



Volume 4, Number 2, May 2005

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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- Little known Facts of AA
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### "THE GRAPEVINE"

#### Info on back issues

Have you ever wanted to re-read an article from an old "Grapevine" and had no idea how to find it?

Do you enjoy the magazine and want to start from the beginning? The first issue was published in June, 1944, by the way.

The AA Grapevine digital archive provides access to everything ever published in the "Grapevine", except for the issues of the current year.

You can find answers to questions about recovery, AA history, spirituality or get information on any number of topics concerning the fellowship.

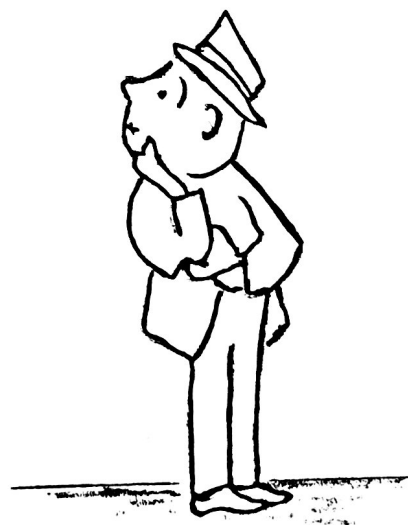
You can search by topic, magazine dept., by date or by keyword to find what you are looking for.

Questions such as:

"Were Bill W & Carl Jung pen pals?"....Jan, '63

"How did the "Grapevine" get it's name?"...June, '89

"Who wrote the AA Preamble?"....May '92



[www.aagrapevine.org](http://www.aagrapevine.org)

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## LITTLE KNOWN FACTS OF AA ....



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### THE OXFORD GROUP

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The origin of AA can be traced to the Oxford Group, a religious movement then popular in the United States and Europe. .

A well-to-do Vermonter named Roland H was able to get sober by attending Oxford Group meetings in New York City. They were held at Calvary Church in New York City under the leadership of the Rev. Sam Shoemaker.

At these meetings Rowland met a friend and fellow Vermonter, Ebby T, also an alcoholic.

Through the Oxford Group they were able to keep from drinking through a plan of self-inventory, admission of wrongs, making amends, using prayer and meditation and carrying the message to

others who still suffered. .

One of Ebby's friends was Bill W., also a Vermonter. Ebby sought out his old friend in New York to carry the message of hope.

Bill had been ruined by chronic alcoholism and was considered helpless. After he heard Ebby's story he once again entered Towns Hospital for treatment. On Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>, 1935 Ebby visited Bill at Towns Hospital and shared his spiritual journey of recovery.

After Ebby left, Bill underwent a powerful spiritual experience. Although not a religious man, Bill experienced the miracle of freedom from the need to drink. When he asked Dr Silkworth about the experience the "kindly little Doctor who loved alcoholics" did not scoff but encouraged Bill to "hang on to it."

Dr Bob, by coincidence, was also from Vermont, and he too had already sought help from the Oxford Group. When he and Bill first met in Akron,

Ohio, Dr Bob was expecting to hear the rantings of an evangelistic do-gooder...but, instead, found himself sharing one-on-one with another alcoholic.

Their common background with the Oxford Group was to highly influence the AA program. However, it soon became apparent that modifications would have to be made if AA were to become a successful formula for the treatment of alcoholics.

Unlike the Oxford Group, AA concentrates on one thing only...the desire to stop drinking. It is this singleness of purpose that has succeeded in keeping millions of alcoholics sober.

(Thanks to the "60<sup>th</sup> AA Anniversary Album" for the information printed here.)

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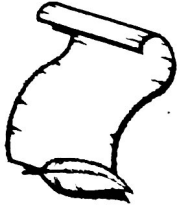
**The slogans are the  
banisters to the  
12 Steps.**

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## MEMBERS MUSINGS

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### ....MORE PROMISES....

Our "Big Book" contains many promises. The promises, which we hear and discuss the most at meetings and in our work with other alcoholics are listed on Pages 83-84.

My first sponsor believed that if you don't give an alcoholic a decision to make he will flounder. Thus we rarely ended a discussion without him giving me a task of some sort and I had to decide whether or not I would perform it. Over the years I learned he was much more interested in my willingness than in the quality of my performance.

One such task was to read the Big Book in its entirety, over the next two weeks (there was

always a deadline !) and list all the promises which I found.

I have always been grateful for this kind of sponsorship. I found so much comfort in the following that I read them and meditate on them regularly. I hope they bring you the serenity and courage which they have brought to me.

"I have seen hundreds of families set their feet in the path that really goes somewhere; have seen the most impossible domestic situations righted; feuds and bitterness of all sorts wiped out. I have seen men come out of asylums and resume a vital place in the lives of their families and communities. Business and professional men have regained their standing. There is scarcely any form of trouble and misery which has not been overcome among us."

"All sorts of things followed. We had a new Employer. Being all-powerful, He provided what we needed, if we kept close to Him and performed His work well. Established on such a footing

we became less and less interested in ourselves, our little plans and designs. More and more we became interested in seeing what we could contribute to life. As we felt new power flow in, as we enjoyed peace of mind, as we discovered we could face life successfully, as we became conscious of His presence, we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter. We were reborn."

"Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow about you, to have a host of friends...this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives."

"If you persist remarkable things will happen. When we look back we realize that the things which came to us when we put ourselves in God's hands were better than anything we could have planned. Follow the dictates of a Higher Power and you will presently live in a new and

wonderful world, no matter what your present circumstances.

"Yes, there is a substitute and it is vastly more than that. It is the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. There you will find release from care, boredom and worry. Your imagination will be fired. Life will mean something at last. The most satisfactory years of your existence lie ahead".

AA member Bill H

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## CARRYING THE MESSAGE



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**Was it serendipity,  
coincidence or  
just God's way???**

During my college years and during a stint in the air force, I was an avid golfer (and drinker) to the dismay of my attention to studies and work.

Life was good and carefree, and when I started my business career golf became a

less important part of daily living. When I did play it was usually accompanied by a pint of brandy -- to compensate for the cold weather, of course.

Needless to say, as time went by and the mixture of work, booze and golf became too cumbersome I gave up golf. Certainly I couldn't let golf interfere with my work, and drinking was "very" important to the social aspects of my work!! GOLF HAD TO GO.

For the next twenty odd years my work deteriorated, my drinking thrived and golf was just a fond memory. The end came when my job was a shambles and the drinking was a 24 hour habit...life was out of my control and I made my call to AA.

During my first two or three years my concentration was on getting sober and putting my wrecked career back on track. During this period I often mentioned to my wife, Susan, who was also in the program, that "maybe" I would like to give golf another try. She encouraged me to do so but I kept putting up obstacles...fearing that I

might not be as good as I was and my golfing "ego" would be shattered.

It was during my third year of sobriety, when Sue and I were on vacation in Southwest Harbor, Maine, that I dragged my old clubs along, just in case an opportunity came up and I might play nine holes or so of golf.

There was a small public nine hole course there and Sue kept pushing. Reluctantly we went to the course one day, accompanied by all my fears, (meeting strangers, playing alone, whiffing a few shots), you name it I had it. As we drove into the parking lot I noticed the parking spot reserved for the pro. His small sporty car was there but what was most noticeable was a bumper sticker that said "ONE DAY AT A TIME"!!!! I entered the shop, introduced myself and the rest is history.

That day he not only welcomed us to the area but played with me, giving me a few pointers along the way, and gave Sue a golf lesson. His name was Vern S. From then on we went to meetings with Vern, had dinner, etc.,

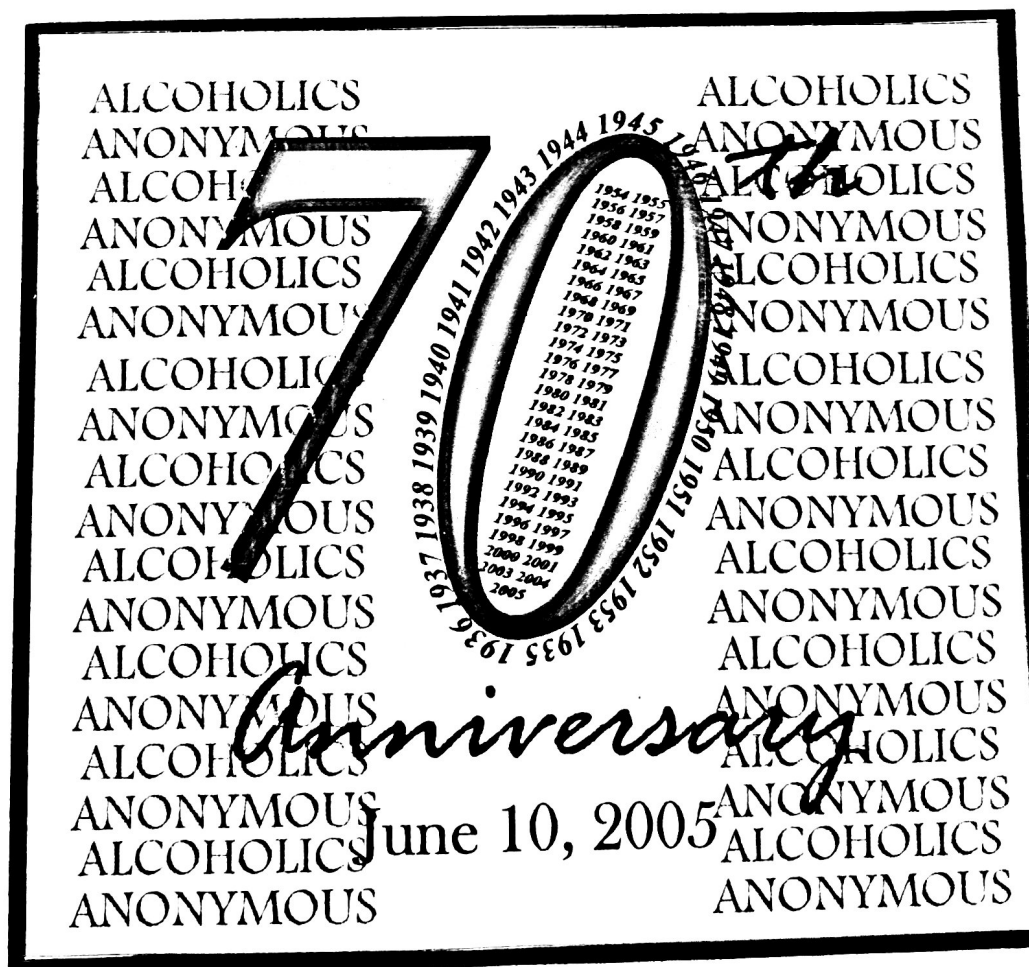


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**\*\*\*\*UNDER DISCUSSION \*\*\*\***

**Alateen ...**The April Intergroup meeting held a discussion concerning Alateen, which is the 12 Step Program for young people affected by someone else's drinking. Currently a young teen has been meeting with a sponsor at noon on Saturday at the Aberdeen building. We are trying to get the word out to see how much interest there is in the community. Al-anon has offered to obtain literature. For information call: Joan F, 235-0510 or Barry P, at 692-8109.

**Spanish speaking meetings...** Anyone in the AA community who is interested in pursuing this vital area of recovery please come to the Intergroup meetings. We are brain-storming this issue and need help with language, location barriers and feasibility.



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## TRAVELING HIGHLIGHTS

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In my dreams I had often visited fabulous foreign ports, soaking up the culture and delighting in the fine cuisine and tropical libations, (served in a fancy coconut shell with a little umbrella). In my minds' eye I could picture myself soaking up sunshine on a sandy beach with an exquisite cocktail soothing and calming my sensual self.

So, when the opportunity came to indulge in foreign travel, two weeks aboard a cruise ship bound for many exotic ports, I was delighted, excited & fearful. Was my newfound sobriety to be tested? Would that newfound sobriety spoil the dreams I had conjured?

It's interesting - no, it's fascinating - that events and parties and travel and

celebrations are always associated with alcohol use. There is champagne for a bon voyage send off, cocktails pre-dinner, fine wine accompanying fine food at dinner, liqueurs after dinner and a night cap to end the evening. How was I ever going to enjoy this wonderful trip without "wonderful" drinking???

Old thinking and dumb thinking was trying to crowd out my new found self. Imagining how wonderful it would be to drink almost obliterated the fact that "*drink*" had nearly destroyed my life.

Keeping the Serenity Prayer foremost in mind and literally fighting off old thinking, I began my voyage.

The cruise ship was conducive to celebrations and the events planned kept idle moments few. The first evening we received the daily schedule outlining activities for the following day and evening - 6am to midnight. The hourly programs covered every possible interest one could

have. It was incredibly comforting to note that at 4pm each day was a mtg. of "friends of Bill W".

Now the daunting thought was that I would have to go all by myself to some strange meeting room, not knowing anyone and encountering God knows who or what. The first hours at sea passed quickly and at 4pm I found myself lounging by the pool, tropical "non-alcoholic" drink in hand (complete with a little umbrella.)

It was too nerve wracking to spoil my trip worrying about going to a "friends of Bill W" group. *Old thinking!* Good sense prevailed the second afternoon and I was looking up the meeting location. I noticed another event scheduled for the "friends of Lois"...this really confused me. Who in the world was Lois and who and what were her friends about?

There are many places to congregate on a huge ship and tracking down the proper spot only added to my rattled nerves. Feeling

as though I had never gone to a meeting I forged on.

Imagine my surprise when I finally came upon this happy, smiling, tanned group of fabulous people. Some I had seen around the ship before and, like me, were Bill's friends.

The following days provided me with new found support, understanding &, most of all, friendships that I hope will endure for many years to come. It was a milestone for me. Now I can dream and plan future trips knowing there are other friends of Bill, and yes, Lois too, waiting for me even in far-away lands. Most importantly, I will know that the trip need not include alcohol to be fun.

Meeting new friends of Bill reinforced how important all my other "friends" are. They are the lynchpin providing understanding and fellowship to maintain my

*"Joyous Sobriety".*

Written by AA member,  
Deirdre

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## SPOTLIGHT ON OUR GROUPS



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### Extra, extra ... a new AA meeting in our area

"Beyond Recovery" a new AA group is established; it meets on Wednesday nights at 6:00 pm at First Health-Moore Regional (3 rd floor, where the Friday and Sunday meetings meet.)

Beyond Recovery is a closed meeting for alcoholics; the group is a study meeting using AA approved literature as its foundation. The group has started with the Big Book.

The group members will select the next book to study when the need arrives at the business meeting which convenes on the last Wednesday of the month following the Beyond Recovery Group meeting.

The group recognizes

lengths of sobriety giving out chips for under 9 months to anyone attending the meeting and year(s) medallions to group members. There is an opportunity for service work with the newcomers from the Detox.

There is no coffee at this meeting; the group decided to keep it simple by B.Y.O.B. - Bring Your Own Beverage, not bottle like the old using days.

Finding the meeting in the hospital isn't hard and the directions are in the May edition Meeting schedule. Hope you can have the opportunity to visit and find "Beyond Recovery" a meeting you like and join.

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**The 12 Steps keep  
us from suicide.**

**The 12 Traditions  
keep us from  
homicide !!**

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## **District 52 News**

### **Service Work...**

District 52's CPC/PI and CFC Committees are up and running. They meet on the last Saturday of each month at 9am in the Aberdeen Bldg. All interested members are encouraged to attend.

Our District needs your help. We need the names & mailing addresses of all the GSR's & Alternates in the groups. Please contact the District secretary Jimmy B at 910-638-1971 with this information.

Our CPC/PI Committee has a new Interim District-wide Meeting List. Also a District-wide telephone answering service is being considered. Contact CPC/PI chair Dave C at 910-295-0999

### **IMPORTANT REQUEST**

Our Area CFC and District CFC Service Committees need your help. If you are interested in being a part of an alternating/rotating team that will help to "carry the message" into Correctional

facilities please contact CFC Chair George W at 910-692-7723.

### **\*UPCOMING EVENTS\***

**SPRING ASSEMBLY**  
May 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>

District 52 UNITY DAY  
Celebrating AA's 70<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary...June 11<sup>th</sup>  
2-6pm, Aberdeen Park.

Thanks for your support !!

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## **WHAT IS INTERGROUP?**



We are a service committee formed for the purpose of supporting AA activities in the Moore County area of NC.

Our goal is to improve communication and understanding among our AA groups.

The Sandhills Intergroup is comprised of interested volunteer members and representatives from the AA groups in Moore County. The ideas and suggestions of local AA's are welcome and all are encouraged

to attend the monthly meeting at 9AM on the first Saturday of each month at the AA building on Wilder Ave in Aberdeen.

Sandhills Intergroup is financed by local AA groups. The treasurer presents an annual estimated budget that covers Intergroup function such as:

The 24 hour answering service that will give meeting information to the caller or will pass along the call to one of our AA members who are listed on the 12<sup>th</sup> Step List.

The Website that provides our meeting schedules and directions to meetings,.

Meeting schedules and the Newsletter, both updated and printed every 4 months.

Distribution of meeting schedules & literature to local hotels, motels, schools, hospitals, community services, law enforcement, mental health and medical and professional agencies.

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