

# Journey Down the Memory Lane Through Glorious Sixty Years of Western India Regional Council

The process of formation of the Regional Councils was initiated at the Council Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> February, 1951. Thereafter, a referendum was invited from the respective regions for the formation of the Regional Councils. Subsequently, the decision to form the Regional Councils was taken at the meeting of the Council held in August, 1951 and a notification to that effect was issued on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 1951. The Western India Regional Council, which was formerly known as Region-1 covering Bombay Region was formed along with the other Regional Councils. Elections to the First Regional Councils was announced in November, 1951, which was scheduled to be held on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1952. Following decentralisation of the regions in the year 1980, the membership strength of the Western Region as on 1-4-1981 was 8,662 which today (as on 1-6-2011) has crossed 59000 mark. As the WIRC celebrates Diamond Jubilee, we bring an account of the glorious journey of WIRC through sixty years of its existence.

## The Formative Decade : 1951-1961



**Shri Ambalal S Thakkar**  
First Chairman of  
WIRC of ICAI

The first meeting of the Regional Council of the erstwhile Bombay Region (now known as Western India Regional Council) was held on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1952, wherein the following first office bearers were elected:

- 1) Shri Ambalal S Thakkar - Chairman
- 2) Shri P. G. Bhagwat - Vice Chairman
- 3) Shri R. P. Shah - Secretary
- 4) Shri A. V. Deshpande - Treasurer

Till the time the above office bearers took charge, the Regional Council was chaired by the illustrious member and first President Late Shri G. P. Kapadia. S/Shri B. N. Pardiwala, S. N. Desai and S. V. Ghatalia were the Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer respectively during the interim period.

During this decade first three Regional Councils were formed, which saw some of the erstwhile doyens of the CA Profession being elected to the Regional Council at Bombay. Notable among them were Shri R. C. Cooper, Shri M. P. Chitale, Shri B. N. Pardiwala, Shri S. V. Ghatalia, Shri. N. M. Raiji and Shri V. B. Haribhakti.

### Significant Achievements through the Formative Decade :-

- CA Students Society, Bombay was formed

in February, 1953 which was emulated by other regions. This set the tone for formation of the formal student associations, across the regions, which was officially constituted on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1957. The membership of the Society was made mandatory for any student entering articles or audit service on or after 1-4-1957.

- During the meeting of the Central Council held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April and 4<sup>th</sup> April, 1959, it was decided that the entire Editorial Board of the "Chartered Accountants Journal" shall consist of Council members from the Western Region.

- The desire of then members to have an independent premises of the Regional Council resulted in the appointment of the Building Committee at its meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> June, 1955.

■ During this formative decade, itself, the WIRC had set the precedence of organising various quality seminars, conference and workshops for the benefit of the members and students.

## The Second Decade: 1962-1972

### Significant Achievements through the Second Decade:-

- The seed which was planted during the formative decade of acquiring independent premises, saw it bearing fruit, with the Regional Council acquiring the office premises at Cuffe Parade, then known as "Beach Manor" during the year 1961-1962. This premises was inaugurated



DIAMOND JUBILEE YEAR

on 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1962 by the worthy hands of the then Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Y. B. Chavan and the same was christened as "Anveshak".

- The vision of the Regional Council members of the formative decade to spread the network of the Region, witnessed the formations of the first two Branches of Western Region, viz; at Ahmedabad and Pune. These two branches started functioning with effect from 1-4-1962.
- During this decade, the WIRC continued to engage in organising "focus driven" seminars, conference and other activities for the members and students.
- The First Western India Regional Conference was organised at Mumbai during the year 1968-1969. Seven hundred members participated in this conference, which was inaugurated by the leading industrialist late Shri Arvind Mafatlal.
- During this decade, WIRC started the process of making representations to various State Governments and other regulatory bodies in connection with matters of professional interest to the members within the Region.
- Representations made to Minister of Cooperation, Government of Gujarat for taking away the audit of Co-operative societies from the CAs. Similarly representations were made to the Registrar of Cooperative Societies to change the policy for empanelment of Chartered Accountants in Maharashtra.

**The Third Decade : 1972-1982**

*Significant Achievements Through the Third Decade*

- The first conference of Chartered Accountants in Mofussil Maharashtra was organised at Pune in 1972-1973, which was inaugurated by the then Minister of Finance, Maharashtra State, Shri M.D. Chaudhary.
- The year 1973 marked the beginning of the silver jubilee year of the Institute. A fellowship meeting was held at Taj Mahal Hotel to commemorate the same. This meeting was addressed by the former Chief Justice Shri Mohd. Hidayatullah.
- A Lady member Smt T.P. Tarapore, chaired the Western India Regional Council for the first time in its history during the year 1973.
- During the year the 1974-1975, the WIRC Newsletter came into existence. During

the first year the Newsletter carried an annual subscription of ₹5/-. The same was made available free of cost to the members following the permission from the Government.

- During the year 1976-1977 the first study circles of Mumbai city viz. Malad, Goregaon, Borivali, Mandvi and Vile Parle were formed.
- The construction work of the new building at Anveshak started at the beginning of this decade was ultimately completed during the year 1981-1982 and the occupation certificate was obtained for five floors.
- The seed was sown for setting up of CA Students Hostel by the end of this decade.
- The tail end of this decade also witnessed the setting up of the Decentralised Office at Mumbai.
- During this decade, too, WIRC relentlessly continued its coordinated efforts in organising standouts seminars, conference, and refresher courses across the region.

**The fourth Decade : 1982-1992**

*Significant Achievements Through the Fourth Decade*

- The first year of this decade saw the advent of Computer Education and hence various introductory courses in Computers were started on a continuous basis.
- The J.S. Lodha reading room and Library were made operational during the first year of this decade, too.
- The 100<sup>th</sup> issue of the WIRC Newsletter was published during 1983-1984.
- This decade witnessed the WIRC being adjudged as best region of the Institute for the first time in 1986-1987 and the same was repeated during the years 1988-1989 and 1989-1990.
- During the year 1986-1987, an unprecedented and highly successful workshop on tax reforms was organised by WIRC, which was inaugurated by the Former Prime Minister, Late Shri V.P. Singh, then, in his capacity as Union Finance Minister. This event was given front page pictorial coverage by all national economic dailies.
- A full fledged reference library was set up at Aykar Bhawan in the year 1987-1988.
- The J.S. Lodha Auditorium was inaugurated in the year 1989-1990.
- The foundation stone was laid for the CA Students Hostel, by Shri S K Dasgupta, then President of the Institute.

### The Fifth Decade : 1992-2002

#### Significant Achievements Through the Fifth Decade :

- The Regional Conference organised during the year 1993 was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, then, in his capacity as Union Finance Minister.
- Shri H.R. Bhardwaj, then Union Minister of Law, Justice and Company Affairs inaugurated the Company Law Refresher Course.
- This decade also witnessed mission statements being issued by the Chairmen at the beginning of the year, which enabled "focus driven" activities being organised during the decade.
- The first overseas Study Tour-cum-Residential Refresher Course was organised at Mauritius in the year 1994.
- The long cherished dream of CA Students Hostel was fulfilled during the year 1995. The hostel was inaugurated by the Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Gopinath Munde on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 1995.
- Campus Interview for newly qualified students was introduced during this decade
- During this decade the WIRC was adjudged the best region during the years 1993, 1995 and 1997, 2001 and 2002.
- During the year 2001, representations were made to Co-operative department, Maharashtra State and representations on Sales Tax Audit made to Government of Maharashtra and Government of Gujarat.
- During the tail end of this decade, i.e from the year 2002, the concept of organising "Sub-Regional Conferences" was introduced by WIRC. In fact, WIRC was first regional council to do so.

### The Sixth Decade : 2003-till 31-3-2011

#### Significant Achievements Through the Sixth Decade :

- With the Continuing Professional Education (CPE) being made mandatory, it was required for all the Chartered Accountants to attend programmes to log in the necessary hours to complete the CPE requirement. Hence, at WIRC, the decade commenced with a flurry of events organised not only at J.S. Lodha auditorium, but also at various other locations.
- The need of the hour was to provide maximum opportunities to the members to attend CPE programmes. Hence in addition to the conventional seminars, new type of programmes like intensive study courses, refresher

courses, modular courses in different formats were designed and structured. Unlike during the earlier decade, these programmes were organised even on week days during evening hours.

- Infrastructure initiatives also witnessed a tremendous spurt, during this decade not only in Mumbai, but across the region.
- The major path breaking initiative was the decision of the Central Council to purchase plot of land at most happening international financial hub, Bandra Kurla Complex in the year 2005. The new building of the Institute is in the advance stage of completion.
- Various IT initiative were also taken during this decade, the notable among them being revamping of the website of the WIRC to make it more "user friendly", the effective use of mail and SMS alerts for dissemination of programme information, organising various IT focused programmes like Information system audit, CAAT, ERP training, cyber crimes, XBRL etc. Not to be left out, hands on training on various computer application was also organised senior members.
- The ambit of the activities of the WIRC increased manifold during this decade ranging from organising CPE programmes, research publications, representation to various government authorities, brand building, public relations, community service, partner in nation building.
- During this decade, WIRC and its branches also has undertaken various international initiatives by organising a number of international conferences, undertaking various international study tours to various countries.
- Representation to various government and other regulatory bodies on matters affecting the professions was made on a regular basis at various levels. As a result of these continuous efforts, in the end of the decade, the co-operative department in Maharashtra reposed confidence in WIRC to undertake the task of preparing of panel of auditors for Urban Co-operative banks and Urban Credit Societies as also partnering with the WIRC for organising training programmes for Urban Co-operative Banks.
- This decade also witnessed an enlargement of the Network of WIRC, with the increase in the number of branches up to 27 and also CPE study circles, study chapters and study groups being formed at various places. ■