

REALTORS® Celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Their Code of Ethics (a Titanic connection)

At the heart of the meaning of being a REALTOR® is the Code of Ethics. On July 29, 2013 the REALTOR® profession marked the 100th anniversary of that august document.

There is some interesting history related to city the official adoption took place in.

The Code was originally adopted at the annual National Association of REALTORS® Convention, held that year (1913) in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

“Canada” you might ask? Well in 1912 we all know that the R.M.S. Titanic smashed into a huge iceberg on its initial voyage and sank in the North Atlantic Ocean. Among those lost were three REALTOR® members from Winnipeg. In those days, a huge highlight of the convention was the delegates deciding where the convention for the next year would be held. In the memory of those three REALTORS® the delegates from the 1912 convention chose Winnipeg as the site for the 1913 convention.

You still might be wondering about Canadian members of NAR. NAR’s original constitution stated its mission was to “unite the real estate men of America” (meaning all of North America). For many decades (until 1943) the Winnipeg REALTORS® Association along with a number of other Canadian REALTOR® organizations, were members of NAR. These associations left NAR in 1943 to join the then newly formed Canadian Real Estate Association.

NAR was founded in 1908 and its original bylaws included a Committee to form a Code of Ethics. It took five years for the Committee to finish its work – thus setting the stage for the Canadian location for adoption. It is interesting to note that the first Code was written before license laws and most other regulations governing real estate existed in most parts of the United States. So, at that time, the Code was seen as the real estate profession’s declaration of industry principles and beliefs. It is considered a “living” document and annually undergoes review and revision.