

HISTORY OF CHAPTER 1



FRANK BALFOUR

1933: Frank Balfour, who worked at the California State Highway Right of Way Department, saw a need to bring together right of way men of all public and quasi-public organizations in the areas of title, legal, and real estate valuation professions for their mutual benefits.

Latter part of 1933: Frank Balfour discussed the idea of forming a Right of Way Association with George Mitchell, Chief Right of Way Agent for the Los Angeles County Road Department. Then Robert Witter, Manager of the Right of Way and Land Department for the City of Los Angeles, and Harry Swearingen joined as supporters of the movement.

October 16, 1934: 14 right of way men assembled at Pozzo's Italian Restaurant in Los Angeles to attend the first organizational meeting of the Southern California Right of Way Agents Association. At that meeting, it was unanimously decided that a right of way organization should bring together all of those in public and private right of way and land activities to elevate right of way work to a profession, built upon a foundation of education to equip the members to better serve their employers.

December 1934: Held the first scheduled meeting of what is today the International Right of Way Association and elected Frank C. Balfour as President, George Mitchell as Vice President, Ralph Beeganas Secretary and Harry Swearingen as Treasurer. Committee Chairman were appointed by the President. It was also decided the monthly meetings and a continuous educational program would be held. Additionally, an annual installation of new officers and a special educational program was to occur every January.

March 20, 1935: The first issue of a monthly bulletin of the Southern California Right of Way Agents Association, Volume 1, was distributed.

March to November 1935: A 2.5-hour weekly extension course in condemnation appraisal procedure was conducted. It was led by Peter Hanson, a nationally known lecturer, appraiser, and charter member of the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers (one of the precursors of the Appraisal Institute).

July 1935: First annual barbecue of Los Angeles Chapter 1 was held to encourage members to become better acquainted and develop a true spirit of fellowship and cooperation. Notably, the 25th annual barbecue of Chapter 1 was held on the Union Oil Company Picnic Grounds in Brea, Orange County.

September 4, 1935: By unanimous vote, the official name of the organization was changed from Southern California Right of Way Agents Association to the American Right of Way Association with the mother chapter designated as Los Angeles Chapter 1. The group had grown to 175 members.

February 1936: The name of the official publication was changed to "American Right of Way Association News" and the official emblem was created, which was adopted in March 1936.

Starting on September 23, 1936: A 12-week educational course was conducted each Tuesday night for 2.5 hours covering California land titles. The average attendance was 83 people.

October 16, 1941: The Code of Ethics was approved by the Executive Committee and adopted at the regular meeting on November 5, 1941.

April 5, 1946: The American Right of Way Association was incorporated as a non-profit educational organization. The first Board of Directors Meeting was held on December 19, 1946. At that time, there were 371 members in Chapter 1 and 158 members in Chapter 2.