

Chuck Prussack

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Precast concrete stands the test of time


I don't know if you have or take time for contemplation. I don't. If I'm at work, I'm pretty busy, and if I'm at home or out and about, I'm pretty busy. About the only situation where I'm able to contemplate things is while I'm driving, during "windshield time." I had some windshield time lately, so I had time to contemplate a few things.

I recently randomly pulled out a 1959 issue of *PCI Journal* to peruse. What a time warp! The clothing people were wearing certainly looks dated, and so do the ads. They looked like they came straight out of *Mad Men*. Of the twenty companies with ads in that *PCI Journal*, only five are still here today. All of the authors of the articles and committee members listed are no longer with us. There was even an ad for a post-Miami convention field trip to Cuba for three days, all inclusive, with airfare, hotels, transportation, and more, for \$86.50 per person!

Times have changed, but the technical content in the *PCI Journal* was as excellent back then as it is today, with the issue I was looking at showing load tests on double tees, piling testing, an American Association of State Highway Officials survey on bridges, fatigue testing, and several other pertinent stories. *PCI Journal* still has relevant information and advertising and has evolved with time into an even better resource for people in our business. It has kept up with our changing times.

When I look at what our company has built, I always ask myself how well they have stood the test of time. Structures coming to a premature demise would reflect badly on what our company and our industry have built, and I'd feel pretty bad if that were the case. Other than a few architectural-ly dated buildings that we've constructed, most of the buildings look about the same as they did the day they were erected. Even the exposed-aggregate, single-tee building that houses my office, built 43 years ago, looks the same as the day it was erected. Most of the bridges we have built are still in service or were taken out due to geometric issues. I'm glad to be in an industry where the products we build stand the test of time!

Where might the future take us? In my ideal future for buildings, there is a return to true fire-resistant materials for the nation's multifamily housing. Fire resistance, energy efficiency, and noise reduction are precast concrete advantages that outweigh a small incremental first cost of building compared with other materials. Every time I see in the news that an apartment building burned down, I want to shout that it should have been built with precast concrete! In my ideal future for bridges, I see continued dominance of the market with prestressed concrete, more substructures built with precast concrete for accelerated bridge construction, curved concrete bridges becoming the standard, and continued growth in longer-span techniques.

So, now you know what I think about while I'm driving. 



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