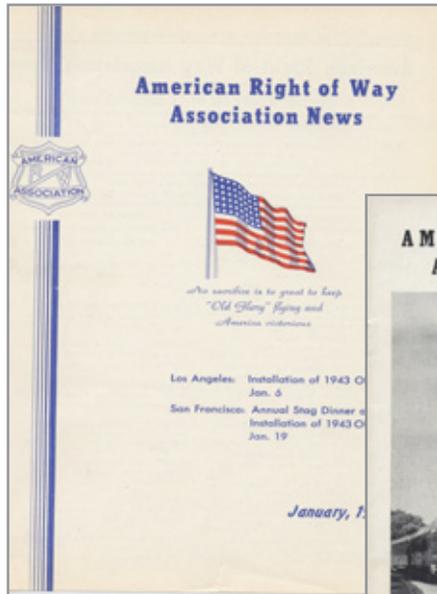


# Building the Future



## for the Past



BY KATE SHIRLEY

## 1940s

### IN AMERICA

The second decade of our young organization's existence did not begin particularly illustriously, mainly due to world events of the time.

The 1940's opened with the United States standing on the precipice of war, a war which would dominate the first half of the decade, and one that would have a grave effect on public works projects of the time.

The New Deal projects, which had been initiated in response to the Great Depression of the 1930s and had hoped to stimulate the economy by encouraging domestic public works projects, were now largely abandoned, as President Roosevelt recognized the need to divert all available government funds toward war production and spending. Originally, the New Deal public works programs had been a boon to ARWA. Hundreds of thousands of miles of roads, tens of thousands of bridges, numerous dams and parks, and many thousand schools, libraries, courthouses, hospitals and sanitation facilities were built, and these projects

had required skilled right of way agents and engineers. As the need to support the war grew, the upkeep and maintenance of these projects was neglected. Even the Public Works Administration was deemed irrelevant at that time, and it was abolished in 1941.

The only exceptions to this general desertion of domestic infrastructure projects and improvements were those directly related to the war effort. These included the roads that served military installations and industrial production which suddenly had to be built or expanded. Major bridges were strengthened in order to accommodate larger loads (including tanks and other materials), and military training and port facilities were built, along with the sanitation facilities they required. Furthermore, with the rationing of gasoline and tires, and automobile manufacturing stalled, the use of public transit was on the rise.

### ASSOCIATION EXPANSION

However, the ARWA continued to grow. By the early 1940s, the American Right of Way Association was beginning to gain exposure in right of way circles outside the state. The Association

had experienced enormous membership growth within California, and was getting poised to expand beyond state lines.

As the Association prepared for expansion outside California, the leadership wanted to ensure that all members would adhere to the same high ethical standards established by the original founders. Thus, in 1941, Chapter 1 President Gifford Todd appointed a committee to draft the first Code of Ethics for the ARWA. Harold S. Throckmorton was elected as the committee chairman, and within a few months, a proposed Code of Ethics was submitted to the Executive Committee. The Association's first Code of Ethics was published in the October 1941 issue of the ARWA New, and formally adopted at ARWA's regular meeting in November 1941.

### NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM IS BORN

The diversion of resources away from public works projects during the early 1940s inevitably caused a pent-up demand for domestic civilian goods and public works facilities. Manufacturing of housing and cars, construction of new roads and highways, and extensions of water and sewer systems had virtually stopped during the war. Automobile production grew from a mere 70,000 in 1945 to 2.1 million in 1946, and then to 3.5 million in 1947. People could afford homes again, and suburbia grew. Highway travel reached its prewar peak by 1946 and began to climb at 6 percent each year, a trend which would continue for decades. Traffic quickly overwhelmed the existing system of rural roads and highways which had been over-used and under-maintained during the war. By 1944, it became very clear to those overseeing transportation and water resources that the end of the war was near.

The nation was concerned that adjusting to a peacetime economy would cause another depression. So in 1944, the U.S. Congress moved to ready the nation for the upcoming post-war economy with the passing of the Flood Control Act and the Federal Aid Highway Act. The latter was the first step toward creating a national system of highways "so located as to connect by routes, as direct as practicable, the principal metropolitan areas, cities and industrial centers, to serve the national defense and connect at suitable border points with routes of continental importance in the Dominion of Canada and the Republic of Mexico."

### POISED TO EXPAND

The 1944 Federal Aid Highway Act authorized \$1.5 billion following the end of the war for use in urban areas, to connect them with the existing federal-aid system. The government once

again put faith in the creation of domestic infrastructure in order to stimulate the economy and create jobs. The Highway Act was based on reports from the Bureau of Public Roads, which depicted a future vision of a national system of 40,000 miles of high-speed, and safe highways to connect the nation.

The American Right of Way Association was ready to handle the job. By October 1945, the membership of Chapter 1 had reached its constitutional limit of 250 members. By March 1946, the Executive Committee was seriously considering the possible incorporation of the Association. In April of that year, ARWA was incorporated by the state of California as a non-profit educational organization (articles of incorporation were filed with the secretary of the state of California on April 5, 1946). The first Board of Directors meeting was held just before Christmas in 1946, with Frank Balfour serving as Chairman.

The men of ARWA were also starting to form alliances around this time with other influential right of way associations. In December 1946, the Los Angeles and San Francisco Chapters sponsored a luncheon in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Association of State Highway Officials. At this time, total membership of the Association had reached 529, and ARWA's profile was on the rise.

Over the next few years, right of way agents from Oregon and Washington began to take notice of ARWA. In order to observe the operations of the Association, J.M. Devers of the Oregon State Highway Commission and Frank Stocking of the State of Washington Department of Highways traveled to California for the annual meetings and seminars of Chapters 1 and 2. They returned to their home states convinced of the need to expand the Association, and got busy contacting right of way and land men and their associates. New chapters were about to emerge.





**Below:** The organizational meeting of Oregon Chapter 3, the first Chapter outside of California, on October 27, 1951. **Left:** The group of men responsible for bringing ARWA to Oregon, including Frank C. Balfour in the middle.



# 1950s

## THE POST-WAR BOOM YEARS

The Association really exploded in the 1950s, thanks in large part to the post-war boom. Public infrastructure was greatly needed, and new forms of transportation were becoming more available. ARWA commenced the decade with two chapters, and membership expanded significantly over the next ten years, with 30 chapters (including the first Canadian Chapter in 1959) and over 7,000 members. What had started as a small meeting of 14 men at an Italian restaurant in 1934 had ballooned to an international organization within 25 years.

In Canada, the 1950s was also a time of exceptional growth. In a country known for its rugged geography and remote locales, mega-projects like the St. Lawrence Seaway and the Trans-Canada Highway were being completed, improving travel and the flow of goods and services. The first trans-continental Canadian flight took place, as did the groundbreaking of the first Canadian subway in Toronto. As in America, Canada was becoming better connected, and the infrastructure demand to keep up with the many developments was high. The decade concluded with the chartering of Ontario Chapter 29 on June 15, 1959 at a meeting with 93 members and guests in attendance.

## HIGHWAY AND AIR TRAVEL POPULARIZED

The success of ARWA during this decade coincides directly with the creation of what many consider to be the greatest public works project in the history of the United States. The national highway system was inaugurated in June 1956, following the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956, an act which was greatly championed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Envisioning that a national system of highways didn't just have the potential of benefitting military operations, Eisenhower predicted that it would also serve as a building block for future economic growth, as it would facilitate the moving of people, goods and services all around the United States. And despite these lofty goals, the Federal Highway System's impact proved to be far greater than anyone anticipated. The highway system not only influenced city planning, but also led to the suburbanization of the country and connected various parts of the country in a way that hadn't seemed possible just a few years before.

By the end of the decade, America witnessed the first domestic jet-airliner passenger flight from New York to Miami. There was a significant boom in air travel and aircraft technology development in the 50's, factors which combined to overwhelm American airspace, and leading to a series of airplane accidents.

## 1940s

### October 1941

ARWA's Code of Ethics first appears in print in the America Right of Way News.

### April 1946

ARWA's Articles of Incorporation are filed with the Secretary of State in California.

### November 1941

Code of Ethics is adopted at the regular meeting of Chapter 1.

### December 1946

First meeting of the Board of Directors occurs with Frank Balfour as the Chairman.

## Interstate Highway Plan from 1955

The Department of Commerce had regulated the air traffic industry since the birth of flight in the 1920's, and it was time for an update. Once again, Congress recognized the need for regulation in a newly booming industry, and passed the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, creating an independent group called the "Federal Aviation Agency," which replaced the Civil Aeronautics Administration. This new agency was solely responsible for air navigation and traffic control within the United States.



Even though the pieces fell into place in 1956, the origins of the Interstate System go back to studies in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 contained many provisions affecting the Interstate System originally derived from the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1944. A key legislative phrase of the Act reads as follows: "It is hereby declared to be essential to the national interest to provide for the early completion of the 'National System of Interstate Highways,' as authorized and designated in accordance with section 7 of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1944." Within the original mileage limitation of 40,000, the highway routes were designated in 1947 and 1955, but in the absence of a national program and a Federal commitment to build the roadways, little was accomplished. It took the push of a president with a lot of fore sight to make that dream into a reality.

### A COUNTRY ON THE MOVE

The construction of the interstate highway system brought many benefits. With more ease in moving about the country and more people able to afford single-family housing, suburbia was expanding. With this growth came an increased need for expansion in the communications industry, along with greater energy demands, including the need for oil, electricity and gas. In addition to roads and bridges, there were new transmission lines to construct and pipes to place underground. This combined to stimulate the economy and create a greater need for skilled and knowledgeable right of way agents. The leaders of the ARWA realized that, in order to grow and thrive, the Association would need to help these right of way professionals gain the necessary expertise and professionalism. A program based on experience and continuing professional education would soon follow. ✪

## Chapter Timeline 1950 – 1959

The 1950s was a time of great growth in IRWA history. To get a sense of it, check out all the charter chapter meetings that occurred just in that decade!

<b>1950</b> Oregon Chapter 3	<b>1957</b> Badger Chapter 17 Empire Chapter 18 Inland Empire Chapter 19 Minneapolis Chapter 20
<b>1952</b> Washington Chapter 4	<b>1958</b> Alabama Chapter 24 Connecticut Chapter 23 West Virginia Chapter 21 Georgia Chapter 22 Florida/Puerto Rico Chapter 26 Kentucky Bluegrass Chapter 25
<b>1954</b> Mile High Chapter 6 Michigan Chapter 7 Gulf States Chapter 8	<b>1959</b> Sacramento Chapter 27 Arizona Chapter 28
<b>1955</b> Philadelphia Chapter 9 Indiana Chapter 10 Illinois Chapter 12 Ohio Buckeye Chapter 13	
<b>1956</b> Potomac Chapter 14 Garden State Chapter 15 New England Chapter 16	

## 1950s

**October 1950**

Oregon Chapter 3, the first chapter outside of California, holds its charter meeting.

**January 1954**

American Right of Way News is renamed Right of Way magazine and switched to bi-monthly publication.

**June 1956**

At the Second Annual Seminar in Houston, the position of Executive Vice President is created, in order to handle day-to-day operations.

**June 1959**

Association goes "international" with the admission of Ontario Chapter 29.

**December 1952**

Frank Balfour heads east to attend an AASHTO meeting where he meets Right of Way agents from Missouri and Oklahoma.

**June 1955**

First Annual National Seminar held in Los Angeles with 603 attendees representing 150 private/public organizations.

**February 1958**

The first Regional Educational Seminar is held in Atlantic City, sponsored by Chapters 9, 14, 15, 16 and 18.