From the Archives

Reading Between the Lines: NAR Publications

Thousands of newspapers, magazines, and journals, dating back to the turn of the 20th century, line the shelves of the NAR Library & Archives. Our staff, members, scholars from outside NAR, and even the press access this priceless information via reference requests, informing research projects both historical and current in nature. However, it is often the details between the lines (literally) — illustrations and advertisements — that give us unique insights into the ins and outs of real estate history.

The NAR Library and Archives holds documents you may have already guessed it does—like the complete backlog of REALTOR® Magazine. But did you know that we also have a complete, physical run of each of its predecessors dating back to 1910? An entire journal dedicated to parking? Access to millions of digital journal articles via EBSCO? If you spend enough time doing research within these publications, you will begin to realize that some of the most informative and unique pieces of history are found in the advertisements that fill their pages.

Just like they do today, advertisements offer a glimpse into specific and niche real estate trends that might not be reflected in NARs reports and surveys. As centuries passed, ads for steel and coal give way to electric lighting and modern HVAC systems. Stories of REALTORS®’ efforts on the home front during WWII are paired with ads for metal-saving “victory” window units and prefabricated homes for GI loans.

Even the booms and busts of cities can be traced through advertisements, evident in the variety of ads for what were at the time flourishing “rust belt” cities. Interestingly, a 1910 National Real Estate Journal ad (pictured below) referred to Duluth, MN as “the zenith of the unsalted seas.” 113 years later, the New York Times published an article discussing Duluth’s climate related real estate boom.
Why did Jones select Everson Lighting Equipment
For His Fifty or More Houses in Oak Park

If you asked him Jones would say

The Garage Should Conform To the Architectural Style of the House

We Are Rapidly Becoming a Nation of Automobile Owners—The Garage is a Necessity and Broaden Builders, Beall, facilitate them-

with the different styles of equipment and hardware, so the Garage Property Designed and Equipped Is a Force Sales Factor

DULUTH
THE ZENITH CITY OF THE UNSALTED SEAS
Offers the Greatest Opportunities for Real Estate Investments.

2d GREATEST PORT IN TONNAGE IN THE U. S.

A NEW PITTSBURG

The U. S. Steel Company now starting the first $20,000,000 unit of their $20,000,000 Steel Plant in Dubuque—Other large industries will follow.

WATCH DULUTH

The National Real Estate Convention meets in Minneapolis June 14th to 17th and plans to finish with a trip to Duluth, visit the Great Iron Mines in the World and view Duluth's Harbor, Steel Plant Site and City.

All dealers and owners cordially invited. For information about the trip—Duluth Real Estate or Mortgages

Write N. J. UPHAM COMPANY, Duluth, Minn.

1923 Is a Stucco Year

STUCCO steadily gains favor as its merits become better and more generally known and as proper methods of application are more generally used.

Sykes Expanded Cup Metal Lath is the one lath that secures proper reinforcement in any type of construction, without extra labor or expense.

The “vesperi” that are rolled into Expanded Cup make a thoroughly self-forming lath, which can be applied in a flat sur-

face or on studding.

The wider strands and the “vesperi” construction give more metal per square yard, greater strength and rigidity, resist sag and spring under the load of west plaster, and make for a better job more easily done.

Build for Less—Sell for More

Back-plastered stucco on metal lath costs considerably less, according to late contractors’ laths, than first class frame construction with sheathing, wooden boards and paint. There is no compari-

son in attractiveness, permanence or sal-

ability. Write for full information.

Sykes Metal Lath Company
505 Walnut Street
Niles, Ohio

This sketch shows a couple of the eighteen bungalows. These houses are complete and the selling price ranges from $14,500 to $16,000.

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The National Real Estate Journal disaffiliated with NAR in 1956, and advertisements in predecessors feature almost exclusively technology. Through these advertisements, you can track the evolution of communication, technology, and the seismic shift in the tools REALTORS® rely on to do business. Fax machines and floppy disks give way to the internet as articles muse about the new millennium and the 1990s hottest housing trend, gated developments.

Our collection of publications holds an astonishing amount of real estate history, statistics, and trend forecasting. The small but important culture details are often, however, found in between the lines.

You can request to view any of these titles by browsing our catalog or emailing Librarians@nar.realtor. In addition to our historic print resources, you have access to millions of journal articles via EBSCO. If you are interested in the NYT article above, staff can also request PDFs of articles behind paywall via a Librarian.
"Concealed telephone wiring adds sales appeal to our homes"

REALTOR® News, Jan. 15, 1990

—says Mr. Don Scholz, of Scholz Homes Incorporated, Toledo, Ohio

Housing trend comes to your neighborhood

GATED COMMUNITIES

Whether you view them as unapproachable fortresses or safe havens, gated communities are a popular housing choice you'll soon be selling—if you aren't already.
1908: United Realty (only one issue produced)

1910-1958: National Real Estate Journal

1934-1942: Freehold, The Confidential Weekly

1942-1976: REALTOR® Headlines (weekly)

1977-1978: REALTOR® Associate News, REALTOR® Review

1980-1985: REALTOR® News (weekly)

1979-1995: Real Estate Today

1996-1998: Today’s REALTOR®

1999-Present: REALTOR® Magazine