



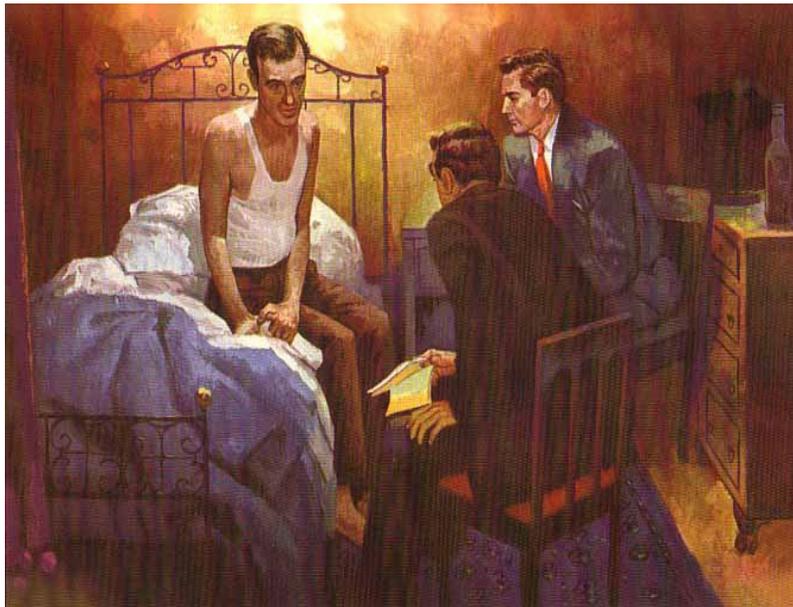
“The Man in the Bed”

“I looked up and there’s two great big fellows over six foot tall, very likable looking,” said Bill in a conversation he had with Bill W. in 1953. “Before very long we began to relate some incidents of our drinking and, naturally, pretty soon, I realized both of you knew what you were talking about.... A lot of folks tried to talk to me about my drinking — the fact is, they’d come around...and I’d just dry up and wouldn’t listen to them. They told me I ought to quit. Of course, I knew that much better than they did, because on top of all the things they knew, only I knew how sick I got.

“Both of you were very likable fellows, and after a while I remember that I had been doing quite a bit of the talking.... So, after hearing some of my story, you turned around and said to Doc — I don’t think you knew I heard you, but I did — you said, ‘Well, I believe he’s worth saving and working on.’”

Bill D., who later came to be known in A.A. circles as the “Man on the Bed,” continued. “You both said to me, ‘Do you want to quit drinking? It’s none of our business about your drinking. We’re not up here trying to take any of your rights or privileges away from you, but we have a program whereby we think we can stay sober. Part of that program is that we take it to someone else that needs it and wants it. Now, if you don’t want it, we’ll not take up your time, and we’ll be going and looking for someone else.’”

They left this with Bill to think over and, as he lay in the hospital bed, he went over his drinking history in his mind. “I reviewed what liquor had done to me... the opportunities that I had discarded, went over the possibilities and things that had been given me and how I had wasted them, and I finally came to the conclusion that if I didn’t want to quit, I certainly ought to want to quit....” When the two twelfth-steppers returned sometime later, Dr. Bob asked Bill if he wanted to quit drinking. ““Yes, Doc,”” said Bill, ““I would like to quit, at least for five, six or eight months, until I get things straightened up, and begin to get the respect of my wife and some other people back, get my finances fixed up, and so on.”” Bill W. and Dr. Bob both laughed heartily. Then, according to Bill,



one of the two turned to him. ““We’ve got some bad news for you. It was bad news for us, and it will probably be bad news for you. Whether you quit six days, months, or years, if you go out and take a drink or two you’ll end up in this hospital, tied down, just like you have been in these past six months. You are an alcoholic.’”

“As far as I know that was the first time I had ever paid any attention to the word. I figured I was a drunk. And you said, ‘No, you have a disease, and it doesn’t make any difference how long you do without it, after a drink or two you’ll end up just like you are now.’ That certainly was disheartening news, at the time.”

The next thing Bill W. and Dr. Bob asked was whether or not Bill thought he could quit for 24 hours. ““Sure ...anybody can do that, for 24 hours,”” said Bill. ““That’s what we’re talking about. Just 24 hours at a time,”” the two A.A. co-founders said. ““That sure did take a load off my mind,”” said Bill. ““Every time I’d start thinking about drinking, I wouldn’t think of long, dry, arid years without having a drink, but this idea for 24 hours.””

Noting that Bill W. and Dr. Bob seemed genuinely happy to be sober, Bill said, ““You seemed to be so well pleased with your sobriety, and you looked it and seemed to talk so confidently yourselves that, really, after a day or two I began to, along with my wife, have confidence, at least to a certain extent, that it could be done... I wasn’t afraid that the program wouldn’t work, but I still was doubtful whether I would be able to hang on to the program. But I did come to the conclusion that I was willing to put everything I had into it....”

“I remained in the hospital eight days. During those eight days I had raw sauerkraut and raw tomatoes the whole time. On the Fourth of July, Doc came by the hospital and I had a friend who had told me I could have her cottage for a week out at the lakes.” Piling into a car, Bill W., Dr. Bob and his wife, and Bill and his wife all went together out to the cottage. “There wasn’t any liquor around. For the

Continued on Page 8

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234 Eglinton Ave. E.
Suite 202
Toronto, Ont.
M4P 1K5

Telephone: 416-487-5591
Fax: 416-487-5855
TTY: 416-487-5062

bettertimes@aatoronto.org
www.aatoronto.org

Editorial committee:
Chair – Chris C.
Editor-in-Chief – Maija P.
Assistant Editor – Jana S.
Secretary – Tim S.
Layout Editor – Lisa T.

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How to reach us:
Submit group news, medallions, other event notices, letters to the editor or articles to BETTER TIMES before the 7th of the month prior to the month of issue by mail, fax or email.

Submissions should be 200 to 500 words and may be made online at www.aatoronto.org or emailed to bettertimes@aatoronto.org. Only signed submissions with a means of contact will be accepted. Your anonymity will be protected.

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DON'T GET BAFFLED WORD SEARCH

BEACH BOYS SONGS WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

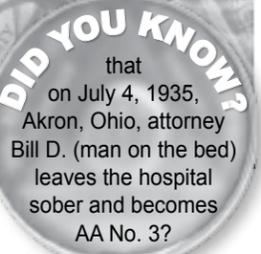


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|------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| ALL ALONE | DO IT AGAIN | HELP ME RHONDA | LITTLE HONDA |
| ALL SUMMER LONG | DON'T WORRY BABY | I CAN HEAR MUSIC | SLOOP JOHN B |
| BARBARA ANN | FUN FUN FUN | I GET AROUND | SURF'S UP |
| CALIFORNIA GIRLS | GOD ONLY KNOWS | I'M SO YOUNG | SURFIN' USA |
| CAROLINE NO | GOOD VIBRATIONS | KOKOMO | WOULDN'T IT BE NICE |

To contact the committees, please email:

Accessibility: accessibility@aatoronto.org
Archives: archives@aatoronto.org
BETTER TIMES: bettertimes@aatoronto.org
Communications: communications@aatoronto.org
Correctional Facilities: corrections@aatoronto.org

Cooperation with the Professional Community: cpc@aatoronto.org
Finance: finance@aatoronto.org
Ontario Regional Conference: orc@aatoronto.org
Public Information: pi@aatoronto.org
12th Step: 12step@aatoronto.org



Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the July issue! We have an edition filled with some Service "Calls to Action" and some Intergroup Administration "Stuff" which is a bit of a twist from some of the regular features we include. That being said, Better Times is a liaison between the Toronto AA members and its Intergroup, so when we need you, we must ask!

Service is part of our responsibility as members and very important to the Pay It Forward aspect of the three

pillars of AA. As many an old timer will tell you, "You can't keep it if you don't give it away!" and "Whatever you put in front of your sobriety is the first thing you will lose." So, if the below ad for Executive Committee members is not something you can explore, then please stand for a position at your next home group business meeting, go talk to a newcomer instead of catching up with your buddies at the next meeting, go hit a meeting you have never been to before OR write an article for the

Better Times! The program needs you wherever you can provide the time, skill and experience!

Service comes in many shapes and sizes, and depending on where you are with your program, there is always work to be done to help the still-suffering alcoholic.

Yours in love and service,

Maija, Editor-in-Chief

INTERESTED IN SERVICE ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE?

DETAILS:

* CURRENTLY 4 (OF 10) SEATS ARE AVAILABLE

* SOBRIETY REQUIREMENT OF 2 YEARS

* 2 YEAR TERM OF SERVICE TO COMMITTEE

* POSITION WILL ALSO INVOLVE SERVING AS LIASON TO A

SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE GTA INTERGROUP

* MUST ATTEND MONTHLY INTERGROUP GENERAL MEETING &

ANY ADDITIONAL MEETINGS WHILE SERVING AS LIASON

* FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT:

<https://www.aatoronto.org/about/policies-and-procedures/>

DID YOU KNOW... that on July 15, 1938, in a letter to Messrs. Richardson, Chipman & Scott of the Rockefeller Foundation, Bill invited them to his home on Clinton St., NY, for meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous? This was the first documented use of the name of the Fellowship.

medallions

DID YOU KNOW?
that in July 1934, Ernie G. sobered up (AA No. 4)? He eventually married Dr. Bob's daughter, Sue.

Who is responsible?

Remember when you fell into the abyss of incomprehensible demoralization, couldn't drink anymore and couldn't stop? What if you had called the hotline for help and nobody answered? Alas, we are dangerously close to that possibility. We can all recite the Responsibility Pledge and we all proclaim gratitude, but talk is cheap. Sure, we're grateful to have our families, jobs and respectability back, but are we grateful enough to spare a few hours a month to pay more than mere lip service?

Typically, all volunteer organizations are operated by 5 per cent of the membership and AA is no exception. You'd think that we'd be lining up to serve, considering where we came from. Every one of us has been rescued from certain insanity or death, yet our fellowship is likewise full of freeloaders — people who take what is freely given without reciprocating.

To those few doing double duty on the phones to cover extra shifts, thank you a thousandfold for stepping up to save lives. You are holding the fort on the front lines, ensuring that every call gets answered 24/7. To everyone else, especially those of you building a resentment right now, take a look in the mirror. By the way, making coffee or setting up your home group doesn't count as Service. Those tasks fall under Unity on the triangle, to be shared amongst home group members the way household chores are shared within a family.

MEDALLIONS			
Dan S.	5	Keep It Simple	July 1
Paul C.	25	Sobriety Plus	July 3
Uma S.	1	Sisters in Sobriety	July 4
Don O.	5	Keep It Simple	July 8
Rob Z.	1	Bayview	July 8
Ruth P.	45	Pine Hills	July 9
Susie M.	5	12 Principles	July 10
Peter N.	30	Bayview	July 15
Susan O.	5	Pine Hills	July 16
J.J. M.	1	Beaches	July 17
Ian M.	1	Beaches	July 24
Olaf S.	25	Hadenuffyet	July 27
Vanessa H.	1	Church St.	July 28
Ami K.	1	Church St.	July 28

Due to ongoing submissions, this list may not be current. For the latest information, please visit www.aatoronto.org

Service on the triangle demands something more from us now that we're sober and productive, like sacrificing some spare time to sit on a committee, be it 12 Step, Intergroup or Finance. Service involves forgoing our own comfort and convenience once in a while for someone else's benefit. Service means donating our talents and skills to the organization for the betterment of all. Service is a willingness to go to the same lengths to contribute as we did to get a drink. Service is a commitment to keep AA vibrant and viable for the future, which is ultimately in our own best interest, and our only antidote against the apathy that would destroy us from within.

Conversely, not doing Service is flat-out theft, reaping the rewards of other people's efforts. Not only are we ripping off AA, we're ripping ourselves off in the process, for it is in the giving that we receive. Hearing the heartfelt plea for help from a suffering alcoholic on the phone

is a most humbling and gratifying experience; exceeded only by seeing that person at a meeting picking up a chip. As a former freeloader, I can affirm that making such a difference is unparalleled in its capacity to transform your life, magically lifting your spirits from the darkness into the light.



So come on people, we are better than this. Call 416-487-5591 and sign up for a phone shift or two. I guarantee you'll feel a sense of pride and joy in a job well done, and your recovery will surely soar.

Laura V.
Mt. Royal group

DID YOU KNOW... that on July 18, 1938, Dr. Richards of John Hopkins stated in a letter that Bill, at the time, was using the name Alcoholics Anonymous both as the working title of the book and as the name of the Fellowship?

finance update

DID YOU KNOW?
that in July 1938, Dr. Silkworth wrote a letter of support for use in fundraising for the book? It was later incorporated into *The Doctor's Opinion*.

Group insurance is now available

It has been a trend in the last several years that rental spaces have been requesting groups to provide their own yearly insurance, even though, in the past, groups enjoyed the privilege of being added on church insurance as a rider. As a result, it's getting harder for groups to provide a clean, comfortable, accessible space for their weekly meetings while continuing to be fully self-supporting. It's a sad reality in these modern times.

We bring you good news!
Through a contact at Ottawa Intergroup, Greater Toronto Area Intergroup has obtained a service where all groups can get insurance. It is blanket coverage with the Co-Operators Insurance Com-

pany and will cost interested groups on average \$100 plus tax per year. This is a standard liability policy with a \$2 million limit and is portable, so if your group has two locations, the policy will cover both weekly meeting locations.

To obtain insurance for your group, please fill out an application form provided by the insurance company and send it in with a cheque for the amount of the yearly policy.

We need group members' permission to use their contact's full name and email address because the insurance company requires it for each group. The group contact person can be either the Intergroup Rep, GSR, Treasurer or the Venue

Liaison. Interested groups can email their request and appointed group contact information (group name, member's name, phone number and email address) to the office at admin@aatoronto.org. This information will then be forwarded to the Finance Chairperson and included on a list for the insurance company. This list will be, of course, kept confidential. After this action, the insurance application will be forwarded to the group contact by mail to start the process.

Yours in Service,
**Ron S., North Toronto Group
GTAI Finance Chairperson**

HAVE SOME TIME?

SERVE ON THE

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE!

**WE'RE LOOKING FOR A CHAIR PERSON,
AN ASSISTANT EDITOR & A SECRETARY**

FOR 2-YEAR TERMS

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE EMAIL US AT

COMMUNICATIONS@AATORONTO.ORG

DID YOU KNOW... that in July 1982, non-alcoholic Milton Maxwell becomes trustee emeritus on account of illness and Gordon Patrick becomes first Canadian Chairman of the Board at GSO?

DID YOU KNOW?
that on
July 28-29, 1950,
the first International
Convention was held in
Cleveland, Ohio, in
AA's 15th year with
over 6,000 in
attendance?

Concept 12

This month we will break down Concept 12 and the three remaining Warranties of AA.

General Warranties of the Conference: in all its proceedings, the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the AA. Tradition, taking great care that the conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference Members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

This Concept consists of the General Warranties of the General Service Conference. It is cast in stone; that is, although Bill leaves the door open for alterations and changes in the other Concepts and points out that the rest of the Conference Charter “can be readily amended,” these General Warranties — like the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions — be changed only by “written consent of three-quarters of all AA groups” in the world! Why? Because “these Warranties indicate the qualities of prudence and spirituality which the Conference should always possess. . . . These are the permanent bonds that hold the Conference fast to the movement it serves.”

The Warranties also express spiritual principles which apply to all other AA entities as well. Let us, then, consider these principles one by one:

Warranty Four: “That all important decisions should be reached by discussion, vote, and wherever possible, by substantial unanimity.” This Warranty is, on the one hand, “a safeguard against any hasty or overbearing authority of a simple majority; and, on the other hand, it takes notice of the rights and the frequent wisdom of minorities, however small. This principle guarantees that all matters of importance, time permitting, will be extensively debated, and that such debates will continue until a really heavy majority can support every critical decision.”

Warranty Five: “That no Conference action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy.” Although practically all other societies and governments find it necessary to punish individual members for violations of their beliefs, principles or laws, Alcoholics Anonymous finds this practice unnecessary.

When we fail to follow sound spiritual principles, alcohol cuts us down. No humanly administered system of penalties is needed. This unique condition is an enormous advantage to us all, one on which we can fully rely and one on which we should never abandon by resorting to personal attack and punishment. Of all societies, ours can least afford to risk the resentments and conflicts which would result were we ever to yield to the temptation to punish in anger. For much the same reason, we cannot and should not enter into public controversy, even in self-defense. Our experience has shown that, providentially, AA has been made

exempt from the need to quarrel with anyone, no matter what the provocation. Nothing could be more damaging to our unity and to the worldwide goodwill which AA enjoys, than public contention, no matter how promising the immediate dividends might appear.

Some situations which may require Conference consideration are: AA may come under “sharp public attack or heavy ridicule” — perhaps “With little or no justification in fact. Our best defense in these situations would be no defense whatever — namely, complete silence at the public level.

Some situations which may require Conference consideration are: AA may come under “sharp public attack or heavy ridicule” — perhaps “With little or no justification in fact. Our best defense in these situations would be no defense whatever — namely, complete silence at the public level. If the criticism of AA is partly or wholly justified, it may be well to acknowledge this privately to the critics — with our thanks. Public violations of AA Traditions. Our own members may try to use the AA name for their private purposes. “Aggressive or punitive action, even in this area, must be omitted. Privately, we can inform Tradition-violators that they are out of order. When they persist, we can use such other resources of persuasion as we have. in the long run, though, we shall have to rely mainly on the pressures of AA opinion and public opinion.” “Another kind of problem is the severe internal disagreement that comes to unwelcome public attention.” As GSO “is not a police operation,” we can only offer AA’s experience as a matter of information.

(continued on page 7)

DID YOU KNOW?
that on
July 3, 1955, in
St. Louis, the Three
Legacies of Recovery,
Unity & Service were
turned over to AA by
the old-timers?

Concept 12

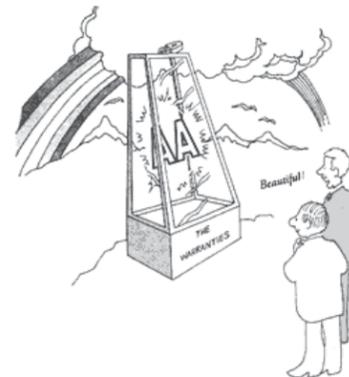
Warranty Six: “That though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.”

The AA Traditions accord the individual member and the AA group extraordinary liberties. In fact, we AAs probably enjoy more and greater freedoms than any Fellowship in the world. We claim this as no virtue. We know we have to choose conformity to AA’s Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions or else face dissolution and death.

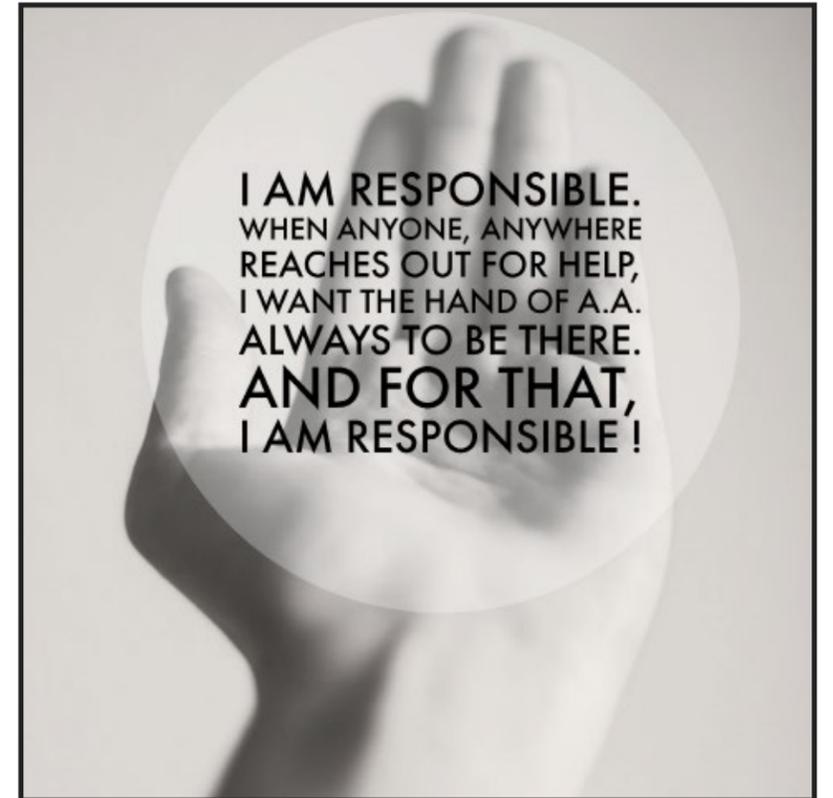
“Because we set such a high value on our great liberties and cannot conceive that they will need to be limited, we here specially enjoin our General Service Conference to abstain completely from any and all acts of authoritative government which could in any way curtail AA’s freedom under God. We expect our Conference always to try to act in the spirit of mutual respect and love — one member to another.

“Freedom under God to grow in His likeness and image will ever be the quest of Alcoholics Anonymous. May our General Service Conference be always seen as a chief symbol of this cherished liberty.”

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History behind the Responsibility Declaration



The Responsibility Statement was written for the 1965 AA International Convention in Toronto. In an article titled How I am Responsible became a part of AA from the GSO newsletter, Box 4-5-9, former AA trustee, Al S., is identified as the author.

In the souvenir book for the 1965 Convention, Dr. Jack Norris writes:

“... We must remember that AA will continue strong only so long as each of us freely and happily gives it away to another person, only as each of us takes our fair share of responsibility

for sponsorship of those who still suffer, for the growth and integrity of our Group, for our Intergroup activities, and for AA as a whole. It is in taking responsibility that real freedom and the enduring satisfactions of life are found. AA has given us the power to choose — to drink or not to drink — and in doing so has given us the freedom to be responsible for ourselves. As we become responsible for ourselves, we are free to be responsible for our share in AA, and unless we happily accept this responsibility we lose AA. Strange, isn’t it?”

group spotlight

DID YOU KNOW?
that in
July 1955, the 2nd
Edition of the Big Book
Alcoholics Anonymous
was published?

Rox Glen Traditional Group History

Rox Glen Traditional group celebrates 25 years on Thursday, July 19 at 8 p.m.

*Rox Glen Traditional group was founded on July 19, 1993.

*Twenty members left The Hill group when a business meeting vote about the Women's Room and a change from the Lord's Prayer to The Serenity Prayer to conclude the meeting were adopted.

*The first meeting was held at a member's apartment until the members decided on the name of the group and the location.

The group has been meeting in the same location since it started at the Rosedale United Church, 159 Roxborough Dr., at Glen Rd.

*The Rox Glen Traditional group name was created and chosen from the two streets where the church is located: Roxborough Dr. and Glen Rd.

*The group has a discussion meeting on Monday nights at 8 p.m. where a step is read from the 12 & 12 book and discussed. A Tradition is read and discussed every month. Even now, the group is very adamant about the importance of the Traditions. The group has an open meeting on Thursday nights at 8 p.m.

*The group members believe strongly in the Spirit of Rotation. They vote in a new group of Trusted Servants every four months.

*Also, to change the way the group operates a motion is carried to the next "Responsibility Meeting" and the group needs 66 per cent to carry the motion.

*Note: the above information was obtained from the records of the Rox Glen Traditional group history questionnaires and from the original notes of the first meeting.



"The Man in the Bed" ... continued

...first week it was rather tough. The other folks would come out and visit us most every day, and we would go over on a little island there and take a picnic lunch and sit around and try to devise a means of staying sober, in addition to what we already had. Naturally, the fellowship and being busy all the time was a great help. I was out there for more than a week and was helped a lot by these fellows coming out there. It was rather rough, but I still was willing and still wanted to go ahead and get rid of this problem I had. ... "I still go to meetings," said Bill from the vantage point of many years of sobriety. "Because I like to go. I meet the people that I like to talk to. Another reason that I go," he concluded, "is that I'm still grateful for those good years that I've had."

Bill D. died in Akron on September 17, 1954. In memoriam, Bill W. wrote, "That is, people say he died, but he really didn't. His spirit and works are today alive in the hearts of uncounted A.A.s, and who can doubt that Bill already dwells in one of those many mansions in the great beyond. The force of the great example that Bill set in our pioneering time will last as long as A.A. itself."

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DID YOU KNOW... that on June 30-July 3, 2005, the 70th Anniversary International Convention was held in Toronto with over 44,000 people in attendance? Toronto was the first city to host it twice. The theme was "I Am Responsible."