

BETTER TIMES

Produced for A.A. members, by A.A. members in the GTA



FOUNDERS DAY

JUNE 10th, 1935

Alcoholics
Anonymous

JUNE 2022



202-234 Eglinton Avenue East
Toronto, ON M4P 1K5
416-487-5591

www.aatoronto.org

SERVICE COMMITTEES

ACCESSIBILITY

accessibility@aatoronto.org

ARCHIVES

archives@aatoronto.org

COOPERATION WITH THE

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY

cpc@aatoronto.org

CORRECTIONS

corrections@aatoronto.org

FINANCE

finance@aatoronto.org

GRAPEVINE

grapevine@aatoronto.org

INFORMATION AA DAY

infoAAday@aatoronto.org

ONTARIO REGIONAL CONFERENCE

(ORC)

orc@aatoronto.org

OPERATING

oc.chair@aatoronto.org

TREATMENT

treatment@aatoronto.org

TWELFTH STEP

12step@aatoronto.org

WINTER SEASON OPEN HOUSE

wsoh@aatoronto.org

COMMUNICATIONS

cc@aatoronto.org

Carla T. Chair
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MEDALLIONS

| NAME | YEARS | GROUP | CELEBRATION |
|--------|-------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Bill M | 50 | Ajax Area Group | June 5th, 2022 |
| Sha F | 1 | Back to Basics | June 15th, 2022 |



SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Wanna stay sober?

We're looking for people who want to stay sober by doing service!

Check out which committee you'd be interested in

Express your interest by sending an email

It's that simple to give back what was so freely given to you and to me!

[Information Technology \(IT\)](#)

[Finance](#)

[Winter Season Open House](#)

Workshop

Service-related workshops i.e. Traditions, Concepts Workshop

Winter Season Virtual Alkathon

Created in 2020; virtual, round-the clock meetings are held on Dec 24-25 and Dec 31-Jan1 hosted by GTA A.A. groups

[Twelfth Step & Phone Greeters](#)

[Operating](#) (formerly Executive)

[Communications](#)

MEETING CHANGES

This pandemic has brought about incredible changes and quickly; please don't forget that our website and meeting list updates are dependant on you letting us know [here](https://www.aatoronto.org/update-or-change-a-meeting/): <https://www.aatoronto.org/update-or-change-a-meeting/>

Better Times NEEDS STORIES

Opinions expressed in *BETTER TIMES* are those of the authors and don't necessarily reflect those of the [GTA A.A. Intergroup](#). The Editor reserves the right to edit for length, content and grammar in accordance with layout and quality purposes. Submit group news, medallions, other event notices to: cc@aatoronto.org Letters or articles to the Editor (200—500 words) for *BETTER TIMES* at bettertimes@aatoronto.org

The Beckoning of the Bar

May 11, 1935, found Bill Wilson feverously pacing the lobby of the Mayflower Hotel remorsefully reflecting on the failed aforementioned enterprise. Had he been successful, he would have been set on his feet financially which, at the time, seemed vitally important. Bitterly discouraged, he found himself in a strange place, discredited and almost broke. Still physically weak, and sober but five months, he saw that his predicament was dangerous. He wanted so much to talk with someone, but whom?

At the end of the room stood a glass covered directory of local churches. Down the lobby a door opened into an attractive bar. He could see the gay crowd inside. In there he would find companionship and release. Unless he took some drinks, he might not have the courage to scrape an acquaintance and would have a lonely weekend.

Of course he couldn't drink, but why not sit hopefully at a table, a bottle of ginger ale before him? After all, had he not been sober five months now? Perhaps he could handle, say, three drinks—no more! **Fear gripped him.** He was on thin ice! Again it was the old, insidious insanity—that first drink. With a shiver, he turned away and walked down the lobby to the church directory. Music and gay chatter still floated to him from the bar. But what about his responsibilities — his family and the men who would die because they would not know how to get well, ah—yes, those other alcoholics? There must be many such in this town. He would phone a clergyman. His sanity returned and he thanked God. Selecting the name of Reverend Walter F. Tunks from the church directory, he invested a nickel to make one of the most important calls in AA history. (Lois Wilson thought the reason for picking the name of Tunks may have been that one of Bill's favorite expressions was, "*taking a tunk*," which refers to a short walk.) This story continues on the next page.



This room is located at the south end of the lobby to the right of the elevators. The Mayflower Hotel was built in 1931, during prohibition, so this room was not built as a cocktail lounge, per se at that time . . . but prohibition ended in 1933.



Episcopal Minister,
Reverend Walter F.
Tunks, and Church
Directory in the
lobby of the
Mayflower Hotel.



Bill Meets Henrietta Seiberling

Reverend Tunks provided Bill with numbers of ten Oxford Group members to which Bill risked his then-precious nickels to no avail, save one contact, Norman Sheppard, who knew about Henrietta Seiberling's efforts to help a doctor get off the hooch. Her very name made Bill wax diffident. He realized she was a member of the prodigious **SeiberlingRubberCompany** family; such a millionaire socialite would doubtless take a dim view on the prospect of helping some unknown New York drunk find another drunk—Bill left the telephone booth and dejectedly returned to his room. But in profound desperation he finally made the call (*Note that was call #12!*).



Only weeks before, Dr. Bob Smith had admitted to the Akron Oxford Group that he was a secret drinker and would they pray for him; Henrietta believed that Bob's answer would come through regular prayer. So, When a phone call came from a rum hound from New York who needed another drunk to keep him sober she thought to herself: "This is really manna from heaven." She replied: "You come right out here."

One must wonder whether Bill invested his limited funds on a taxi ride, or walked those several hilly miles. ***(A speaker at the 2008 Founder's Day believes he walked, so the next day he planned to count the exact number of steps that Bill would have taken; then report back to us the next year, but I have never heard the report.)***

Henrietta *did* arrange for the two alcoholics to meet for supper at the gatehouse of the Stan Hywet Mansion where she and her teenage children were then residing. This was Sunday Evening, May 12, 1935. Dr. Bob Smith, his wife Ann, and 17 year old son, Bob, arrived at about five o'clock, but Dr. Bob's severe hangover would not allow him to partake of the supper.



Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company,
founded by Frank Seiberling in 1898



The 65-Room Stan Hywet Mansion was
the residence of the Seiberling family

Bill W. Meets Dr. Bob



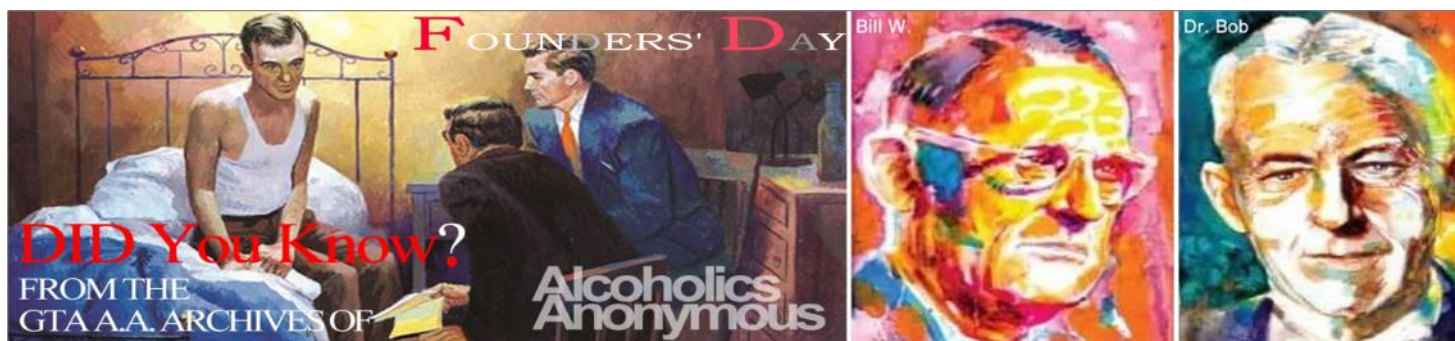
Dr. Bob had in mind that time spent with this mug would be snappy, so he had made Henrietta promise that they would stay only 15 minutes after supper, but this notion became less compelling when Bill said something to the effect that Dr. Bob appeared to need a drink. But the 15-minute talk continued *on and on* till eleven o'clock! Perhaps the prevailing factor sparking the doctor's continued interest was that Bill's revelations came from personal experience, unlike from other benignly motivated friends who spoke from book knowledge. Another factor would have been that Bill doubtless related Dr. Silkworth's ideas of the **physical allergy** and the **mental obsession**... any true alcoholic would immediately see the truth in this concept through their own experience.

Bill's recently enlightened method of talking with new prospects reflects lesson #2 from the earlier page of this book. Doctor Silkworth's pointing out the necessity that Bill change his approach from preaching to personal experience, at just the right time, may well have provided another example of Dr. Carl Jung's notion of '**synchronicity**.'

Dr. Bob had been privy to the teachings of the Oxford Group for over two years, so he obviously would not have been impressed by Bill's new-found spiritual knowledge. Just as today, one drunk sharing his or her alcoholic experience with another alcoholic best implants the seed of hope into a newcomer's world of doubt and confusion.

But yet, it is not beyond reason that Ebby's miracle would have been discussed, as well as Bill's spiritual experience at Towns Hospital. Plus, certainly, both parties would have shared a mutual interest in the Oxford Group teachings of which they were both deeply and regularly involved.





A.A. EVENTS LEADING UP TO FOUNDERS DAY JUNE 10, 1935

In November 1934, while in Vermont, Rowland H. introduced Ebby T. to the Oxford Group and later took him to the Calvary Rescue Mission in New York City. While at the mission, Ebby heard Bill W.'s drinking problem. Ebby visited Bill and shared his recovery experience "one alcoholic talking with another."

On December 15, 1934 Ebby T. gave Bill W. a copy of William James' book "The Variety of Religious Experience". It deeply inspired Bill by revealing 3 key points for recovery:

- 1) Calamity or complete defeat in a vital area of life (or what we call "hitting bottom").
- 2) Admission of defeat (or what we call acceptance).
- 3) Appeal to a higher power for help (or what we call "surrender"). These key points are also the basis for Steps 1, 2 & 3.



On May 10, 1935 Bill went to Akron Ohio and attended the annual stockholders meeting of the National Rubber Machinery Company in an attempt to take over the company but lost the proxy fight. On May 11, 1935 in poor spirits and tempted to enter the hotel bar, Bill W. realized he needed another alcoholic so he phoned clergy members listed on the Mayflower Hotel lobby directory. He was referred to Henrietta Seiberling. Henrietta viewed Bill's arrival as the answer to her prayers for Dr. Bob. Henrietta called Dr. Bob's wife Anne Smith to arrange a dinner the next day.

On May 12, 1935 Mother's Day, Bill W. (age 39) first met Dr. Bob (age 55)) at Henrietta Seiberling's gatehouse in Akron at 5 pm. Dr. Bob was so badly hung over he could not eat dinner and planned to stay only 15 minutes. Bill told Dr. Bob of his alcoholism experience in the manner suggested by Dr. Silkworth. Dr. Bob then opened up to Bill and they talked until after 11 pm. Dr. Bob's planned 15 minutes turned into 6 hours.

In June 1935, Bill moved to Dr. Bob's house at the request of Dr. Bob's wife Anne. Dr. Bob, off the booze for about a month, left Akron by train to attend a week-long American Medical Association (AMA) Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey. He started drinking soon after boarding the train. Bill and Anne received a call to come pick up a very drunken Dr. Bob at his office nurse's home. Bill helped Dr. Bob through three days of sobering up to prepare for a scheduled surgery. On the day of the surgery, Bill gave Dr. Bob his last drink (a beer) and a "goofball" (a barbiturate).

Dr. Bob's sobriety date is June 10, 1935. Bill W.'s sobriety date is December 11, 1934. The beginning of the Fellowship of A.A. is celebrated on the day that Dr. Bob had his last drink. This constituted 2 alcoholics coming together for the purpose of sobriety.

OLD GTA MEETING BOOKS ARE NEEDED FOR THE GTA ARCHIVES

TO DONATE A.A. GTA ARCHIVAL ITEMS, PLEASE CONTACT THE GTA ARCHIVIST
EDDY G. at 416-536-7536



Founder's Day

WORD SEARCH

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JUNE
STEP
ONE
SILKWORTH
SEIBERLING
HENRIETTA
ANNE
BOB
AKRON
TOWNES
OXFORD
GROUP
ROLAND
HAZZARD
EBBIE
THATCHER
LOUIS
WILLIAM
MAYFLOWER
HOTEL
INSIDIOUS
INSANITY
ALCOHOLICS
ANONYMOUS
FELLOWSHIP
SOCIETY

THE INSANITY OF DRINK

I am so glad to be cured from the insanity of drink.

Having just celebrated 5 years, I look back and think about what it used to be like. I used to be like a flimsy reed, where any one little thing could set me off. And when it did, I knew what would "fix" it; a drink. And it would, for a few hours, until I awoke the next morning to the horror, despair, and terror of not knowing what I had done the night before in a blackout.

Thank God for A.A. and the 12 steps. My Sponsor and the program helped me understand that when I started drinking, I was unable to stop. We call that the 1st step. After understanding, and being convinced of this simple fact, I was able to proceed to the other steps, which gave me tools for living. While life still happens and I get frustrated at times, I now have the knowledge of the obsession I have to drink, and the allergy it produces – an inability to stop. I now have a Higher Power (spirituality) that helps me through challenging times. And I now have tools for living (the steps) that help me adapt and overcome much more quickly to challenging situations, and most importantly, without needing to take a drink.

I've learned in recovery that it's my actions that matter. I can't wait for my feelings to guide me; I must put in the work first, and my mind follows. The steps, and connection with other alcoholics, have helped me not take a drink as of today, for 24 hours, 5 years, 3 weeks, and 6 days.

I don't plan to drink today, so hopefully tomorrow, I will be able to count another 24.

God bless. -Jeff S.

GROUPS BEGUN IN JUNE

June 11 1946
June 17 1953
June 6 1958
June 23 1990
June 27 2009
June 1 2010

[North Toronto](#)
[Scarborough](#)
[Silver birch](#)
[Thursday East End](#)
[Dry On Danforth](#)
[Love and Tolerance](#)



The Cooperation with the Professional Community
Committee of Alcoholics Anonymous
serving Scarborough and Eastern Ontario invites
you to an information session.

Learn what Alcoholics Anonymous Can and Can't do

Choose one of our TWO Sessions for your convenience

June 14th from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm

Dr A Mooney, Addiction Specialist and A.A. Trustee

A.A. and the PROFESSIONAL

June 16th from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm

LUNCH AND LEARN

Information and Q&A



Meeting ID: 853 9263 4979 Passcode: 808085

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24/7

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to get a lot

and to give a lot

to the still suffering alcoholic

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