



# Government and Administration

by **David E. Punches, SR/WA**  
**International President**  
**1973-74**

As we review the development and achievements of the International Right of Way Association in this 50th year, it would seem proper, interesting and essential that we retrace the evolution of the governmental and administrative background of the organization. How did we come from the small informal monthly luncheon meetings of a group with a common interest in right of way in 1934 to the well structured professional establishment we have today?

Since I was not involved with the founder, Mr. Frank Balfour, in those 1934 meetings, I cannot personally recount how the Association was administered or governed at that time. We do know that the Association was founded in Los Angeles, California, in 1934 under the name of the Southern California Right of Way Agents' Association. The offices of the Association at that time were President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The Committees were Membership and Investigating, Finance, Luncheon, Program and Publicity. For many years the Association remained a west coast membership but with the "jumping" of the Rockies and the chartering of Chapter 5 in Kansas City in 1953, it became a National organization. Growth was rapid and constant from then on, resulting in today's 73 chapters which dot the United States and Canada. Truly, it

has expanded into an International technical organization dedicated to the advancement of right-of-way and land acquisition work as a fully recognized profession.

At the Second Annual Seminar in Houston, Texas in June 1956, the Board of Directors created the position of Executive Vice Chairman, it being the plan that the position would be filled later and that the Executive Vice Chairman's office would, in reality, be that of the business manager of the Association. Later, Frank C. Balfour, the founder, was named to that office under the National Chairman, Dick Taylor.

In a special report of June 1962, Mr. Balfour wrote: "This will be the last official report from your National Headquarters Office submitted by your Executive Vice Chairman. As you are aware, the title of this national office will be changed to Executive Secretary effective July 1, 1962, at which time the new office of National Vice Chairman, the number one assistant to the National Chairman, comes into existence."

On February 1, 1964, Frank Balfour retired as National Executive Secretary, culminating thirty years of continuous service to the Association. National Chairman, Dan Williamson, appointed Robert L. Stone as the new National Executive Secretary. At a later date, Mr.

Balfour, while in retirement, would again take over this office.

The National Board of Directors' meeting in 1964 in Detroit was a session that started on Wednesday and ran through Friday, resulting in numerous changes. A resolution was defeated that would have created the office of Second Vice Chairman. Then a resolution was submitted to amend the By-Laws by deleting the words "National Chairman and Vice Chairman" and substituting the words "National President and Chairman of the Board" and "National Vice President and Vice Chairman of the Board." This carried by a two-thirds majority. An Executive Secretary and Parliamentarian were appointed by the Chairman, such appointments being subject to approval by the Executive Committee. Frank C. Balfour was named Founder and National Counselor, also an officer, director and member of the National Executive Committee. Members of the National Advisory Board were added to the Board of Directors with voice and vote.

In 1966, an item changing the By-Laws to establish a Women's Auxiliary was approved. Also the National Education Committee, recognizing the need for an aggressive educational program, recommended the creation of the office of Director of Education and the Board of Directors appointed Dan Rosencrans

as such Temporary Director with instructions to develop such a program as rapidly as possible. The joint efforts of the National Professional Development Committee, supported by many years of studies by several individual chapters, came to fruition in Boston on May 26, 1967 when the Board of Directors formally adopted a Resolution establishing a National Registration Program for the Association.

At the National Association Seminar in San Antonio in 1970, the Executive Committee structure was changed to the following: President and Chairman of the Board, President Elect, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer. Essentially, the same official framework is in effect today.

The Board of Directors' meeting in Miami, June 1971, acted to strengthen the membership of the Association's various International committees by inserting the following into each of the Resolutions which establishes the committees: "The Committee Chairman shall appoint a committee member from each Region after securing the advice and concurrence of the Regional Chairman and the (International) President." Thus, henceforth, the Regional Chairman and the International Committee Chairmen were able to discuss and reach an agreement for any particular region.

With expansion and the inherent differences in international laws and

policies, it became necessary to change the Association's name to International Right of Way Association, which name was officially registered with the Secretary of State, State of California, in April of 1980.

The headquarters staff that has been established to administer the organization's affairs today is made up of: Executive Vice President, Director of Professional Services, Director of Educational Services, Assistant to Director of Educational Services, Clerical Assistant, Director of Administrative Services, Executive Secretary, Bookkeeper, Membership Service Coordinator and Director of Publications.

To keep pace, any organization must be flexible, must renew itself, must make provision for change. But in adopting this philosophy of flexibility, it must be careful to preserve those tenets conceived by its founders which provided the firm base for its existence. At first glance, it would appear that the changes since 1934 have been many but in fact, a closer study reveals that some were merely the result of the "semantics of the times." Actually, those who have guided the fate of the Association have done remarkably well in adjusting to growth and the demands of progress without compromising the goals and ethics embraced by that first dedicated group in 1934. They are to be commended and should long serve as an inspiration to those who will follow.



*Pictured left to right are Association giants Dean R. Little, SR/WA (Frank C. Balfour Award winner), Gene L. Land, SR/WA (Past International President and Balfour Award winner), and Fred A. Crane (past International President). All were very active in making the Association's governmental structure work for the benefit of all members.*

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