



AA EXCHANGE BULLETIN

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE OF A. A.

February-March 1965

Vol. 10 No. 1

• 305 East 45th Street, New York 17 • Mail address: Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York 17 •

'RESPONSIBILITY' THEME OF 1965 CONFERENCE

What does A.A.'s 9th Tradition mean when it says, "...directly responsible to those they serve"?

Delegates to the 1965 General Service Conference will delve deeply into this question April 19-24, when A.A.'s 15th Annual Meeting of the Conference will be held at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York, the second 6-day Conference in A.A. history.

Balancing the Books

Board members, G.S.O. and Grapevine Staff Members will join the Delegates in also exploring, "Just what has the Conference meant to Groups since it began meeting in 1951? To the Grapevine? To G.S.O.? To the Board?"

Also to be asked is "Have all of us met our responsibility to the Conference, and vice versa?"

On The Agenda

Already set for the session are three discussion topics:

(1) Should a third term be considered for Delegates?

(2) Should ex-Delegates be allowed to attend the Conference at their own expense, with no voting or talking privileges?

(3) Some A.A. Groups call themselves "A.A. Family Groups." Is this causing confusion with the Al-Anon Family Groups?

All of us at G.S.O. look forward to seeing you Delegates in April. You'll be getting lots of mail about the Conference now, so we hope this will be the best-informed Conference ever!

A.A.'s FIRST 100--AND YOU-- CALLED TO TORONTO

Our first 100 members are being searched out for A.A.'s Biggest Party, the 30th Anniversary International Convention in Toronto, Canada, July 2-4, 1965.

It will probably be the largest most talked about assemblage of once "hopeless alcoholics" in the world's history so far. All of us at G.S.O. hope to be with you on the spot when this history is made. Surely we'll all be reminiscing about it for years to come.

Registrations are flowing into G.S.O. for hotel and motel rooms, on a first-come-first-served basis.

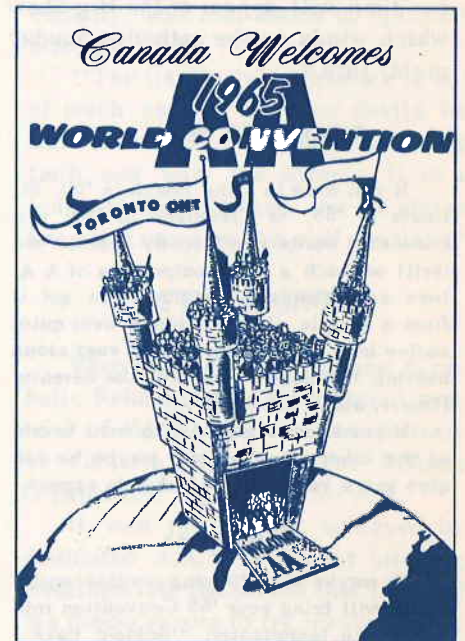
A.A.'s Future!

"I like to think of our General Service Office as one answer to the question: 'Who's worrying about A.A.'s future?'"

"At G.S.O. there are many people involved in taking the 'long look' into A.A.'s future. This Group--Trustees, A.A.W.S. and A.A. Grapevine Directors and Staff--are in an excellent position to do so. They're at the crossroads of the Fellowship."

"It takes a lot of people with different types of training and temperament--more than 80 people counting volunteers and paid staff--A.A.'s and non-A.A.'s who are concerned with A.A. today and tomorrow."

"All kinds of talents and training are represented--from communications, law, industry, penology, sociology. All kinds are needed to give A.A. a comprehensive and objective viewpoint." --A Staff Member



Groups were sent registration forms in January. (Write, phone or wire to G.S.O. for a registration-housing form if you don't have one.)

Chartered planeloads of both new and old A.A.'s and their families will arrive from all over North America and other continents. And, of course, trains, boats, buses, and cars full of

TURN TO NEXT PAGE

30th Anniversary



INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION JULY 2-4, 1965 TORONTO

CONVENTION STORY — (Continued)

eager A.A.'s will pour into the Maple Leaf country in time for the big pre-Convention dance Thursday night, July 1.

At the big meetings, discussions, panels, and Alkathons, we will see and hear Bill W. (and Lois) plus many of the other early A.A. members we've read about in the Big Book and "A.A. Comes Of Age." We'll hear the message carried in many tongues (with simultaneous translations).

In addition, many of the world's foremost nonalcoholic experts on alcoholism and famous early friends of A.A. will be heard from.

Al-Anon's convention is being held at the King Edward-Sheraton while A.A.'s meet at the Royal York.

Some of the more entertaining radio, TV, movie and stage stars of our time will appear at the Big Show which winds up the gathering Sunday night, July 4.

REMEMBER WHEN . . .

If you were in Long Beach in '60, St. Louis in '55, or Cleveland in '50, you know that words can't really express the thrill of such a mass outpouring of A.A. love and courage—whether you get it from a couple of new friends over quiet coffee in a hotel room or in a vast arena hearing thousands of us say the Serenity Prayer, alone no more.

If you know someone who went to one of the other Conventions, maybe he can give you a vague idea of what to expect.

Reflections

Or maybe the following reminiscences of '60 will bring your '65 Convention into focus—in technicolor: "Seldom have I gazed on such a wondrous crowd of people of varied colours, races and creeds, utterly intent on each other, and in the cause that brought them together.

"A.A. Worldwide"

"I watched them as they passed me by, their faces alight with contentment and joy. I read their badges as they passed by, curious to learn where they came from: California, Washington, Idaho, Texas, Nebraska, Ohio, Florida, New York, were a few I read, while sprinkled well among the crowd, was the green Maple Leaf of Canada, standing out in the bid to be host to this assembly in a future year. Scotland, England, Africa, Jamaica, Panama, and Hawaii, all passed by.

WILL YOU HELP US?

Your Convention Committee is making every effort to reach the first 100 A.A. members—quite a big job in an anonymous outfit with no lists of members!

We do not have up-to-date addresses on many of them. If you have such information, or know someone who does, please write the Convention Committee at G.S.O. at once.

Wonderful Non-A.A.'s

"With them, too, came friends who had not lived this alcoholic desolation—yet understood. Brilliant are these friends of ours; of the church, medicine, and all other professions. How clearly they expounded their knowledge and understanding in many talks. Wives, husbands and other dear ones were there in strength, now bonded in an equally great allied movement (Al-Anon) to understand and help us and themselves. I do believe, in this huge happy assembly, these beloved ones were the happiest.

BELOVED FRIEND

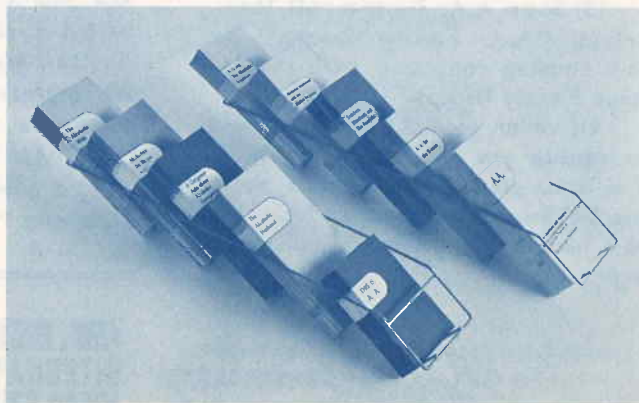
"As long as memory holds, I do believe, part of me will never leave these meetings, or be separated from this happy company. In that deep, mysterious realm of recollection and inner sight, I shall see Bill stand before us in the quiet dignity of humility and gratitude. I shall know, as I knew then, I was not listening to a leader but to a beloved friend.

"Thus we came, we saw, we heard, and the motive that brought us together does not rest, I believe, in this accomplishment. What we saw and heard has now become a vital influence that will flow through us to all with whom we come in contact for a very long time to come."

St. John's, Nfld. — July, 1960

DISPLAY RACKS

Here is a new wire rack specially designed to hold A.A. literature. Each rack holds five different pamphlets and may be picked up and moved for storage between meetings. Shipped two to a set for \$3.50 (for the two racks).



WE GOOFED

(10th Step)

On impressive stationery with "Humility Himself" printed on it, an anonymous letter writer (he signs himself (Stinky) has written about an article in our Holiday 1964 issue.

Our headline said, "A.A.'s in Nine Cities Man Our Professional Exhibit," but we listed only five!

Stinky writes (stinkily), "I submit that this adds up to tactlessness verging on stupidity—headline 'nine cities,' then billing only 5."

You're right, Mr. Humility H. Our face is as red as the ink on that issue. Truth is, there were 7, not 9—and we left out Atlantic City and New York City! Sorry, A.C. and N.Y.C.!

WHAT THIS SEAL MEANS TO YOU



"Conference-approved" on a piece of literature tells you that a great many people have worked diligently to bring you a clear interpretation of the A.A. program as contained in the Twelve Steps, in the Twelve Traditions, and in the Big Book.

It means that the joint Literature Committees of the General Service Conference and the Trustees have carefully gone over every draft of the pamphlet. This sometimes takes months (the "Sedatives" pamphlet took well over a year) but it does set up a guard against the release of distorted A.A. material.

"Speed 3 3/4, 7 in., 2 Track"

That's what a lot of people ask us about A.A. tapes. Tape-oholics will know what it means.

You can get eight tapes (\$2.50 ea.). Some are personal, some are stories, and special talks, including two by Bill and one by Lois. Write for the Order Form.

EXPERIENCE PLEASE?

Please give us your experience so we can share it with many other Groups who write us questions.

1. Does your Group hold Beginners' or Newcomers' meetings? How? (What is the format for such meetings?)

2. Do they have any value? Thanks for all the good answers on your Group "officers," and Steering Committee, etc. But we still need more. What "trusted servants" does your Group have? How are they chosen? By whom? For what term of office? What are the responsibilities of each?

A.A. CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

- 12-14 14th Annual Mid-Winter Stampede, Greeley, Colorado. Write: Stampede Chairman, P. O. Box 209, Greeley Colorado.
- 20 25th Silver Anniversary (Dinner & Dance), 4 Chefs Restaurant, Frankford Ave. & Levick St., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Write: Intergroup Secretary, 2202 St. James Street, Philadelphia, Pa.
- 26-28 1965 14th Alberta Conference, Write: P.O. Box 5003, Station E, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

APRIL

- 2-4 18th S.C. Convention, Tar Poinsett Hotel, Greenville, S. C. Write: Chairman, P.O. Drawer 5027, Spartanburg, South Carolina.
- 10 Western N.C. Spring Roundup. Write: Chairman, Drawer X, Tryon, North Carolina.
- 16-19 5th Australian Convention, Festival Hall, Brisbane, Australia.

Coming Up In The Grapevine

You won't want to be left out on the big Convention news which is appearing monthly in THE GRAPEVINE.

In the February issue, look, too, for "A Lush in the Halls of Ivy"; and two articles that may really prove good for controversy—er, that is, discussion: "A Gripe: Color Bar?"

Also: "Tahitian Interlude"; "The Power of Prayer"; "There's No Double Standard"; "The View from Five Months"; "The Jellinek Formula for the Rate of Alcoholism"; "My Name is Joe"; "A Sweet Challenge"; and a marvelous cartoon about our 4th Tradition.

COMING IN MARCH

"Make Your Immaturity Pay"; "That Final Call"; "A Visit to Dublin A.A."; "My Aching Tooth"; "The Lights Never Go Out"; "My Name is Jeanette"; "What Are Your Goals?"; "Am I Special?"; "Living Sober"; "Cure"; and a better-than-average bin of funny anecdotes devoted to the lighter side of our common problem.

Cheerful Notes from Walled-in A.A.'s

DOMINGO GROUP

"I sometimes find myself wondering what a strange world it is that I, an Irish-born American A.A., find myself holding an A.A. meeting in the psycho ward of a Spanish hospital," writes Leam H. from Malaga, Spain.

"But there is a bond between these men and me. I had been in Bellevue Hospital's psycho ward over 25 times and five times committed to King's Park State Hospital.

"We have collected about 30 fairly solid members in two years. We wrote a letter explaining A.A. to a school for women social workers; one of them arranged for us to meet the doctor in charge. All the doctors here had received from us the folder 'A.A. and the Medical Profession.'

Faith vs. Logic

"We've noticed that the kind of people brought to our hospital meetings are the same kind of newcomers who do not return after coming to their first meeting of outside Groups.

"These latter are brought by wives or mothers, poor women with the bewildered look of poverty and frustration on their faces but with a glint of hope in their eyes.

"One cannot try to explain A.A. to these men on a basis of logic. The only way to get through is to revive their faith. Folks have to be shown

the logic of the program, then meetings introduce them to the practice of humility, and that builds up spiritual strength.

"The intellectual approach is not of much use to the poor devils we meet in the hospitals. With them, only faith can work the miracle. It is a long and difficult task, but we alkie know that miracles are still possible."

EASTVIEW GROUP

When he dedicated the new Alcoholic Rehabilitation Ward (honor system) of the Westchester Penitentiary in Valhalla, N. Y., Warden William O'Brien had high praise for A.A.

It was the results achieved by dedicated A.A.'s who kept bringing meetings into the prison that inspired his predecessors to try rehabilitating inmates with drinking problems, he pointed out.

Since that work began, the percentage of prisoners with alcohol problems has fallen from 80% to 50%, he said, because rehabilitated prisoners stay out of trouble.

PIONEER (PRISON) GROUP

"Bad news this past week from my lawyer, but I can accept it as one of the things I cannot change. Otherwise things are going along just fine. Our Group attendance holds up pretty well even though our Sat. nights are in competition with a movie."

HOW GROUPS REACH OUT WITH THE MESSAGE

(P.I.C. Notes)

Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

"Our new P.I. Committee has spoken to 700 students since Sept. 1, so we are really active. Please send the P.I. Kit and eight extra copies of the pamphlet on Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings."

Regina, Sask., Canada

"One of our radio stations, CKRM, has as a public service given A.A. a half hour. The Regina Intergroup set it up, and call it 'Ask An Alcoholic.' Stories are told, then time is given to ask questions. Response has been very good."

Norwalk, Conn.

"Our East Norwalk Group now has a 40-minute 'Ask An Alcoholic' radio show on station WNLK here. We model it after the New York City show.

"During the second program we got 10 calls for help!"

St. Louis, Mo.

"Just came into A.A. this year and am now Secretary of my Group. There is a Dr. who has dried me out around six times. He is very good, but could not keep me dry.

"I have just told him I belong to A.A. and now he wants to see if we could get some information as to how we could

work together to help others.

"Could we put pamphlets in his waiting room?"

WEST LOTHIAN, SCOTLAND

"The seriousness of alcoholism is getting more and more publicity in Scotland, especially on TV.

"It was mentioned on the program that the Scottish Home Office in Edinburgh estimates that there are 75,000 active alcoholics in Scotland, 50,000 of whom are around Glasgow and the west of Scotland. This works out at approx. 1% of the total population. It's a wonder how the country survives.

"I am pleased to say that our Group is getting a good name, mainly I think due to the fact that we insist on holding the traditional style of meeting. Blethering is confined strictly to the tea-and-bun session. I think all alcoholics are perpetually thirsty and born bletherers.

"Bye for now, or, as we say here, Ta, Ta the noo."

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

"We put a notice of our Group meetings in the local paper's 'Weekend Events' section. Our Intergroup approved, as long as no names are used.

"Do you think it is all right to say that meetings are open to the public? Will curiosity seekers come in, and break anonymity?"

"If so, this could happen any time someone with a problem comes in and then leaves."

TRADITION KEEPERS

"Thanks for the literature in Portuguese. One copy of the Traditions is now being read at meetings and the other we gave to the Paraibo 'Campina Grande Group,' started 3 months ago by a traveling A.A. and already has 59 members."

—Dorothy, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

MY LIFE'S MEANING

"What could I say about A.A.?" writes Juan, the next-to-newest member of the Amigos Alcoholicos Group, Barcelona, Spain. He goes on:

"For me, when I met them, I was nearly drowning. I found my life so desperate and that of my family so void that in my clouded mind there only was the obsession of wishing death for myself.

"Today, only one month after having found the help of A.A., I am starting to realize the happiness and well-being life offers me.

"Now I understand that assimilating the observations and reasons of my A.A. friends, and my firm decision of stopping to drink—only the first drink, as they say—my life can have a happy meaning; the pursuit of my family's happiness and to help those who like me have suffered the pains of alcohol, so that with them, my conscience, free of resentments and of bitterness, may find Peace."

Muchas gracias, Juan. You say it so well you inspire many of us to wish we had come as far as you have away from alcoholic selfishness!

SPECIAL GIFTS TO G.S.O. NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1964

ALABAMA: Tuscaloosa Alabama
& N.W. Fla. 1964 A.A.
Convention. \$ 608.92
CALIFORNIA: San Bernardino 13th
Annual So. Calif. Convention. \$ 744.23
D.C.: Washington—Homecoming
Celebration of Cosmopolitan,
Mid-East & Ross Groups. . . . \$ 182.00
FLORIDA: Broward Co. Gratitude
Dinner. \$ 385.00
Palm Beach—A.A.
Groups of Palm Beach. \$ 770.00
KENTUCKY: West Ky. Area
Groups \$ 50.00
LOUISIANA: Shreveport—19th Annual
Tri-State Convention \$ 150.00

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston-Second
New England Conference. . . . \$ 100.00
MICHIGAN: 12th Michigan State
Conference. \$1505.23
NEBRASKA: 5th Annual Nebr.
A.A. State Reunion \$ 150.00
NEW JERSEY: 8th Annual State
Convention. \$ 150.00
NEW YORK: Buffalo—Fall
Conference & Anniversary. . . \$ 100.00
Coopers Plains —
Watson Homestead Fall
Roundup \$ 100.00
S.E. N.Y. Assembly. \$ 100.00
OHIO: Canton—1964 Gratitude
Sunday Meeting. \$ 135.00

RHODE ISLAND: Providence
Chowder Party. \$ 150.00
VIRGINIA: Arlington—Annual
Banquet of Northern Va. . . . \$ 100.00
Va. State Memory
Fund \$ 100.00
CANADA: B.C.—Yukon Area
Assembly. \$ 243.94
B.C.—Forest Camps
Groups. \$ 50.00
N.B.—P.E.I. Area
Assembly \$ 100.00
Sask.—Oklahoma
Party. \$ 140.00