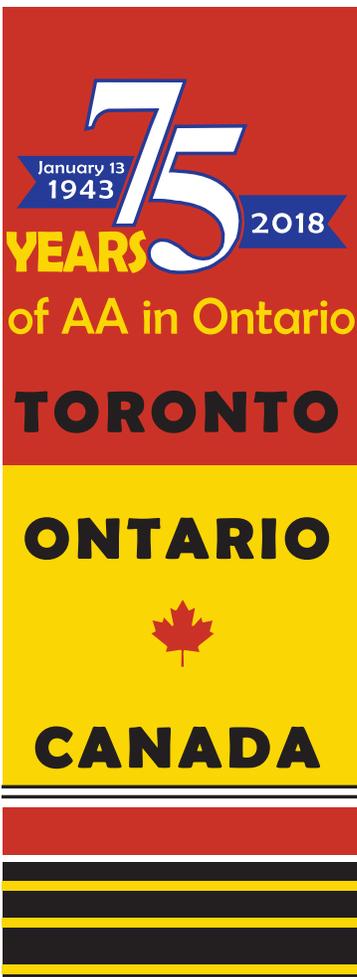




Inside this issue:

**Creating and saving
our history**

David T.
Eddy G
Peter N
Bryan DeS



The Eighty - Three

Volume 1

ORC Archives Newsletter

**Our history through the eyes of those
before us... A legacy of gratitude**

Ontario Regional Conference (ORC) History

A Brief History of the Ontario Regional Conference

December 16, 1943 our first dinner was held at the Royal York Hotel with 80 people present. A.A. had been successfully established in Canada for almost one year.

This dinner is now known as the Ontario Regional Conference banquet.

January 28, 1944, a celebration was held to open "1170" Yonge Street, which, at the time was an office, clubhouse and whatever A.A. needed. "1170" was used for the annual celebration in 1945.

In 1946, 1947 and 1949, the celebration moved to Knights of Columbus Hall on Sherbourne Street.

In 1948, Bill and Lois came to Toronto and the celebration was held on Saturday, February 7th at Central Technical School and on Sunday, February 8th at the Tivoli Theatre. There were 800 in attendance at Central Tech and 1,400 at the Tivoli. This was the first time Lois spoke to a large group, of 200 wives after which many new Alanon Groups were formed. Bill later spoke to a larger group of A.A.s and wives.

In 1950, A.A. returned to the Royal York Hotel, and Jarvis Collegiate for Saturday night. It continued at the Royal York until 1979. In 1980, a move was made to the Hilton Harbour Castle Hotel where it remained until 1989. In 1990 A.A. moved its celebration to the Sheraton Hotel on Queen Street West across from City Hall, where it remained until 1996. In 1997 it returned to the Royal York, where it has remained until the present day (2018), except for 2012 when it was held at the Westin Harbour Castle.

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In 1965, the International Convention to celebrate 30 years of Alcoholics Anonymous, was held for the first time outside the United

States, at Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto, July 2-4. Local A.A. members had to guarantee its financial viability. It was a part of their bid process. Fortunately, they didn't have to dig in their pockets as it was a success.

The ORC was cancelled in 1965, as it was in 2005, when Toronto became the first city to host the International Convention a second time. In 1993, a convention was held at the Toronto Convention Centre to celebrate 50 Years of A.A. in Canada, and it also replaced the ORC.

The name Ontario Regional Conference evolved over time. In 1948 and 1949, references were made to the Toronto Region of Alcoholics Anonymous and a Regional Conference. At that time, the region to which they were referring was comprised of Rochester, Syracuse, Buffalo, Niagara Falls (New York), Detroit and Toronto.

In 1950 the name used was The A.A. Conference; in 1951 The Regional Conference; in 1952 The Ontario A.A. Conference; and in 1953 The Ontario Regional Conference.

The Ontario Regional Conference was initially sponsored by all the groups in Ontario. With the passage of time and growth, many parts of the province began to have their own conferences. Until 1963, delegates were elected at the Regional Conference. The first Western Ontario Delegate was elected in London in 1957. Gradually, one of the purposes for the ORC, which after 1950 was to elect the delegate, ended. It continued to be sponsored by Toronto Intergroup and the Ontario General Service Committee, whose name changed to the Ontario Provincial Committee in 1981. In 1991, the name of this Committee changed to the Ontario Delegates' Committee, at which time the areas around the province withdrew their support and the sole sponsor became Toronto Intergroup.

The Beginnings of AA in Canada—75 Years

The Beginnings of AA in Canada

On January 13, 1943, two friends of alcoholics, the Reverends George Little and Percy Price, along with six alcoholics - Tom E., Bruce M., Sam McC., Buzz McT., Dorothy C and Weems C., met at the Little Denmark Restaurant in Toronto. Something special happened that day. A second meeting was held the following week at the same location. On Thursday, January 28, the first meeting was held at the Metropolitan United Church House. Six people attended. In a matter of just two weeks attendance had tripled. On February 25, Dorothy, the first woman in A.A. in Canada, attended the meeting at the Metropolitan United Church.

Weekly meetings continued at the Church House until June 10. On June 12, 1943, the meeting moved to 160 Bloor Street East to the newly acquired Club Room. Alcoholics Anonymous was launched in Canada.

By October 22, A.A. was established in Windsor, and on November 26, 1943 in London.

In gratitude for this new found sobriety, a dinner was held on December 16, 1943 at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto. There were 80 people in attendance, including newly minted members of Alcoholics Anonymous along with family member and other supporters of sobriety. Today, we know this dinner as the Ontario Regional Conference (ORC) Banquet.

As a result of the rapid growth of A.A. in the first year, on January 28, 1944, Toronto members rented a building at 1170 Yonge Street. Bruce M. learned that a Royal Bank branch was closing. After negotiations, an agreement was reached that rent at "1170" would be a nominal \$50.00 per month, which ironically was not paid for years.

The office was open daily and a regular Thursday night meeting was established. This later became known as the Central Group. *"It soon became known across the continent simply as '1170' and its location*

was described as 'across from the liquor store'." A second group formed before Christmas 1945 and the East End Group was in the planning stages.

By October 1945 The Woman's Group was formed and in the year leading up to 1946, the Midtown, West End, Victor, Parkdale, Kingsway, and North Toronto Groups were established.

In October, 1947 there were ten groups in Toronto and the first Central Committee was formed at "1170" Yonge with procedures drawn up by Glen G. Marg M. of the North Toronto Group became the permanent secretary and held the position for 25 years. In August, 1948 an office was opened at 331 Bay Street to deal with administrative matters. "1170" remained open to provide services to alcoholics.

The office moved several times and in 1987 was established at 234 Eglinton Avenue East where it has remains today. The name changed to Toronto Intergroup and is known today as the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) Intergroup, serving A.A. from Oakville in the west, to Keswick on Lake Simcoe in the north, to Scarborough in the east. Lake Ontario forms the southern border.

In 1947, the first meeting in a correctional facility took place at the Mimico reformatory, initiated by Dr. Little. This meeting was likely the first of its kind in the Canadian Penal System.



Scarborough District 22

History of District 22 Scarborough

At the end of 1978 Toronto East split to form two districts - Toronto City East and Toronto Suburban East.

Redistricting was headed by an area committee headed by Rollie P. the delegate for the area. Not all groups supported the redistricting.

The split would officially take place January 1st 1979. Pat O'B who was the alternate D.C.M. for Toronto East was elected by the G.S.R.'s of the new district - Toronto Suburban East as D.C.M., Murray D was elected as the alternate D.C.M. and John N was elected as Secretary. In late 1980, a decision was made to request GSO to change the name to Scarborough District 22. The request was made and approval was received effective January, 1981. The District is now known as Scarborough District 22.

The District 22 boundaries are as follows:

From Lake Ontario North along Woodbine Avenue to O'Connor Drive; along O'Connor to Eglinton Avenue East; East along Eglinton to Kennedy Road; North along Kennedy Road to Steeles Avenue; East along Steeles to Pickering. The Eastern boundary is Pickering; the Northern boundary is Steeles Avenue; the Southern boundary is Lake Ontario; and the Western boundary is Woodbine/O'Connor/Eglinton/Kennedy.

During the District's history, the meeting location has changed as follows:

Location

Date

West Hill – Highland Creek Lions Club Bldg. Jan1979
to +/- 1984
4285 Lawrence Ave E, Scarborough

St. George's Anglican Church..... +/- 1984 to
June1992
5765 St. Clair Ave. E. at Brimley
Scarborough

St. Maria Goretti Church.....July1992 to June2006
717 Kennedy Road, Scarborough

Mid Scarborough Community Centre July2006 to Nov
2007

Don Montgomery Community Recreation Centre Dec
2007 to present 2016
2467 Eglinton Avenue East, Scarborough
(Name changed to Don Montgomery Community Recreation
Centre on November 29, 2007)

DCM's from time of split to April 2016

Pat O 'B	1979 - 1980
Pat C	1981 - 1982
Roy B	1983 - Sep 1983
Bobby H	Oct 1983-1986
Ron D	1987 - 1988

Ron D	1989 - 1990
John B	1991 - June 1992
Jim J	July 1992 - 1994
Helen MacC	1995 - 1996
Mel W	1997 - 1998
Ed H	1999 - 2000
Fred D	2001 - June 2002
Harold S	July 2002 - 2004
Larry W	2005 - 2006
Ruth F	2007 - 2008
Terry G	2009 - 2010
Cathie D	2011 - Sep 2011
Carolina C	Oct 2011 - 2012
Bryan D	2013 - 2014
Eddy G	2015 - 2016
Tom S	2017 - 2018



AA in Ottawa

In the Ottawa area, documented contact was made by Jack F. with the Toronto Group on April 19, 1945, followed by a meeting with Tom G. of the Toronto Club at the Lord Elgin Hotel in Ottawa on August 3, at which time it was decided to form a group in Ottawa. Jack F. and Clem K. began meeting twice weekly— Wednesday and Sunday, beginning August 7. They were joined October 29 by Roy G. The first formally recorded meeting was held October 30, 1945 in room 317, 163 Sparks Street, involving all 3 members. A fourth member, Bob H, joined November 11, 1945. At the November 28 meeting, with all members present, Tom G. from Toronto addressed the Group and three new members were introduced. The minutes from that meeting note that Tom “gave an inspiring address, and introduced the custom, since adhered to, of closing all meetings with the Lord’s Prayer”. The practice of opening meetings with a moment of silence began March 5, 1946. Anecdotal information suggests contact also was made directly to New York around this time and that could well have been the case. Father Hurlahey, a longtime devoted friend of AA, put Roy G and Alf F. in touch with the New York office in November 1945.

BEGINNINGS Most important is that a group, called the Ottawa Group, started in the fall of 1945 with three members and by May 30 of 1946 membership had increased to 47. There has been some discussion about which was the first group to form in Ottawa. Some argue it was Tuesday/Friday while others talk about the Cameron Avenue group. Minutes taken at the first meetings of the Ottawa Group of Alcoholics Anonymous held at 68 Cameron Avenue, show that March 5, 1946 the group decided to meet on Tuesdays and Fridays—so everyone is right.

MINUTES TELL US...

Minutes of the early meetings track in an interesting way how meetings and customs evolved to how we now know and accept them as “normal”. It is useful to remember that, although the Ottawa Group received a circular from the New York office proposing the adoption of “AA Tradition—12 Points”, which were read to the meeting April 5, 1946, these were circulated to the membership at that time, but not adopted as official until the International Conference in June 1950. In Ottawa, the “7th Tradition” began December 16, 1945 when the group voted to establish a “Kitty”. At the same meeting Bob H. agreed to investigate a “P.O. Box in the Club’s name”. Subsequently, on December 19, 1945, Bob reported that “no P.O boxes were available in Ottawa now, except one at \$15.00 per annum”. The meeting approved that he keep continuous contact with the Post Office and obtain a box at any price, but preferably a lower rate. In anticipation of an article in the Readers’ Digest about the fellowship, members were anxious to be ready for a deluge of questions, and approached Mr. Hurlow, Citizen writer, who volunteered to give them publicity as required after the Digest article appeared in January. Arrangements were also made to

contact the Police Court and Civic Hospital for referrals. On December 30, 1945, members held a social gathering at 68 Cameron Avenue—a fore-runner to the Alkathon? At the January 2, 1946 meeting, Bob H reported that Box 38 had been obtained, effective January 1, at the Besserer Street Post Office, in the name of Alcoholics Anonymous, for a cost of \$6.00 per annum. The minutes noted a 6 month contract was agreed to, and \$3.00 plus 35 cents for the key “were paid from the “kitty”. It was also agreed that Jack F would notify New York, Toronto and Windsor of the organization on a club basis, and submit the P.O. box number. At that meeting it was noted that Hurlow of the Citizen was composing a draft article (subsequently published Saturday, February 23, 1946). January 9 the following advertisement was approved for the Personal Column of the Citizen, to run for 3 days. “LIQUOR may interfere with a normal mode of living. Write Alcoholics Anonymous, Ottawa Club, P.O. Box 38”. Subsequent enquiries (some routed from New York) were assigned to members for follow-up. On January 16, it was agreed there was a need for a regular routine for meetings. This was resolved by agreeing to appoint a chairman a week in advance to plan the meeting. At the same meeting, it was approved that one member following up a prospect would be accompanied by a second member if desired. Based on experience over a two month period, the Minutes for March 5, 1946 read “It be required that two members attend any call for assistance”.



