



Education-Lessons from the Past Directions for the Future

by **George E. Midgett, SR/WA**
International President
1980 - 1981

Did you know that as recently as fiscal 1974-75 only 20 courses were given? Compare that with the 117 courses given in fiscal 1982-83 and you begin to realize how far our education program has come in the last ten years of our history.

There were courses given prior to 1974-75. In my own experience as Education Committee Chairman of Carolinas Chapter 31, I can recall giving a negotiations course at Raleigh, N.C. in November 1968. This was followed by Communications Course I in August 1969 and Interpersonal Relations Course II in October 1970. These three courses were based on material being developed by Dr. Charles (Chuck) Pyron. Pyron has been instrumental in developing IRWA courses in communications and negotiations and was awarded the 1983 Y. T. Lum Award for his cumulative educational efforts.

"In the early days," Dr. Charles Parker of North Carolina State University worked very closely with Charles Pyron and those of us in Chapter 31 to put together those early courses. It is interesting to note that those courses were sponsored jointly by North Carolina State University and AR/WA, with two certificates being given to students who completed those courses.

Another early course, "Managing The Right of Way Organization," was based on Dr. Pyron's textbook

published in 1970. This was our first official textbook. The only other book used for courses at that time was "Selected Readings In Right of Way" published in 1968. "Selected Readings" occupies a special spot in my office and I still frequently refer to this book.

Today we have nineteen formal education courses covering all areas of right of way. Why do we have so many courses and how do we account for such rapid growth in our education program beginning in the early seventies?

I think there are two main contributors to this explosion in education. One of these was the birth of our professional designation program which became effective January 1, 1968. That program recognizes four disciplines in right of way: negotiations, law, engineering and appraisal. Each discipline requires education credits. Our Principles of Right of Way textbook, published in 1972, was designed to meet the general needs of our membership. Course 101 - Principles of Real Estate Acquisition (once known as Right of Way Acquisition) has without question been more enthusiastically received and supported than any other of our courses. Our Association made a commitment to its members to offer courses to meet the education requirements for senior designation and to develop courses in direct response to the expressed

needs of our membership. This commitment is continually enacted on through the addition of new courses and the revision of current courses.

Another important part of our education program has been the certification of instructors to teach our courses. In the spring of 1974 we had no certified instructors. The first instructor's certification clinic was held in Lawrence, Kansas in the summer of 1974. Since that time 27 clinics have been held and today we have one hundred and seventy-nine certified instructors.

The education needs of our members have grown, changed and expanded as a direct response to a broadened membership base. From a relatively narrow base devoted almost exclusively to the acquisition agent, we have become an association with diversified interests and responsibilities. Today we include acquisition agents, engineers, appraisers, attorneys, relocation specialists, property managers, planners and environmental specialists as well as managers and supervisors in all of these areas. Multiply this by the great number of investor owned companies, local, state and Federal agencies, independent contractors and individual practitioners, and we can begin to understand and appreciate the job our association has done and continues to do in providing educational opportunities for all our members.

A brief look at our formal courses show that they are broken down into seven groups or series:

- 100 Series - Basic Principles
2 courses
- 200 Series - Communication
Negotiations
Problem Solving
Testimony
10 courses
- 300 Series - Management
1 course
- 400 Series - Appraisal
2 courses
- 500 Series - Relocation Assistance
2 courses
- 600 Series - Environmental
Considerations
1 course
- 700 Series - Property Management
2 courses

I'm sure that many of you shared the same kind of experiences as we in Chapter 31 in trying to put together courses in the late sixties and early seventies. Stop for a moment and think about the first 35 to 40 years in the life of our association. What a terrific job those folks did in building the foundation that gave birth to the finest education oriented association in the world today! They did it pretty much on their own; but they got the job done in their local chapters! And, you know something? That's still where the job must be done today and in the future! It's up to us; we have fifty years behind us and an unlimited future ahead. We approach the future with the vision of Frank Balfour and the leaders of yesteryear who have brought us to where we are today. That future's heart is the education program and as long as we approach the future with the vision of Frank Balfour and yesteryear's leaders we will continue to grow as the training ground for tomorrow's practitioners.

Skills of Expert Testimony
June 16, 1984
Disneyland Hotel
Tuition: \$60.00

This course is presented in conjunction with the IRWA Celebration 50! Education Seminar.

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As President, Bill Reid, SR/WA, displays ARWA education material.



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