ONE HUNDRED YEARS
American Housing’s Most Influential Leaders

FEATURING
ROSS CORTESE
Developer of Leisure World
Ross Cortese

"At the same time Del Webb was creating his Sun Cities, Cortese was perfecting the active adult community with his Leisure World concept. Recognizing that seniors wanted to enjoy retirement, Cortese created country club living for seniors.

Cortese's first Leisure World opened in Seal Beach, Calif., in 1960. The 6,600-unit community was quickly followed by the 13,000-unit Leisure World in Laguna Hills, Calif. The communities featured clubhouses, recreation facilities, hobby shops, golf, tennis, swimming pools, health clubs, and shopping centers. The Leisure World in Laguna Hills is recognized as one of the best planned and executed developments of the 1960s.

Cortese followed with five other Leisure Worlds around the country, with nearly 36,000 homes and more than 62,000 homeowners."
100 Years, 100 People. American Housing’s Most Influential Leaders
Excerpted from January 1999 BUILDER Magazine

(The following is a much shortened summary from the original 43-page article in the January 1999 issue of Builder Magazine. Each person’s contribution is significant. The “company they keep” makes their recognition even more impressive and memorable.)

6. Charles Abrams
A lawyer and columnist for the New York Post who authored the Municipal Housing Authority Law, the first public housing law in the United States. Promoted self-supporting middle-income public housing. Served as an advisor on urban planning to the United Nations.

7. Hans Andersen
In 1903 Andersen Lumber Co. manufactured standardized window frames with interchangeable parts. Dominated the wood window category. Company has a legacy of innovations in the market.

8. William Atkinson
Enterprising developer during WW II. Built the first FHA city, Midwest City, in Oklahoma City for defense workers. In 1950 the community was named the top neighborhood development in the US by the Urban Land Institute.

9. James Stanley Baughman
Accomplished President of Fannie-Mae (Federal National Mortgage Association) from 1937 - 1967. Created the concept, systems and protocols of the secondary mortgage market.

10. Albert Bemis
Researcher who pioneered the cubical modular methods of building layout. The Bemis Research Foundation worked with MIT to develop and promote plywood, steel framing and panelized construction.

11. Barry Berkus
Created the first large scale national and international housing and planning practice in the late 1960s. Planned and designed homes and neighborhoods using open planning, volume and amenity centers to provide architecture to buyers who couldn’t afford an architect.

12. Duncan Black/Alonzo Decker
Innovator of power tools. In 1917 “Black and Decker” introduced the portable power drill and the Lectrofflater, the first portable electric air compressor. Other innovations include the Dustbuster and the first cordless electric drill.

13. Jack Bloodgood
Architectural Editor of Better Homes and Gardens. In 1970, he published contemporary house plans which revolutionized the housing plan industry for small-volume and production builders.

14. Harold Boeschenstein
Managed research to develop fiberglass. Became President of Owens Corning Fiberglass in 1938.

15. David Bohannon
After WW II created the NAHB and the HBI (Home Builders Institute) to give voice to Builders as they faced federal agencies, allocations and shortages. In 1943, this group merged with the NAHB (National Home Builders Association).

16. Edward Bouton
The first developer to assemble experts from many fields to create the Roland Park Community. Created regulations between the administrators, the development company, the homeowners and the municipality to protect the community.

17. Marcel Breuer
 Introduced European modernism to the American home. Studied with the Bauhaus school. Designed the first tubular steel furniture. In 1946, designed the prototype for the split-level home.

18. Eli Broad
Modernized financing methods for home builders with entity-backed lines of credit. Founded Kaufman and Broad Home Corp. in 1957.

19. Fritz R. Burns
Developed production-line techniques to build 5,000 houses in Los Angeles for defense workers in the 1930s and 1940s. Principal founder of NAHB. Served as president in 1943.

20. Gustav Carlson
Invented plywood for the 1905 World’s Fair. In 1934 his invention was improved by using an odor-free and waterproof glue instead of animal glue to bond sheets of softwood veneer.

21. Willis Carrier
Invented air conditioning in 1915. By 1928, he developed an air conditioner for the residential market. His invention greatly improved the quality of life for residents in the sunbelt.

Editor’s note: The first five influential people are ranked. The remaining 95 are listed alphabetically.

1. Franklin D. Roosevelt
Turned around the building market during the Great Depression by designing and signing new laws which impacted housing. Created the FHA in 1934. Created the VA Loan Guaranty program in 1944.

2. Frank Lloyd Wright
A pioneer of modern architecture. Promoted natural materials and modern technology in his organic designs. Famous for the Prairie-style house, a forerunner of the modern ranch-style house with an open floor plan.

3. Henry Ford
The growth of the car industry lead to the development and growth of the suburbs and “garden communities”. The assembly line enabled cars to become more affordable. As the economy grew workers had the means and the freedom of mobility to move farther away from their workplace.

4. Jesse Clyde Nichols
Created the Country Club District in 1908 which became a model for community living. His cutting-edge development included self-perpetuating deed restrictions, a homeowner’s association, and sensitive land planning. He created the first regional automobile-oriented shopping center with leased stores.

5. William Levitt
In 1946, Levitt built Levittown, a modern production line community on 4,000 acres on Long Island. Reduced the process of building a home to 27 distinctive steps. Incorporated labor saving power equipment and tools which enabled him to build 38 homes a day. His success came from the location of the suburban tract housing site, his promotion techniques and the availability of FHA and VA financing.
22. Jimmy Carter
During his Presidency, Carter expanded the federal housing programs and doubled the size of the Federal government’s low-income rehabilitation loan program. Since 1984, Rosalynn and Jimmy Carter have brought national attention to Habitat for Humanity.

23. Lucius Cavallero
Founded America’s first state-sponsored housing agency in Florida to provide financing for affordable housing. Cavallero was a life director of the NAHB. He was one of the authors of the original Home Owner’s Warranty program.

24. Henry Chandler
Chandler and his partners bought 47,500 acres in the San Fernando Valley between 1903 and 1909 for $2.5 million. They had inside knowledge that the city was going to build a 233-acre aqueduct into the arid, dry empty area. Known as one of the great inside deals of all time.

25. Ross Cortese
Developed the active adult community concept with Leisure World. Recognizing that seniors wanted to enjoy retirement, Cortese created country club living for seniors. Cortese’s first Leisure World opened in Seal Beach, CA., in 1960. The 6,600-unit community was quickly followed by the 13,000-unit in Laguna Hills, CA. The communities featured clubhouses, recreation facilities, hobby shops, golf, tennis, swimming pools, health clubs, and shopping centers. The Leisure World in Laguna Hills is recognized as one of the best planned and executed developments of the 1960’s. Cortese followed with five other Leisure Worlds around the country with nearly 36,000 homes and more than 62,000 homeowners.

26. John Crean
Created Fleetwood Enterprises in 1950. He was a pioneer in the multi-section manufactured home.

27. Trammell Crow
Successful real estate developer built a nationwide network of apartment builders and managers. Trammell Crow Residential was the largest home builder in the country during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Known for using the atrium in his projects. Developed the merchandise mart concept.

28. Arthur Vining Davis
Established one of the largest land development companies in America with 300,000 acres of land in Florida. Founder and chairman of the Aluminum Corp. of America (Alcoa).

29. Elsie de Wolfe
The first professional interior decorator. She freed Americans from the strict and crowded Victorian style. She promoted an open, clean style that was perfect for America in the 1920s.

30. Ben Deane
Popularized the "California" housing look in the 1960s. He brought the custom California home design into the average American’s price range. Originated the garden kitchen in California.

31. Marriner Stoddard Eccles
Credited with creating the legislation that formed the Federal Housing Administration and the concept of long-term mortgages. Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board from 1936-1948. His determination to maintain low interest rates contributed to the housing market surge in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

32. Joseph Eichler
One of the first production builders to use architects on a grand scale. One of the largest builders in San Francisco in the 1950s and 1960s. Pioneered the plank, post, and beam concept with open space plans, glass areas, natural wood textures and glass-enclosed interior courts.

33. Lee Evans
Presented more than 500 seminars to builders. Designed the first NAHB Chart of Accounts in 1961, a revolutionary job-costing system in 1965 and the first integrated business management computer program in 1975.

34. Herbert Faber/Daniel O’Conor
Formed the Formica Insulating Co. in 1913. Created Formica by bonding layered papers with plastic resins.

35. John Fahey
Director of the Home Owners Loan Corp. during the Great Depression. The HOLC program rescued more than 1 million homeowners whose mortgages were foreclosed or in trouble. The HOCL offered 15-year mortgages at a time when three-year mortgages were the standard.

36. David Fox/I.P. "Ike Jacobs"
Fox and Jacobs created one of the largest, most innovative home building companies in the country. Focused on the housing first-time market in Dallas, Texas in the 1960s - 1970s.

37. Ernst Fritsche
Improved the public perception of the home building business by offering a five year warranty on the home. Developed the "sweat equity" concept.

38. Millard Fuller
In 1976, Fuller founded the private-sector solution to low-income housing. Habitat for Humanity International allows low-income families to work with volunteers to build their own simple house. The homes are built with no profit or interest charges.

39. R. Buckminster Fuller
An architect, cartographer, philosopher, scientist, inventor and public official. Most noted for building the Dymaxion home in the 1940s and later, the Geodesic Dome.

40. Bertram Goodhue
Reintroduced the Spanish Colonial Style at the 1915 Panama Pacific Exhibition. It became the dominant architectural style in California.

41. Charles and Henry Greene
Designed and built exotic, expansive, handcrafted dwellings in Pasadena, California from 1893 to 1922. Focused on the bungalow style home - sheltering eaves, sleeping porches, and decorative wood members.

42. Emil Hanslin
Environmentalist and builder responsible for developing the first recreation-based community - the New Seabury Community on Cape Cod in the 1960s.
43. Isaac Heimberger
Helped create the collateralized mortgage obligation industry.

44. Herbert Hoover
President Hoover laid the groundwork for the Federal Housing Administration and the Home Owners Loan Corp. He created the Federal Home Loan Banking System. His concept of insuring mortgage funds for housing influenced the structure of the FHA's mortgage loan guarantee program in 1934.

45. Philip Johnson
The "Dean of American Architecture" built the Glass House in 1949 in New Canaan, Connecticut. This house exemplifies the International style in America.

46. Ralph Johnson
Director of the NAHB Research Foundation in the 1960s and 1970s. Built demonstration homes that tested and proved various building products, systems and technologies.

47. Jesse Jones
Driving force in the formation of the Federal National Mortgage Association. Helped create the secondary mortgage market in 1935 with RFC. In 1937, formed Fannie Mae as a subsidiary of the RFC.

48. Max Karl
Founded the Mortgage Guaranty Insurance Corp., a private mortgage insurance company in 1957. The MGIC enabled more Americans to buy homes with less than a 20 percent down payment.

49. Bertram King
First director of the VA Loan Guaranty Program. 40 percent of WW II Veterans bought houses through the VA program.

50. Walter Kohler
Kohler made bathrooms what they are today through his contemporary designs and addition of color to bathroom fixtures.

51. James Lange
Editor of Practical Homeowner in the 1940s and 1950s. Promoted cutting construction costs. Credited with introducing national product advertising to the home building industry.

52. Raymond Lapin
Headed both the FNMA and GNMA which impacted the secondary loan market. In 1966 he converted Fannie Mae from a federal agency into a private corporation.

53. James Lendrum
During the 1950s and 1960s, Lendrum published books and pamphlets for the home building industry. Topics included storage wall components, the W-truss and a design to improve warm air heating systems for houses built on concrete slabs.

54. David Link
Wrote the "Housing Critic" column in the 1960s. In the 1970s and 1980s, Link served as Editor of Professional Builder. His programs improved the professionalism and performance of individual builders and the industry as a whole.

55. John Long
Built Maryvale, a master planned community of energy-efficient homes in the desert southwest. Embraced solar energy and plastic plumbing.

56. Richard Manoogian
Built Masco Corp., the largest building products manufacturer in the world.

57. William McChesney Martin
Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank from 1951 to 1970. His middle-of-the-road policy of letting interest rates find their natural level allowed the housing industry to reach its full potential.

58. William Marvin
Built Marvin Windows into the world's largest made-to-order window and door manufacturer.

59. W. H. Mason
Invented a high density fiberboard and named it Masonite in 1924.

60. Duncan McDuffie
Built 15 exceptional communities in the San Francisco Bay Area from 1915 to 1939. Pioneered concepts such as underground conduits for phone and electricity, planted areas between curbs and sidewalks, planted street dividers, small landscaped parks, playgrounds and beautiful gateway entrances. Introduced mandatory homeowner associations to protect the architectural integrity and maintain the common areas.

61. Alfred Mellowes
Created the first self-contained refrigerator in 1916. Named "Frigidaire" in 1918 when General Motors bought the company as a subsidiary.

62. Edmond Michel
Invented the hand-held circular saw in 1924. This was the necessary precursor to the acceptance of plywood (which was hard to cut with a hand-held saw.)

63. Addison Mizner
Started to create a model community of Spanish/Moorish architecture in Boca Raton, Florida in the 1920s. His project went bankrupt with more than 3,000 investors.

64. William Molster
Credited with creating the education framework of the NAHB.

65. Robert Moses
Hailed as the "Master Builder of New York." Known as an enthusiastic bridge builder, highway designer and slum clearer from the 1920s to 1960s in New York City.

66. Seward Hamilton Mott
Created National standards for design and planning in the mid-1930s. Established neighborhood land planning and design.

67. John McC. Mowbray
Proponent of sensitive land development and sound environmental planning.

68. Herbert Nelson
For more than 30 years, Nelson was the dominant private-sector voice in American housing. Created the strict code of ethics and Standards of Practice for Realtors.

69. Frederick Law Olmstead Jr.
Residential landscape architect for over 50 years. Introduced covenants to preserve open spaces. Leading role in planning the architectural character of Washington, D.C.

70. Otto Paparazzo
In 1967 Paparazzo brought the condominium concept to the senior market with "Heritage Village" a 2,600-unit master planned community near New York City.

71. Andrew Place
Member and Director of the NAHB Research Foundation for 24 years. From 1946 to 1964, Place used advance construction techniques to build homes and a factory.

72. Hugh Potter
Influential home builder during the 1930s and 1940s. Involved in the formation of the FHA, the Urban Land Institute and the NAHB.
73. Perry Prentice
Founding editor and publisher of *House and Home* in 1952. Advocate for better design and production in home building.

74. James Price
Largest builder of factory-built homes after WW II.

75. Lewis Ranieri
Guided the secondary mortgage securities market from zero to almost $1 trillion annually. Built the Solomon Brothers Mortgage trading department into the largest in the world.

76. Winifred Riefler
Designed the mechanisms for the FHA loan guarantee program.

77. James Wilson Rouse
In the 1950s, he pioneered the enclosed regional mall. In the 1970s and 1980s he developed the festival marketplace to energize decaying downtown areas.

78. Paul Randolph
An architect and inventor who created the "Florida" look - the concept of orienting the home toward the back with a screened patio and pool.

79. Augustine Sackett
Invented Sackett Plaster Board at the turn of the century which evolved into modern drywall. In 1909, Sackett sold his business to United States Gypsum, which refined the product to create sheetrock.

80. Walter Schmidt
In the 1930s, Schmidt established the Urban Land Institute to address the needs of the American city. Researched real estate, urban blight and rebuilding central city districts.

81. Don Scholz
Scholz Homes designed, manufactured and promoted the industrial-built, high-quality homes at reduced prices in the 1940s - 1960s.

82. Waldo Semon
In 1926 Semon invented PVC plastic, by accident, while a research chemist at BF Goodrich. It took many years to find a practical application for this flexible and elastic material.

83. Earl Smith
Builder in Southern California who introduced the "flat top" home. Also designed a compact housing project which was an early version of the planned unit development. Smith was a driving force behind the creation of the NAHB Research Inst.

84. William Smolkin
One of the first full-time housing consultants to land developers and home builders. He specialized in market analysis and marketing.

85. Clarence Stein/Henry Wright
Provided the popular vision of the "garden city" including the cul-de-sac, green space areas around homes and apartments, and safe sidewalks for children.

86. David Stone
Widely known and respected sales and marketing consultant in the home building industry. Founded the Stone Institute to promote his concepts nationwide.

87. Art Troutner
An inventor with 60 patents who revolutionized how the world thinks about wood. Founded Trus Joist Corp. Invented the Open Web Truss, the all-wood I-Joist and Microllam laminated-veneer lumber.

88. Harry Truman
Promoted economic and housing policies that contributed to the housing boom of the 1940s and 1950s. Truman was a driving force behind the Housing Act of 1949, which established the goal of "a decent home for every American family."

89. Paul Volcker
In 1979, under his Chairmanship of the Federal Reserve Bank, interest rates topped 24 percent, but inflation was beaten, and the path to substantial economic prosperity was laid.

90. Robert Wagner
A judge on the New York State Supreme Court and later a Senator from New York who greatly impacted housing policy in the 1930s and 1940s.

91. Jim Walter
In 1946, founded Jim Walter Homes which offered shell homes on the buyer's lot for $895. Opened a successful mortgage subsidiary and diversified his company into a wide variety of industries.

92. Gustav Wand
Created the Parade of Homes concept in which hundreds of builders in various cities promote their companies and the home building industry. Created the first registered Builder Warranty Program.

93. Ray Watt
A leading builder in the residential, commercial and industrial market for 50 years. Among the first builders to promote mobile home parks and resort time shares.

94. Robert Weaver
"As the first secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Weaver originated many of the systems and programs and elevated the place of housing in the public debate."

95. Del Webb
On January 1, 1960, Webb created an active adult community named Sun City in Phoenix, Arizona. One of the first developers to recognize the huge potential of the retiree housing market.

96. Robert Whitten
Whitten was secretary of the City Planning Commission in New York City, which created the first zoning law in 1916.

97. Royal Barry Wills
Credited with bringing authentic colonial design to the field of small-home building. He was inspired by Cape Cod and Colonial Farmhouses.

98. F. Vaux Wilson
Father of the panelized housing industry. Used precut Homasote panels to build homes faster. As President of Precision Built Homes Co., Wilson designed a system that allowed both flexibility and rapid construction.

99. Robert Winnerman
Winnerman created U.S. Home Corp. in 1969 which became the Nation's largest home builder by 1972.

100. Herman H. York
A prolific architect. More than 750,000 homes were built from Herman York Designs through his syndicated home designs in 300 newspapers nationwide.

The Nominators:
Frank Anton, Hanley Wood, Inc.
Bill Becker, William Becker Organization
Barry Berkus, 83 Architects and Planners
Jack Bloodgood, Bloodgood Sharp Builders
Michael Dickens, IBACOS
Lee Evans, Lee S. Evans and Associates
John Garrell, The Housing Executive Report
Herbert Kohler, Kohler Co.
David Landon, Pardee Construction Co.
William Marvin, Marvin Windows and Doors
Nash Phillips, Wilshire Homes
William Pulte, Pulte Home Corp.
Art Rutenberg, Arthur Rutenberg Homes
Larry Zarker, NAHB Research Center
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