



# The Eighty - Three

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Area 83 Archives Newsletter

**Our Area 83 history through the eyes of those before us... A legacy of gratitude**

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## Lakeshore Districts celebrate 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

This past August districts' 26 & 28 ( Lakeshore Districts' ) celebrated their 40<sup>th</sup> annual conference. The Archives chairpersons for the respected districts sat down to provide an excerpt from a talk given by an early member of Alcoholics Anonymous who was involved with the start up of the first conference.

The first annual Lakeshore Districts' Conference originated from a Public information Committee (PIC) meeting in 1972. The meeting was held in Grafton at the residence of Neil Matherson, also in attendance at this meeting were Jack C ,PIC chair, John Knox, Terry O, Whitby Young Peoples Croup (WYPG), Milt Laxtall, (Ajax Area Group), Alex Robson,( Oshawa Central Group) , Dale Lowell, George T, ( WYPG) and Earl Evans (WYPG). At this meeting one of the agenda items was to address Peterborough's decision to not allow Oshawa to hold the annual Central East Area Toronto Conference, which at that time was alternated between different cities in the Central East Area Toronto zone. It was decided that Oshawa (Lakeshore) would host its own Conference.

A conference committee was put together from the members in attendance at this meeting and it was agreed that Jack Knox would chair that first Conference. Earl Evans would be the Speaker Chair and the other PIC members would serve in

different positions on the Conference Committee.

The problem of where to hold the conference now presented itself. Earl knew a gentleman associated with Durham College, and it became the home of the 1st Conference.

The Conference was held in the meeting hall, a barracks type building, filled with chairs borrowed from all over Oshawa for the occasion. The main speaker was invited up from the USA Dinner was served in the College cafeteria and Tony's catered and heroically fed all 767 registered attendees.

The Lakeshore Conference changed venues several times over the years until it was established at the General Sikorski Polish Veterans Hall.

It was through the commitment of this first conference committee that the Lakeshore Districts' conference was able to celebrate 40 years of serving the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

Submitted by

District 26 Archives Chair John St. J.  
District 28 Archives Chair Dave P

### Of Special Interest

See the Archivist's Blog:  
[http://  
area83archivist.blogspot.com/](http://area83archivist.blogspot.com/)

Contributions to 'The Eighty -  
Three' should be sent to:  
[archivist@area83aa.org](mailto:archivist@area83aa.org)

## Scarborough District 22 Archives Committee

Scarborough District 22 created the Archives Committee in early 2004 and the first Archives Chair, Eddy G. (Beaches Group) was elected in May 2004. Longtimer Joe C. (Bellamy Group) became the Alternate Chair.

Eddy felt that members were needed on this committee. For the next seven months at the District 22 table he kept asking GSR's to let their group members know if anyone would be interested in serving on this Archives Committee.

Finally, in December 2004, when the GSR's were finishing up their 2 year term, two members- Matti H. (Wanstead Group) and Ed H. (Twelve Steps Group) decided they wanted to be on the committee. Shortly after, Cathie D. (Pine Hills Group) and Marie M. (Kennedy Park Group) came on board. Over the years, Benny L. (Beaches Group), Bryan D. (Sunday Scarborough Group), Rob S. (Wanstead Group), Carolina C. (Bellamy Group), Jim N. (Pine Hills Group) and Jaquie (Pine Hills Group) have been on this committee. On average there have always been at least four to five members on the committee.

We have tried to hold regular monthly meetings. At first, the meetings would be held in Joe's home, then Matti's home and then we would meet at Tim Hortons (Birchmount & Danforth). Later, we would meet at Bryan's home and now we are back meeting at Tim Hortons.

All the excitement and enthusiasm from the members talking about the history of District 22, the groups and the longtimers the meetings would go on for 3 to 4 hrs. Then at one meeting Ed H. said "we have to set a time limit to this meeting because my wife wants to know when I will be coming home for dinner". Today, we have a 1 ½ -2 hour time limit for the meeting.

In our second year (2006) as a committee, Matti H. came up with the idea to start an Archives Breakfast in the East End and ask District 18 to join us. Matti's idea came from a past event where District 18 & 22 were jointly involved. This event was the Gratitude Dinner which was put on for many years. The proceeds would buy Big Books for Correctional Facilities in the two districts. The East Toronto Archives Breakfast will be in its seventh year. The event is held in the month of May. There is fellowship, breakfast and two longtimers, one male & one female from the districts who speak at the open meeting. The purpose of this event is to bring awareness about archives in the East End and the GTA Area. The proceeds from this event go to the District 18 & 22 Archives Committees.

The committee went through a hard time in a twelve month period. Three committee members passed away while serving as chairpersons- Matti H. in February 2009, Joe C. in October 2009 and Benny L. in February 2010. Ed H. the current chair was a little reluctant to step in.

What held the committee together was the commitment in planning and putting on the East Toronto Archives Breakfast.

The committee members have been involved in a number of projects. Group history questions and oral history questions were created, a 17"x 22" color photo showing most of the present group table covers, a 17"x 22" photo showing the district boundaries, recording some oral histories of longtimers, organizing and putting together in folders district minutes, scanning district minutes and other items and putting them on a memory stick.

The committee has been working on an Archives Display Table which will be displayed at District 22 functions like Service Day, East Toronto Archives Breakfast and group anniversaries, as well as, Area 83 Assemblies. A table cover has been made. Also a digital photo frame was purchased which has all the present groups and meetings in District 22 showing their building, entrance, room setup, table cover, slogans & a brief history.

Three binders have been created. The first two binders have the History of District 22 explaining how the district came to be, the boundaries, district meeting locations, a list of all past DCM's who have served at the district, a list of all known original groups & meetings when the district was created and a list of present groups and meetings. Also all the present groups and meetings in District 22 which have a history summary page and photos showing their building, entrance, room setup, table cover & slogans. The third binder has all the known past groups and meetings in District 22 with a history summary page.

The Scarborough District 22 Archives Committee has slowly been developing and scratching the surface of the history in District 22. All the hard work, dedication, commitment and passion from all the members have created continuity to the Scarborough District 22 Archives Committee.

Eddy G.  
Beaches Group

## Report on 2011 National Archives Workshop

I am an alcoholic, a member of the Long Branch Group, and I am also the GTA assistant archivist. In September I had the good fortune to attend the 2011 National AA Archives Workshop in Helena, Montana. It ran for four days, and was attended by over 140 members, either archivists in their respective areas/districts, or friends of archives. It was a very busy four days. I attended a number of workshops. Some of the most interesting involved cataloguing your archives repository through the use of a computer database.

Although we in the GTA are blessed to actually have a repository to store our treasures, our neighbours to the south (some of them) are quite advanced with their databases and the ability to search for items upon request. For a novice tech person like myself, (and our archivist Eddy G. if I may be so bold!), it is quite a steep learning curve. But I am constantly reminded that as long as we are willing, whether in our own recovery or our service endeavours, more will continually be revealed!! Some of the archivists there are retired, and I was envious of the amount of time they are able to put into their archives service work.

Workshops were given on how to prepare your repository for disasters (broken water pipes/fire, etc.), and I think some of them were even good to go in the event of a nuclear attack!

At the banquet on the Saturday night, the Stepping Stones archivist gave a lengthy and enthusiastic presentation on all the efforts to restore Bill and Lois' home in New York state. Extensive work has been done on the buildings on the property, and all items were catalogued/databased, a huge and lengthy undertaking. For anyone interested in the history surrounding AA (Bill W. did a lot of his book/Grapevine writings in the small cabin on the property, aptly name "Wits End"), it sounds like a must visit. Most of all, I was able to meet many new friends, and make some new contacts to assist our archives work here in the GTA. As I reported at the October GTA Intergroup meeting, it was definitely time well spent. Next year's workshop will be held at Cocoa Beach, Florida from October 4th to 7th, 2012. A very special thank you to the GTA Intergroup for providing the funds to allow me to attend this year's event.

Yours in love and service, Jim.

## Development of Ottawa AA Archives

The late Dave H had a dream that there would be an AA archives in Ottawa. If he had kept it to himself, it would have been just that—a dream. Instead he gathered together a small group of AA members who became the first Archives Committee in the Fall of 2000. Previous to this time the late Bob E and Carolyn A would mount an Archives exhibit at the Fall Conference. The first Ottawa Alcoholics Anonymous Archives Committee consisted of Dave H, Michael C, Steve C and Alistair F. They managed to rent Room 102A in the Bronson Centre. The room measured 8 feet by 10 feet and had only one window and no furniture. The room was not large enough for the computer, which was installed in Room 102B courtesy of our next-door neighbour.

It is regrettable that no minutes were kept until June 2003 when the Terms of Reference for the Committee were drawn up. These terms of reference were amended over the years.

In November 2004 Archives move to Room 206, which measured 20 feet by 18 feet and had four windows. The new location allowed for the installation of the donated computer and the purchase of a printer.

Most of the furniture was donated by members or scavenged from Centretown garbage. A member painted the room and the carpet was steam cleaned by another member. Other members handled the carpentry and the installation of drapes.

Ottawa AA Archives was initially financed by contributions from Intergroup and Ottawa West and Ottawa Bytown general service districts. Seaway Valley north District came on board in 2005.

The bulk of the \$9000 annual budget comes from two fundraisers—The Longtimers Luncheon in November and the Spring event in April when we presented plays written by Bill McN from Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Individual members have been extremely generous in their purchase of multiple tickets for their sponsees or as outright donations to Archives.

The first annual Summer Event took the form of an open-air meeting on Canada Day 2006. Although attendance was sparse, members were generous with the 7th Tradition.

The Archives collection consists of the Grapevines donated by Bob E, and the audiotapes donated by Bernie D, Gus K and other members. We also have mounted photographs from the Longtimers Luncheons and the Spring Events.

Our most treasured artifacts are the rubbing of Bill W.'s tombstone by Ellie V, a copy of the Lasker award and a prepublication multilith copy of the Big Book donated by Tina M. In addition, we have a Winerack Collection of the Golden Books, meditation books and the Ontario Provincial Committee directories donated by various members.

Drop by to visit the Ottawa AA Archives room in the Intergroup Office in Room 108 of the Bronson Center. Archives can be contacted at the Intergroup (613-237-6003). The Archives meeting is held the third Wednesday of each month in the Intergroup Office.

Volunteers are always required to assist with the sorting, cataloguing and especially by typing. If you are able to assist, contact the Ottawa Archives Chair at 613-868-9243. The current Reps for District 62 are Patrick G with assistance from Mary H (Oral Histories) and Louise C. We now also have a rep from District 58 in the form of Clayton G who is returning to service after being active in his home group for a few years.

Active participation in recording our local AA history is a way for all members to learn how AA started in the Ottawa area and it lets them listen to the stories of the early members who have since passed onto another existence but who have left us the legacy of their message.