

THE SERENITY TIMES

The monthly newsletter

Of the

Darwin district

February 2021



[Darwin District](#) Recovery
Darwin District serves the A.A. groups in the Darwin District.

[Darwin District Office](#)

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[Office Hours:](#)

11am-2pm Monday-Saturday
Mick G (District Committee Member)
Pat M (Treasurer)
Susan B (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 & Correctional Facilities Coordinator)

VACANT (Roundup Coordinator)

Susan B (Editor)

[Next Meeting](#)

For committee members is scheduled for Wednesday the 10th Feb 2021, at 7pm, via Zoom.

The next quarterly District meeting for all GSRs and committee members is scheduled for Wednesday 3rd March at 7pm, via Zoom.

[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, and would love to print your story or a story about your group, anything that will encourage others.

Tradition 2. Long Form.

For our group purpose there is but one Ultimate authority—a loving God as he may express Himself in our group conscience.

A.A. is both a democracy and, in Bill W.'s words, "a benign anarchy." A group elects its own officers—who have no power to order anybody to do anything. In most groups, most of the slate rotates out of office at the end of six months, and new officers are elected. If a group wants to be a part of the whole A.A. service structure, it elects a G.S.R. (general service representative, with a two-year term). G.S.R.s elect area committee members and then join them in electing a delegate from their area to the annual General Service Conference. The Conference is about the closest approximation of a government that A.A. has; it produces opinions on important matters of policy; it approves the choice of some trustee nominees for the General Service Board and directly elects others. But neither the Conference nor the board can give orders to any group or member. Then who is in charge around here? A.A. is a spiritual movement, and so the "ultimate authority" is the spiritual concept of the "group conscience." Its voice is heard when a well-informed group gathers to arrive at a decision. The result rests on more than arithmetic, a "yes" and "no" count. Minority ideas get thoughtful attention. What about that annoying character who is always sure she is right? If she is wrong, then she will—if she remembers the First Tradition as well as the Second—go along with the decision of the group conscience. Does this notion seem too cloudy? Let us think back to our first meetings. The presence we newcomers felt in those rooms was the same as the group conscience. And it was real, welcoming us in, setting up no barriers of rules....

Members of AA may be chosen to do service in many ways.

GSR Group Secretary
Coffee + Tea Person
+ many more

Helper when anyone needs it



Public Information Update

Treasurer DDO: Pat M

At the end of December after the donation of \$2,000 to GSO and renewal of the annual insurance policy of \$856.70 we retain a healthy balance (cash and bank account) of \$ 5,516.93. We recorded a loss for the month of \$3,268.05 compared to a loss of only \$60.95 for the same month last year. The difference is attributable to the donation of \$2,000 to GSO as agreed at last meeting and literature purchases of \$534.80. Donations from groups were also quite low this month – only \$60. Petty Cash/Literature Cash Sales The petty cash tin was counted on 21 December at \$19.05. Opening balance \$58.05 and receipts for \$39.00 for copy paper, coffee, milk, and kitchen tidies were found. Hence \$58.05 - \$39.40 = \$19.05. This was topped up \$48.20. Caroline is now keeping the float to \$50.00 and will advise if this needs to be adjusted.

DCM: Mick G

Thank you again to all the committee members for your ongoing work for the Darwin District Office. Meetings continue to operate on 50/50 basis of zoom and "face to face".

The Office continues to need volunteers for Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 11am -2pm with 6 months sobriety required.

The Office continues to be maintained by Denis P in a clean, safe and operable manner although Denis has rotated off from the Office Maintenance position.

Thank you, Denis.

Two speakers have been purchased and connected to the Office computer as agreed at the last Darwin District Meeting.

Positions Available on the DDO
District Committee Member
Office Maintenance Coordinator
Office Coordinator

Round up Coordinator

Positions Vacant on Area Committee

1. Treasurer

Please continue to announce at meeting the following workshops:

1. Public Information Workshop Wed Jan 20th 7pm

2. The twelve Steps to Recovery Wed 27th 7pm

3. The Twelve Traditions Feb 3rd 7pm 2021

All on zoom.

Regards

Mickg.

Webmaster: Mick G

Nothing to report except that entry to the 3 January Workshops can be via aadarwin.org.au website, go "find a meeting", scroll down to Wed night 7pm DARWIN SERVICE GROUP and "click" on Link.

Regards

Mickg

Secretary: Susan B

As this is my first meeting as secretary, I can say I hope to take correct notes and then successfully transfer to print in these pages.

Rgds Susan B

Registrar: Denis P

Hello again and thank you to all committee members for your constant efforts and for being a great influence on me. Answered a few newcomer requests about meetings and a father asking about alcoholics anonymous for his son. Answered an email from a member in Alice Springs for Susan. B helping them contact each other. Forwarded an email from a member who loved listening to the speakers Chris and David at Darwin service group to Mickg. Updated Monday night Daily reflections group contact on the meetings lists and GSO website. When Marg.M dropped into the office we noticed her emails were not making it to the big pond address and neither was Tony. F Got in touch with Mick G to get help in sorting that out. Sent out updated meeting lists to group contacts and printed some up for the DDO office and pigeon holder. Printed up the upcoming workshop flyers and serenity times leaving a stack on the DDO desk for members to take. Which has been good volunteers reading while there and taking to hand out at meetings. Acting on emails remotely from home with ease. Finally, it has been enjoyable sharing the remote 24hr diversions each fortnight with Mick G with no issues. Thanks to all.

Kind regards

Denis P

Literature: Caroline B

8th Dec sold an Australian Big Book for Wednesday night group and a small 12x12 to a member.

14th December picked up literature order for the DDO office, being for 7 4th Edition Big Books there is plenty in stock for over Christmas & New year period.

14th December Dan T brought back to the DDO office all the literature including banners from Tiwi re-Andrew.

15th December sold literature for Humpty doo group of \$64.00 and literature for Daily Reflections group total of 203.00 Marg paid \$150.00 in cash and \$53.00 electronic I emailed Pat the copy of the receipt. Also

\$24.50 for a personal sale in total \$240.00 for that day.

16th December sold a little big book and a new comer pack to a member for the Tuesday harbour view group

28th December counted literature tin float \$50.00

29th December banked \$32.50 literature sales and emailed Pat Mac the receipt

31st December picked up order for office being 6 daily reflection books, Sent Pat Mac copy of the invoice 1st January 2021. Thank you Susan for your service.

Grateful to be a part of service and the service of those about me. Happy New Year for 2021

Treatment Facilities: Doug W

STRINGYBARK

BANYAN HOUSE

DARWIN CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

Office Co-Ordinator: VACANT

Please think about whether you can fill the position of Office Co-Ordinator, AA needs your service.

Office maintenance: Denis P acting

All has been going well, regularly topping up office supplies each fortnight or as when needed for the DDO. Kept disinfectant bottles topped up. Vacuumed the office floor each week. Latest shop for the office was on the 28th of December 2020 and that was for; 2x 2 pack of paper towels, 1 x dishwashing detergent, 1x Glen 20 surface spray, 1x roll of bin bags and 1x bottle of metho coming to a total of \$19.45 leaving receipt and change in petty cash tin. Checking the Casuarina post office box each week picking up the regular magazines from WA, S.A. and Victoria. Also, Telstra bills, northern region area a treasurer letters and other important treasure mail letting Pat.Mac know. Overall good month of service with Darwin Alcoholics Anonymous.

Regards Denis.P

Please think about whether you can fill the position of Office Maintenance, AA needs your Service.

Public Information Officer: Dan T

January 21st, 2020

Happy new year to you all,

Quarter 1 of this year is looking to be quite active with regards to Public Information activity, with the forming of a PI committee for our district. The aim of the committee is to engage all local groups in coordinated Public Information activities and share information regarding PI initiatives so as not to waste opportunities or double-up with placement of cards literature etc. We are seeking representatives from all

groups interested in carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic.

The first committee meeting will be held on zoom and is scheduled for **Sat February 6th at 7PM (ZOOM ID: 829 4795 7826 / Password: 260917)** where we will hopefully gauge how much interest there is from our groups, put together a regular agenda to follow and decide how often it will be necessary to meet, plus the sharing of any other ideas and initiatives.

Some groups are already engaged in excellent Public Information activities such as handing out cards and literature and speaking at selected venues, and and sharing this information around the fellowship is sure to add value to our Public Information responsibilities and may even inspire others to get more active *living* the 12th step. We hope to see you there.

In other news, we have placed a community announcement in the NT news Saturday January 23rd and have an announcement on the on-line classifieds for the next 30 Days. This was quite an expensive exercise given that we only got into 1 printed copy and I am making enquiries as to better or more cost-effective options regarding the newspaper. I will keep you posted there.

Yours in service,

Dan T

Editor Serenity Times: Susan B

The January Serenity Times has been emailed out. All the members of one group in America have been emailed a copy of this edition by Terrie, author of Zooming into Alice. I had no problems finding content for this issue and hope it stays that way. The hardest part in creating the newsletter is getting stories from AA members to include in newsletter. Caroline is still a great support, providing her Book of the Month for which I am extremely grateful. Mick provided me with an article this month and plenty of advertising material. I rely on contributions to make the newsletter interesting and not mine but our members. I have received a little feedback which was all good.

Susan.B



Convention Cancelled.

Sad news came to me in an email on January 22: *2021 National AA Convention cancelled due to COVID* it said. The convention, in Adelaide this year, touted as all face-to face, had been killed off by the virus.

It was not that South Australia closed its borders (it did not and they are still open at time of writing) but the convention venue, the Hilton Hotel, had told the host planning committee that they would be able to have only a maximum of 200 people at the event.

“This ruling by the South Australian Government makes our event non-viable”, the committee said, making the announcement “with deep sadness and heavy hearts”.

“Whilst these restrictions will be reviewed again in March, we cannot leave this decision to such a late time frame for people booking flights, accommodation and other travel arrangements,” the committee said.

Having only 200 attend the convention certainly would make it unviable. The registrations would go nowhere near covering the hire of the venue. Judging by the last Adelaide convention held there in 2014, the organisers could have expected at least 800 to 1000 members to attend.

The planning committee has arranged full refunds to those who paid registrations in advance. Because profits from national conventions are passed to the General Service Board of AA, the planning committee “strongly encourages” members to pass on their refunded registration fee to the GSB. Alternatively, members could pass the money on to their local CSO or DDO.

The committee apologised for the inconvenience and disappointment to many members and concluded the announcement: #hopeto see you in Melbourne and #2022 fingers crossed. Bob W



God grant me
the *Serenity*
to accept the things I cannot change, the
Courage
to change the
the things I can
and the
Wisdom
to know
the difference.

Here is a short story that an A.A. member wanted to share with you all.

Hi friends, my name is Caroline, I am an Alcoholic.

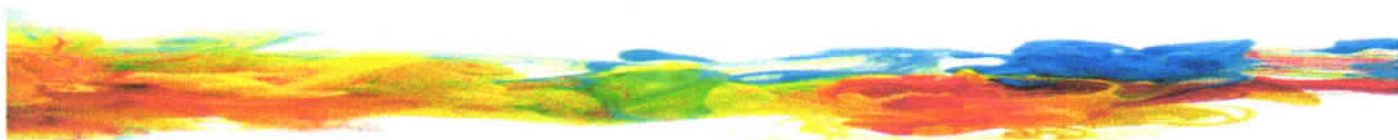
I am grateful to be sober and part of, the special fellowship here in Darwin.

I wanted to share how service work has WORKED as a large part in my personal recovery.

I came to live in Darwin in 2018.

I previously lived in a very isolated place, in the geographical sense, sadly also AA fellowship there was very remote. Little did I know this was affecting my sobriety, along with the fact I had gone through immense emotional pain due to my marriage breakup. By the grace of God, I never picked up alcohol. I had to recreate my life and get myself back into the fold of Alcoholics Anonymous, Homegroup, Sponsor and go through the Steps. Then came the God given opportunity for service, I started small just in my home group and it is from there where members gently but greatly encouraged me, helped me see I could step out a little further. Service work has put a real gratitude in my heart and a totally new way to see how working with others, and alongside others really makes me part of an exceptionally large whole and that makes me feel complete with a true purpose to God and people. To have thought that I came from brokenness to restored, I never thought possible. I love the position as literature officer, it is so special to me knowing how literature to us is a part of the structure that adds to one's recovery. Thank you, Darwin A.A., for turning me around when I was at a turning point in my life.

Yours in service Caroline B



A Declaration of Unity

This we owe to AA's future, to place our common welfare first; to
keep our Fellowship united.
For on AA Unity depend our lives,
and the lives of those to come.

I Am Responsible

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

I am responsible.



THE TWELVE STEPS

- 1) *We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.*
- 2) *Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.*
- 3) *Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand Him.*
- 4) *Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*
- 5) *Admitted to God to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.*
- 6) *Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.*
- 7) *Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.*
- 8) *Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.*
- 9) *Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*
- 10) *Continued to take a personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.*
- 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.*
- 12) *Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

Telling people where we are

Doing PI in AA is telling people where we are, Jane H told a public information workshop on 20 January. And it could be simple and done at low cost, she said.

Jane, former Area D PI Co-ordinator, presented the workshop as part of the Darwin Service Group's "Back to Basics" zoom meeting on Wednesdays at 7.00pm.

Under the banner of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers, she asked the question: How well do you individually or your group, district or area do PI?

She said: PI can be simple – just distribute the pamphlet "AA at a Glance", business cards and a poster such as "There is a Solution". These could be given to doctors' surgeries and to psychologists who, with COVID, had been very busy in Victoria.

AA could also use newspapers, online media, and digital billboards to carry the message. While a digital billboard had cost the Area \$500 for a month and a screen in a doctor's surgery \$400 for two months, they had generated a big increase in phone calls to AA.

Another approach was setting up a public information meeting on zoom, inviting people like doctors and psychologists, who could be more likely to go online rather than attend a meeting.

Jane said good results had followed a newspaper article about a man who had been 30 years' sober. Putting a Big Book in local libraries was also a good way to tell people about AA.

Members speaking to nurses, service clubs like Rotary and schools was another channel for PI, and radio advertising, are all effective.

Jane added: Look around your Area for opportunities. Just give information – if we don't, those suffering may not have the chance to get well."

The PI committee set up in Darwin, being co-ordinated by DDO committee PI member Dan T, will have its first meeting on Saturday, 6 February, at 7.00pm. The zoom address is on our DDO website.

PI COMMITTEE MEETING 7pm Feb 6th!!!

The first PI committee meeting is happening on February 6th, 2021.

Anybody wishing to attend is welcome. Put it on your calendar.

ZOOM Meeting

Topic: PI Committee meeting

Time: Feb 6, 2021 07:00 PM Darwin

Meeting ID: 829 4975 7826

Passcode: 260917

HISTORY OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS IN DARWIN AND THE NORTHERN TERRITORY *Part 6*

25) In 1978 at the National Convention in Canberra John and the late Paul V met and took advantage of the opportunity to compare personal notes, both there and later in Sydney. Apparently although still drinking, Bill and another, (possibly Terry), helped to prop up Paul V to attend his first meeting in 1965. He could not walk to his first meeting without help, but in the following decades he would at times carry the message single-handedly in the Northern Territory. Paul V who passed away in July 2005 often told the story of his first meeting where he was greeted with the words: "Come in Paul you're in the right place."

26) In the following years many members left Darwin or stopped coming to meetings Paul V often carried the responsibility of extending a helping hand when an alcoholic needed it. Kevin D recalls attending his first meeting in 1968 in a 'Sydney William's Hut' (a corrugated iron army shed with shutters for windows) located in a difficult place to find behind the old Darwin Hospital at Myilly Point. The malodorous shed was used for storing damaged and broken furniture, mattresses, and rubbish. Paul V mentioned often that he was given a three-legged chair to sit on at his first meeting. This was the only official meeting on at the time, but members would gather at eating places or one another's houses frequently for support and fellowship. In 1969 the venue improved greatly with a move to the Doctor's meeting room in the main section of the hospital. Members at this time were: Les W, Paul V, Bill S, Terry, Ian (Pharmacist), Tom (Howard Springs), Mike (a public servant), and Norm (related to Terry's wife). As far as we know the first public meeting was held at Spillet house in Mitchell Street, Kevin and Air force Bob did most of the organising, the late Jim Bowditch, then editor of the NT News, did an article on AA and up to 30 people attended including more than 10 observers. Not bad for a town of less than 40,000. Kevin said he would see Paul V (deceased) driving an old blue Kombi-van for his daily swim at Mylilly Point. Terry later fell or jumped off the water tower at the end of Ross-Smith Avenue after a relapse and Tom who owned a service station at Howard Springs relapsed and went crazy with a shot gun and was restrained by the police. Some others transferred south and Norm 'changed his metabolism' with various vitamins and herbal supplements leaving the late Paul V the only sober member at the meeting.



Here I have found a photo of an old 'Sydney Williams Hut'

Above to the right is the inside of a 'Sydney Williams Hut'.

Sidney Williams huts began to appear at military sites in Darwin in the late 1930s when they were erected at East Point and Emery Point. They were the forerunners of the thousands of huts that were shipped to the Territory over the next few years. They featured steel frames and were made of corrugated-iron clad with ripple-iron doors at each end.

Above is the old Darwin Hospital at Mlilly Point.

CAROLINES BOOK OF THE MONTH

Hi everyone.

Our first book of the month review for 2021.

Thought some quotes to start off the year from a great little book titled.

Grapevine Daily Quote Book.

365 inspiration daily readings.

3rd of January--Rev Samuel M Shoemaker

The spiritual Angle of AA

"It is when you let truth go into action and hurl your life after your held conception of truth, that things start to happen.

January 18

"Learning to Handle Sobriety"

"AA does not teach us how to handle our drinking; it teaches us how to handle our sobriety."

January 21

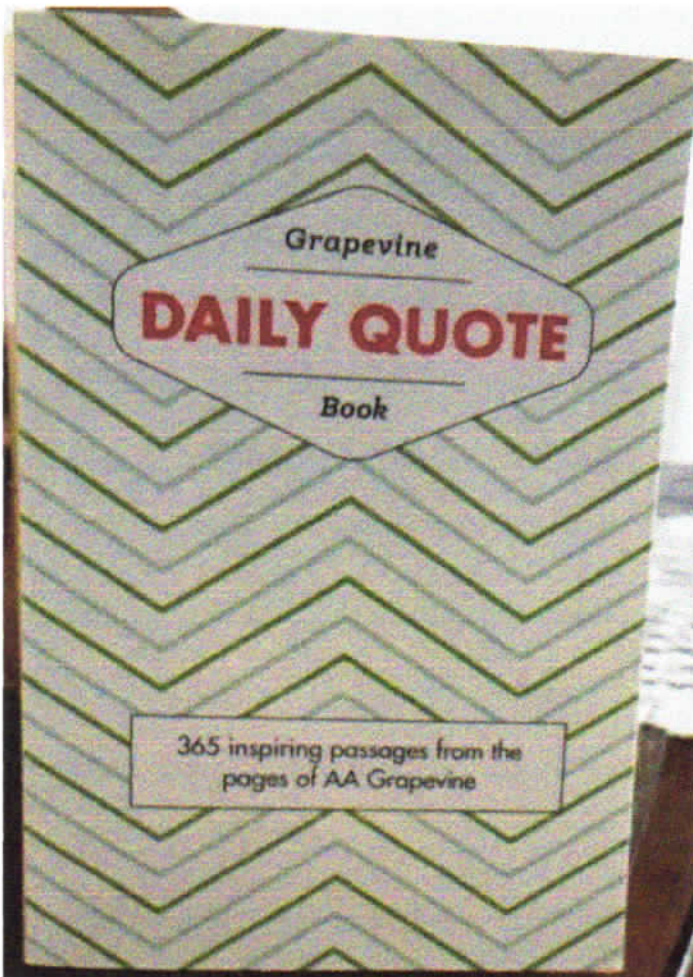
"Awareness "

"All turmoil comes from the deep, nagging feeling that we should be different from what we are.

.... If we could totally accept who and what we are (changing each instant), we would find ourselves moving in the silent immenseness of now".

A great way to start off the day with inspiration one day at a time.

Kind regards Caroline B



I thought I would look up the month I was born, in the Grapevine Archives and I found this printed below. I found this members view an interesting read, I thought some of you readers might like to read it also.

AUGUST 1951

Is There a God?

BELIEF in God is simply a matter of faith. Faith cannot be proved; it is implanted in the heart of the individual. The word "God" simply means a divine authority--a supreme power over the universe and the people in it.

Some people maintain that they cannot believe in God because his existence cannot be proved--that what is outside the world itself cannot be explained and therefore may or may not be true. Apparently, they do not understand that all knowledge is relative. Nothing can be absolutely clear to human understanding.

Of course, it is a fact that material science rejects all contradictions. Materialism cannot explain the idea of eternity. But this same materialism once maintained that the earth was flat. It sneered at every new thought or idea and persecuted all those who challenged established theories. This was true in the case of Newton, Westinghouse, Mores, Fulton, and Pasteur.

The fact remains that through countless ages *The Book* which begins, "*In the Beginning, God. . .*" remains the best seller. It has been translated into many languages and is read by millions to whom it has brought hope and inspiration. Some time ago I visited the Palomar observatory near San Diego, which houses the largest and strongest telescope in the world. In this observatory, astronomers can examine the heavens--searching for new stars and viewing celestial bodies billions of light-miles away. It is easy to understand that when these learned men are intent on the heavens, studying the wonders of millions of stars so far away, they forget material things--unworthy things--and can realize the utter insignificance of the planet we call Earth.

In talking with one of the noted astronomers at this observatory, it occurred to me that it would be interesting to learn his ideas: to find out if he--an astronomer--thought there was a practical, scientific explanation for the world's origin. So, I asked him, "Does your work in natural science and the formation of the earth and heavenly bodies strengthen your belief in God--a spiritual authority--that directs and controls the Universe; or does it refute and reject the idea of God and prove that this world came into existence through natural causes?" The astronomer made

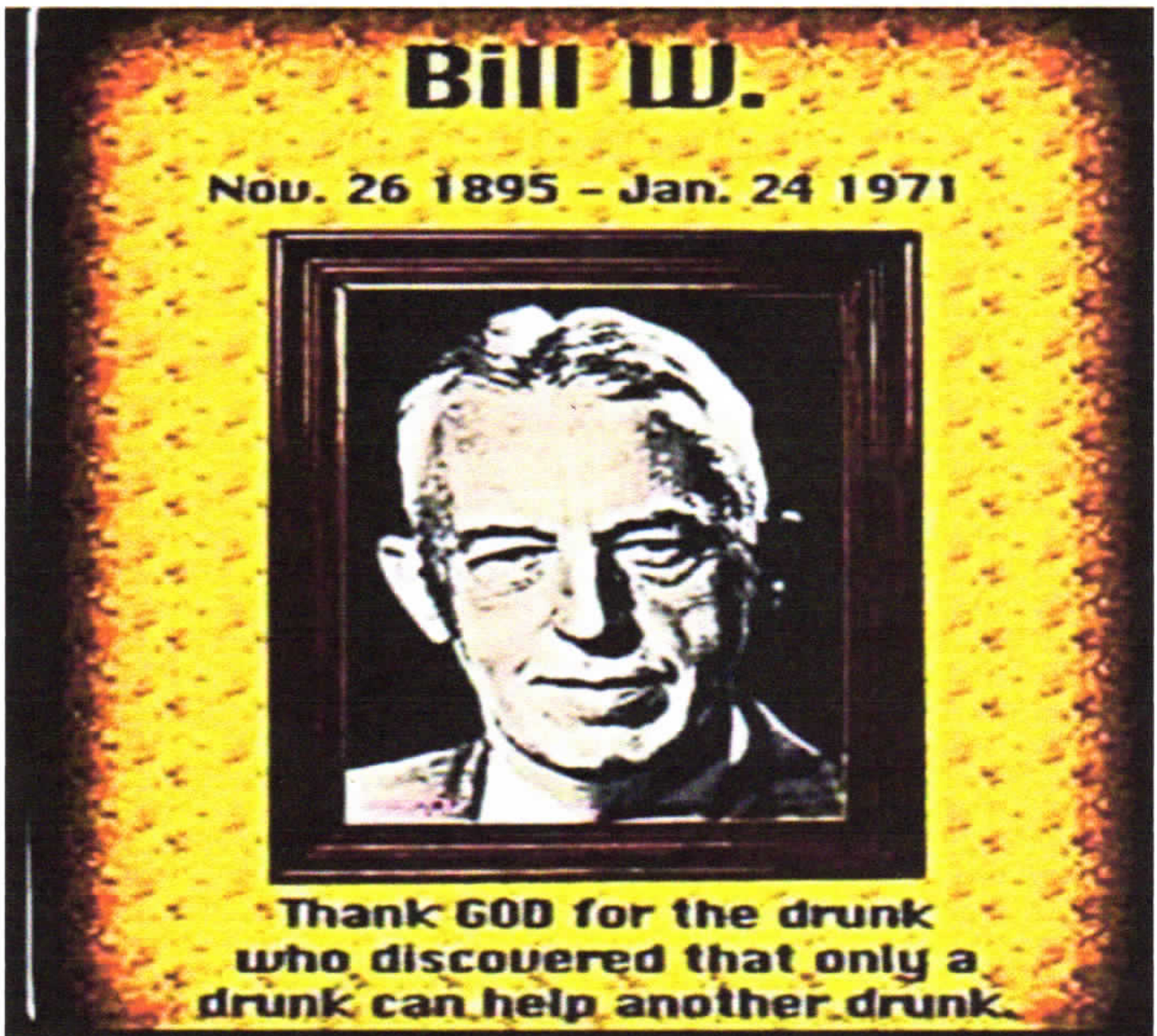
a reply as clear as the ringing of a bell; "My work and study only strengthens my belief in a power that is unlimited--that has supreme control and has set to time the movement of the Universe.

It confirms my belief that there is a power above and beyond life on this or any other planet, and I believe there is a God."

The need of worship has been present during the ages. Men have always felt dependent on some power greater than themselves. For thousands of years men have prayed--to find comfort when they were sad, security when they were afraid, courage when they were weak. Much of the world is Christian, and though it is true that many people do not give much time to religion, they are nevertheless influenced by it. It is my belief that the proof that there is a God is unimportant. What is important--and needs no proof--is that the teachings of God make men live better lives--make them happier in their associations with other human beings. The doctrines of reward for Christian living, and punishment for sins after death--could be debatable. But there is no doubt of the effect of Christian principles upon our daily life.

Is there a God? Let each individual answer this for himself. It is my opinion that our religious leaders and teachers have a difficult task. They cannot help to instill in another human a belief in God if he does not himself believe. Nor is it possible to know how many people who apparently ignore religion do believe in God. But it is my firm conviction that such a belief brings hope, inspiration, and guidance.

BY: B. L. Z. | DES MOINES, IOWA



THE TWELVE CONCEPTS

Concept I

Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship.

Concept II

The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice, and the effective conscience of our whole society in its world affairs.

Concept III

To ensure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.-- the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional "Right of Decision."

Concept IV

At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

Concept V

Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal," ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard, and personal grievances receive careful consideration.

Concept VI

The conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.

Concept VII

The Charter and the Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purpose for final effectiveness.

Concept VIII

The trustees are the principle planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.

Concept IX

Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.

Concept X

Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of each authority well defined.

Concept XI

The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.

Concept XII

The conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power, that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principal; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.