

CHAPTER FOUR Educaring

One of the finest achievements of the real estate profession was the creation of the Canadian Institute of Realtors (C.I.R.), an educational scheme undertaken by the Canadian Association of Real Estate Boards (C.A.R.E.B.) in 1955. The motivation was admirably set forth by R.A. Patterson of Montreal who had just been elected C.A.R.E.B. president at the group's annual meeting in Edmonton. During a stopover in Calgary the following year he observed, "There is a great need for the real estate profession to attract well-educated people if our industry as a whole is to prepare itself for the enormously expanding future."

With this very goal in view the Calgary Real Estate Board already had instituted, on its own, some short courses for the instruction of newcomers to the business. But this Canadian Institute of Realtors' Toronto team, with the hopes that its efforts would become popular nationally, had created the industry's first intensive teaching plan. Upon successful completion of the course participants, as professionals, henceforth were entitled to affix to their names the degree of A.C.I.R. (Associate of the Canadian Institute of Realtors).

The innovators held their first annual meeting in Halifax on October 4, 1956 at the conclusion of the association's thirteenth annual gathering. By that time the C.I.R. had been operating for a year and, with a most promising start, and with the future greatly heartening them, the small buoyant group elected Jack Weber of Edmonton as the first president.

Alberta and Calgary realtors were very keen to bring the program to this province but they wondered if the nationally-formulated scheme would embrace enough detailed local needs. Clair Cote, who headed the Calgary Real Estate Board's education committee felt some important decisions had to be made if the educational program, devised in Toronto, was to be tailored for the needs and circumstances pertinent to real estate practitioners in this province. Alberta real estate people had alternatives to consider regarding the three-year training course being administered by the newly-organized C.I.R., then implemented in conjunction with the University of Toronto.

The training, designed to provide the student with the information necessary to his becoming a career realtor, Cote felt, had to be adapted to the Alberta scene, rather than one tailored strictly for mid-Canada agents and sales staffs. The preferred choice was:

(1) In Alberta the first and second years of the three-year face-to-face instruction should be sponsored by the University of Alberta.

(2) The correspondence version of the course could be conducted by the Canadian Institute of Realtors in Toronto, through the Canadian Association of Real Estate Boards. A committee consisting of Clair Cote and Aubrey M. Edwards felt the first year course had to be localized, made more flexible than the Toronto-based prototype. It should be set up as a continuing educational project, and administered by the local real estate boards of Calgary and Edmonton.

An early version of today's Calgary Real Estate Board Orientation/Training course.

(CREB Archives)



Messrs. Cote and Edwards urged that the second year course should be sponsored by the University of Alberta's Department of Extension, that a third year advanced course should be organized on the workshop principle, and be conducted in Calgary, Edmonton, and Lethbridge if enough prospective pupils wanted the instruction. Clair Cote, in his role as chairman of the Alberta Real Estate Association's Education Committee, backed his two-man Calgary committee's stand with the fact that interest in the course being offered out of Toronto resulted in only seven Calgary students enrolling in the first year of instruction, and only three in the second. Clearly something "home grown" was wanted.

The result of the committee's 1957 observations and recommendations was the appointment of a solicitor to prepare and present a brief to the Government of Alberta asking for amendments to the Real Estate Licensing Act in order to clear the way for the establishment of an Alberta version of the course. Aubrey Edwards was appointed to the advisory board to set up test standards for those taking the C.I.R. examination. Meanwhile, much enthusiasm for the course was shown by newcomers to the real estate profession even though the "rookies" knew that, prior to enrolling they must pass a mandatory exam. Their scores placed them in the 90% bracket!

Aubrey Edwards, as the new chairman of the Calgary Real Estate Board's education committee, emerged with an all-inclusive curriculum and a team of excellent local instructors, all of them professionals in particular specialties.

Sales Training at the Board.
CREB (Archives)



The study topics:

History and Organization of Real Estate in Canada
Legal Forms, Listing Agreements, Offers to Purchase
Law of Contracts between master and servant, principal and agent
Real Estate Agents Licensing Act
House Construction - including a field trip
Ethics and Public Relations
Salesmanship.

The first Calgary gathering of real estate freshman students took place at Penley's Academy on December 10, 1956. Present were 50 out of a total of 150 applicants, with Cote and Edwards proudly watching the occasion which marked the culmination of a great many hours of preparation. The roster of instructors was impressive: W. Frank Johns as the historian; Kennett I. Lyle speaking on the licensing of agents; Roy Deyell, W.A. McGillivray, and J. Fred Scott, Q.C. handling the legal topics; A.L. Knight teaching house construction; Ivan C. Robison dealing with public relations and ethics; and Frank Johns returning to the lectern for his talk on salesmanship.

"Back at the shop," board members had been helping to stock the C.R.E.B. library because, before long, each first course student was to be given six books and pamphlets to help become better acclimatized to the profession. Additionally, the education committee urged each Alberta local board to examine its local public library for books related to real estate, and to publicize their existence. It encouraged locally established realtors throughout

An open house showing
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the province to donate pertinent books to their board's libraries, an undertaking already meeting with success in Calgary.

As the years passed the two-week courses, frequently held in the winter months, met with increasing success. The Canadian Association of Real Estate Boards introduced, as a prodding move, a \$2,500 annual fund to encourage university studies in real estate, available to students at recognized Canadian universities in the fields of commerce and economics. From the start of its existence it also offered assistance to students proceeding to graduate studies in business.

The whole purpose of workshops and the courses was to achieve a professional status for Realtors. It was very well received. Recognition of its value was in evidence when, in 1959, arrangements were completed by the Alberta Real Estate Association for the University of Alberta (the University of Calgary, as such, had not yet been born) to hold first and second year C.I.R. courses in Calgary and Edmonton, both by lecture and assignment by correspondence for a fee of \$100.00 for each course.

In Calgary within the industry itself, interest and competition were heightened by a schedule of prizes open to both classroom and correspondence students. Licensed agents and salesmen taking the first and second year courses were eligible for \$25.00 for a complete pass, and \$50.00 for a pass with honors. Third year students competed for a prize of \$50.00 for a complete pass and \$100.00 for

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a pass with honors. In addition, a student whose examination mark exceeded those of any other C.I.R. student in Canada would receive a framed certificate. A Calgary student who made top marks while competing with three or more fellow Calgarians in a year's course would receive a framed certificate plus a cheque for \$50.00. They were significant awards, enough of "a carrot to keep many a donkey trotting when the going was really tough," which it could be, and often was! The designers of the Calgary series of courses also supplied precis of their performance to the successful students, to help them in landing future jobs.

Measurement of the graduates' success has always been in evidence. A random choice of a typical year, 1959, reveals the name of H.S. Kent, a third year C.I.R. correspondence graduate. Hailing from the Nanton area, a realtor since 1947, he encouraged other graduates to meet frequently to plan and carry out activities to publicize the benefits of C.I.R. training. In 1948 Kent had been named as the first president of the brand new C.I.R. student group.

To sample another year's newsmakers, achieving the top mark in Canada for a first year student in 1959 was Ben Barrington who had been sales manager at Toole Peet before becoming a partner with Aubrey Edwards. His mark in Economics was 90%. Evelyn M. Hinds was a second year C.I.R. graduate who took the correspondence route. Although her pair of scores were tied with those of two graduates from other parts of Canada, Evelyn received a 90% mark in Property Management, and 86% in Real Estate Law.

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In the third year category the national average mark in Town Planning was 59%. Roy Wilson, second vice president of the Calgary Real Estate Board and manager of Wilson Realty was graded at 90%.

In 1962 the C.I.R., a most important facet of the industry, changed its name from the Canadian Institute of Realtors to the Real Estate Institute of Canada. When a Calgary chapter of the organization was formed in 1960 with Kennett Lyle as its first chairman, it was the third in Canada, the earlier ones having taken shape in Ottawa, then in Quebec City. The goals of the body were clearly enunciated: to provide the necessary organization and leadership, to assist the Real Estate Institute of Canada implement and carry out its various programs and activities, as well as promote a harmonious liaison with real estate boards within the territorial jurisdiction of the local chapter. Since coming onto the scene that local chapter has become a most influential body in determining future Calgary real estate policies and legislation.

Despite the "localization" of certain aspects of the courses, the education of career Realtors was very much a Canada-wide effort. For instance, in 1956 the Canadian Association of Real Estate Boards (C.A.R.E.B.) instituted a program of bursaries, informing the nation's universities that students aiming at a career in the industry would be eligible to apply for a modest (\$500.00) assist. In this province a plan was afoot to establish a real estate chair at the University of Alberta.

*The presentation.
CREB (Archives)*



The deep and continuing involvement of the Calgary Real Estate Board in education was unmistakable. For example, Aubrey Edwards, whose name was seemingly synonymous with the profession's education programs, was elected 1954 chairman of the Calgary and the Alberta education committees, and chairman of the scholarship committee of the national body, C.A.R.E.B. Over the years any news of Calgary educational activities included the tireless extracurricular work and dedication of a host of the city's professional realtors such as Frank Butler, Hardy deForest, Al MacDonald, Clair Coristine, Bill Dickson, Romaine Klassen, Al MacLean and so many others. That their efforts paid off there was no doubt. Behavioral standards and the heightening of ethical standards made the old selfish cut-throat behavior very much a thing of the past.

For instance, in 1957, public complaints had dropped from several hundred annually to 75 with only three convictions of misconduct or shady practice. Yet, by the middle of that year 1,989 real estate licenses had been issued in Alberta. Obviously the educational efforts were bearing fruit. It was felt the industry was maturing well, a quality trend that, while it developed slowly at first, has persisted throughout the half century of the profession in Calgary.



Winners of annual awards to top salesman. Left to right, Albert Romano, E.B. Lyle, retiring President of CREB making the presentations, Kurt Kuennecki, and John Miller. Directors of the Board elected at the same meeting, were V.L. Hawkes, L.S. Irvine, H.S. Kent, Al Larson, P. Peitch, H.D. Tarves, Roy Wilson and Doug Muir.