

EIGHTY YEARS OF VITAL DISSEMINATION OF CONCRETE INFORMATION



The Information Centre of The Concrete Institute stocks the largest collection of cement- and concrete-related reference works in Africa. Bryan Perrie (seated on left), MD of TCI, was pictured with the staff of the Centre. Susan Battison is seated next to Perrie with Bongani Methula and Kizzy Shipalana standing.

The enormous collection of printed matter in The Concrete Institute's Information Centre is as relevant today as when the well-known "concrete library" shelved its first few books 80 years ago, says Susan Battison, Information Specialist at the TCI.

The Information Centre at the TCI offices in Midrand holds the largest collection of cement- and concrete-related reference works on the African continent, arguably also in the southern hemisphere. It was started in 1938 when TCI forerunner, the Portland Cement Institute, was established and has been the one constant factor amidst name changes and shifts in focus the current TCI has undergone since then.

Battison comments: "Many people think that libraries with books and papers are irrelevant because so much research information is now available on the Internet. However, internet research can be dangerous and commercially influenced. Some of the information on the web is marketing in disguise emanating from amateurs or pseudo concrete experts posting YouTube videos and blogs. Very little information free of charge on Google is peer reviewed or verified for accuracy and updating."

She says peer-reviews and scholarly information can be expensive to obtain but TCI Information Centre has a huge collection of such verified information available - free of charge. "The Centre has built up a reputation of trust within the concrete industry and is recognised as a champion of free concrete information."

Its impressive catalogue has essential information for students and concrete industry specialists under one roof and if necessary the centre's staff can also search global information resources, to save clients valuable time and money. Tertiary students who have progressed to become heads of university departments or global authorities spent hours of research at the Midrand 'library' which has generated immeasurable goodwill for TCI over the years.

"Our reference works now total over 130 000 items and includes journals, conference proceedings, books, DVDs, standards, and historic data from an era long before the internet existed. TCI Information Centre caters for the needs of professional builders, civil engineers, concrete technologists, students, lecturers, professionals, journalists, and home improvers. It has even helped school children with homework," Battison adds.

The latest additions to its collection (and which cannot be accessed free of charge on the internet) cover topics such as:

- Corrosion consequences for reinforced concrete structures;
- Creep and hygrothermal effects in concrete structures;
- Development of ultra-high-performance concrete against blasts: from materials to structures;
- Glassfibre reinforced concrete: principles, production, properties and applications;
- Materials for sustainable infrastructure;
- Swelling in concrete dams and hydraulic structures;
- Recycled aggregate concrete structures; and
- Strain-hardening cement-based composites.

For more details about these new authoritative additions and the TCI Information Centre's online catalogue visit www.tciinformationcentre.co.za/activeconnect2002/.