



Episode 03: Guy Chipman

Let's be honest – REALTORS® face an ever-changing industry. With emerging tech, growing trends, and a booming market, it's vital to keep up. Join me, Gilbert Gonzalez, CEO for the San Antonio Board of REALTORS®, as I get real with experts on what REALTORS® need to know in this industry. It's time to get real.

0:23 GG: Today, we're highlighting someone who was a member of SABOR for many years, who celebrated his 100th birthday this year. Guy Chipman became a REALTOR® in 1946, and he was President of SABOR twice in the early 1960s. He also served as President of the Texas REALTORS® in 1983 and he was the 1964 recipient of SABOR's REALTOR® of the Year Award. He also received SABOR's first Distinguished Service Award in 1990.

With his years of experience, he has seen the local real estate market change and grow over the decades, and he was an active part of much of that success.

We got a chance to speak with Mr. Chipman recently to hear some of his stories first-hand.

Before he got into real estate, Guy served his country in World War II as part of the US Army. Just after the war ended, Guy set his sights on a career in real estate.

1:12 GC: I went to work in the real estate business January 1, 1946. That's the effective date on my license.

GG: On the heels of the Great Depression as well as a world war, Guy had to find a broker with the know-how to help a new agent get started.

GC: I went to work for Arthur Baird Company, and Arthur was the biggest REALTORS® in San Antonio. He had three offices. He was the only company in town that had that.

GG: His new broker was no stranger to challenges, having kept his business profitable during the Depression.

GC: Arthur had been in the business before the Great Depression hit. I thought an interesting bit of information I wanted to ask him, what was it like when the Great Depression hit the real estate industry? And he said well for about six months all businesses were pretty, very slow, very very slow. He said but after about six months, people began to settle down and people would retain a little money or they were smart investors.

2:30 GG: This new job not only gave Guy the technical training he needed to build his business. It also gave him an experienced broker to help him get started. One of the first things his broker told him was a good salesman always makes himself available.

GC: A good salesman can make a decent living even in the middle of the depression, and I thought that was a good way to start.

GG: Once Guy learned the ropes, he started his own brokerage, eventually building one of the largest real estate companies in San Antonio at the time. And with a never-ending curiosity for the business, he set out to learn as much of the industry as he could, soon offering a full range of services.

3:04 GC: I was everything. I was commercial. I was residential. I was property manager. As we, the company grew I set up a department for each one of those.

GG: Not only did he have the drive to learn as much as he could, he also had a knack for details. At the time, many of the forms used by members had very little detail and were difficult to use. So he took his talent to the Board and helped make changes to many of the forms, eventually earning the nickname “Mr. Forms.”

3:30 GC: And it was one side, one side of the paper, the other side was blank. And on that side it had printing on it. It had a place for the name and address and legal description, and then all the rest are blanks to be filled in if you wanted to. There really was very little information going on contracts at that time. So we started having a better, larger contract, more details, more commitments, more understanding.

GG: Guy soon made his way to the top leadership spot at the association, serving as President in 1962 and 1963. He was also a trailblazer for equality, and during his time on the Board he became an advocate for the inclusion of minority members on the Board of Directors. But success didn’t come right away. And for a long time, he was met with opposition.

4:30 GC: I got turned down each time. No we want so and so and they nominated someone else.

GG: However, through his perseverance and personal commitment to diversity, he was successful in getting a minority member onto the Board.

GC: I recommended him and by golly he was accepted by the directors and he was voted upon and voted in as a Director. And you know I’m an army brat. I grew up in the military. I moved around the country, I went to two colleges that were integrated. I didn’t look at things like a lot of people did.

GG: Guy also saw first-hand the makings of the original MLS, and remembers how hard it was to market properties without it. Prior to the creation of the MLS, we operated primarily with an open listing, a non-exclusive listing and a lot of times people would have four, five, six, seven, eight real estate brokers listing their house with a non-exclusive listing, which meant they could all serve at the same time

5:43 GC: The Board heard that California was having some success with an early version of the MLS, so they went to check it out.

GC: The board decided they would send three REALTORS®, they we’re gonna send them out to California where MLS was in operation and doing it was doing well out there. They went out there and spent a week with REALTORS® out there and they came back with a glowing recommendation that we should have MLS.

GG: This change, however, was not an overnight success.

GC: There were some of them that when the MLS was created didn’t want to jump on and pay MLS, but then there’s some members of the public who had their houses for sale. And they didn’t want it to go in MLS. In those cases, they didn’t want to have many people looking at their house, they wanted pretty selective showings, which may not work in their best interest.

GG: Like today, some consumers did not want their homes listed in the MLS. But Guy often questioned if this was in the best interest of the consumer.

GC: But what's the advantage? The other brokers don't know about that listing so it doesn't get shown. Some people had a particular personal situation, and didn't want the public to really know about.

GG: This new system took some getting used to, overall agents soon realized the benefits it provided.

7:06 GC: Yes, it took a lot of introduction a lot of explanation. But it was pretty well received and the more active brokers particularly liked it.

GG: The MLS continued to grow, becoming a game-changer for REALTORS®. By the time Guy was President, he made a commitment to continually improve this tool for members.

GC: I worked real hard to try to make particularly the MLS effective.

GG: Since his presidency at SABOR, Guy continued to serve the association at all levels, and he was eventually elected the President of the Texas REALTORS® in 1983. Though he's seen a lot of changes in his years, one thing has never changed, and that's the value of the REALTOR® Code of Ethics.

7:51 GC: The Code of Ethics has always been important to the real estate industry. It gave us a map to go by.

GG: Over the years, that map has guided him in providing the best care for his clients. When asked for his words of advice to those just starting out, his dedication to the Code is clear.

8:09 GC: First, of course, absolute honesty. Second you've got to have empathy, you have to understand things from the other person's point of view and the person has to practice that at all times. The biggest advice I would give is to get as much education as you can. Knowledge is the basis of power.

GG: While he no longer keeps his license active, Guy still remains interested in what's happening in the market and stays up to date with the latest developments. He continues to attend meetings of the Past Presidents when he can, offering his insights and using his experience to help guide the Board. He has certainly created a long-lasting legacy in the San Antonio area, and he is someone we are proud to have served at our association.

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