



AA EXCHANGE BULLETIN

NEWS AND NOTES ON ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS WORLDWIDE

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A. A. IN ENGLAND PASSES MILESTONE

Orders Pour In As Groups Seek Bill's New Book

Initial response to announcement of the forthcoming publication of Bill W.'s new book, "A.A. Comes of Age," indicates that this long-awaited volume may be one of the most popular of all the co-founder's writings.

More than 400 individual orders had been received within a few days after the special pre-publication order blank had been mailed to the groups. The average number of copies requested in each order was six.

For the benefit of groups which may have misplaced the order blanks sent to them early last month, a second copy is being included with this issue of the Exchange Bulletin.

"A.A. Comes of Age," which describes the birth, growth and expansion of the Fellowship during its first 22 years, represents the closest approach to a history of A.A. yet written. It will undoubtedly become a standard reference work for future historians, according to many who have seen advance copies of the book.

List price of the new book is \$4.00 and the price to local groups is \$3.50.

NEW GROUPS

Fifty-eight new groups, nine Loners and four Clubs were registered at G.S.H. during the period from July 18 to August 14. In addition, four new Hospital groups and two new Prison groups were registered.

Headquarters Briefs

HELPED NEEDED

Unnecessarily large amounts of time, money and effort at General Service Headquarters are devoted to maintaining accurate mailing addresses for local groups. This is because many groups change such addresses two or more times a year.

It would assist us greatly if your group would do one of two things:

- Obtain a permanent Post Office Box to which all group mail could be addressed, or
- Agree to have your group's mail go to a single address for a period of a year without change.

The "Post Office Box Plan" works particularly well since it assures continuity in getting material to a group despite rotation of group personnel.

We'd like to be able to spend more time on "real service" and less on changing stencils. And we think that's the way you want it, too.

United Kingdom Service Board Becomes Reality

Alcoholics Anonymous overseas passed a historic milestone this Summer with the formation in London of "The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain and Ireland) Ltd."

The Board is the successor to the "Pre-Foundation Committee," formed following Bill W.'s visit to the British Isles in 1950. In purpose and function it parallels, in its own area, the General Service Board of A.A. in New York as a custodian of A.A. Tradition and service agencies.

The present members (Trustees) of the company are seven in number, including two non-alcoholics: Mr. Maurice Rena and Prof. Ferguson Rodger. The A.A. members are Alan B., Bill H., Richard P. and Joe I'. One appointee, Bob B. withdrew for personal reasons. Bob L. of the Central Service Office in London has been named secretary.

At their first meeting June 29, the Trustees emphasized their decision to be guided by

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EXPLOITATION OF DIRECTORY VIOLATES ITS A.A. PURPOSE

General Service Headquarters continues to receive reports indicating that A.A.'s World Directory is being used for "commercial" purposes by individuals or organizations. Such use violates the confidential nature of the Directory, which is designed for use by A.A.s, solely for A.A. purposes.

Whenever mis-use of the Directory is reported to General Service Headquarters, the person or organization responsible for such mis-use is asked in writing to respect the purpose for which the volume is intended.

Some groups return to the sender all mail which appears to have reached them through mis-use of the Directory and ask that their names be removed from the sender's mailing list.

While great care is taken at G.S.H. to prevent the annual Directory from reaching those who would exploit it, it is recognized that compilers of commercial lists have ingenious ways of obtaining copies. It is understood, for example, that a firm specializing in mailing lists is now selling a special list based on a recent Directory.

All groups are urged to do their utmost to prevent their own copies of the Directory from falling into the hands of individuals or organizations who might use it for commercial purposes.

MUNICH

The Munich, Germany, Americholds Saturday night meetings (8:00) in the Bundesbahn Hotel and welcomes visiting members.

TO MEMBERS

Your Group has been selected to receive extra sample copies of this issue of the "Bulletin." Would you like to receive your personal copy each month? Subscriptions are now available at \$1.00 per year.

NEWS & NOTES FROM THE FIELD

TRAVELERS

A.A. Area Committeemen in the Northern Area of Ontario, Canada, don't let distance keep them from Committee sessions. To reach a recent meeting at North Bay, six of the fifteen members present had to cover the following distances (one way): 80, 100, 131, 180, 265 and 270 miles!

OHIO

Excerpt from comment by Pete W., Columbus, Ohio, Delegate, on his experience at Seventh General Service Conference: "Each day I became more enthused, more alert to my sense of responsibility. Each day the picture of service became plainer and the realization of how little I'd given, in comparison to what I'd received, dawned on me."

KANSAS

The Kansas A.A. State Convention will be held Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 4-5-6, at the Broadview Hotel, Emporia, Kansas.

WYOMING

Wyoming's A.A. Fall Convention will be held Saturday and Sunday, October 12-13, at Worland, Wyoming. An open meeting Saturday evening will mark the beginning of convention sessions. A combination brunch and business meeting will be held at 9:00 Sunday morning.

SOUTH CAROLINA

The recent A.A. State Convention in South Carolina once more emphasized the basic unity of groups comprising the Fellowship in that State. No attendance records were set but nearly all who attended felt that the sessions were informative and productive.

SOUTH DAKOTA

The South Dakota Fall Conference of A.A. will be held at the City Auditorium in Rapid City, Saturday and Sunday September 28 and 29. Hotel or motel reservations can be arranged in advance by writing to A.A. Conference Committee, Box 701 Rapid City. (Guides or drivers will be furnished for tours to Mount Rushmore on Friday and Saturday preceding the main Convention sessions.)

Who Runs A.A.? We All Do!

What's *your* answer when some one in your group, or an outsider, asks: "Who runs A.A.?"

Neil McV., Ontario (Canada) Delegate to the 1957 General Service Conference, has been answering the questions carefully and succinctly in recent reports to groups in his Area. Extracts from his comments were reproduced last month in the Area newsletter, "All Around Ontario."

Does Bill W. (the surviving co-founder) or the General Service Board or the G.S. Headquarters Staff or the General Service Conference *run* A.A., Bill asks? In each case, he points out, the answer is "No!"

Bill and Dr. Bob, the second co-founder, guided A.A. during its early years of trials and tribulations. At St. Louis in 1955, however, Bill turned over to the movement itself responsibility for its three "legacies" of Recovery, Unity and Service.

Similarly the fifteen Trustees of the General Service Board, of whom eight are non-alcoholics, do not "govern" A.A. Their responsibility is "custodial," to preserve A.A.'s traditions and services. And the Headquarters Staff has merely a "service duty," Neil notes; staff members put into action the details necessary to give effect to established policies.

Annual Clearing-House

The General Service Conference is described as merely an annual "clearing-house assembly where ideas and suggestions in line with the voice of A.A. throughout the world are consolidated into definite future policies." Neil emphasizes that any item is considered to be the voice of A.A. only if it has the support of two-thirds of the Conference members.

Then who does run A.A., Neil asks?

"We run A.A. Yes, you and I run A.A.,"

he says. "When the resolution Bill presented to the Conference (*Ed. note:* and to the 20th Anniversary Convention) at St. Louis in 1955 was carried without a dissenting voice, A.A. became the property of each and every member throughout the world. It gave to each and every one of us the privilege and honor of shouldering the obligations and responsibilities of A.A. worldwide."

What of our responsibilities in running A.A.?

Group Is The Basis

The basis of authority in A.A. is the group, Neil declares. "We, as individual members, form into assemblies which we call the 'group.' Guided solely by our common welfare and recognizing but one ultimate authority, we arrive at a group conscience. This 'voice of the group' should have the support of at least two-thirds of the members and be as near unanimity as possible. Members of the group make their voice known through their General Service Representative. He is the two-way channel of Communication from the group to Headquarters and to other groups, and from Headquarters and the other groups to his own. . .

"All groups are autonomous except in matters affecting other groups and A.A. as a whole and it is quite possible for the group to carry an effective message in its own community without this connection with the whole. But does that fulfill our obligations and carry our full responsibilities as co-owners of this great Fellowship? Do we thereby share our experiences, strength and hope with each other to the fullest? Do we take our part in running A.A. or do we leave it all to the other fellow? These are questions it might be well for each of us to ponder."

Delegates Faithful In Making Reports

Has the Delegate in your Area reported to your group on the 1957 General Service Conference? Letters to G.S.H. indicate that this year's Delegates are unusually faithful in "carrying the message" to local groups.

It's not an easy task. One Delegate writes: "Frankly, I dreaded trying to start to make my reports but thank God I started and the results have been much better than I could ever have anticipated."

Another Delegate writes: "I drove 200 miles and there were only 25 present. But this is a beginning and I feel good about it. Many will hear the story from the 25 who were present."

Coincidence

A correspondent in the Listowel Group, County Kerry, Eire, writes that he is "collecting" small coincidences that happen in A.A.

Recently at a meeting here a fellow told his 'tale of woe.' In the course of it he said that the judge suspended his driving license and put him off the road for two years. Seated next to him (although he did not know it) was the judge himself, who has been a member of A.A. for several years. It is also pleasant to know that the present Lord Mayor of one of our large cities is an A.A. member. So we're going places but of course we can't tell the neighbors about it.

Georgia Group Six Years Old, Plans Big Day

NEW GROUPS

Neprud Group
Wisconsin Home for
Women
Taycheedah, Wisconsin

Demrofer Group
Pardelup Prison Farm
Mt. Barker
Western Australia

Several hundred visitors are expected to join inmate members of the Tattnall Group in the Reidsville, Georgia, State Prison on Sunday, September 29, to mark the group's sixth anniversary.

"We like to feel that we're making progress—and we are," a member of the group writes.

The Tattnall Group recently adopted a new election procedure to assure continuity of group activity. At its semi-annual election meeting it selected, in addition to its regular officers, a "co-chairman" and "co-secretary." It is expected that these men will become chairman and secretary at the next semi-annual business meeting.

The new procedure will allow six months for the co-chairman to learn the duties of his post.

GROUP UNITY FLOURISHING AT 'EL RENO'

"Group unity" has a special meaning at El Reno (Oklahoma) Federal Reformatory, according to Frank E. sponsor of the inmate group, who offers the following interesting analysis.

"Here at El Reno each inmate does have something in common with his fellow-inmate.—*They are both in confinement.* Each inmate has been convicted of a violation against society... He is vitally concerned with gaining his freedom from confinement. The inmate, in the majority, is taking advantage of every opportunity offered him

NOT FOR 'ANGLE-SHOOTERS,' RETRIEVER GROUP STRESSES

A.A. in the U. S. Penitentiary at Steilacoom, Washington, is not for "angle shooters," Bob S., secretary of the Retriever Group, points out in a recent note to G.S.H.

"We have acquired a few new members but we are not particularly interested in having a large group; we want the men who are sincerely interested in living the A.A. way of life and not those who would use the group to shoot angles.

"The program at this institution is so varied and contin-

uous that a man actually has to deprive himself of attending other activities in order to attend A.A. and that is the way we want it.

"We have our own radio system within the institution and we have just been granted one hour radio time each month. We thought this might prove an effective method of spreading the word and that it would reach some men who are not familiar with the A.A. program."

Warden Praises Rehabilitation

The A.A. program represents rehabilitation in its fullest sense, Warden Mark S. Richmond of Connecticut State Prison (Wethersfield) writes in a recent issue of "Today's Group," an inmate publication.

"In the face of many obstacles and limited opportunities for rehabilitation, your A.A. members are earnestly trying to help each other as you learn more about yourselves. A.A., either in prison or out, will continue to be a success, not because large numbers of people have *taken* advantage of its program, but because many persons needing help have learned to *live* the A.A. way of life. It is as simple and practical, yet as difficult, as that."

Illinois Group Attracts Fifty

The A.A. "Group of Hope" at the Menard, Illinois, State Prison has attracted approximately 50 inmates during its first five months of existence, according to a recent report on group activities from Guy B., chairman.

Use Many Methods

Features of the new group's program have included informal discussions on the Twelve Steps, showing of a motion picture on A.A. and the use of tape recordings with messages directed to inmate groups.

"We feel very encouraged by the loyalty of the men as shown by their regular attendance and enthusiastic participation in the group discussions," Guy writes.

to 'improve' himself in every way he can so that his return to society can here be justified, and he can be successful in readjusting into his proper place in life.

"Our inmates are comparatively young (17-23 years of age), and it is entirely possible that they have not yet formed a 'prejudice' against the 'sufferer of another kind of problem'. Proof of this is that El Reno was first of the Federal Penal institutions to de-segregate, and without serious repercussions. We feel that this is an evidence of a 'tolerance' for

the other fellow that has partially resulted from our Forum (A.A.) efforts.

"We do agree that this concept would probably not be successful on the outside because of the feeling of 'being different' existing between the alcoholic, the narcotic, the neurotic, et al. However we have seen this 'tolerance' and 'unanimity' within the Forum (A.A.) Group develop despite the presence in the group of many different types of troubled individuals."

Education Aided By Australians At Royal Park

NEW GROUPS

Bide-A-Wee Group
Carlstrom Hospital
Arcadia, Florida

V. A. Hospital
Iowa City, Iowa

State Hospital
Woodville, Penna

Larundel Hospital
Bundoora, Victoria
Australia

Cooperation of Royal Park Psychiatric Hospital authorities is paying "big dividends in recoveries and in educating the medical profession and the public generally on A.A.," according to a report from Bill B. in Melbourne, Australia.

Royal Park, a state institution, has for the past year set aside 20 beds exclusively for alcoholic patients. Two weekly closed meetings and a large open meeting on the first Sunday of each month are held at the hospital. In addition, alcoholics are eligible to be transported to three outside A.A. meetings each week.

There is no time limit for alcoholics at Royal Park, which occasionally re-admits former patients who have had a "slip," if the alcoholic is considered to be sincere in his efforts to attain sobriety.

Royal Park has already gone a long way toward meeting the urgent need for adequate hospitalization for alcoholics in the State of Victoria, Bob concludes.

A. A. Display

The special A.A. display for medical and other professional groups will be shown at the 59th Annual Convention of the American Hospital Association at Atlantic City, New Jersey from September 30 to October 3.

Arrangements are already being made for additional displays during 1958.

Twelve Steps Now In Zulu, Joe Reports

Joe R., an Internationalist member who is chief cook aboard the S.S. African Rainbow, sends the following letter from Mombasa, Kenya Colony, British East Africa. Accompanying it was new evidence of the spread of A.A. worldwide: a translation of the Twelve Steps into the Zulu language!

Here in Kenya we have Mount Kenya and Mount Stanley in the Ruwenzori Range... the "Mountains of the Moon". Each is snow capped all the year round. Here too you will find the Great Rift Valley, 40 to 60 miles wide. The Valley is about 1,550 feet below the level of the surrounding country, runs North and South across the East African Plateau, stretching from the Jordan Valley in Palestine through the Red Sea and the Danakil country in Ethiopia down the coast to Portuguese East Africa. And we too have A.A. which has grown from one member to three . . . but it is growing slowly but surely. The seed is well planted. Alcoholics are few here as this is the Moslem world.

Our friend Ismail Salim Iddi is doing a wonderful job, and tells me that he is going to put A. A. on "the road to Zanzibar" where he has several friends.

On the trip we had four priests that will be located in this area, and I gave them some literature and they promised to contact Iddi, with any alcoholics and their problems.

COME ON IN!

If you're an Internationalist with New York as a port of call in your future, why not plan to visit G.S. Headquarters? The welcome mat has room for all! And of course, there's plenty of room in P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Annex, New York.

AUSTRALIAN NATIVES LEARN THEIR THREE R'S AND TWO A'S

A unique A.A. prison group, most of whose members are still learning to read and write "is doing fairly well" in the Fremantle (Western Australia) Prison, according to an inspiring letter from Thomas N., a member of the group.

"Each of us colored boys, Australian natives, are trying to learn and practice the whole principles of A.A. on a daily basis whilst in here and, by the grace of God, I feel that we shall be able to do so," Thomas writes.

"At present there are eight of us attending the meetings but owing to lack of education most of us are finding it a little hard to cope with the literature. However, this situation has been

brought before our deputy, Mr. Cant, and he has increased the number in school, enabling more time for study in reading and writing. With the aid of our school teacher, I feel these boys will learn to grasp the real value of education and a definite understanding of the program.

"We have much to be thankful for in regards of our Superintendent, Mr. Waterer, and our Deputy Superintendent, Mr. Cant, who is responsible for all A.A. activities. I do think there is every opportunity of each of us natives becoming decent, law-abiding citizens among the community of the state. I feel that with God's help we can do so."

Sailor's Photos Tell The Story

Internationalist Jim D. writes from Canada:

"Lately I've been realizing more and more how much more happiness I derive from taking pictures of my ports of call than I did hanging around the low dives back in my drinking days. My daughter comes to meet me when I get home instead of slowly edging out of the room when I enter as she used to do when I was drinking. Thankful? You bet I am! To A.A. and the God of my understanding. It is so much more wonderful than I could have ever dreamed during my drinking years.

HOSPITALITY

The hospitality of Irish A.A.s is "wonderful," according to Hugh, an American who has been travelling overseas this Summer. Hugh likes particularly the Belfast A.A.s' custom of maintaining an "Open House Daily," with tea served from ten in the morning until closing.

Groups in Belfast and Derry have been discussing the possibility of an "All Ireland A.A. Conference, Hugh reports.

Service Board Becomes Reality

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the Twelve Traditions of A.A. "in all their deliberations."

They also arranged to assume responsibility for Alanon Publications on August 1 and to change the firm's name to Alcoholics Anonymous Publishing Company of Great Britain & Ireland, thus conforming to the title of the American counterpart.

A report on the first meeting defines the function of the new Board as follows: (a) Always to serve the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, (b) To administer the publishing company, (3) To deal with the many problems (suited to a General Service Office) already posed from time to time by our brothers and sisters in the Commonwealth, (d) To provide, in the future, any other services which it is called to provide, within the limits of its resources.

Membership in the group at the Warren (Pennsylvania) State Hospital remains steady at 35 members, with admissions and discharges "just about balancing," a group correspondent reports.

'Phone Number Guides Visitors In Honolulu

Planning to visit Hawaii? Art and Bernice B. write that you can establish contact with the Hickam Traditions Group in Honolulu by telephoning either 42576 or 424485, numbers that will not be listed in the local 'phone directory until December.

The new address for Gus E. of the Athens, Greece, Group is: 14 Niriidon Street, Old Phaleron. Gus would welcome any wayfaring A.A.s.

A.A.'s Conference-approved pamphlets are a great help to members of the Discussion Group in Townsville, Queensland, Australia, a member of the group writes.

"The ones on the woman's angle are very good and were needed here" he reports. "Am pleased with the pamphlet on sedatives. They are a danger, in my opinion, that cannot be stressed too often. They kill the practicing alkie and put the sober ones back on the grog. I treat them with respect, even the mildest."

SEEK DATA

Members of the group at Mitchel Air Force Base, Long Island, New York, would like to hear from other prison groups "as to the organization and activity they have."

Receiving the "Exchange Bulletin" helps sustain group morale, Joanne S. of the Shakopee, Minnesota prison group, writes. "It is also very nice to know that there are others thinking about us."

BULLETIN EDITORS

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