

## ABOUT IFIC

The International Ferrocement Information Center (IFIC) was founded in October 1976 at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Bangkok, Thailand under the joint sponsorship of the Institute's Division of Structural Engineering and Construction, and the Library and Regional Documentation Center. IFIC was established as a result of the recommendations made in a 1973 report by the U.S. National Academy of Science's Advisory Committee on Technological Innovation (ACTI), titled: *Ferrocement Applications in Developing Countries*. Subsequently IFIC received financial support from the Government of Australia, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Government of France, Government of New Zealand and the International Development Research Center (IDRC) of Canada. It was directed by Ricardo Pama and Lilia Robles Austriaco. It remained active at AIT until about 2006.

Basically, IFIC served as a clearing house for information on ferrocement and related materials. In cooperation with national societies, universities, libraries, information centers, government agencies, research organizations, engineering and consulting firms all over the world, IFIC attempted to collect information on all forms of ferrocement applications either published or unpublished. This information was identified and sorted before being repackaged and disseminated as widely as possible through IFIC publications and references reprographic (graphic reproductions) services. All information collected by IFIC were entered into a computerized database at the AIT library in Bangkok. The data may still be available in their archive at time of this writing.

The main disseminating tool of IFIC, between 1980 and 2006 was the *Journal of Ferrocement*. IFIC published Monographs, Do It Yourself Booklets, Slide Presentation Series, State-of-the-Arts Reviews, a bibliography, and reports on ferrocement; it also compiled two editions of the *International Directory of Ferrocement Organizations and Experts.(FOCUS)*. The information brochure of IFIC was published in 19 languages as part of IFIC's attempt to reach out to as many interested organizations and people worldwide.

To transfer ferrocement technology to the rural areas of developing countries, IFIC organized training programs, seminars, study tours, conferences and symposia. For these activities, IFIC acted as initiator, identifying needs, soliciting funding, identifying experts and bringing people together. As of 1984, IFIC successfully undertook annual training programs in Bangkok, a regional symposium and training courses in India, seminars to introduce ferrocement in six countries in Asia and eight countries in Africa; and a study-tour in Thailand and Indonesia for officials from Africa. IFIC organized the second International Symposium on Ferrocement and co-sponsored subsequent international symposia up to about Ferro-8. IFIC also successfully established the Ferrocement Information Network with members from 14 countries; the IFIC Reference Centers Network with 79 members in 41 countries; and the IFIC Consultants Network with 133 members worldwide. Moreover IFIC promoted the introduction on ferrocement technology in the engineering and architecture curricula of 144 universities in 51 countries.

At the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Symposium on Ferrocement which took place in New Delhi, India, in December 1988, a petition was submitted by some delegates to establish an "International

Society on Ferrocement.” The decision to establish the International Ferrocement Society (IFS) was taken during the 4<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Ferrocement in Havana, Cuba, in October 1991. IFS was later officially registered in **1993**, at the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok, where it was head-quartered until 2007. IFS was founded to coordinate all activities related to ferrocement worldwide and to cater to the needs of practitioners, architects, engineers and researchers on application, development and research on ferrocement. Its mission overlapped with IFIC but allowed the functioning of an organization independent of AIT. IFIC and IFS coordinated all subsequent activities until about 2006.