need for a single organisation embracing the interests of all those concerned with concrete, there can now be no doubt whatsoever. The rapid growth in membership since The Society's formal inauguration - even allowing for the fact that the initial membership was to some extent 'ready-made' by the four predecessor organisations - has been solid proof of that.

Nor can there be much question that The Society is meeting the needs of most of its members: the number and scope of The Society's activities - meetings, visits and publications - is impressive by any standards, let alone in so relatively young an organisation.

I say 'young' but The Concrete Society did not of course spring full-blown out of thin air: what it has accomplished during the period covered by this report could never have been accomplished if it were not for the solid foundation laid down by the Reinforced Concrete Association through many

years and more recently by the Prestressed Concrete Development Group, the Pavings Development Group and the Formwork Development Group. This first annual report of The Concrete Society is a fitting place to pay tribute to the officers and members of those organisations not only for what they have accomplished in the past but also for the indispensable role they have played in The Society's formation and early life.

Nor would it be proper to present this report without paying tribute to our first President, Sir Frederick Snow, and to those who served on The Society's Council and its various committees during those formative months. Credit is due, as well, to the members of The Society's secretariat and honorary branch secretaries and treasurers without those efforts - largely "behind the scenes" - the achievements of The Society's first eighteen months of formal existence would have been impossible.

In this first report it seems appropriate to review, in somewhat more detail than might otherwise be required, the origin and structure of The Society. To many members the information will be familiar; to others and to future members it will serve as a useful background to The Society's activities.

The Society's organisational structure is no static thing: it cannot be and it should not be. The period under review has already seen a major reorganisation of The Society's divisional and standing committees into a structure more closely geared to the needs and interests of the membership. There will doubtless be further changes indeed some have already taken place since the close of the period covered by this report - but these changes will always be based on one overriding consideration: to serve The Society's members, and the industry they represent, better.

Nor is this first annual report an occasion for excessive self-congratulation. What has been accomplished in this short period is impressive, and just cause for pride. But this first full year has been more than that: it has indicated the scope and challenge for The Society as a leader of development in the construction industry, and pointed the way toward constantly expanding service in that role.'

40 years later, The Society still embodies the founding principles and traditions of its formative years, but dynamically continues to re-invent and re-appraise its role to ensure compatibility with the changing needs of its membership and the wider construction community.