

Building the Future

PART III

for the Past 75 Years

1960s

BY KATE SHIRLEY

SWINGING SIXTIES

The 1960s was a decade once again dominated by war. Although not a world war, the effects of Vietnam were nonetheless felt around the world. The swinging sixties was a time of change in the world, and North America was no exception. The younger generations began to question the status quo, rebelling against the conservative norms that dominated the 1950s. The civil rights movement took root, and the feminist and anti-war movements also gained in power. The “space race” began, and the U.S. sent the first American into space in 1961. Over the course of the decade, the U.S. would proceed to have an American man orbit the Earth for the first time, and perhaps most famously, successfully send the first men to the moon in 1969.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS

In terms of right of way, big advancements happened in the 1960s which further underscored the need for talented and qualified agents. The prevalence of home and office technology like telephones and televisions was increasing rapidly, and the need for communication infrastructure and the facilities to support it was accordingly on the rise. The first communication satellite was invented in 1965, and the invention of fiber-optics in 1966 would shepherd in the use of cables to promote mass communication. Energy needs were also rising in almost all areas – North America needed more oil, more gas, more electricity, and they needed educated professionals to help provide it.

The Interstate Highway System, which began construction in 1956, continued to grow rapidly. As a result, increasing numbers of people were willing to drive long distances

thanks to the new-found ease of travelling by road. And in Canada, the Trans-Canada Highway, which had been made possible by the passage of the 1948 Trans-Canada Highway Act, officially opened in 1962. In the U.S., Congress passed the Highway Beautification Act in 1965. The act called for control of outdoor advertising, including removal of certain types of signs, along the nation’s growing Interstate Highway System and the existing federal-aid primary highway system. It also mandated the removal of junkyards and other eyesores along Interstate or primary highways to be removed or screened in order to encourage aesthetically pleasing roadside development.

Federal Agencies sprung up in the U.S. to deal with the nation’s burgeoning infrastructure and right of way needs. In September of 1965, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was created as a cabinet level agency by the Department of Housing and Urban Development Act. The Federal Highway Administration, an agency fully dedicated to highway transportation, was created in 1966.

To meet the growing needs of his nation, in 1962, President John F. Kennedy sent a message to Congress, in an attempt to encourage the passage of an urban mass transportation act, and said “To conserve and enhance values in existing urban areas is essential. But at least as important are steps to promote economic efficiency and livability in areas of future development. Our national welfare therefore requires the provision of good urban transportation, with the properly balanced use of private vehicles and modern mass transport to help shape as well as serve urban growth.” His concept was enacted into law in 1964, and provided \$375 million in federal assistance for infrastructure over three years.



This graphic depicting the many right of way disciplines first appeared in the August 1966 issue of Right of Way.

THE TRANSFORMATION CONTINUES

To meet the needs of the U.S. and Canada, ARWA was also undergoing a transformation in many ways. After Frank Balfour stepped down as Association President in 1957, the decision was made to limit each incoming presidential term to one year to ensure fresh ideas and perspectives were imbued into association leadership. This move brought with it a decade wherein ARWA was led by Association Presidents from all over North America. These Presidents came from nine different states all over the U.S., expanding the geographical representation and experience of association leadership.

More specifically, the Association was expanding across North America in leaps and bounds, increasing membership and chapters even in faraway locales like Hawaii and Alaska. More chapters brought easier access to educational offerings and member benefits, and membership soared. The value of Association membership increased with each new member and each new chapter. By the end of the decade, ARWA could claim 19 new chapters to its roster, three of them Canadian.

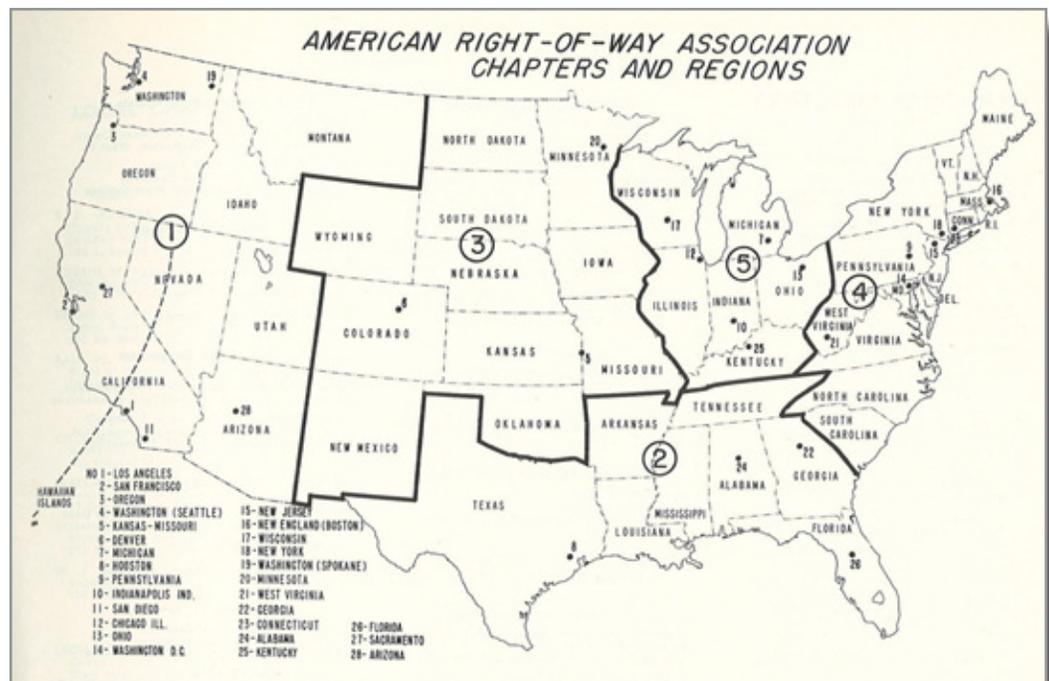
This member growth, coupled with the new technology emerging each day, exhibited the commitment of highly trained right of way professionals ready to tackle the infrastructure needs of North America. In order to add value to this commitment, the Board of Directors established the Office of Director of Education in 1966. This move was followed the next year, when the Board created the Professional Development Program, known in those days as the National Registration Program. The professional designation program was launched January 1, 1968. The new Senior Member Designation aimed to significantly expand enthusiasm for the educational offerings of ARWA, as it was designed to motivate right of way professionals to complete the requisite courses. Since the program got off to a slow start, many members were initially “grandfathered in.” Written materials and skilled instructors were needed to augment the new courses, and so in 1968 “Selected Readings in Right of Way” was published, followed by Charles Parker’s “Managing the Right of Way” organization in 1970.

EXPANSION OF REGIONS AND COMMITTEES

The system of organizing chapters into regions led by a chair and vice-chair began to flourish. This development helped aid communication between the members and chapters and the association leadership. The practice of holding region forums began, and enhanced the educational offerings of ARWA and provided more accessible and targeted educational opportunities to members who were unable to make the trip to the Annual Conferences.

During the 60s, the committee system also expanded greatly. The committee structure was organized into two groups – operating committees and industry committees. As they are today, operating committees included education, liaison, membership, professional development and nominations and elections, and handled the operation and government of the Association. Industry committees focused on specific fields of right of way and how to improve professionalism within that sphere, and included the utilities, highway, pipeline and valuation committees. The region and committee systems worked to enhance each other, as representatives from each region were placed on each committee, thereby assuring a large geographical base of experience in each field.

As the decade drew to close, the changes and educational advancements were paying off. By the end of 1969, the total number of chapter had reached 47, and they were now organized into a cohesive power structure within the three new regions.



Although a little outdated even by its print date, this 1960s region map shows just how much IRWA has grown!

1970s

A Slow Start

The 1970s proved to be a challenging time in North America. After the relative boom of the 50s and 60s public infrastructure growth slowed considerably. Much of the decade was spent mired in a recession due in part to the oil crises of 1973 and 1979, which caused energy prices to skyrocket, and left little funds for infrastructure. In Canada, the average age of public infrastructure hit an all-time low. As in the United States, this was followed by a period of slower development, as the need for new additions and repairs seemed less urgent.

Despite these challenges, this was a decade of astonishing technological growth. It saw the birth of modern computing, with the invention of the first general microprocessor, personal computers and pocket calculators. Jumbo jets revolutionized commercial flight, doubling passenger capacity and increasing flight range to 6,000 miles. Technology was becoming more accessible to the average citizen with each passing day, and the communications industry had to keep up. Of particular importance in achieving this was the spread of fiber optics, which transformed the communications industry at the time.

The environmentalist movement continued to expand, and its emphasis focused not just on local issues, but national problems as well. This was reflected in much of the public infrastructure legislation passed over the decade, as the U.S. Congress became increasingly concerned with mitigating environmental consequences of various infrastructure projects. The Federal Aid Act of 1970 was passed, which addressed the economic, social and environmental effects of Federal Aid Highway Projects. It also placed standards on highway noise levels. The National Environmental Protection Act was signed into law in 1970, and the Safe Drinking Water Act, passed by Congress in 1974, affected every public water system in the United States.



This photo, taken in 1970, shows Karl Baetzner, SR/WA presenting Frank Balfour with a plaque containing seven silver dollars, his accumulated salary for serving as ARWA Executive Secretary at \$1.00 per year.

In response to the energy crisis, the U.S. Congress passed an act which consolidated numerous energy-regulating agencies into the Department of Energy (DOE). The Federal Regulatory Energy Commission (FERC) was also created as an independent regulatory body. This new agency controlled interstate electricity sales, wholesale electric rates, hydroelectric licensing, natural gas pricing, and oil pipeline rates. FERC was also tasked with reviewing and permitting liquefied natural gas terminals, interstate natural gas pipelines and non-federal hydropower projects.

Education Improvements

In the midst of all this, ARWA continued to emphasize the relatively new SR/WA Designation as a motivator for right of way professionals to become more educated and showcase their skills. The challenging economic times meant it was often difficult for employers to find the means to send employees to local Chapter seminars and educational offerings. Nevertheless, by the end of the decade, ARWA's membership stood at almost 11,000, 30% of which were proud carriers of the SR/WA Designation. SR/WAs were gaining recognition from their employers and receiving additional benefits when it came to hiring, promotions and pay structure.

May 1961

Wives of ARWA members form the American Right of Way Women's Association, a social club.

June 1966

Office of the Director of Education is established.

1968

"Select Readings in Right of Way" is published.

June 1965

The first Frank C. Balfour Award is presented at the 11th Annual Conference.

June 1967

Board of Directors creates the Professional Development Program.

1960s

Educational offerings continued to expand and improve in response to member needs. In 1972, the Association published its seminal text, "The Principles of Right of Way." An important milestone was the creation of two education foundations. In June of 1976, ARWA's Board of Directors elected to adopt a separate, non-profit corporation known as the Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF) with the purpose of expanding educational offerings and the professional development programs, provide scholarships, recognition awards and grants to ARWA members, as well as promote and conduct studies on important issues affecting the right of way profession. In its first year, RWIEF was tasked with overseeing and expanding the three major scholarship funds bestowed at the time by ARWA, the Frank C. Balfour Scholarship, the Mark A. Green Award, and the Gene L. Land Award. In 1979, the Board moved to create a separate foundation for Canada, the Canadian Right of Way Education Foundation (CRWEF).

These educational developments were responding to the growing needs of the members. Beginning in the late 60s, and really taking off in the 70s, was a sea change in the scope of right of way work. In the past, right of way agents had been expected to be a jack of all trades - appraising, negotiating, engineering, as well as acting as title clerk, relocation agent and property management specialist all at the same time. The knowledge base of these "old-school" agents tended to be extensive but vague. In the early 70s, specialized agents with specific, expert knowledge in one field became more desirable. This trend was reflected in the educational advancements made by ARWA - better access, increased course options and specialized education staff to coordinate course offerings. Members could now take courses that focused more on advanced training, and went beyond the basic principles.

End of an Era

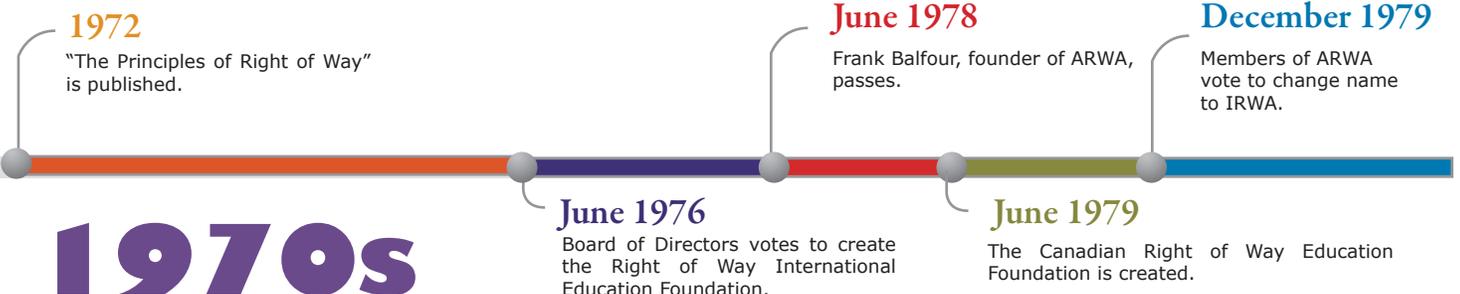
Amid all this growth, change and improvement at ARWA, the decade closed on a somber note, when founder Frank C. Balfour passed away in September 1978. He had fully dedicated 44 years of his life to advancing the right of way profession, attending countless chapter charter meetings, region seminars and annual conferences. His dedication was borne from a desire to raise the standard of professionalism, ethics, and education in the profession he loved, and today still remains a testament to his persistence of vision.

Chapter Timeline 1960 – 1979

The 1960s and 1970s was a time of enormous growth in IRWA history, as demonstrated by all the charter chapter meetings that occurred just in that decade!

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|---|--|
| 1960
Sooner Chapter 33
Southwest Chapter 35 | 1969
Arkansas Chapter 51
Old Dominion Chapter 52
British Columbia Chapter 54 |
| 1961
Gateway Chapter 37
Salt Lake City Chapter 38
South Texas Chapter 39 | 1970
Roadrunner Chapter 53
Allegheny Chapter 55
Inland Counties Chapter 57 |
| 1962
Mississippi Chapter 40 | 1971
Wyoming Chapter 61 |
| 1963
Iowa-Nebraska Chapter 41
San Jose Chapter 42 | 1973
Tumit Chapter 62
Snake River Chapter 64 |
| 1964
Louisiana Chapter 43
Southern Nevada Chapter 44 | 1975
Ottawa Chapter 63 |
| 1966
Big Sky Chapter 45 | 1976
Atlantic Chapter 65 |
| 1967
Sierra Nevada Chapter 46
Santa Barbara Chapter 47
Prairie Chapter 48 | 1977
Orange County Chapter 67 |
| 1968
Alaska Sourdough Chapter 49
San Joaquin Valley Chapter 50 | 1979
Colorado West Chapter 70 |

One of the last but perhaps most resonant acts of the decade at ARWA occurred in December 1979, when the members of the Association voted - at long last - to modify its name, finally becoming the International Right of Way Association. Association leadership had become more aware of interest in IRWA outside of North America. This step succeeded in creating a true bridge for expansion, not just in North America, but all around the world. 🌐



1970s