

W A R M U P S

Your Archives Interchange

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ARCHIVES COMMITTEE REPORT: ONTARIO, CANADA

We have a good start on A.A. history in Ontario. Bob D. has agreed to be historian: we are starting to get tapes from older members. Because this information is vanishing it's important to get it now.

It appears that individuals have begun small, localized collections. But no extensive cooperative undertakings have been made: significant reservations have been expressed by people who have documents and historical relics about releasing their collections unless they will be placed in reliable and protected accommodations...

In 1981 a small committee of members with long periods of sobriety was put together. Meetings have been taking place, and the project is being enthusiastically worked on by all those involved. It was the idea of our committee to establish an archives repository for Ontario. A number of localities here had already indicated to G.S.O. that they had commenced to collect historical data and memorabilia.

The group chose Toronto as the geographical location (for an archives) because (1) the greatest number of members would get an opportunity to see the material. (2) Toronto Intergroup Office has the space to display it and is prepared to provide the space. (3) The space is a dry room on the main floor; large

enough to contain at least 3 large display cabinets. (4) The material could be moved readily and put on display at the Ont. Regional Conf.

This choice was supported by the Ont. Provincial Comm. A motion was made and approved unanimously by the Archives Comm. that a recommendation be forwarded to Intergroup and Ont. Provincial Comm. that 3 cabinets, suitable to space available

and approval of the Archives Comm. be purchased. The maximum cost to be considered is \$3,000 and it is also recommended that estimates be obtained to get the best prices. Funds required will be from the Toronto Intergroup and the Ont. Provincial Committee.

It will be necessary to follow up members all over the Province to obtain information and material for the project.

Whit H. has offered his personal collection to the Archives. Tom H., chairman



LOIS W.'S PARTY FOR LONGTIME MEMBERS

It was a day to remember: Saturday, Oct. 2, Stepping Stones, Bedford Hills, N.Y., home of Bill and Lois. Lois, on this warm, lovely autumn day, welcomed 120 longtime A.A. and Al-Anon members, their spouses and several early friends of A.A. The purpose was simply to meet each other, to reminisce, and to share their memories of "How it began." (Definition, for this event, of "Longtime member": anyone who had sought sobriety in A.A. before 1950.)

Guests began arriving about 11:00 a.m., coming from nearly every area of the U.S. and Canada. A program planned by Lois started early in the afternoon and was arranged to enable each person to speak for a few minutes about A.A.'s or Al-Anon's beginnings in his or her area. The short but very moving talks were taped and later sent to all who attended.

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ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

ACTIVITY

At the July 31 Quarterly meeting of the Trustees' Archives Committee, we welcomed two new members: Joan U., South Dakota, and Al H., Sask., Canada. Al was recently selected as new chairman of the committee. Also joining the meeting were Dr. Jack Norris, Milton Maxwell, past G.S.B. chairman, Gordon Patrick, present chairman, and Bob P.

What was discussed was the frequent turnover of archivists in some areas. Hardly, it seems had we completed and mailed a complete "history" of an area, directory listings, early correspondence and the like, then we get a letter from the new archivist asking for the same material. Many hours have been spent duplicating items. Hallmarks of successful archival centers seems to be permanent person to serve as archivist while the Archives Committee members rotate. Additionally a permanent place for the collection is important. Members seem freer to contribute their holdings if such a place exists.

Related to this topic Committee member, Joe K. related how the three separate committees in Tennessee (Eastern, Mid and Western) have recently consolidated in Nashville at the Central Office with the services of a permanent volunteer and assistant.

CORRECTION

We erred last issue in saying that A.A. Comes of Age was now available on cassette tapes. Sorry. We should have said that "12 Steps and 12 Traditions can now be heard on cassette tapes with Braille tabs."



A TIME FOR CHANGE: NELL'S RETIREMENT NEARS

Inevitably it comes in time to all of us: a climactic change in our lives. For most of us, sooner or later we have to face the prospect of retirement. Each of us faces this kind of adjustment differently.

For me, this "formal" separation from my well-loved companions at G.S.O. will occur December 31, and though I initiated this retirement action myself, the trauma of parting after almost 36 years of service

will be, and is now, difficult to experience.

But I believe, at 65, it is time to "let go" and to release the well-being and future of the Archives into new and capable hands and hearts: Frank M. will fulfill the Archivist duties admirably and bring his own special creative gifts to the unfoldment of this growing activity, as will Ron Brenne, our new but already valuable and knowledgeable Assistant Archivist and Researcher.

But I hope to stay nearby; and never lessen interest in this fellowship, nor loosen the close bonds of friendship with my A.A. and Al-Anon friends.

I'm forever grateful for this marvelous experience that began for me on Mar. 3, 1947, at 415 Lexington Ave., New York City, in 3 small rooms of the Central Terminal Building. I have enjoyed and treasured every moment of it. I won't say "goodbye": just want to extend my love and thanks to each one of you dear friends who have labored to build your own area archives. Stay well -- I'm sure we'll meet again along the way.

LOIS W.'S PARTY (CONTINUED . . .)

The meeting broke for a beautiful lunch served under a large, colorful tent, set up near the house. Afterwards, the program was resumed and more memories shared.

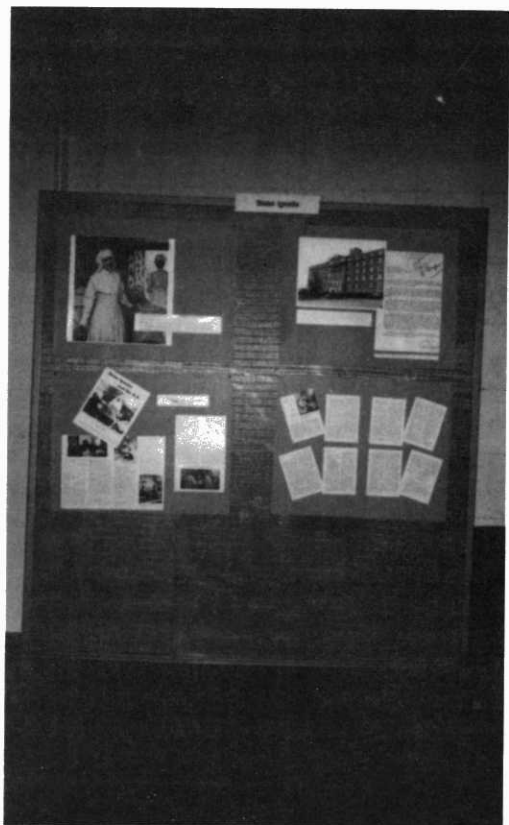
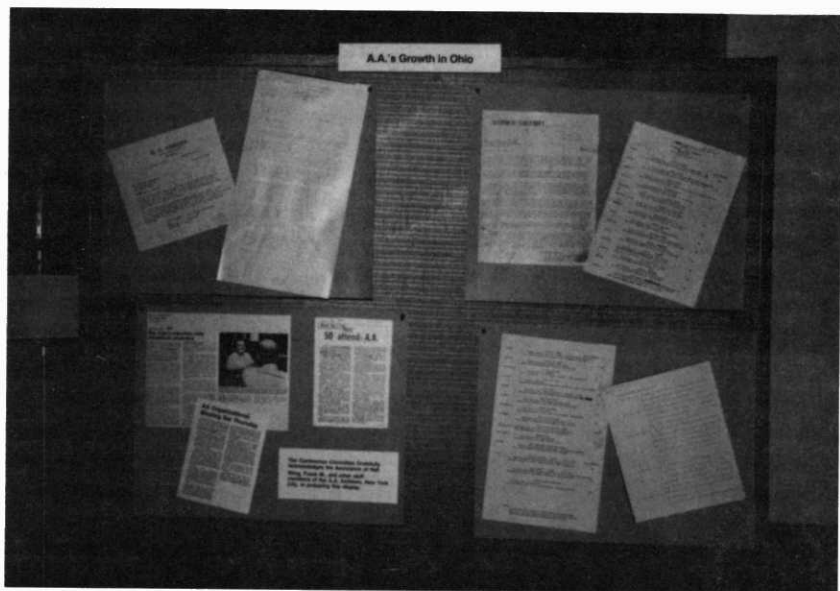
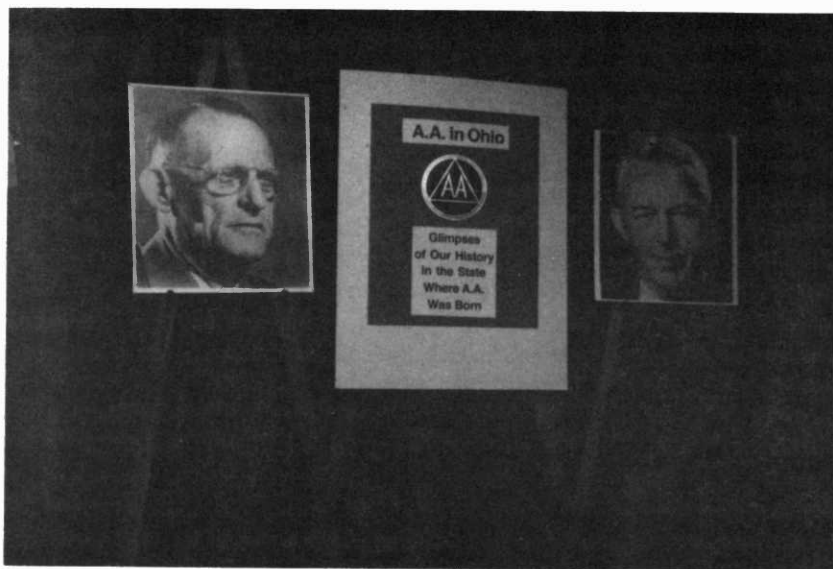
Everyone enjoyed looking at the A.A. and Al-Anon memorabilia in Lois' home: the many books, scrapbooks of their trips, pictures, plaques, gifts from local A.A. groups and members. Bill's studio was also visited and more A.A. historic events and memorabilia inspected. Guests had an opportunity to visit with each other in between events. It was a wonderful, nostalgic, unique, once-in-an-A.A. lifetime party for all those fortunate to attend and participate. (Worthy of note: the whole day was personally conceived, planned and organized by Lois herself.)

ARCHIVES EXHIBIT AT OHIO STATE CONVENTION

The 750 attenders at the Conference were treated to a huge room (36' x 50') of Archival displays. Northwest Ohio Archivist, Mel B., headed a committee that "got it together" for a budget of \$300. Since it's permanent, the plan is to use it again each year with some changes. Mel shared some tips

- 1) Keep it simple. Local stores have attractive, low-cost, long lasting boards.,
- 2) Blow up pictures so they can be seen
- 3) double-face tape is a must
- 4) Don't underestimate interest in material, especially about the younger members, and
- 5) Safeguard anonymity of members.

The "mix" of materials included both general A.A. history; Saturday Evening Post, Liberty Magazine articles and local A. A. milestones in the area. The latter, of course, abound in Ohio.



NEWS AROUND THE ARCHIVES

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: "We have begun the WAIA Washington Area Alcoholics Anonymous Archives project amidst great enthusiasm. As time passes, what we do here today will be history for the alcoholics as yet unborn and so it is important that we not only collect the history of the early years, but that we keep accurate records of what we do today." (Washington Area Intergroup Association - New Reporter)

FLORIDA: "We felt it is necessary to buy a cabinet at the earliest date in order to have a safe place to store the 'goodies' people are willing to donate to our collection. We hope in the future to have a small display cabinet, also. As soon as we have secured a cabinet, we hope to go to any group who would like to see the historical movie, 'Markings on the Journey.' This could stimulate interest in our committee." (A.A. Archives Committee - Central Florida)

INDIANA: "Progress of Archives to date: We have reached a point in this matter where we really can't go on much further until we locate a place to store the archives. One such place being considered was a Central Office somewhere in the state, hopefully Indianapolis." (Minutes: Indiana State Committee meeting)

MISSOURI: "The Archives are getting a lot of new items. Mail Bob copies of your group files, district minutes or anything else to do with A.A. today, 'Today's news is tomorrow's history.' They had the same problems in the past that we have now, it might help to read to see how they solved them. . ." (Archives Committee Report -- chairman Bob R., Western Area of Missouri Assembly)

NEBRASKA: Don B. reported that the Archives display at the State Reunion was well received. He has been asked by the delegate to report on the Archives to the State at some future time. (Minutes of District Twenty Committee meeting - Bellvue, Nebraska)

NEW ZEALAND: "Tom P. has been making steady progress with the Archives but still needs your assistance by letting him have any information you can about your group: When did your group start, who were the original members, where they met, have you hosted any Assemblies...Any information of this nature is important." (New Zealand General Service Conference of A.A. - Newsletter)

SOUTH AFRICA: "Apart from the acquisition of some exciting material this year, the Archives have made little or no progress. This is due to what seems to be the inevitable lack of funds. Val D. is to be thanked for entrusting his valuable books -- gifts from and inscribed and signed by Bill W. -- to the Fellowship Archives." (Archives Report -- Jean G., Archivist)

VIRGINIA: "I think cooperation between Intergroup and Archives would make a good topic in 'Markings.' I have been in touch with some of our Virginia Intergroups and have mostly gotten good cooperation. Northern Virginia Intergroup has been particularly helpful, allowing me to use their xerox machine to copy various documents for the Archives." (Letter, "Country Bill" L., chairman, Archives Committee, Virginia Area Committee)

CALIFORNIA: "We do have a grand group of people on the Archives Committee..will make a tape, have 17 members, all having 30 or more years of sobriety...to reminisce about days long gone by...At a recent Conference Assembly...had table with slowly growing archives." (Letter: Bill W., Calif. Northern Coastal area)