



The Eighty - Three 'ORIGINS'

Volume 17, No. 2
December 2020

Area 83 Archives Newsletter

Online Edition- Service: Where we Came From

AREA 83 ARCHIVES

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Welcome to our Special Edition Archives Newsletter *The Eighty-Three*. We are dedicating this issue to the history and origins of Area 83 service committees that have and will continue to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Since we have never had any articles about the various service committees and how they started in our area, this seemed like a good opportunity as service on these committees has been so important over the years. It is what ensures that AA is there for all of us. It has been the General Service operations that has sustained us since the start of the pandemic.

On March 11, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global health crisis—a pandemic with 126k cases worldwide. By the end of March, the U.S. had 100,000 cases, and Italy, Spain and the U.S. were seeing 900 deaths a day. By March 24th Canada had 2,792 confirmed cases.

Ontario's Premier Doug Ford declared a state of emergency on March 17, 2020. He shut down the province with the intent to slow the spread of COVID-19. In response to the impending crisis, Area 83 had announced that the Spring Assembly was cancelled on March 13, 2020. Around Eastern Ontario intergroup offices and in-person meetings were shutting their doors. Intergroups and district websites continued to offer resources for teleconferencing and

other online services, and phone lines were maintained for the struggling alcoholic.

Then, A.A.'s General Service Office (GSO) closed for the first time ever. Not even WW2, or 9/11 had resulted in a shutdown. "As a result of Coronavirus (COVID-19), New York State has shut down 100% of operations of 'nonessential' businesses/organizations. The General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. located at 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY is closed, effective March 20, 2020, until further notice." ([excerpts from press release 03/20/2020.](#))

The press release went on to say that GSO staff would be teleworking to continue their commitment to serving our fellowship and answering mail. Further press releases provided guidelines on running online meetings, and as in WW2, where the Grapevine was the touchstone for those in-services far from home, AA Grapevine Inc. quickly responded by offering six months free online access to the 2020 issues (in audio format as well) of Grapevine and La Vina.

Not long after, we would learn that The Detroit 85th World Conference, the 70th General Service Conference, and National Workshops were cancelled. Some of these were later resurrected as Zoom conferences and available over more days, thus allowing people to attend that normally would never could go.



AA works because so many give back freely. This pin, signifies 20 years of volunteering to take meetings into the correctional facilities. It is a tribute to its owner for the countless lives he has touched.

Contributions to "The Eighty Three" should be sent to:
archivist@area83aa.org

Online Edition-Service in Area 83

From the Archives Chair

This term has been the most interesting and the most challenging of my journey not only in service, but in sobriety. I came in to this position two years ago with not much experience and feeling very overwhelmed. But just like the Twelve Steps, I learned that I didn't have to take it all on at once, I could do it in piece-meal with the help of those who came before me. I am truly grateful for all of the help I have received.

To take a quote from the very first Archives Chair of Area 83 *"I was very enthusiastic about Archives when I first started, but that enthusiasm and interest gets greater as time goes on"*.

It has been amazing reading over the minutes of the Area Assemblies and Committee meetings. Seeing the names of those whom I look up to, those past delegates and service men and women, reading their names as GSR's and DCM's from years ago.

This is a very unique time we are living in right now. I never would have imagined that in-person meetings would be shut down and recovery would be limited to online only. I was the speaker the other night for the first time on Zoom, and it was very unusual to say the least. However, just like in person, I felt so great afterwards. I still wouldn't trade this life for my former existence.

I look forward to the day we can all meet again in person. I pray that we all stay safe and continue to be there for one another. I'll see you on the other side of this.

We are Area 83 Strong

From the Archivist

Within Area 83 the Area service committee members ensured that AA in our area stayed available. From Zoom education sessions, and assistance in starting Zoom meetings; to hosting working groups on reaching out to distanced members. The Area hosted training sessions for the membership to assist voting at the October Virtual Assembly. The Service Information Day committee facilitated online workshops. Our webmasters and intergroups provided access and set newcomers on the path to recovery. Our members started, facilitated, and attended virtual meetings. We arranged socially distanced meetings in parks, parking lots and backyards. Sharing our experience strength and hope.

Within Area 83, of concern were closures to access prisons and treatment centers. There were missing members, some who may not make it back. There were newcomers going to their first meetings arriving via Zoom, and long-timers going out under the stress of lockdown. Newspapers reported skyrocketing sales of alcohol, and rising mental health issues.

Some of the positives have been accessibility for those who have in the past found it difficult to make it to meetings because of health challenges/

disabilities/childcare needs. Access to ASL Zoom meetings in other parts of North America have become available to those who need it. We heard stories of hospitals providing tablets for patients to login; of members helping housebound members access the technology so they had a meeting at their fingertips 24/7.

For all of us the world has opened. We had the opportunity to participate in meetings in other countries, presentations and workshops. For service committee members, there was the ability to go to their respective service meetings around North America to increase knowledge and experience.

Our cofounder Bill W. made an observation in the November 1960 Grapevine regarding technology changing the way we communicate in his essay *"Freedom Under God: The Choice is Ours"*. He stated *"Nothing can matter more to the future welfare of AA than the manner in which we use this colossus of communication."* —Bill W., 1960. These words have never been truer than during this pandemic. We are very lucky to live in these times as we do have the ability to stay connected. For the majority of us technology has allowed AA to continue to provide services to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Public Information & Cooperation with the Professional Community

Like all of A.A., the primary purpose of members involved with Public Information service is to carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Working together, members of local Public Information committees convey A.A. information to the general public, including the media. (see Area 83 website: [Public Information resource tab](#))

History

The first Public Information committee in A.A. was formed by the General Service Board in 1956. with a corresponding Conference P.I. Committee established in 1961. At that time, "A.A.'s movement-wide public information policy" was written and approved by the General Service Conference. ([MG-7 Guidelines-Public Information](#)).

Within what would eventually become Area 83, the earliest mention is in the March 9, 1975 minutes of the Ontario Eastern Area Assembly. At that time, PIC role included communicating with media and the general public as well as with professionals. The role would later split into PIC and CPC. At this time the eastern PIC Coordinator was Neil M. He was absent from this meeting due to illness. Within those minutes, Lakeshore PIC, Jack C wrote: "we at the PIC committee would like at this time to thank our past chairman, Neil M. For his many years of devoted service and wish him well in his AA life, may God bless and keep them for many years to come, a day at a time" Although the minutes don't say as such, Neil M. had stepped down from the position in 1976. In the following 1977 Area report Jack C. is described as the PIC chairman, But his name is not indicated officially at the top of the report. The following are some of the report highlights with regard to PIC service at that time.

Kawartha, Ron O'N. "We are having good success with young people joining our organization and looking for information from PIC, when a representative visits and talks to them in our schools.

Lakeshore District, Milt L. "Our subcommittees, such as PIC and institutions, are really on the move and great interest has been shown by all groups. I know we will be hearing a lot more from these people in the future. "

Lakeshore District PIC, Jack C. describes the PIC committee that has been set up in his district, consisting of a speaker chairman, TAS chairman, activi-

ty chairman, industrial representatives, literature chairman and a radio, newspaper, TV representative as well as the secretary, treasurer and co-chairman. Highlights of their activities consisted of speaking to classes in secondary schools, presenting at Dupont of Canada in Ajax, meeting with representatives of LCBO and their union in an advisory capacity, in setting up a program for their employees with an alcohol problem. They also attended in an advisory capacity at the Oshawa General Hospital regarding the role traditions would play in the new detoxification centres opening next month in Oshawa.

Ottawa District – PIC report, Conrad G. "It seems a growing public awareness and understanding of AA's effectiveness through attraction is reflected by the growth of groups, membership and request for information in the Ottawa area." Highlights of the report indicates 10 high schools, approximately 825 students and 20 speakers and literature. Students in criminology department provided 50 pieces of literature, As well as student request. Meetings are held in hospitals for the schools are nurses and are in a eight speakers and 140 in attendance. Womens auxiliary group, agencies such as the alcohol research foundation, the national research Council, social planning Council, family service Centre of Ottawa, community information service, Catholic family service of Ottawa, planned parenthood, North Canaan, weight watchers, mental health rehabilitation centre and Canadian foundation on alcohol and drug dependency organization, health and welfare survey directory of associates in Canada. They also provided radio TV and newspapers with press releases for conference announcements, on the CBC platform program, produced a half hour taped show for Sky Line, provided films and tapes on AA to Ottawa Citizen, action line Canadian weekend, and the national press.

Quinte District, PIC Report, Harry G., assisted by Roch A. " December 10, 1974 Two members put on a meeting at Dupont with about 100 in attendance. This was taped to be played on the back shift. Literature was also supplied. December 23, 1974 members were on a one hour radio program at CKLC. It was received quite a few calls" Report also goes on to discuss sitting on the panel at hotels, hospital, speaking at churches, panels at the Loyalist College in Belleville and also request for film.

Public Information & Cooperation with the Professional Community - *continued*

“More doctors are asking for literature. the police and a judge have been asking for starting a halfway house.”

St. Lawrence International District. Robert S. requested that “If you or your group has scheduled some future events in anyway involving AA we would be most grateful to be so informed in order that it received proper publicity and avoid all possible conflicts.”

Toronto East District, Bob H. “The newsletter covering Toronto East was well supported, and films are being shown at groups on a regular basis.”

1977 Public Information Chairman was Ted H.

Specific to Public Information

Although there is no indication in the Eastern Ontario minutes of October 1977 meetings by the time the March 19, 1978 assembly minutes were printed, the Public Information service role had separated into two. The Area PIC chairman was Ted W, and the CPC chairman was Jack C. The minutes do provide a report from Ted W., but there was nothing from Jack C as the CPC chairman.

Some highlights from the assembly reports with regard to Public information come from Leo M., DCM of Ottawa district.

He speaks of the hard work of the PI - CPC committee under the guidance of chairman Terry C. while working closely with the institutions committee, chaired by Randy W. He also gives thanks to the coop-

eration of the traffic courts under the guidance of our AA court liaison chairman John H.

In October 2020, Ray R., the Panel 69 PI chair, spoke about the impact COVID-19 is having on Public Information. He attended an online workshop, the North American Public Information Workshop, hosted by Area 11 in Connecticut where 100 people were in attendance. Additionally, there was a knowledge sharing workshop hosted by Area 82, Halifax. The goal was to reaffirm our presence, given the concerns of alcoholism and addiction during these trying times. Different suggestions from PI working groups were having AA declared an essential service, use of billboards, grocery carts with AA placards, articles in the media, among others.

In his report to the October 2020 Area Assembly, Ray spoke about fielding phone calls, “although not able to answer all the questions, I was able to direct the callers to someone who could provide the answers.

I'm hoping to do a wrap-up meeting with the district chairs. I want to get some feedback on their experience ‘cause that's what it's all about, our shared experience. I'd also like to encourage them to continue their service journey.”



Sobriety in A.A.: Opening doors to a life without drinking (Publi... 9,133 views • 2 years ago



AA’s Public Information uses various platforms to reach people in need of help. Examples include Public Service Announcements on TV, strategically placed signage or the AA YouTube Channel.

INSTITUTIONS COMMITTEE - Corrections and Treatment

History within Area 83

At the March 7, 1975 Ontario Eastern Area Assembly, Charles P. was the Institutional Coordinator, taking over from John M., and Ray R. was the institutional Chairman. The Coordinator and Chairman were responsible to both Prisons and Treatment Centres.

Minutes from the March 1975 Assembly indicate that Kawartha district, Ron O’N, had three institutional meetings plus contacts at Lindsey and Peterborough jails. Lakeshore District, Milt L., had 4 Institutional meetings, Ottawa District, Wilf O’G, conducted meetings at The Royal Ottawa Hospital, the Ottawa Regional Detention Centre, Serenity House, Burritts Rapids and Bellevue House. They also sponsored meeting once a month at Ontario Hospital in Brockville and at Landry Crossings Minimum Security Institution, as well as Saturday afternoon meetings in their local jail, the Ottawa Regional Detention Centre.

Quinte district, Jack L. had nine institutional meetings and reported challenges in meeting the requirements for outside speakers at the Millhaven Institution in Bath.

The Institutional Committee focussed on two service roles that in 1984 would become Corrections and Treatment; the latter included both hospitals and treatment facilities.

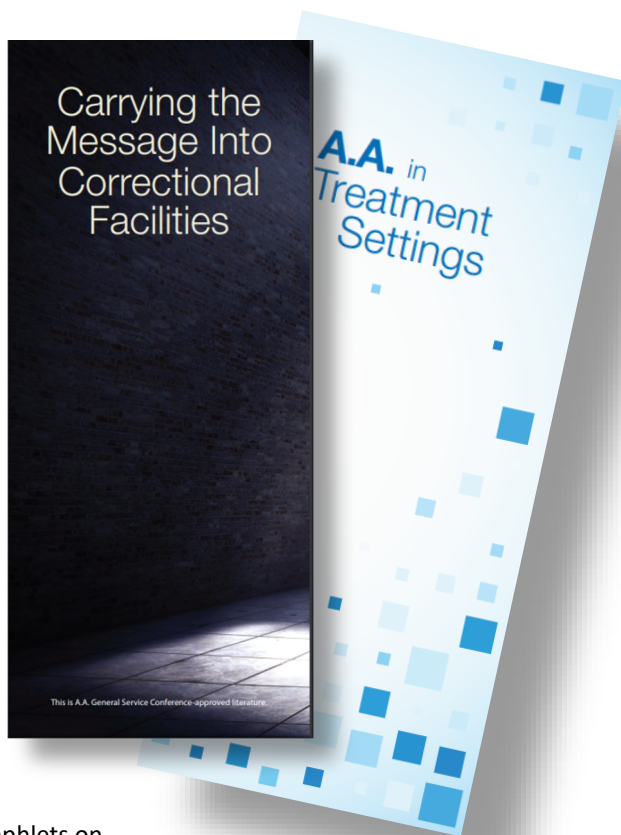
Corrections got its start in 1942, when a pioneering warden, Clinton Duffy, at California’s San Quentin State Prison asked nearby AA’s to carry the message to alcoholics in the prison.

Treatment, and AA involvement began in 1949, with High Watch Recovery Center in Connecticut, the first and oldest 12-step-based treatment centre still operating today. The Hazelden treatment center was founded and staffed by AA members, and since then many alcoholic rehabilitation clinics have incorporated AA’s precepts into their treatment programs.

In 1977, the General Service Conference recommended that the Institutions Committee be dissolved and two new committees be formed—one dealing with Corrections, and one with Treatment Facilities. The 1983 General Service Conference recommended that a Corrections Workbook be developed for carrying the A.A. message into correctional facilities.

At the Oct 2020 Assembly, Les M. Corrections chair, gave his report and in it he said *“Covid 19 has resulted in an overall inability to carry the message to correctional facilities. Although in the USA, Saint Lawrence International does allow Zoom meetings, we are not doing this in Canadian facilities. We need to check into how we can do the same in Canada. Columns Bay on November 1 will allow 1 outside volunteer and five inside for AA meetings. Other impacts have been to Corrections working groups –these are now on hold.”*

COVID-19 has however proved a boon in allowing Corrections service members from across North America to meet and share best practices via zoom.



Pamphlets on carrying the message into Correctional Facilities (F-5) and Treatment facilities (P-27) can be found on AA.org

There are currently 9 ministry of corrections facilities in Area 83. Eight of these are federal correctional facilities, two state prison facilities, and three youth facilities in Area 83. Plans are also in place for the development of two new prisons in Ontario, one in Brockville and one in Kemptville.

From information derived from the survey of Area 83; 3.8% of our membership that responded to the survey came to AA through the judicial system.

INSTITUTIONS COMMITTEE - Corrections and Treatment - *continued*

New Service Committee 1984 - Corrections

On April 26, 1984, after Dave K. accepted the role of Treatment Facilities chair, Earl S. became the last chair of Institutions, and became the first chair in the new service committee—Corrections.

In the minutes of the March 1984 Assembly, Earl S. was last chairman for the Institutions Service Committee.

In the excerpt here, Earl submits what will be his final report as Institutions Chair and makes note of groups in the process of splitting into institutional and treatment facilities roles.

Reports from Area Sub-Committees.

Institutions;

Hi Friends

I am an Alcoholic and my name is Earl I'm your servant as Institutional Chairman for Eastern Ontario.

The Institutions in the area seem to be doing very well. I've attended quite a number and found a fairly good attendance both from inside and outside. We do have small problems now and then but they all seem to be rectified.

I know literature has been slow but I have some now and the remainder of my order is coming directly from New York.

We can always use more Group Sponsors and volunteers just to attend inside meetings.

Some of our Districts are in the process of splitting into Institutional and Treatment Facilities which should get more people involved and also lessen load on the Chairperson.

I would like to urge any person who hasn't been in an Institution to try it and find out for themselves just how rewarding it can be. We do lose some inmates but on the other hand there are a great many who came out and made it. Don't forget there's no Alcoholic alive who has ever had a black-out, who isn't capable of any crime and could be inside. Some of us were just lucky.

In closing I would like to thank you and the Institutions for my sobriety.

I am, yours in A A Service

Earl

P.S. Anyone who needs me do not forget to call.

Area 83 Corrections

The purpose of a corrections committee is to coordinate the work of individual A.A. members and groups who are interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics behind the walls, and to set up means of smoothing the way from the facility to the larger A.A. community through pre-release contacts.

Pre-Release / Bridging the Gap/ Temporary Contacts, etc...

Experience suggests that even though an inmate may have been participating in a group or meeting in a correctional facility, there is often anxiety about the transition to a regular A.A. group on the outside.

With the constant reminder that A.A. has only sobriety to offer, many committees do try to provide some additional personal contact, so this transition period can be made easier.

(Area 83 website: <https://area83aa.org/resources/corrections>)

INSTITUTIONS COMMITTEE - Corrections and Treatment

New Service Committee 1984 - Treatment

Treatment Committees are formed to coordinate the work of individual A.A. members and groups who are interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in treatment and outpatient settings, and to set up means of "bridging the gap" from the facility to an A.A. group in the individual's community. (Area 83 website: <https://area83aa.org/resources/treatment>)

From information derived from the Area 83 Membership survey completed in 2019, 15.5% of our members responding said they came through a treatment centre.

Treatment Facilities Chairperson Report.
I am an alcoholic, member Agincourt Acorn Group and my name is Dave .
After accepting, last April 26th, the challenge as Chairman of Treatment Facilities, I talked to two long time active A.A. members, both of whom are alcoholism counselors for large companies. One of them identified a directory listing all treatment facilities in Ontario which Tom Hills approved we purchase for \$30.00.
This directory, published and updated annually by A.R.F. is titled "DIRECTORY OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG TREATMENT RESOURCES IN ONTARIO", was shown at the EOA Committee meeting in Belleville on Sept. 22nd., when I reported an outline of what I planned to say here today.
Since the Belleville meeting I have attended meetings in 7 Toronto Area Treatment Facilities and talked to the members looking after these meeting and met with Tom Hills and Ron T. Chairman of Treatment Facilities for Toronto Intergroup to advise him of our plans.
Our plan is to ask this meeting for volunteers, by district, and I will send these volunteers a photocopy of all treatment facilities within the geographic boundaries of their district as they define these boundaries for me. It would be nice to send each of you a photocopy of the complete treatment facilities list but you would have received 2 inches of paper of which only a page or so applied to your district and we could not afford the cost. These Volunteers would then form an Area Treatment Facility Committee to review the list of Facilities supplied, identify those that are truly alcohol treatment facilities and contact them to enquire;
(a) Do they now have an AA program or meeting in their facility?
(b) Are they willing to meet with members of the local committee to discuss the establishment of an AA program or meeting in their facility?
(c) Would they allow local A.A. members to take their patients to outside A.A. meetings?
I am forming a committee in the Toronto Area, which will contact A.A. members now working in treatment facilities and A.A. members, who as Government or Corporation Conciliers, are placing alcoholics in treatment centres to find out how we can co-operate with them and get their comments on various treatment centres.
It is expected that the area Treatment Facilities Committees would report back to me on their activities and these reports along with a report from the Toronto Area Committee would be blended into a master report to next years Fall Assembly. To analyse Treatment facilities across Eastern Ontario District will require members in each area to devote some time and effort. What better way to introduce newer members and sponsees to the personal growth that comes through service.
Dave

On April 26, 1984, Dave K. accepted the newly created role of Treatment Facilities Chair. This would be his first report to the Area Committee.

At the October 2020 Fall Assembly, current Area Treatment Chair Shane H., spoke about the impact of COVID-19. Prior to everything shutting down they had received 240 bridging the gap request. They have received 43 since. There have only been a few meetings put in place [in treatment centres] using Zoom.

Overall, Covid 19 has resulted in an overall inability to carry the message to treatment centres. Although some treatment centres do allow online meetings, the majority do not. One benefit has been the ability to attend workshops, exchange ideas, and meet with other treatment service members from across North America.

Accessibilities

On Feb 23, 1959, AA granted 'Recording for the Blind' permission to tape the Big Book. In the AA exchange Bulletin dated August 1961, it announced "Alcoholics Anonymous" in Braille is now available from GSO. The book consists of three volumes - priced at \$7.50. It also wrote of the start of a New GSO listing for Blind Members. Excerpts from bulletin indicate Ann M., of GSO Staff, would coordinate communication services, including linking blind members wishing to correspond in Braille with other blind members; and loaning Braille material, ie. article from the Grapevine, and the AA Newsletter in Braille. Members who received a mailed loan copy were requested to return it within a week.



BOX 4-5-9
NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE OF A.A.

Vol. 21 No. 1 February-March 1976

Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony Opens A.A. Archives

"A minimum of myth about A.A. and its co-founders" was called for at the "official" opening of the A.A. archives here at G.S.O. recently.

Following a regular quarterly meeting of the General Service Board, George G., chairman of the trustees' Archives Committee, presided at the short but moving ceremony held at noon in the packed conference meeting room adjacent to the archives on the eighth floor at 468 Park Avenue South, New York City.

Lois W., widow of A.A.'s late co-founder Bill, spoke briefly, as did John L. ("Dr. Jack") Norris, M.D., nonalcoholic chairman of the board, and Tom S., Jacksonville, Fla., former trustee who chairs the archives at-large committee. A blue ribbon was cut to symbolize the availability of the archival library; Lois and Tom did the honors.

The event was like many other A.A. gatherings, with inspiration, tears, refreshments, and a good laugh at the end. Board members,
(continued on p. 5)

More Deaf Seek A.A. Help

Even those who cannot hear the sound of A.A. can now see our language of the heart — as the hands spelling out "Alcoholics Anonymous" show.

G.S.O. has now learned of A.A. meetings for deaf alcoholics in California, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, and New York.

There may be more. At the last Conference, we heard of deaf A.A.'s in Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Nova Scotia, Oregon, South Dakota, and Vermont. If you know of any others, please send us complete in-

formation, so we can refer inquirers to local meetings for deaf A.A.'s.

(A.A. literature for the blind is also available, both in Braille and on cassettes — but that's a different story.)

Instead of spelling out words letter by letter, as shown above, another sign language has a movement or gesture for almost every word. (Since these also involve the face, we can't show them.) The Reverend Richard Russo, New York, nonalcoholic expert on teach-
(continued on p. 6)

'76 CONFERENCE THEME, PRELIMINARY AGENDA SET

"Sponsorship—Our Privilege and Responsibility" is the theme of the 1976 General Service Conference meeting, to be held at the Roosevelt Hotel, New York, April 19-24.

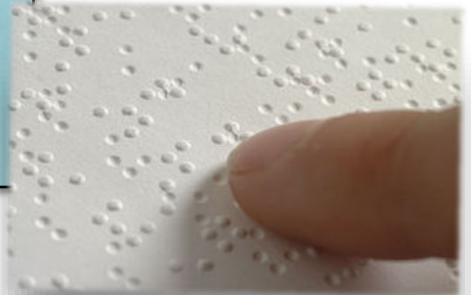
The tentative agenda for the annual gathering was scheduled for mailing to Conference members in January. It calls for presentations on sponsorship, literature, and public information (P.I.); one unstructured workshop; and workshops on A.A. in hospitals, sponsorship,

and P.I. Also scheduled are elections of regional trustees for West Central U.S. and Western Canada.

Discussion topics slated include: "Back to Basics" (are we getting away from A.A. basics at meetings?); the Twelve Concepts (can they help solve area problems?); and the delegates' job of carrying the service message.

The A.A.W.S. presentation on literature will include a report on the feasibility of the Big Book in paperback. Also discussed will be distribution by G.S.O. of "Bill W.,"
(continued on p. 6)

From Jack G. San Francisco, "AA.'s who work with deaf alcoholics find it necessary, of course, to spend time explaining A.A. to professionals who work with deaf people. Meetings for the deaf began at least seven years ago at local levels, when a few A.A.'s wanted to try to help some deaf alcoholics, and a few professionals were distressed at the drunkenness of some deaf clients or patients. It took a lot of going to hospitals, deaf associations and clubs, jails, and social and other agencies, plus mailing out lots of notices and bulletins and placing advertisements in publications for the deaf. First results were discouraging, and it took patience, especially when someone slipped. That sounds very much like the way A.A. has often started locally, doesn't it?"



In the February-March 1976 issue of Box 459, the above article so eloquently refers to those who are hearing impaired "even those who cannot hear the sound of AA can see our language of the heart."

Accessibilities

History in Area 83

While there are no special alcoholics, there are alcoholics who have additional personal barriers to receiving the A.A. message. For some, a six-inch step can be an insurmountable obstacle. A locked access door, blocked ramp or parking problem can make it impossible to get to a meeting. Some members are ill, homebound or living in retirement or convalescent homes; others have hearing or vision loss, learning, reading or information processing challenges; and still others are elderly, use wheelchairs, canes or have other mobility concerns. Literature may be hard to understand. Childcare issues may make it impossible to attend regular meetings. Remote geography or cultural differences may hinder contact with other members.

(AA Pamphlet F-107 & Area 83 website: <https://area83aa.org/resources/accessibility>)

A committee was formed in 1995 as “simply a fact-finding exercise, to determine if and how we are meeting the needs of those with mobility and sensory disabilities both inside and outside the Fellowship.” There was a report to the Assemblies in March 1996 and October 1997. There was further discussion and recommendations made but not accepted. Then there was a motion in March 1998 to discontinue pursuing this idea.

More recently, there was a motion in March 2014 for Area 83 to recognize Accessibility as a stand-alone committee at the Area level. This was tabled until the June 2014 meeting. Ruth F. researched and prepared a report to present at the June meeting to provide further information. This report is included in the June minutes. The motion was again tabled to the September 2014 meeting. At the September meeting the motion was defeated. A new motion passed which was “That Area 83 add Accessibility role/functions to the Area Treatment Chair”. This motion was passed by the Assembly in October 2014. The first Chair for this position in 2015 was Herb W.

In 2020, The Accessibility ad hoc committee, consisting of Kim S. Chair, Bill C., Ruth F. and Marty M., was assembled. The scope was to make an assessment of, and recommendations around four primary subjects:

- the value of an Area Accessibility chair to Districts and Groups in Area 83
- the pros and cons of creating a stand-alone committee verses continuing to have the responsibilities fall under the role of the Treatment Chair
- the potential responsibilities of an Accessibility Chair

- the costs to carry out the responsibilities of an Accessibility Chair

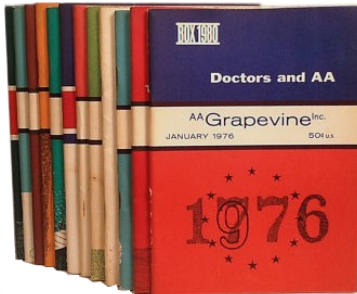
This was the ad hoc committee’s recommendation:

We voted unanimously to have a stand-alone Accessibilities Chair. We truly feel that Area 83 would not only benefit from a stand-alone Accessibility Committee Chair but that Area 83 needs one. Accessibility is more than a wheelchair bound person or a deaf individual. Accessibility is about no barriers to attend and participate.

This information was distributed to the members of Area 83. It was voted on at the Area Committee Meeting and approved to move forward to the Assembly. On October 25, 2020 the Area Assembly voted with substantial unanimity to create a stand-alone Accessibility Chairperson and Accessibility Committee.



Grapevine



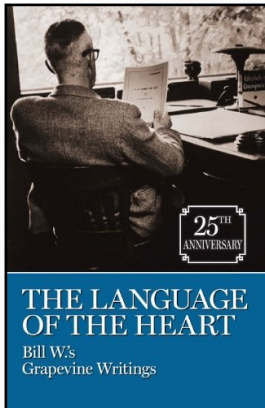
The AA Grapevine got its start during World War II. Alcoholics Anonymous experienced all aspects of the war; In the war itself, and at home. For AA it was vitally important to demonstrate that sober alcoholics were as loyal and patriotic as the next American, perhaps even more so. Through this commitment to the nation the concept of unity gained a new importance. As members were served across the world, the identity of an AA member grew from one associated with one's local group to a greater identification with a national movement. The first "specialized" group of AA, the Seaman's Group, is perhaps the most profound example of this shift in the concept of what it meant to be a member, but it was the publication of The Grapevine that stamped AA as a national organization.

Now news from New York was the same for everyone, no longer individual letters to individual groups reflecting on different aspects of policy in a piecemeal fashion. The magazine also gave Bill W. a nationwide format to share his ideas that he put to great use after the war.

Not only was AA loyal by working and volunteering for those in the armed services, but those that stayed home acted as emotional and spiritual support for those overseas. The contributions of Bobbie B. and the rest of the central office to the morale of the sober alcoholics were significant. The need for news from home, the need for a connection to the outside world, was an important key to the sobriety and sanity of AA's soldiers. Reading the correspondence between the office women and the men in the field gives a glimpse of how they dealt with the ravages of war.

AA was not just concerned for the soldiers in the field, but the situation of the returning veteran as well. The concept of unity became an important part of the ethos of Alcoholics Anonymous. By focusing on the shared experience of fighting overseas, early members were able to identify with the new man who was just returning from war. This concern for the alcoholic soldier reinforced the values that first made AA popular in the late 1930s. They were not out to change the nation, just those that wanted to recover.

Kaufmann, Kevin, "Rigorous Honesty: A Cultural History of Alcoholics Anonymous 1935-1960" (2011). Dissertations. 73. https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/73



The AA Grapevine Statement of Purpose

The AA Grapevine is the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous. Written, edited, illustrated, and read by AA members and others interested in the AA program of recovery from alcoholism, the Grapevine is a lifeline linking one alcoholic to another.~ www.aagrapevine.org

Above: A prolific writer, Grapevine gave Bill W. a means to communicate his ideas to an international audience.

Right:

In the June July 1978 Box 459– the Report from the AA Grapevine indicates increased circulation after a conference Advisory action from the GSC in 1977, recommending Areas establish Grapevine Committees to sign up Grapevine representatives in each group.

Reports From the A.A. Grapevine

Circulation hits 100,000 with the help of group GvRs

Directors' report: This has been a banner year for the Grapevine – the March issue achieved a circulation of 100,000 subscriptions. It has also been a year of changes. Kitty K., circulation manager for almost ten years, retired at the end of December. Jack M. retires May 1, after 16 years at the GV, eight as editor. Jack's best-known contribution may be Victor E., but far more important are his love, dedication, and professional skills.

We have increased the number of

Grapevine Corporate Board members from nine to 11 by adding two regional trustees, one from the U.S., one from Canada.

In compliance with a 1977 Conference action, we turned over to the General Service Board Reserve Fund \$492,230 (of which \$388,835 was deferred liability for unfulfilled subscriptions, and \$103,835 was a contribution to the fund). This left the Grapevine with a \$90,765 net worth at year's end.

Charles H., chairperson

Staff report: Circulation increase gained momentum in the last quarter of 1977 largely because a 1977 Conference action recommended that delegates be responsible for

establishing area GV committees, using area and district structures to sign up a Grapevine representative in every group. There are now 68 area GV committees and 2,000 group GvRs.

Our mail has increased greatly, practically all of it enthusiastic, and we are receiving more and better manuscripts. Outstanding among many excellent articles published in the last year was the Bill W. - Yale correspondence of 1954, when Bill was offered an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. We also publish occasional articles by non-A.A.'s with something significant to say, such as "What A.A. Meetings Taught a Non-A.A. Counselor."

Jack M., Retha G., Ann W.

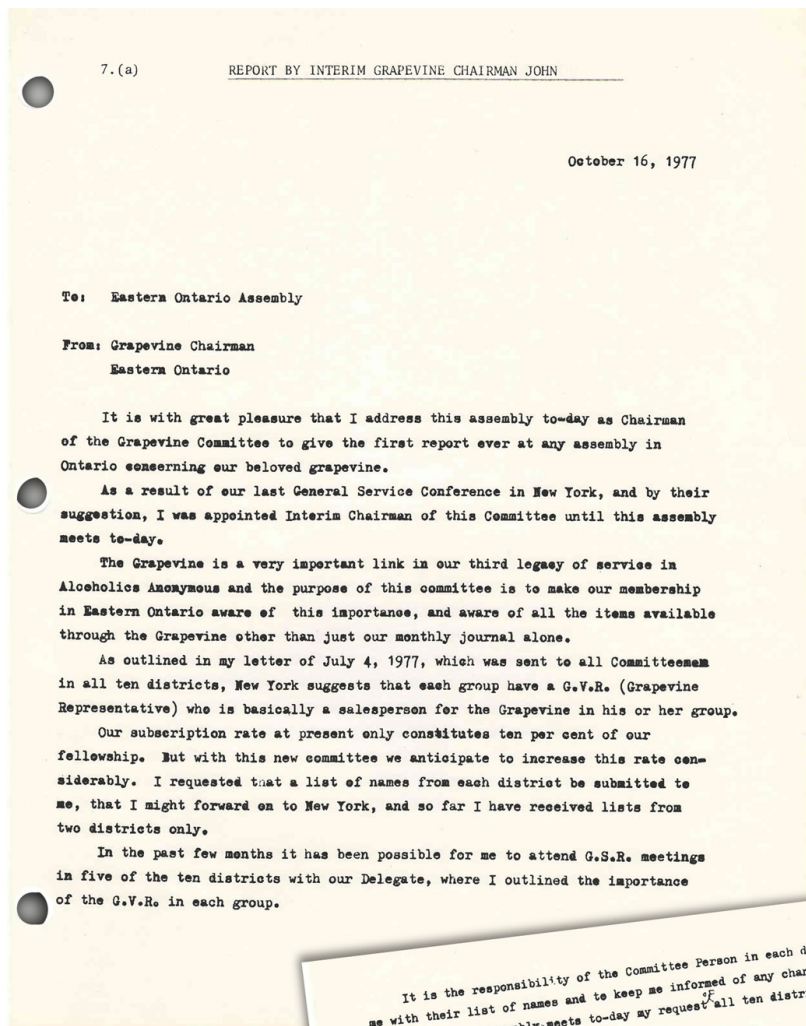
Grapevine

Then Panel 69 Grapevine Chair, Jenny C., noted that Grapevine Inc. quickly adapted to what was going on in the world and started publishing articles that talked about COVID-19. They also provided six-months worth of free online access to the Grapevine magazine.

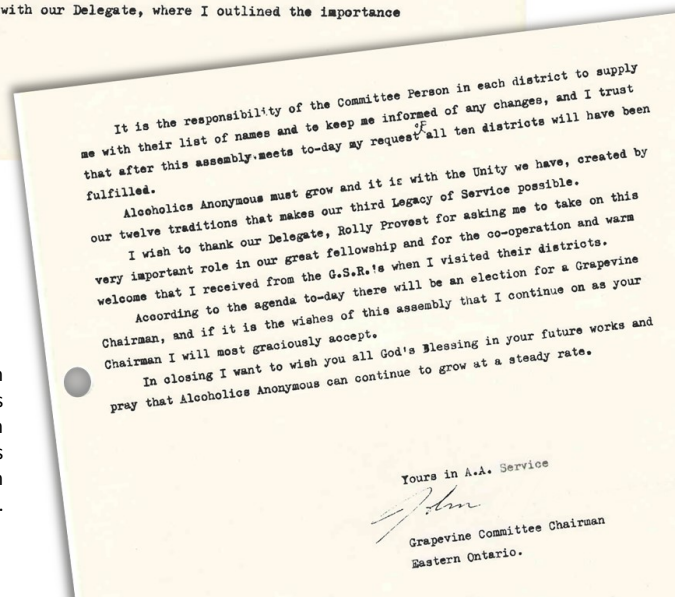
“Within Area 83, although our annual calendar order was down 40%, we still had 13 orders placed, 113 pocket planners and 78 wall calendars. The fellowship in Area 83 came together. We had volunteers from multiple districts willing to drive up to 2 hours one way to pick up orders and carry them forward. In a relay fashion.

As the term has carried on I have continually been invited to attend the GTA Grapevine Committee meeting. A lot of really good ideas are coming from these passionate Grapevine Representatives including PDF and Power-Point files for creating your own grapevine display. This can be used for your group or district grapevine representatives and it is located on the Area 83 website [under resources / grapevine.](#)”

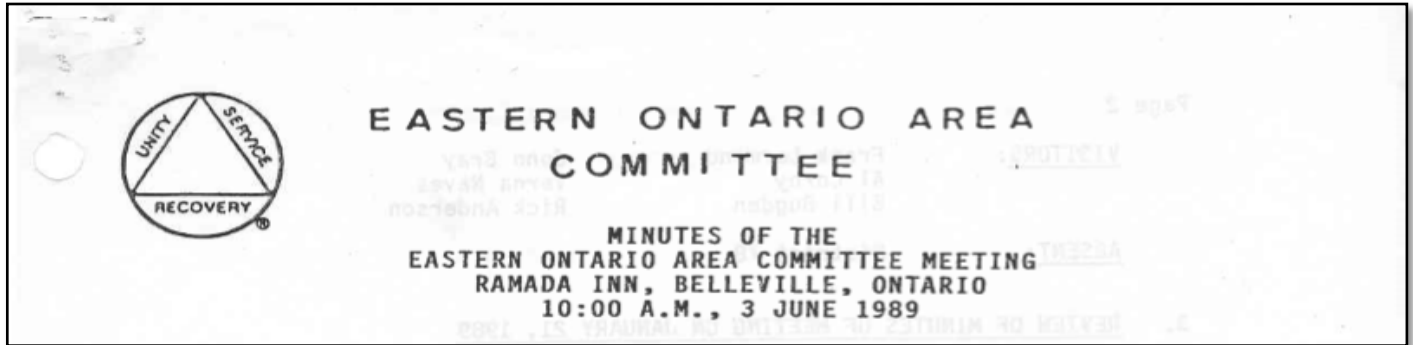
She recommended taking advantage of the amazing tools provided by the Grapevine, be it the collection of free YouTube videos, or ePub, and print subscriptions, and to checkout the updated user-friendly AA Grapevine and La Viña websites. She concluded with “Your meeting in print during a pandemic. Don’t forget to carry the message and gift a subscription to someone who might be in need. This is a perfect gift for the upcoming holiday. Especially for those who are not able to meet up with others. While Zoom is an amazing alternative, a Grapevine is another easy way to stay connected.”



The October 16, 1977 Eastern Ontario Assembly minutes records a report by the interim Grapevine Chairman John H. as he became the official chair in 1978.



Self-Support



Twelfth Step work is the lifeblood of Alcoholics Anonymous — carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic. Without it, the Fellowship would wither and die. Yet, even at its simplest level this vital contact between one alcoholic and another involves an investment of time and money. What follows are extracts from the **June 3rd, 1989 Minutes from the Eastern Ontario Committee that tell the story of how Self-Support got its start in OUR Area.**

Below: Numbers included in the Delegate's report given at the Area Committee meeting on June 3, 1989, as she outlined her concerns and a request for the area to work for solutions to our "self-support system."

in 1988 our area had 500 groups registered. Of these, 268 contributed to New York, 232 did not. There are 61 groups who have not contributed since 1987, 13 groups have not since 1986, 49 have not between 1980 and 1985, 5 have not contributed since prior to 1980, and 95 groups have never contributed at all.

10. NEW BUSINESS

C) Self-Support System

The Delegate, Katie G., brought back suggestions from the 39th General Service Conference, one was to designate a month a year as Self-Support month. This included looking into ways to distribute contribution envelopes.

The Urgent Problem

GSO was Drawing on the "reserve fund" at an enormous rate and, if we continue drawing from this "reserve fund" without group contributions it was going to dwindle away. Katie said, "it is not happening right today. But if we do not take care of tomorrow today, it is not always going to be today... Because tomorrow will come and we will not have a reserve fund". If the groups do not contribute and the cost of publishing, printing, and mailing continue to rise, then we will definitely have to look at eliminating some group services. Katie expressed her feeling that she would not like to see the group services in any area, be it correctional facilities, treatment facilities, starter kits, etc. being cut down. But as Katie

said these things would be looked into if we (i.e., The Delegates, the DCMs, etc.) cannot motivate the groups to contribute to New York.

It was pointed out that it's not only a matter of the amount of the contributions, but it is a fact that, at this time in the Eastern Ontario Area, approximately 46% of our groups do not participate in the AA service structure. Katie went on to say that if she, as delegate, goes to New York, she's not bringing the total informed groups' conscience, but only a portion of it.... Katie asked for suggestions as to how we can encourage the groups to participate and contribute.

There was a lot of discussion at the Area Committee meeting including suggestions on costing and providing contribution envelopes to all the groups, sharing on how self-support was discussed in various districts and meetings, and about Workshops that had been held. There was a discussion on the matter that Area 83 had a finance chair person as well as the treasurer at one point.

Self-Support

The Proposed Solution

Dennis D. mentioned the position of Finance chairperson that, sometime ago existed in the area until it was realized that the Treasurer and the Finance chairperson were doing very much the same thing and there was a lot of duplication of efforts. Then Dennis suggested to the Area Committee meeting that the establishment of the position of "SELF SUPPORT CHAIRPERSON" should be considered, who would look strictly and only after just that: self support, and contributions possibly not so much to the area because [the current treasurer] and the treasurers before him did a good job in looking after contributions to the area, but rather, the Self-Support Chairperson Should concern [themselves] with informing the groups about the self-support system and take some initiative in improving this.

Bob E. pointed out that he was fully supportive of what Denis D. had said on this issue and, in particular, "that this position should be called Self-Support Chairperson. The Treasurer's job is more and more to get the bills paid, while the Self-Support Chairperson should work on getting the cash in". Bob also felt that it was not fair to Katie G. to go out there all the time and talk about money since this might create an image problem for the Delegate.

Art W. Spoke of the difficulties of having the finance [person] in Ottawa while he as Secretary-Treasurer was in Toronto. They did not travel together so the Finance man did not get the information until they met up. At that time the Finance Chairperson also said to Art "that something has to be done about this job." The duties of the Finance Chairperson were then integrated into the duties of the Treasurer, who, at that time, had

become a separate job, i.e., the position of Secretary Treasurer was split into two positions, one being the Secretary and the other one being the Treasurer. Art also said that he was in favour of establishing a position of a Self-Support Chairperson.

Katie G. spoke about her experiences in New York where in other areas the job of Self Support was given either to the past delegate or to the alternate delegate. Her concern was the different districts might say well here comes the "collector" and that this would put undue pressure on the alternate delegate. Katie felt that having a past delegate doing this would be much better.

Frank O'D ... did not think the motion should read that every time the self support chairperson should be the past delegate because not every delegate might be prepared to do this, after having fulfilled a two year commitment during which the delegate had to travel more or less each weekend. Frank felt that the person should be elected and not appointed. In the present case with Dennis D., Frank felt that it was certainly appropriate; however, in the future, it should not be automatically the past delegate, but rather, the person should be elected on a two-year, basis.

Fred B. raised the question of whether establishing this position should not be approved by the Assembly before the Area committee goes ahead with electing somebody.

Art W. ... that the Area Committee can at any time start a position and put it into operation to avoid losing time until the Assembly comes up. Therefore of all the minutes past year or subject to final approval by the Assembly, we can go ahead now and then bring it up at the Assembly...

The Motion

John M said I would like to support Frank's idea of amending the motion (see page 11) i.e., that it should not be an appointed position but, rather, an elected position. John M seconded by Roly C. made an amended motion,

"that the position of Self-Support Chairperson be elected by the Area Committee at an Area Committee meeting."

Voting took then place, and the motion was carried.

Harry C., seconded by Bob C, then made a motion,

"that we elect this person now."

Motion was carried

Denis D. was then elected, by acclamation, as the SELF-SUPPORT CHAIRPERSON

Archives

We need to make it come alive in order for it to live again

The Real Concern: expressed by a past delegate

At the Area Committee meeting on June 2001, under New Business Panel 45 Delegate (1995-1996) Ray M. gave a report accompanying a notice of motion *"To discuss the feasibility of implementing an Archives Committee/Archivist for Area 83 Eastern Ontario International."*

I know it's been a long day for all of us and we are anxious to be on our way. I promise to keep it short. As I sat at the back of the room at our last area meeting I became very conscience of two past delegates who are no longer with us, Bob E. and Tom H. Both loved Alcoholics Anonymous with a passion and dedicated their lives to serving A.A. Bob and Tom traveled extensively throughout the area gathering material and recording our history. They both became AA members when Alcoholics Anonymous was just beginning in our area and for the most part, in fact lived our history. In making inquiries about the collection of Archives material that Tom H. had acquired over his AA lifetime, I was informed that most of it was still packed in the same boxes that were removed from his home and that due to lack of enough storage space at Toronto Intergroup, 8 boxes have been shipped to Barrie. John G., Chair of Toronto Intergroup Archive's committee, shared my concern that age alone will destroy the treasure that Tommy left us.

The deeper I dug into this issue I found myself with more questions than answers. I know that this is going to take far more time than I ever could imagine. Our history shouldn't be retired to boxes in dark basements and storage closets. It deserves to be brought into the sunlight so that we can see it, feel it and become a part of it as Bob and Tommy did. We need to make it come alive in order for it to live again. Our history is irreplaceable, once we have lost it, it is gone forever.

Yours in Love and Service,
Ray M.



I would like to recommend to the Area Committee that an Ad Hoc committee be formed to examine and report their findings on:

- a) How the archives should be handled in our Area
- b) Which entity i.e. Intergroups or Area is best suited to preserve our history, fund it, display it, house it, accessible to all members in Area83.

Above: The Area Committee on June 9, 2001 unanimously agreed to form an ad-hoc committee to investigate these recommendations.

Right: The ad hoc committee found that Area 83 already had pockets of established AA archives. Ottawa and Toronto Intergroups both house and display some archive material. Peterborough and Cornwall were accumulating archival materials with more to come. What is harder to display is our written history, as it still needs to be sorted, catalogued and then preserved.

So where do we go from here?

We believe that it is time for Area 83 to accept its responsibility in partnership with those intergroups/districts that have existing archives and archive committees. Intergroups bring bricks and mortar along with an address. The Area brings the strength of service continuity. The Area has the ability to fund what is needed.

Archive breakfasts hopefully will continue not just as a fundraiser, but to also hear those wonderful old timers share their journey. In order to have a master catalogue containing our history from all sources in our area, we are going to require the services of an Archivist.

In order for this to work, we need to have dialogue with our partners to identify any areas of concern they may have. We need input from each other in order to make our history stay alive for us and for those to come. We need to preserve not just what Bob and Tommy gave us, but all of the material that so lovingly has been given to us in trust.

Immediately above: At the January 5, 2002 Area Committee Meeting Ray M, presented the ad hoc committee's findings on how the archives should be handled and by whom. It was unanimously decided that the Area 83 Archives Ad Hoc Committee continue with the task of seeking out further information to identify Archive locations and activity by informing and consulting with Intergroups and District Archives Committees.

Archives

Summit of Area 83 archive stakeholders

Fears of Archival takeover quelled by Ad hoc Committee Chair

At the Ambassador Hotel, during the service day preceding the Spring Assembly in 2002 every entity that had or was interested in archives was invited to attend a meeting with the Archives ad-hoc committee. This included a number of districts, as well as the Toronto and Ottawa Intergroups. There was a good turnout for the Saturday afternoon meeting. "We had some very good sharing and any thought that the Area was about to take over archives was, I believe, put to rest" said Ray M., past delegate and chair of the ad hoc committee. It was stressed from the very beginning of the meeting that for archives to work for all our members in Area 83 that this would have to be a partnership of all the various entities that already have archives. There must also be a structure in place for future archive entities and also for reporting. We know that many Areas have archives; most of these have an archivist. In this respect Area 83 is falling behind.

We are trying to build up extensive records which will be of value to a future historian...

It is highly important that the factual material be placed in our files in such a way that there can be no substantial distortion...

We want to keep enlarging on this idea for the sake of the full length history to come...

— Bill W., 1957

A.A. Guidelines

Archives

from G.S.O., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

A.A. Guidelines are compiled from the shared experience of A.A. guidance given through the Twelve Traditions and the General Service Tradition of autonomy, except in matters affecting other groups or conscience of the members involved. The purpose of these Guidelines

SERVICE THROUGH ARCHIVES

Whenever a society or civilization perishes there is always one condition present: they forgot where they came from.
—Carl Sandburg

GSO guidelines say A.A. members have a responsibility to gather and care for the Fellowship's historical documents and memorabilia. Correspondence, records, minutes, reports, photographs, newspaper and magazine articles from the past and the present should be collected, preserved, and made available for guidance. . .

A BID FOR MORE TIME: A thorough and consequential report with significant recommendations was presented at the December 2002 ACM, and quickly tabled at the January 2003 ACM when it was clear the DCMs needed more time to discuss this matter at their districts.

CLARITY ON A MURKY ISSUE OF ARCHIVES

With much discussion, the Assembly passes motion on Archivist and Archives Committee

FALL ASSEMBLY-2003 Delegate, Roy R. bluntly told the Assembly that our Archives need a permanent address, and that address should not be my garage. Area 83 does not have an address. There was value to be had by having a common view point focused at the Area level. We are not interested in taking over a collection, we saw that there would be financial saving if the technicalities of saving paper was learned by at least one person at the Area and shared with District Archivists. The Archives Chair person will be the front [person], the contact with the Districts which choose to be involved. Exactly similar as current chairs such as PIC and Self Support. We do not see the need to have a professional Archivist. There will not be paid Archivists at the Area or District level.

The Archives Chair and the Archivist are two different positions, and that if we choose to have an Archives Chair that person will have the latitude as a starting point to use the recommendations by the Ad-hoc committee. With only three in opposition, the Assembly embraced the recommendations and would elect their first Archives Committee Chair, Gord H. at the January 2004 Area Committee.

Archivist

Repository

The first mention of an Area 83 Archives committee & Archives Repository was by Alternate Delegate Tom H. in March 1982. A collection of AA memorabilia was starting to amass with a handful of long-time AA members. Members of this first committee were: Al B., Bob D., Whit H., Tom H., Neil M., Ed Y., and Jack R.

It was agreed the concept of such a Committee to establish an Archives repository for Ontario was not only feasible, but a necessity.

Tom H. was also involved in the consideration of establishing a repository for archives on behalf of the AA membership in Ontario. It has taken a great deal of time. For quite a long period many people in the Province from all the areas, Eastern, Western, North East and North West, and also the Intergroup in Toronto, had been discussing proposals to establish a museum or whatever you may wish to call it; a location to contain and display material reflecting the history of AA in the Province. In the usual alcoholic fashion there has been difficulty in reaching a consensus amongst the many individualistic members who have used their prerogatives to maintain autonomy - until now.

It would seem that now there is an expression of opinion to exercise the traditions as they relate to unity and the common good, to work and come together to initiate an archives program. With the assistance of guidelines from New York and help from the archivist Nell Wing at GSO, the foundation of an archives repository would be realized.

The group weighed the advantages and disadvantages of various locations and eventually chose Toronto. Fearing that their could be resentments in setting it up in Toronto because of it's size and reputation for being the centre of activity. It was hoped that the principles of our fellowship would be enough to overcome it.

Archivist

The whole process from the first proposal of an Archives committee to the installation of the Area's first Archivist in 2006 was long and drawn out.

With the Area Committee rotating every two years, it was hard to keep the momentum of the issue on track for more than two years. The conversation on Archives lingered on for 3 full rotations!

At its inception, the idea was that the Area could provide consistent leadership and technical support to any AA entity who had or wanted to get into archiving. The Area Archives chair was the cheerleader and the Archivist, the technical specialist. It would be easier and preferable, especially with rotation, that one person (area archivist) go to community college and become a smart teacher rather than 28 District archives chairs trying to find courses every two years.

The original proposal had a 5-year term for the Archivist, that was amended to a 3-year term to be approved or re-approved by the Area Committee. The first Area 83 Archivist, Máire O. was appointed and approved by the Area Committee in September 6, 2006.

The requirements for the Archivist are restricted to skill set, and their proximity to the Area Archives in the repository at the GTA Intergroup is irrelevant. Past, as well as our current Archivist, Linda McQ, have been from the Ottawa region. If you have any materials and you want tips on proper storage and conservation, the Area Archivist would be glad to assist Archivist@Area83aa.org.

Below: The pros and cons for setting up the Area Archives repository in the GTA Intergroup, in Toronto.

PROS for Repository in Toronto

1. More likely to be visited
 - ✓ more members in Toronto
 - ✓ members from other parts of Ontario likely to go to Toronto.
2. The Toronto Intergroup office has the space to display the material and prepared to provide it for this purpose.
3. The space that is available is a dry room.
4. The material could be moved easily and put on display at the Ontario Regional Conference.

CONS

Toronto-centricity

★possible RESENTMENTS★



Above Left: some artifacts in the repository include souvenirs like this key chain from July 1987. The coin on the ring, a gift in early sobriety for the owner, having a coffee pot on one side, and a cup on the other—meaning the coffee is always on. **Above Right:** The pros and cons for setting up the Area Archives repository in the GTA Intergroup, in Toronto. **Background:** the Archives display at the Intergroup office, 234 Eglinton Ave. East, Toronto.

Webmaster

Alcoholics Anonymous cuts teeth on World-Wide Web

On December 22, 1995, information about Alcoholics Anonymous became available on the World Wide Web <http://www.alcoholics-Anonymous.org>

The General Service Board approved, at the October 1995 meeting, the recommendation of the trustees' Public Information Committee that G.S.O. implement an A.A. Web Page. The A.A. Fact File and a list of addresses to contact General Service Offices world wide would then be available in English, Spanish and French, on the A.A. Web Site. There were ongoing discussions as to how to use the Web Page, (in keeping with our Traditions), to communicate the AA. message [February-March 1996 Box 459](#)

Guidelines were prepared for use by Central Intergroup offices to assist planning their Web Sites and how G.S.O. will relate to them electronically. The board recognized that, with the growth in the use of electronic communication, it was important that G.S.O. implement a strategy to permit a step-by-step expansion in electronic communication. [June-July 1997 Box 459](#)

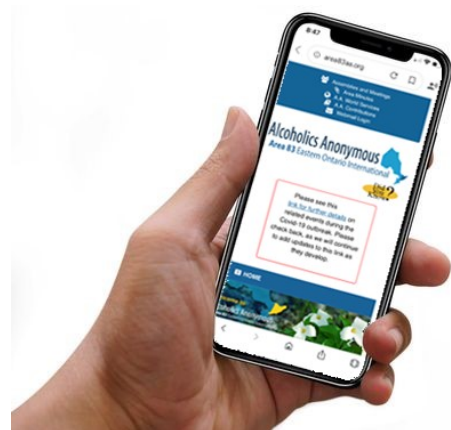
Slow and Steady, Area 83 pushes for an online presence.

In January 2005 an ad hoc committee was struck to investigate the costs and feasibility of creating an Area 83 website.

In June, the committee reported back to the ACM that given 80% of the Delegate Areas in the US and Canada have websites, as well as many districts within Area 83, that this would be the time to establish an online presence. It was estimated that the cost to create the website would be minimal as there are talented individuals inside Area 83 that would volunteer their time and effort to build a website. The estimated cost to operate a website was to be around \$300 per year. The ad hoc committee recommended the website be created in this [Panel 55] term, but not before the Area committee and Assembly have a chance to discuss and agree to certain principles.

The principles to be agreed upon were the creation of a Webmaster, an appointed position based on skills and ability to work within the framework of AA, and that the position have a 2-year term limit and report to and receive direction from the Area Committee. This proposed model duplicates the reporting structure for the AA.org website, in that the staff behind it report directly to the GSO Board. Finally, prior to creating the website, the Area had to create guidelines that outline the content, structure and maintenance of the website. Three years and several call letters later, in January 2008 the Area Chairperson presented the Area's first Webmaster, Vince R. and the Alternate Webmaster Bob F.

The Area's website initially was a centralized place for members to go for mostly service-related materials, events and helpful links to other useful resources or district websites.



The Area 83 Website has evolved since its original debut. In 2014 the website received a facelift, though still largely a repository for go-to information. More recently, George M., working with the Area's officers has tried to make the website more responsive to the needs of the fellowship. It has hosted many useful links and presentations at the behest of Subcommittee chairs and served as an important go to place for Area 83 members during the province's response to Covid-19.

In his report to the ACM on June 6, 2020, George displayed the chart below illustrating the traffic on the website. The first big peak, mid-way through March signifies members looking for direction following the shelter in place order from the Province. Members were trying to find where they could get their meetings. During his same report, the Webmaster could only speculate on the huge spike in activity on 22 May, 2020....the day before Victoria day weekend (aka May 2-4 weekend).

Above right: the Area 83 website as it appeared in 2008 **Left:** the website as it appeared in 2020 on a smart phone during the pandemic. The red box included a link for current Covid related communications. **Below:** traffic on the Area 83 website from January-June 2020. ★ Indicates when the province's stay at home order went into affect.

