

THE SERENITY TIMES
THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
OF THE
DARWIN DISTRICT
NOVEMBER 2020

STEP 11

*Sought through prayer and meditation
to improve our conscious contact with God,
as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge
of His will for us and the power to carry that out.*



Darwin District

Darwin District serves the A.A. groups in the Darwin District.

Darwin District Office199

Nightcliff Community Centre
5/18 Bauhinia St Nightcliff NT 0810
PO Box 40760

Casuarina NT 0810

Telephone 0889485202

Email: aadarwin.@bigpond.com

Website: aadarwin.org.au

Office Hours:

11am-2pm Monday-Saturday

Mick G (District Committee Member)

Pat M (Treasurer)

Kitty Kat (Secretary)

VACANT (Office Co-Ordinator)

Denis P (Registrar)

Mick G (Webmaster)

Caroline B (Literature Officer)

Denis P (acting Maintenance Officer)

Dan T (Public Information Officer)

Doug W (Treatment Facilities Coordinator)

VACANT (Correctional Facilities Coordinator)

VACANT (Roundup Coordinator)

Susan B (Editor)

Next Meeting

Wednesday 4th Nov 7pm via Zoom
District meeting for all GSRs and committee members is scheduled for Wednesday the 9th December at 7pm, also via Zoom.

**Nominations required for
CHAIRPERSON & TREASURER**

**To submit your story, or any other
articles A.A. suitable for printing
in the**

SERENITY TIMES:

Please contact the editor at

serenitytimesaa@outlook.com

The editor has the right to decide the suitability, for printing, of all articles forwarded.



Public Information Update

Treasurer DDO: Pat M

07/10/2020 Current Balance (cash and bank account) \$6,987.73.

We recorded a surplus for the month of \$65.75. compared to a larger surplus of \$501.41 for the same month last year-the difference attributable to higher group contributions and literature sales in September 2019 and a literature order payment this month of \$208.70. Group contributions this month amounted to \$515.00 from two face to face groups plus Zoom meetings. There were no literature sales recorded this month and all outstanding literature invoices have been paid.

DCM: Mick G

Darwin has continued to show its adaptability to change, as "normal meetings" and Zoom meetings continue to carry the message. It is wonderful to see interstate and overseas members on the Zoom meetings that I have been attending, contributing to the wealth of "experience strength and hope" to existing and new members. The **Darwin Service Group** On Zoom 7pm Wednesday nights, now has a Group Conscience and is practicing the 7th Tradition. The group aims to bring the other two sides of the AA triangle, that of Unity and Service, as a learning resource to all members. It consists of local, interstate and international members. The group has had John W from GSO New York, ex committee chair of the International Literature committee share on Concept 7. The group will continue to hold workshops on AA positions, i.e.: Area Delegate, GSR, how to be a Secretary etc... The Darwin Office is financially sound, with great representation on the committee with only a few positions to be filled. Check front page in red. Thank you to Denis who is still maintaining the Office Maintenance position until it has a new volunteer.

Webmaster: Mick G

Lots of new resources accessible on aadarwin.org.au Video of recent GSR Bootcamp, Australian Service Manual and AA Guidelines in PDF to download, also National Newsletters.

All current meetings face to face and Zoom.

Past and current Serenity Times.

Past and current Darwin District Office meetings reports with financials.

Past and current Northern Region A "Area Meetings" reports.

National and International Conventions and Workshops.

Make aadarwin.org.au your "go to site" for all current information.

Secretary: Kitty kat

Kitty Kat has processed her first meeting notes.

Literature: Caroline B

Caroline would like to know who owns the old banners in the corner near the safe at the DDO.

Treatment Facilities: Doug W

Doug has organised volunteers to attend these facilities.

Registrar: Denis P

Denis had a handover from John S. Mick G has advised Denis to read the District Committee Member position description. Denis has been busy in his role completing a lot of work that comes with his position.

Office Co-Ordinator: VACANT

Office maintenance: Denis P is acting in this position until someone volunteers for this position.

Public Information Officer: Dan T

October has been a productive month on the PI front with a new meeting starting over on the Tiwi Islands which I had the privilege of assisting with. Our District has donated banners, literature and brochures to this new meeting, and we were able to get these out to them within a few days of the initial request for assistance. Apparently, there hasn't been a meeting out that way since the 80's! A big thanks to Bob W who had a trip planned out that way and was able to deliver our care package in time for their first meeting. A little God- job going on there perhaps. Also, a big thank you to Caroline B and Denis P for opening the office and sorting out the gear to be sent off on short notice.

I will be distributing some posters and cards with the 24hr phone number around some of the Doctors surgeries and other locations where they might appeal to people wanting help over the next couple of months. The police watch-house is a high priority here, but still closed to the public due to COVID-19. If anybody has some other suggestions where these might be helpful, I would love to hear from you.

Our National TV campaign continues to run on an evening time slot (around 6pm news time.) on channel 9 and channel 10. They have put at least a couple of people in touch with us so far.

St Johns Ambulance are continuing to carry our contact cards and offer them to patients affected by alcohol.

Dan T Public Information Officer.

Pi_aadarwin@outlook.com



Bill W Camp 2020

Wash up meeting 27th September at TB's place, Stuart Park

Minutes

Present: TB, Bill, Macca, Libby, Vicki, Bob, Sarah, James, Fay Mark (left early for work)

Apologies: Darren, Marg, Jenny, Susan

Meeting opened 10.15am with reading of Traditions

MOTION; accept minutes of July 19 final planning meeting (M: Sarah 2nd Vicki) accepted without amendment.

The Camp: Three members spoke about the mess left behind and food left overnight in members containers after an interstate member organised cooking a dinner on the Sat night. General agreement that next year's committee makes sure this does not happen again.

Al-Anon members said visiting Al-Anon's commented favourably on the way AA and Al-Anon worked together and the respect shown to Al-Anon throughout, during the camp. It was noted that AA has always invited Al-Anon to share.

Al-Anon, may look at giving out a book to their newest member next year.

Mark, in a brief report, said despite fewer visitors he felt the "scaled back" camp worked well and was enjoyed just the same. He said he was keen to do something for next year's camp.

The possibility of bringing the countdown forward was raised (currently it follows the Sunday morning Spiritual Concepts meeting). Some members favoured making it earlier to consider those members preparing the lunch and because some people left on the Sunday morning (as the newest AA member did this year). Others said they believed most people were around after the SC meeting and it was tradition to have the meeting then. No decision was made.

Bob in his Secretary's report noted that about 40 people attended the camp which included 14 or 15 interstate visitors who came despite worries over the coronavirus. Bob said he would not be continuing as secretary and would pass on a file to the new secretary.

Finance:

It was agreed that a cheque for \$400.00 be issued to reimburse Mark for this year's camp supplies.

A finance report to the meeting showed that the camp itself finished up with a surplus of income over expenditure of \$311.00, taking into account printing of flyers and mailouts also \$250.00 to the C&S Tape Library for a PA system, overall surplus of income over expenses for 2020 was \$138.25. With a bank balance of about \$830.00 after supplies were paid for. It was decided to distribute more than the surplus. Retaining \$500.00 or more than was discussed as a prudent reserve.

MOTION: That we distribute \$330 at 60:30:10 and retain \$500 as a prudent reserve (M: Bill, 2nd Libby) carried with one abstention, Bob to be given a cheque to distribute \$330 by EFT.

Unity Weekend:

In a brief discussion on the auction held on the Saturday night it was generally agreed that "mystery prizes" should not be included in future auctions, following an incident where a new member (despite a warning) was "bidding up" big on a prize worth only a few dollars. It was felt there was a need for AA to be transparent in all things.

Bill W Camp 2021:

Next meeting Sunday, 31 January 2021, 10 am at TB's, Stuart Park.

Meeting closed 11.25 am with the Serenity Prayer.



My Story

I grew up surrounded by alcoholics who drank alcohol and indulged in regular drinking nights. Cannot really pinpoint when my first drink was, however, I remember clearly coming to from my first blackout at the age of 15, feeling confused, lost and frightened. My earliest memories of childhood were nothing to smile about, I never felt like I fitted in at school or within the family structure. Full of shame, guilt, disgust and hatred for myself and others, accompanied with suicidal thoughts.

I had no concept of God, I could not imagine there was anything out there real enough to believe in or to have faith in, that would bother watching over me, this shallow, silent, withdrawn, scared little girl, living in constant fear and anxiety.

I left home not long after my first Blackout and I purposely was seeking quick fixes to try and make me feel comfortable, which I found every time I drank alcohol and indulged in drug use, most often both at the same time, drinking/using until I was in blackout unable to feel, think, care, I had achieved numbness.

This life continued and progressed into adulthood and for almost three decades.

In that time, I had children, moved from state to state, destroyed relationships, married/divorced, doctor shopped for sedative medication. I was incarcerated on several occasions, lied/cheated and abandoned my loved ones, little did I know my life had become unmanageable. Through a series of life-threatening events I found myself at the age of 43, in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I listened to your stories and I saw life in your faces and a spark in your eyes, I thought that's all good for you, however you haven't walked in my shoes, you don't know what I've done and what I've been through and you certainly don't look how I feel, you would not understand.

That AA stuff aint gunna work for me, you speak a language I do not understand. However I was desperate and at a turning point in my life, I couldn't stand living with myself sober and I didn't want to go back to how it was, I'll keep coming back if, you will have me. It was the older sober members in those rooms that that were able to love me when I could not begin to love myself, they loved me back to life.

Eventually I chose a member to sponsor me, a God sent angel, I completed the 12 steps through the big book of Alcoholics Anonymous and life gradually began to change for the better.

I would not say I skipped through the tulips, I have and still do at times trudge the road to a happy destiny, however life today sober is by far better than any of my days drinking.

Alcoholics Anonymous, God, the 12 steps and a sponsor saved my life and has given me a purpose to live, a new design for living,

One Day at a Time

A Grateful member of AA.

*God grant me the serenity
To know the things, I cannot change
Courage to change the things I can
And the wisdom to know the difference.*



History of Alcoholics Anonymous In Darwin and the Northern Territory Part 3

10) Soon the Big Book arrived by mail, followed soon after by "AA Comes of Age", and numerous sponsorship letters. About every 4 or 5 days the amassed frozen production from the abattoir required trucking into Darwin – the driver's duties included collecting mail and on-the-run purchases.

The wait for mail was agonizing for John. When it was distributed, he would note the familiar type-written address, and with total relief would nonchalantly pocket the letter from his sponsor, knowing he would have to endure a further wait to read it in privacy. Only enough time was allowed the driver to quickly throw down his evening meal, and shower before the lighting plant was shut down for the night. This necessitated a further delay until John's eyes adjusted to the dim light and he could at last read his letter by moonlight. Unfortunately, his sponsor had "scrounged" worn typewriter ribbons from departmental dustbins, resulting in the palest print, in single line spacing, and no paragraphs!! Having a Jewish sponsor was good for him – it made him work hard for all he got and thereby appreciate it.

11) After one of those rare trips into Darwin, John arrived back at the regular pre-arranged rendezvous point, the Adelaide River Hotel. On this occasion, his expected transport failed to arrive by the anticipated time, so, fearing he had missed him, John set off to walk the 28- miles of bull-dust track to Deepwater Lagoon. After about 5 of those 28 miles he was so fatigued, (whilst simultaneously exhilarated from his much needed AA contact), he lay down to rest on what he thought was the edge of the unmade road, unaware that he was dead-centre of the wheel ruts! His next experience was to be woken by the roar of an engine, choking dust swirling in the twin beams of the car's headlights, being berated by his chauffeur, 'You Crazy, Yohnny! I nearly kill you! Why you sleep in the road? You give me heart attack, you craaaazy bastard!' Only the contrast of his white shirt saved John from certain death...his moleskins and shoes, already smothered in dust, had rendered him almost invisible.

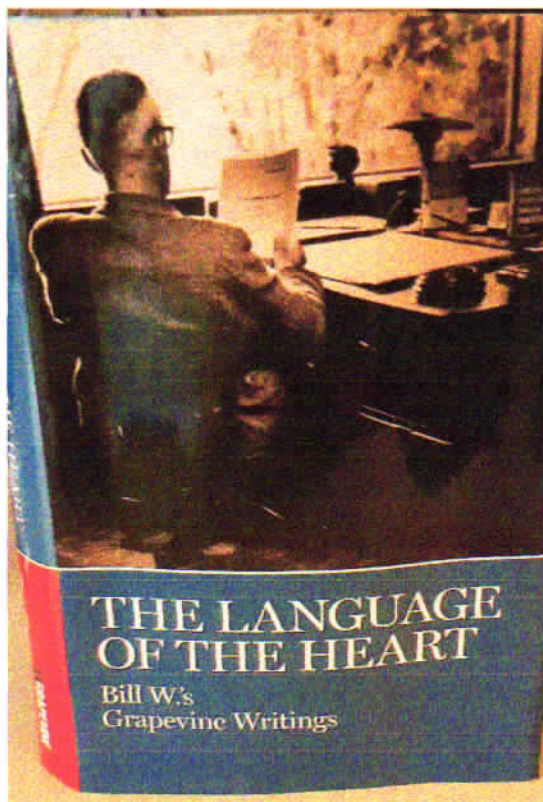
12) John re-located into Darwin on the memorable day, the city was shaken by an earthquake, in November 1963, and a mere handful of days before President Kennedy was assassinated in the USA. Once again Rev. Symonds came to his aid by getting him located into the Uniting Church's hostel, for apprentices on Myilly Point. On the pretext that a sober, more mature occupant might have a calming influence on the young apprentices, he was persuaded to also become secretary of the management committee of the hostel, thus validating his non -apprentice status as an occupant. No better location could have been found in Darwin for a still shaky AA member, within easy reach of the hospital, (across the road), bus stop, AA meetings and city.

By now Darwin was growing up, it comprised of one air-conditioned coffee shop, the Post Office was air conditioned, and one of the fleet of taxis in the city had air-conditioning! Queen Elizabeth had visited the city, and a massive clean-up had taken place, transforming it from a tired bombed-out rubbish entanglement to a relatively spruced-up, vigorous city. The sunken shipping in the harbour had been salvaged, and apart from the grim reminders of the strafing by enemy aircraft still visible on the walls of the bank building on the corner of Bennet and Smith Streets, and the fortifications at Lee Point, Darwin was becoming a thriving metropolis. An opera company from Perth even visited for one performance of Carmen! Even so, it was still the Mecca for many a restless fellow or maintenance fugitive, many who were in the grip of alcoholism, and had made Darwin their destination.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

I hope you are enjoying reading this history of AA in Darwin, for me I am also enjoying the history of Darwin itself.





Welcome To

Caroline's Book of The Month

Hello again Friends another great book of the month.
Language of the Heart.

In this book I cannot help but see a real spirit that lays within.
A spirit of history and loaded with experience, strength and hope.

Seeing Bill W's personal spiritual experience and growth, with God, the 12 steps and traditions, I found gave me more insight and understanding of our co-founder.

Along with other wonderful people that were in Bill's life.

May I share what I love and the spirit behind the traditions.

From page 248 & 249 ...

The traditions are neither rules, regulations, nor laws.
No sanctions or punishments can be involved for their infraction.

Perhaps in no other area of society would these principles succeed.

Yet in this fellowship of alcoholics, the unenforceable traditions carry a power greater than that of the law.

For years now, we have seldom seen a serious departure from them.

The example of the very few who have persistently ignored them has not caused others to follow suit.

We obey them because of the need for A.A. survival.

We obey them because we ought to and because we want to.

Perhaps the secret of their power lies in the fact that these life-giving communications spring out of living experience and are rooted in sacrificial

Love.

That's it for the month.

Happy Reading folks.

Kind Regards

Caroline.

To purchase a copy of this book, contact Caroline via Darwin Office.

Telephone 08 8948 5202 between the hours of 11-2. Darwin Time. Caroline is generally in attendance Monday's, or via Email aadarwin@bigpond.com

A Date to Remember: Thursday 1st April-Monday 5th April 2021

ADELAIDE 2021

NATIONAL CONVENTION HILTON ADELAIDE, VICTORIA SQUARE

WITH ALANON AND ALATEEN PARTICIPAATION

www.aa.org.au

Plan a trip with your friends. Book your accommodation and your tickets early.

ADELAIDE 2021 ROAD TO RECOVERY.



Alcoholics Anonymous Darwin

12 CONCEPTS workshop

7pm -830pm (Darwin time)

Wednesday, November 25th 2020

Guest presenters:

Chris and David(from Melbourne)

The Darwin Service Group

Enter via aadarwin.org.au find a meeting tab

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85656704661?pwd=TWerczd5d0EyM1JlL0ZralFJU2VJUT09>

Password: 719924 Contact: Mickg 0407657240

Sp Adobe Spark

VACANCIES.....

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES...

OFFICE CO-ORDINATOR....

CORRECTIONS

CO-ORDINATOR.....

ROUNDUP,

CO-ORDINATOR.....

VACANCIES IN OFFICE.....

AREA NEEDS

NOMINATIONS FOR.....

CHAIRPERSON AND ALSO
TREASURER.

AA DARWIN NEEDS YOUR

SERVICE

PLEASE THINK ABOUT

THESE

POSITIONS



I AM RESPONSIBLE

When anyone, anywhere, reaches for help,
I want the hand of AA always to be there,
And for that: I am responsible.

Without people stepping up for service we would not have AA.

Please seriously think about putting some new blood into our committee,

Even if you have served before, think about coming back.

Encourage members of your groups to step up.

We are AA Darwin we can do it.

(editor)