

History of Area 83 Presentation- Sat. Oct. 27, 2023

January 13, 1943, Toronto, Canada

On Wednesday January 13, 1943, the 1st meeting was held in Toronto, Canada. 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 at 720 Bay St. in Toronto. Something special happened that day and a second meeting was held at the same location the following week.

On Thursday, January 28, 1943, the first organized A.A. meeting was held at the Metropolitan United Church House.

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

On January 28, 1944, as a result of the rapid growth of A.A. in its first year, Toronto members rented a building at 1170 Yonge Street.

In October 1947 there were ten groups in Toronto and the first Central Committee (today GTA Intergroup) was formed at "1170" Yonge with first operating procedures drawn up by Glen G.

In August 1948 an office was opened at 331 Bay Street to deal with administrative matters. **On August 16, 1948**, Marg M. of the North Toronto Group became the permanent secretary and held the position for 25 years. "1170" remained open to provide services to alcoholics.

History of Area 83

1949

At this time Bill Wilson was trying to get his ideas on a structure for AA underway. There was a minimal amount of structure in place. In 1938 there had been formed what was called the Alcoholic Foundation, but the main operations were still in the hands of Bill W. & Dr. Bob S. to whom most problems were still referred. With Dr. Bob ill with cancer, Bill was concerned with the future of AA & he began travelling about the continent promoting his new ideas in his own inimitable (unique) fashion.

1950 July

The 1st issue of All Around Ontario produced by the Toronto Central Committee at 331 Bay Street. Creator & 1st Editor was Art L. Published until about 1969.

1950 July 28-29

1st International Convention was held in Cleveland with about 3,000 in attendance. 15th Anniversary. The 12 Traditions were accepted in the Long Form. The second legacy "UNITY" was secured.

Two weeks later Bill W. met with Dr Bob at Akron conveying the good news that the Trustees now would consent to the formation of a world service conference which would provide a service structure for North America in the form of a General Service Conference.

1951 March 3-4

Bill W. was a guest at the Regional Conference (today called Ontario Regional Conference) in Toronto. Following Bill's presentation on the structure of the Third Legacy it was thought that the structure of the States & Provinces would change to make them entities unto themselves. This presentation resulted in the election of our first Delegate for the Province of Ontario to attend the first General Service Conference in New York. The Delegate chosen was Adam C. from the Friday-Yonge Group in Toronto. Adam served on Panel 1 (1951-1952). The Alternate Delegate was Art L.

During this Regional Conference the first Ontario General Service Committee was elected.

The 1st Ontario General Service Committee consisted of:

Delegate & Chairman	Adam C.	Toronto
Alternate Delegate	Art L.	Toronto
Treasurer	Walter M.	Hamilton
Secretary	George D.	Toronto

4 Committee Members representing Areas (now known as Districts)

Don N. Haileybury
Morey S. Owen Sound
Neil M. Port Hope
Glen G. Toronto

Adam C. was to spend the first year in Office with the assistance of his committee organizing the province into Areas & Districts. There was much dissention as the membership of Ontario felt

that in “UNITY” our second legacy, was an infringement on the Primary Purpose of carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic.

Adam & his committee with dedication, sincerity & determination prevailed & the members broke the barrier whereby most groups & members accepted the fact that in “UNITY” there is strength, upon which our common welfare is built.

The letterhead used for the correspondence & bulletins of the 1951 “Regional Conference” at the Royal York Hotel read as follows:

NEW YORK STATE-PROVINCE OF ONTARIO-NORTHERN
PENNSYLVANIA
A.A. REGIONAL CONFERENCE
ROYAL YORK HOTEL

Up to this time there had been a loose knit structure which may be seen from the terms used. Bill W. was changing this with his new General Service Conference.

1951 April 20-22

The 1st General Service Conference took place in New York City & was held at the Commodore Hotel. The proposal was to give it a try for 5 years & the idea was accepted in principle.

At this time Ontario was just one jurisdiction. The service terminology was different. What are now considered Districts

were called Areas & our currently known District Committee Member (DCM) was known as an Area Committee Member.

Although all this sounds very simple & would indicate there were no problems after Bill got approval for a General Service Conference when he was in Toronto at the Ontario Regional Conference in March 1951 it must be remembered that a Central Committee (today called GTA Intergroup) had already started in Toronto in October 1947. As might be expected there was opposition, but Adam C. did his best to sell the new concept.

1952 April

The 2nd General Service Conference took place in New York with 38 Panel 2 Delegates in addition the 37 Panel 1 Delegates for a total of 75.

The Delegates were elected for a two-year term which meant down through the years that there is always one panel with one year's experience. Also, Delegates may not be re-elected nor chosen for any service position.

1953

Art L. from Toronto was elected Delegate (Panel 3, 1953-1954) for all of Ontario at the Ontario Regional Conference at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto. Art was tireless as a Delegate in his efforts on behalf of AA at the Area & Group Level with his organizing ability & knowledge of our legacy of UNITY he

convinced many of the dissenting groups & members that for AA to survive, there must be Unity.

Art L. became known at the General Service Office (GSO) as “The Letter Writer.” He was the creator & first Editor of the publication “All Around Ontario.”

1953 April- After Adam C.’s two years as Delegate finished, he was elected as the first Canadian Trustee to serve on the Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

1954- The Ontario Directory was first published by the Ontario General Service Committee. Until 1989.

1954 April

The Alcoholic Foundation changed its name to the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

1955 April

Whit H. of Sarnia was elected Delegate (Panel 5, 1955-1956) for all of Ontario at the Ontario Regional Conference (ORC) at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto.

1955 July 4-6

20th Anniversary Convention in St. Louis.

Whit H. was present when Bill W. read the Resolution (page 123 Service Manual) that transferred the twenty-year stewardship

of Alcoholics Anonymous from Bill & AA's old-timers, into those of its elected representatives. The Three Legacies: Recovery, Unity & Service turned over to the membership. This is when AA took full responsibility for the management of its own affairs.

This was the first time the General Service Conference (GSC) was held outside of New York except for 1991 when it was held in Rye, New York State, which was not far from New York City itself. Presently, the General Service Conference (GSC) is held in alternating years at the two locations.

1956- Public Information (PI) Committee of General Service Board is formed.

1956 April

At the General Service Conference Whit H. Delegate (Panel 5) made a presentation to the Admissions Committee asking that a 2nd Delegate be approved for Ontario. This request was unanimously approved. This allowed Ontario to be divided into two areas East & West & served by two Delegates, easing the burden & workload for what had been one Delegates responsibility.

1956 October

Whit H. assumed the Chairmanship of the Ontario General Service Committee whose membership was:

Whit H. - Chairman- Delegate

Neil McV. -Alternate Delegate
Tom T. -Treasurer
Bert L. -Correspondence Secretary
Russ M. -Recording Secretary
John B. -Editor of AA Ontario

1957 November

A 2nd Delegate for the Province of Ontario was elected at the London Conference for what has become known as Western Ontario Area 86.

He was Leander John Joseph G. from Kitchener (Panel 8) the 1st Delegate of West Area.

1958 June 7- Adam C. died.

1958

Ontario was divided into 2 Areas- the West & the (East/North). The West has remained virtually the same geographically- from Oakville west down the Niagara Peninsula- inclusive of Windsor & Sarnia, along Georgian Bay, Huntsville & Northern Muskoka then curls back to Lake Simcoe to include Hamilton & London.

From the date the 2nd Area came into existence a committee came into existence which has continued under different names until the present:

1958- The Ontario Committee – General Service Conference

1964- The Ontario General Service Committee

1980- The Ontario Provincial Committee (OPC)

1990- The Ontario Delegates Committee (ODC)

It has consisted of all the Delegates in Ontario & the Alternates. At times it had a Secretary, a Treasurer, & other committee member such as Public Information & Institutions.

1961 March 24-26

Al B. (Bayview Group- Toronto) was elected Delegate (Panel 11) at the Royal York Hotel.

1962 April- The Delegate, Al B. (Panel 11 -1961-62) made a presentation to the General Service Conference to hold the 30th International Convention in Toronto in 1965. This would be the first held outside the USA.

He also took a request for a 3rd Delegate to be granted in Ontario & it was granted.

1963- Ontario was divided into 3 Areas- East (virtually what it is today), West & North. Jack K. was the 1st Delegate from the North. He was elected at Sault Ste. Marie. Jack was allowed to attend the Conference for 1962 although he was Panel 13 which meant his official status was for 1963 & 1964. The reason apparently was to keep the numbers of members on the panels approximately the same.

Al B. had been the last Delegate to serve the East/North.

Harold F. from Kingston was the 1st Delegate (Panel 13, 1963-1964) to serve the East Area (today Area 83). Garfield K. (Panel 15) followed Jack K. in the North.

1964 Fall- The 1st Area Assembly for Eastern Ontario held away from the Royal York Hotel in Toronto was in Belleville & Alf McG. from Ottawa was elected as Delegate (Panel 15, 1965-1966).

From 1964 to March 19, 1978

Assemblies were held in Belleville.

1964-1974 at St. Thomas Moore Hall,

1975-1976 at Nicholson College

& 1977- March 19, 1978 back at St. Thomas Moore Hall.

1966

The ratio of Trustees changed to 7 non-alcoholics to 14 alcoholics. Prior to this there had always been one more non-alcoholic on the Board. It should be noted that the ratio was 2/3rds majority of alcoholics.

Trustees

1938- May- Alcoholic Foundation was established with 5 Trustees (3 non-alcoholics & 2 alcoholics).

1939- 7 Trustees (4 non-alcoholics & 3 alcoholics)

1943- 9 Trustees (5 non-alcoholics & 4 alcoholics)

1949- 15 Trustees (Bill Wilson for 1 year) 8 non-alcoholics & 7 alcoholics).

1962- 19 Trustees (10 Class A non-alcoholics & 9 Class B alcoholics).

1966- 21 Trustees (7 Class A non-alcoholics & 14 Class B alcoholics).

1967

Ontario divided into 4 Areas. At an election held in Thunder Bay in 1966, Vern C. was the 1st Delegate elected for the North West Area & the 1st Delegate for the new North East Area was Bob McC. The boundary was set west of Wawa to cut north to Hudson's Bay.

1969- A coordinator for Public Information (PI) was made for the Ontario General Service Committee. Neil M., Grafton, Ont. became the coordinator.

1970 Jan- General Service Board authorized Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC), a spinoff from the Public Information (PI) Committee.

1970 August 1- Bernard Smith dies. Chairman of the Board 1951-1956.

1971 Jan. 24- Bill W. died. 36 years sober.

1971 April- An Institutions Coordinator was established for the Ontario General Service Committee. John M. became the coordinator.

1975 April

Peter W. was elected as the Eastern Canada Region Trustee at the General Service Conference (GSC). Served for 4 years. Peter from Toronto was an Area 83 Delegate (Panel 17, 1967-1968).

1975 Nov. 3- Official opening Archives GSO.

1976 Oct. 3

Rolly P. was elected as Delegate (Panel 27, 1977-1978) at Nicholson College in Belleville.

1977

Eastern Ontario Area Committee established. Rolly P. – Full Committee.

Each of the Areas in Ontario was now operational & was following its own autonomous path. Each had its own geographical & population problems with which it had to contend. There was still a central collection office (Ontario General Service Committee) for funds which tended to restrict the development of individual area autonomy. This office also acted as an intermediary for ordering of literature from GSO also inhabited the development of responsibility.

Eastern Ontario Boundaries

Area 83 Eastern International encompasses a large area including Eastern Ontario & Northern New York State. Border

Oakville to Cornwall & from North-East New York State to Pembroke, Ontario.

Oct. 16, 1977

Rolly P. had returned from the April General Service Conference & initiated some changes in keeping with the recommended structure. At this time the Delegate acted also as Chairman of the Assembly which was not in keeping with the Area Committee as identified in the Service Manual.

Ed A. was elected as the 1st Chairman of the new Area Committee. Ed had been Delegate (Panel 19, 1969-1970).

Another idea that Rolly promoted was redistricting. Most districts had little difficulty with this proposal. Ottawa took a little more time than most but came back with 4 Districts in 1980.

1977- General Service Conference dissolved Institutions Committee & formed Correctional Facilities & Treatment Facilities.

1977 Sept. 30- Oct. 2

The 1st Eastern Canada Regional Forum was held in Ottawa with about 500 in attendance. Dr. Jack Norris, a non-alcoholic & Chairman of the General Service Board, had introduced these in 1975 in order to make members more familiar with the operations of the General Service Board (GSB) & General Service Office (GSO). In August 2024 Ottawa will be the host.

Oct. 22, 1978

Assembly held at Cobourg Lion's Hall. Rolly P. had taken ill & was unable to complete his term. It was picked up by the Alternate Delegate Wilf O'G. who had been assisting him for some considerable time.

1978 Nov. 22- The serving Delegate, Rolly P. died while still in office. (Panel 27, 1977-1978 Eastern Ontario Area 83).

1978 late Fall- Velma R. was hired as full-time Secretary Treasurer for Ontario General Service (OGS) to start Jan. 1, 1979.

May 6, 1979

Eastern Ontario set up a committee to study the pro's & cons of the purpose & need for Ontario General Service (OGS) to continue. Also, the benefits of belonging to OGS. It was felt there was an overlap of services.

The conclusion was there was a need for such an arrangement. It felt that within the Province of Ontario it was important to know what was taking place & that it was important the AA message was being carried to those who need it.

The committee had 10 meetings & produced 5 interim reports with the final one Aug. 23, 1980. It was recommended that Area 83 operate independently but send its fair share to OGS &

where necessary communicate with the other 3 Areas what was transpiring in Area 83.

One of the changes that occurred was that the name of Ontario General Service was changed to Ontario Provincial Committee (OPC). It took 10 years for the other Areas to decide to operate independently & close the office in Toronto. This did not occur painlessly.

There seemed to be a need for financial support in the North & a need for “experienced” personal help. Money was necessary to cover expenses for travel & accommodation. The reason for the division into the 4 Areas was primarily on account of the difficulties in covering the whole province.

Area 83, Eastern Ontario, decided to be self-supporting & to become independent eventually. It was anticipated the other areas would follow the example, but it was decided the other areas were not prepared to follow suit at this time.

Area 83 would continue to support the Provincial Committee.

1979 Nov

Ontario General Service (OGSC) Committee decided that coordinators (Public Information & Institutions) no longer necessary as the Areas were getting stronger.

1980 May 23

Quinte Secondary School, Belleville. The Secretary Treasurer resigned before starting the duties. Bob E. was elected to do the job. Terry O'C. did the work for this Assembly only while Bob assisted.

1980 Nov

Partially as a result of the Eastern Ontario's study the name of Ontario General Service Committee (OGSC) was changed to the Ontario Provincial Committee (OPC).

1980 Nov. 7

Ontario Provincial Committee (OPC) & Toronto Intergroup Operating Committee as sponsors of the Ontario Regional Conference began to get together partially as a result of the ORC Committee unilaterally deciding to move from the Royal York Hotel to Hilton Harbour Castle & losing money (\$19,000 for coffee) on account of providing free coffee throughout the weekend.

1981 August 6

Archives Committee was set up at the request of the Ontario Provincial Committee (OPC) by representatives from Ontario Provincial Committee (OPC) & Toronto Intergroup. 1st meeting. Tom H. (Alt. Delegate) was Chairman. The committee decided that the Toronto Intergroup Office at 272 Eglinton Ave. W.

would be the best central location & secure place to store & view the archives.

1982 July

Milton Maxwell becomes Trustee Emeritus on account of illness & Gordon Patrick becomes Chairman of the Board (1982-1988). 1st time for a Canadian. Gordon served from 1975-1981 as General Service Board Non-Alcoholic Trustee.

1982 Oct. 31

At this Assembly held at the Lion's Hall, Napanee, the Chairman & Secretary Treasurer were both elected at the same time as the Delegate & Alternate Delegate. Secretary Treasurer was one position.

1983- Ontario membership (Please see the Area 83 Archives Display)

Areas:

East	10,120
North East	1,893
North West	1,210
West	6,230

1983 March 27

The Delegate was instructed by the Area Committee to vote against approving the printing of the "Gay Pamphlet" at the

General Service Conference (GSC). The Delegate voted in favor of printing the pamphlet at the GSC.

1983 Oct. 29-30

A combined 2-day Service Day & Assembly was held for the first time. It was the first time the Assembly was held at the 401 Inn in Kingston.

The Delegate was requested to attend the “Gratitude Conference” for Gay people in Toronto Thanksgiving Weekend to ensure it was being conducted in accordance with AA Tradition. Also, in 1984.

1984 March 25

Assembly was held at the 401 Inn for the second time but for one day only.

1984 Oct. 27-28

Assembly was again held at the 401 Inn for 2 days & has continued with the 2-day sessions. At this location until October 1990 (8 years).

1985 Oct. 26-27

Tommy H. name was submitted for consideration as Trustee for the Region of Eastern Canada. He was elected at the General Service Conference (GSC) in **April 1986** & served for 4 years. Term ended in 1990.

Tommy was an Area 83 Delegate (Panel 33, 1983-84) Died April 18, 1999, 43 years sober.

1986 Oct. 25-26

Denis D. elected as Delegate (Panel 37, 1987-1988) at the 401 Inn, Kingston. It was the 1st time an American was ever made a Delegate in a Canadian Area. He was from Bombay, NY.

1983-1984- Denis Doyle was Area 83 Chair.

He designed the two-minute three light system that is used when DCM's give their reports at the Area Assembly.

1988- Katie G. from Cornwall elected as Delegate (Panel 39, 1989-1990) for Area 83. 1st woman Delegate for Area 83. Katie made the motion to separate from the Ontario Provincial Committee (OPC).

1990 March 15- Velma R., Secretary Treasurer of the Ontario Provincial Committee (OPC) retired. At this time the position was terminated.

1990 Nov.- The name of the Ontario Provincial Committee (OPC) was changed to the Ontario Delegates Committee (ODC). The Trustee for the Region of Eastern Canada was to attend future meetings. Now the purpose of the committee would be to prepare the four Ontario Delegates for the General Service Conference (GSC).

1991- Sponsorship of the Ontario Regional Conference for the last time was shared by Toronto Intergroup & the 4 Areas. Toronto Intergroup became the sole sponsor of the Ontario Regional Conference (ORC) & the Archives (stored at the Toronto Intergroup Office).

1992 March 13-15- The Assembly moved from the 401 Inn to the Ambassador Hotel in Kingston. New procedures were introduced & passed. An Ad hoc committee had worked on them for a lengthy period. At this location until October 2019 (29 years).

Also, the Eastern Ontario Area name was changed to “Area 83.” General Service said that they will continue to use Eastern Ontario for the purpose of geographical location.

1993 March 13- The “Area 83” name changed to “Area 83 Eastern Ontario International” to be inclusive & to reflect groups in Quebec & New York State.

1996 Oct.- Toronto is advised that it has won the bid for the International Convention in 2005. It is the first city to get it twice.

2000 Oct- Joe D. from Kingston was elected Delegate (Panel 51, 2001-2002) for Area 83.

2010-2014 served as a Non-Trustee Director. Served on various committees.

2014-2016 served as a General Service Trustee.
Joe passed away on Dec. 17, 2016.

2013- The 1st Canadian Eastern Regional AA Service Assembly (CERAASA) was held in Longueuil, Quebec. This event was meant to run alternating years from the GSO Regional Forums for Eastern Canada. The service assembly would help with the unity of Eastern Canadian region (10 Areas), the involvement of the members, & in a better preparation for the Eastern Canada Delegates for the General Service Conference (GSC).

2015- the event was held in Area 83, Mississauga, Ontario.

2017- the event was held in Area 81, Moncton, New Brunswick.

2019- the event was held in Area 90, Laval, Quebec

2021- the assembly did not take place due to COVID.

2023- after the COVID pandemic was over, held in Area 86,
St. Catharines, Ontario.

2025-the event will be held in Area 82, Nova Scotia.

2014 Oct- Joyce S. from Toronto was elected Delegate (Panel 65, 2015-2016) for Area 83.

April 2023- April 2027- serves as our Eastern Canada Regional Trustee & her current position is Director of Grapevine.

Location of Assemblies

1951 – 1963	Royal York Hotel, Toronto (13yrs)
1964 – 1974	St. Thomas Moore Hall, Belleville (11yrs)
1975 – 1976	Nicholson College, Belleville
1977 - Mar.19, 1978	St. Thomas Moore Hall, Belleville
Oct.22,1978 – Mar.25,1979	Cobourg Lion’s Hall, Cobourg
Oct. 21, 1979	Loyalist Collegiate Vocational Institute, Kingston
Mar. 23, 1980	Quinte Secondary School, Belleville
Oct. 19, 1980	Quinte Secondary School, Belleville
1981 – Mar. 27, 1983	Lion’s Hall, Napanee
Oct. 29-30, 1983- Oct. 1990	401 Inn, Kingston (8yrs)
Mar. 1991 – Oct. 2019	Ambassador Hotel, Kingston (29yrs)
Mar. 2020 – Oct. 2022	Virtual
Mar. 2023 Hybrid	St. Lawrence College, Kingston
Oct. 2023 Hybrid	St. Lawrence College, Kingston

Area 83 – Positions & Committees Started

Registrar	1989-1990	1 st Chair- Wes B.
Self-Support	1990	1 st Chair- Denis D.
Archives	2004	1 st Chair- Gord H.
Archives	2005-2006	1 st Chair- Gord H. (full term)
Archivist	2007-2008	1 st Archivist- Maire O’B.
Webmaster	2009-2010	1 st Chair- Vince R.
Alt. Webmaster	2019-2020	1 st Alt. Chair- Joe W.
Treatment/ Accessibility-	2015-2016	1st Chair- Herb W.

2005 April- the 1st issue of “The 83” Archives Newsletter was published.

2007- The 1st Annual Area 83 Archives Workshops started. Rotates annually- Toronto, Peterborough, Ottawa & Kingston.

Growth of Area 83

Year	Districts	Groups	Members	Source
1968		200	3,300	Minutes
1976	10	244	5,500	Minutes
1979	19	388	8,054	Minutes
1993	25	601	14,484	Conf. Report
1994	26	590	14,295	Conf. Report
1995	27	606	14,489	Conf. Report
1996	27	626	15,199	Conf. Report
1997	27	610	15,073	Conf. Report
2023	25	601		Minutes

1951 - 2023 Area 83 Delegates

There have been 37 Area 83 Delegates (7- women & 30- men).

March 2020

During the COVID Pandemic our Area 83 Trusted Servants with their technological skills were able to organize virtual Area Committee Meetings, Area Assemblies & Sharing Sessions.

Also, they were able to assist in the two virtual General Service Conferences.

Today, the Area 83 Committee Meetings & Assemblies are hybrid (in-person/virtual).

Research for this presentation was compiled by David T. (Area 83 Archivist) & Eddy G. (GTA Intergroup Archivist) from Tommy H. Fond.

Friday October 26, 2023