

ICRI PAST TO PRESENT: A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

BY MILT COLLINS

Some scenarios are permanently etched into one's memory and can be relived as if they happened yesterday. Such is the case with the day in Las Vegas in 1988 when it was suggested by Jim Warner that an association of concrete repair contractors be formed, and I took the bait and asked seminar attendees at World of Concrete if they would be interested. Much to my surprise and pleasantly so, I was approached not only by contractors but also by manufacturers and engineers, who expressed an interest in helping to form such an association.

The rest, as they say, is history. Starting as the International Association of Concrete Repair Specialists (IACRS), a small group of dedicated members prevailed as skeptics suggested that the association was unnecessary and would soon fold. Time, of course, has proven that Jim's suggestion was a valid one, and any doubts have long since disappeared.

Because I had no previous experience running an association, I relied heavily on the energy and persistence of that core group of volunteer members. Their strong desire to make a success of IACRS was the key to its continuation and growth. The change of name to the International Concrete Repair Institute (ICRI) in 1993 was a reflection on the stature that the organization had gained in those first 5 years.

After my wife Sally left her position as Director of Financial Aid at Georgetown University Medical

School, she joined me and put her heart and soul into the organization. From 1991 she was every bit as much a part of the management of ICRI as was I, and without her energy and encouragement I have no doubt that progress, although a virtual certainty given the drive of the membership, would have been much slower in coming.

As we read each issue of *Concrete Repair Bulletin*, we are very pleased to observe the steady increase in programs, publications, and membership. We are happy to see the proliferation of names and faces unfamiliar to us, and also happy to see familiar ones who have been with the organization since that first meeting back in Naperville, IL, in 1988.

Sally and I are delighted to observe the place that ICRI has taken in the concrete industry. Certification and joint programs and publications with other organizations were distant dreams when we retired; it is a credit to those who followed us that these have been accomplished, and that growth has continued worldwide even through the recent difficult economic times.

Our sincere thanks go to those who worked so hard in those early years, and our very best wishes to the management and members for the continued growth and prestige of the organization.

Milt Collins was the Executive Director of ICRI from 1988 to 2001. He and Sally currently reside in Las Vegas, NV.