

# ***THE SERENITY TIMES***

**The monthly newsletter**

**of the  
Darwin district**

**MAY 2021**

## **Tradition 5. Long Form.**

Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity *having but one primary purpose*—that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

**I am responsible.**



**When anyone, anywhere,  
reaches out for help,  
I want the hand of A.A.  
always to be there.**

**And for that:**

**I am  
responsible.**



### **Darwin District**

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

### **Darwin District Office**

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

Casuarina NT 0810

**Telephone** 0889485202

**Email:** [aadarwin@bigpond.com](mailto:aadarwin@bigpond.com)

**Website:** [aadarwin.org.au](http://aadarwin.org.au)

### **Office Hours:**

11am-2pm Monday-Saturday  
Mick G (Acting 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**

The next District meeting for committee members is scheduled for Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm, via Zoom.

The next Area meeting is Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2021 9am 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](mailto: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, service, steps anything that will encourage others.

## Public Information Update

### Treasurer DDO: Pat M.

#### Financial Report: Summary

At the end of March, we retain a healthy balance (cash and bank account) of \$6,634.92.

We recorded a surplus for the month of \$859.25 compared to a surplus of \$383.15 for the same month last year. The difference is attributable to significantly higher group donations and literature sales this month despite higher expenses (literature purchases and PO Box Rental). Year to date we are showing a loss of only \$287.06 despite our decision to donate \$2000.00 of excess funds to GSO.

#### Petty Cash/literature Cash Sales

The petty cash tin was counted on 26<sup>th</sup> February at \$63.35. Since there was no petty cash expended during the month the balance remains the same. Caroline is now keeping the float to \$50.00 and will advise if this needs to be adjusted.

### Acting DCM: Mick G.

PI is very active, and Alice Springs has shown interest in our resources and joining the PI committee, great work Dan and your small but active committee.

I have purchased an AA self-inking stamp, as requested at the previous District Meeting. The stamp is in the Office and is to be used on AA literature.

I am also working through the files on MS Office, arranging them in some order and have downloaded much of the DDO information from 2013 onwards into these files and created backups on two mini drives which are now in the safe.

Darwin AA History Archives have previously been downloaded and backed up on these two drives and the computer.

Denis P and I will meet later this week to finalize some files and to update Denis on their future organization and use.

As far as I am aware, there have been no nominations for any of the positions currently vacant on the DDO Committee, with a few of us now working in several positions for which we have not been nominated by the District to fulfill and which will be an unsustainable workload for some of us into the future.

I am calling on all members to seriously consider their debt to the AA fellowship, that the fellowship was there when we needed it, and it was there because people did service work to keep the fellowship operational for the newcomer and to carry the message to the newcomer. It was there for me and you, but without active service work on the DDO, District and Area, will it be there for the next person?

Support and training are available in all/any of the positions that are currently vacant.

On behalf of the Darwin Fellowship, I extend our great thanks to the office and phone volunteers, who are on the "frontline" for the newcomer, 24/7.

### Webmaster: Mick G.

The website continues to provide much needed access to information for existing members and hopefully newcomers.

7 days into April and 81 views already.

The website is not only an information service, but also an extension of "fellowship" to all.

### Secretary: Susan B.

Thank you to all for your reports.

### Treatment and Corrections: Doug W.

Visits are continuing a fortnightly basis to Banyan House and Stringybark. We are well received at both. Recently several people have been regularly attending meetings after leaving Banyan. First week of April 4 clients from Stringybark came to the Daily Reflections Meeting along with 2 case workers. It was good that they saw one of the members that had been out to visit previously and heard one of the members that was going to visit that week.

### Registrar: Denis P.

This month I have updated the Wednesday night rapid creek meeting with the correct address so that google maps pick it up, and the correct address for the Monday night group. Updated Darwin service group and Saturday Nightcliff group contact details. Updated Tuesday Night Big Book Recovery Group as in person and online at the starting time of 7:30pm. Printed up meetings list keeping the office desk stocked for anyone and the pigeonhole at the door. Printed copies of the serenity times placed on the DDO desk for anyone to grab.

### Acting Office Co-Ordinator: Denis P.

Again, it has been a real pleasure working with everyone. An enjoyable easily worked position. Diverting the 24hr phone each day with my phone alarm set for 2pm 7 days of the week, helps greatly in thinking of others. Sometimes giving a call to let the volunteer know it has been diverted or a simple text message and thanking them for their service. Regularly updating the 24hr phone volunteer roster. Currently we have 2 office volunteers on Tuesday and Wednesday who without skipping a beat let me know if they can't make it or need to leave early. Huge thanks to Tony F and Darren H and all the 24hr phone volunteers, many thanks for without all your ongoing

commitments we would not be there for the still sick and suffering alcoholic. With myself in the office on the Mondays. Still having Thursday, Friday, and Saturday to fill from 11am till 2pm manning the office keeping it open for any members or newcomers looking for information.

#### **Office Maintenance: Denis P. (acting)**

Everything is going well, this month picked up DDO mini-Drives and gave them to Mick G. Mick gave them back to me later after he had done some work with the mini drive then I returned them to the office safe on the 27/3/21. Restocked Big brother with copy paper when needed. Vacuumed office floor checking on supplies. Thursday 1/4/21 dropped into the office noticing an issue with the air conditioning not working" so I called around and John S directed me to the office volunteer manual where I learnt the Darwin city council pays for and puts the order in to be fixed. So, I contacted Council.

#### **Literature: Caroline B.**

It has been a busy month.

I have had quite a few sales mainly to groups. I have placed orders and received deliveries, banked money from sales. Literature tin still contains a \$50 float.

#### **Editor: Susan B**

Last month it was very hard to get input for Serenity Times Thank you to a few loyal people I had something to put to print. This month I have had great input from some wonderful members also, this issue will hopefully encourage others.

#### **Public Information: Dan T**

#### **April PI Report – Serenity Times**



April has been a productive month on the PI front with several new PI initiatives in the pipeline. Thanks to some help from a handful of local members we are getting literature out to several Doctor's surgeries. The Monday daily reflections group is continuing to do an excellent job of getting literature into the hospital as well.

Serenity Times May 2021

Thanks to the help of a member (with a better network than me) it looks like we might finally get some PI info up at the police stations. I am incredibly grateful for this because I have been trying for ages, and I believe the foyer where they let the drunks out in the morning is about as good a place as you could get for rock-bottoms (personal experience) and extending the hand of AA.

We have 2 new 15 second TV clips which the GSO have provided me with, which give a powerful message and are also non-race and non-gender specific. One is titled 'Champaign', and the other 'Sauvignon Blackout'. Channel 10 have agreed to air this for us for free, on an on-going basis once they have received *ratings advice* which the production company in Sydney needs to provide us with. I am working with the GSO to obtain what is required and it might take a while, but it will happen eventually. If anybody wants to view these, I can email them to you. (be warned, they are about 12MB each.) Just drop me an email to: [pi\\_aadarwin@outlook.com](mailto:pi_aadarwin@outlook.com)

Hannah. M, our PI co-ordinator from Alice Springs has joined our small sub-committee and we are looking forward to sharing ideas and helping her out where we can go forward.

The GSO has a *remote communities coordinator*, and I am hoping I can get her to drop into our next sub-committee meeting to meet everyone and get some ideas around the (zoom) table on how we can most effectively carry the message out to the many remote communities throughout the NT. Dave Scott, our National PI coordinator will be dropping in also, and will do a bit of a talk on PI at a national level.

Anybody in our fellowship with an interest in carrying the message to the suffering alcoholic is most welcome to join us. This is an excellent way to get into service outside of the group, or within your group and it does not have to take heaps of time or effort on your part.

**Our next PI Sub-Committee meeting will be held on Saturday May 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 7:00 PM**

**ZOOM ID: 848 0043 6276**

**Password: 616503**

Yours in Service,  
Dan T.  
District PI Coordinator.

**DARWIN SERVICE GROUP**  
**"THE NEXT PHASE"**

May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 AA Members employed in the Alcoholism Field.

May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021

May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Includes guest speakers as well as question and answer time.

All subjects follow AA Guidelines.

All welcome to attend, this is for anyone interested in how things in AA work.

ZOOM MEETING 7PM WEDNESDAY NIGHTS (DARWIN AUSTRALIA TIME)

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**BILL W CAMP 2021 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Next meeting is **FRIDAY MAY 14<sup>TH</sup>**.

6.30pm

Pandanas Room

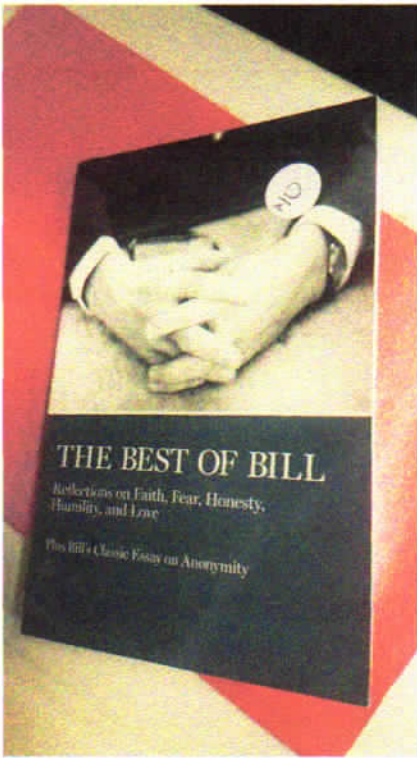
Nightcliff Community Centre

Buhinia St Nightcliff.

Look forward to seeing you there.

Marg 0402602602





## CAROLINES BOOK OF THE MONTH

Hello again all.

This month I thought to do a small review on the book titled "The Best Of Bill. About the book----- This book is called "the greatest social architect of our century" by Aldous Huxley, Bill W was a co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. These essays, which he first wrote for the Grapevine magazine, discuss the spiritual principles that have helped millions of people recover from Alcoholism and enriched the lives of countless others around the world.

Here is a snippet for you to read----

Yet we can't well content ourselves with the view that all these recovery failures were entirely the fault of the new comers themselves. Perhaps a great many didn't receive the kind and amount of sponsorship they so sorely needed. We didn't communicate when we might have done so. So we AA's failed them. Perhaps more often than we think. We still make no contact at depth with those suffering the dilemma of no faith.

Till next time you all take care

Kind regards in service Caroline B



### **HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT HELPING OUT?**

**WE CALL IT SERVICE!**

**SERVICE** CAN INVOLVE MANY THINGS,  
MOST OF US ARE AWARE OF THE **SERVICE** WE PROVIDE WITHIN OUR GROUPS.  
STEP 12, WE ALL KNOW WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO CARRY THE MESSAGE TO OTHERS.  
THERE ARE MANY OTHER **SERVICE** OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN A.A.  
WITH OUR HIGHER POWERS HELP, WE CAN DO MANY THINGS,

I could never imagine myself being an editor of a newsletter, I could hardly use Microsoft Word when I started, I managed to break everyone's anonymity, by not knowing how to BCC emails, which means you cannot see who else the email has been sent to.

Would you believe nobody sacked me, someone kindly showed me how to do it correctly.

I am learning more each issue.

I find being committed helps me stay sober, if I bust, we must find someone else to be Editor, that is not as easy as it sounds.

The Editor role is for 2 years and then it rolls over to whoever will take over.

The last Editor had been faithfully producing the Serenity Times for 8 years I believe, which was exceedingly kind of her as we could have been without a newsletter after her 2 years was up.

All our roles have a roll over period, we have a lot of positions where people are classed as acting in that position because their roll over time is up, they are faithfully still fulfilling the role until someone else nominates to take over.

This issue of Serenity Times I am adding all the position roles, what is required to fill these roles and a list of vacancies.

As well as these roles another way to offer service is to write your experiences for this newsletter, it could be about how you came to be in A.A. What your life is like now, your experience with any of the 12 Steps or Traditions maybe about your home group. Anything that could encourage all of us including the newcomers.

Thank You for reading this!

Yours in service Suze B.

## WHAT IS A DISTRICT?

An AA District is a geographical unit within an Area containing a number of AA Groups, the number being dependant on the ability of the General Service Representatives (GSR'S) to communicate between each other and to meet regularly together with comparative ease. A metropolitan District may cover a small Area but contain 15-20 Groups, while a rural District may cover many square kilometres but include as few as 3 or 4 Groups.

As the number of Groups in an Area increases more Districts are formed, each new one then electing another District Committee Member (DCM) to the Area Committee. Experience has shown that the answer to growth rests in the setting up of more Districts to meet the Fellowship's expansion in size and activities, that is, more DCM's rather than more Areas and more Area Delegates at the Conference.

Because of the closer communication links within the District the Groups are able to share together and to carry their message more effectively. In Areas where communication is difficult because of vast distances the District brings communication and support to more Groups.

## DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER      DARWIN IS VACANT:

The DCM usually has GSR experience and is elected by the GSR's of the District to be responsible for the District. S/he is also responsible for carrying the collective Group Conscience of the Groups in the District to the Area Committee. The DCM is the vital, two-way communication link between the Groups' GSR's and the Area Committee, including the Area Delegate. The qualifications for a good DCM are not complicated:

1. A background in AA service work that goes with the GSR job.
2. Enough sobriety (say four to five years) to be eligible for election to Area Delegate and
3. The time and energy to serve the District and Groups well.

Usually, an Alternate is also elected to act as the DCM's stand-in and to automatically replace the DCM who resigns or is unable to serve for any reason. In most areas the DCMs are asked to resign if they find they cannot assume the responsibilities of the job, for the District GSR's need this leadership.

## POSITION DESCRIPTION FOR DARWIN DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER:

This is a two-year commitment where the DCM then rolls over the position to a new person. This prevents individuals from becoming tired and brings new blood into the position.

1. Schedules and chairs monthly Office sub-committee meetings and quarterly District meetings.
2. Submits a report to each monthly Office sub-committee meeting and to each quarterly District meeting.
3. Supports and assists the Office Coordinator to ensure the efficient and functional operation of the District Office.
4. When the position of Office Coordinator is vacant, performs the duties of the Office Coordinator in addition to those of the Chairperson. Represents the groups in the District on the Area Committee.
5. Represents the groups in the District on the Area Committee.

## DO YOU FEEL YOU CAN FILL THIS POSITION?

If so AA Darwin needs you.

Mick G is our outgoing DCM contact him via the office and he will answer all your questions.

# DARWIN ROUNDUP



**ROUNDUP CO-ORDINATOR REQUIRED!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

### Overall Objective

The overall objective of the position is to arrange and co-ordinate a Roundup Committee and all necessary resources to plan and manage the annual Darwin Roundup and to ensure the event is successful and within budget. Resources include finances, venue, communications, catering, speakers, meetings, and other events. The event should be self-supporting through registration fees and donations.

The Roundup Co-Ordinator will set up a roundup committee and allocate roles and responsibilities.

Specific tasks to be undertaken are:

- In conjunction with the District Treasurer develop a detailed budget for the event. The total amount to be approved in advance by the Darwin District Committee. The detailed budget will include expenditure on venue, catering, and materials as well as projected income from registrations.
- Select an appropriate venue and develop a detailed program of events including catering and refreshments.
- Hold regular roundup committee meetings to ensure that a detailed plan is developed and progressed.
- Ensure all communications are arranged in a timely manner including flyers, notices in relevant publications and websites.
- Arrange all necessary additional assistance, such as registration desk personnel, catering assistants, greeters, speakers, and cleaning assistants.
- Report progress at each monthly District Office and Quarterly District meeting, including details of expenditure and income.
- Manage the running of the event to ensure the program runs to plan and issues arising are dealt with effectively.
- Post roundup present a report to the Darwin District on the outcome of the event including financial summary, and comments on what aspects were particularly successful and what might be improved for future events.

The Darwin Roundup is usually run on the first weekend in August which corresponds with a long weekend in Darwin.

**CAN YOU HELP, IT WOULD BE SAD NOT TO HAVE A ROUNDUP THIS YEAR.**

## DISTRICT TREASURER

- Responsible for all financial records of the District, including Office operations, other District expenses and the annual Darwin Roundup.
- Attends monthly Office sub-committee meetings and quarterly District meetings.
- Submits a report to each monthly Office sub-committee meeting, to each quarterly District meeting in the approved format and to the Roundup Committee as required.
- Manages the District bank account and ensures that all income received is banked on a weekly basis.
- Prepares payments for all invoices received and approved.
- Delivers an annual financial report at the Annual General Meeting in the approved format.
- Makes recommendations regarding financial management of the Darwin District including the Office.
- Ensures that the Office cash box is supplied with a permanent \$50 float in a range of denominations.
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## DISTRICT SECRETARY

- Attends monthly Office sub-committee meetings and quarterly District meetings.
- Calls for items for meeting agenda from Group GSRs and from the Office Sub-Committee.
- Drafts and distributes meeting agendas.
- Takes minutes of monthly Office meetings and distributes them to the members of the Office sub-committee.
- Takes minutes of quarterly District meetings and distributes them to GSRs and Office sub-committee members.
- Submits a report on external correspondence sent and received to each monthly Office sub-committee meeting and to each quarterly District meeting

## REGISTRAR

- Attends Office sub-committee meetings and quarterly District meetings.
- Submits a report to each monthly Office sub-committee meeting and to each quarterly District meeting.
- Keeps an up-to-date record of the contact details of all Groups in the Darwin District, and coordinates with the Area Committee to maintain details of other groups in the Northern Region for publication in the meetings list.

As a service to the Area Committee, keeps the Northern Region Meetings List up-to-date and publishes a new Meetings List whenever necessary, distributing it to the Groups, Office sub-committee members and the Australian General Service Office by email. Provides the Office with hard copies of the Meetings List and ensures copies are also available Registrar in the receptacle outside the Office door.



## EDITOR OF "THE SERENITY TIMES"

- Attends Office sub-committee meetings and quarterly District meetings.
- Submits a report to each monthly Office sub-committee meeting and to each quarterly District meeting.
- Publishes the District's monthly newsletter, *The Serenity Times*.
- Distributes *The Serenity Times* to General Service Representatives (GSRs), Office sub-committee members, District Committee Members (DCMs) representing other Districts in Area A Northern Region, the CSO and the Australian General Service Office (GSO).
- Writes, edits, and solicits AA news and articles for publication in *The Serenity Times*.

## LITERATURE OFFICER

- Attends Office sub-committee Meetings and quarterly District meetings.
- Submits a report to each monthly Office sub-committee meeting and to each quarterly District meeting. Report to include details of stock, purchases, and sales.
- Ensures that an adequate quantity and range of AA literature is kept at the Office for sale to the Fellowship in Darwin.
- Takes all AA literature orders from the Fellowship in Darwin.
- Regularly seeks financial approval to order AA literature from the GSO, places orders, unpacks literature orders, checks literature received against tax invoices, advises District Treasurer of Invoice to be paid, packs literature onto CSO shelves.
- Carries out an annual stock-take and reports the results to the Fellowship at the AGM.
- Discards unsaleable and old stock.
- 

## PUBLIC INFORMATION COORDINATOR

- Attends Office sub-committee Meetings and quarterly District meetings.
- Submits a report to each monthly Office sub-committee meeting and to each quarterly District meeting.
- Increases the profile of AA in Darwin through the use of advertisements, AA posters, letters to professionals, etc.
- Cooperates and coordinates with Area A in all public information activities.

## WEBMASTER

Attends Office sub-committee Meetings and quarterly District meetings.  
Submits a report to each monthly Office sub-committee meeting and to each quarterly District meeting.  
Operates the District website.  
Publishes a current AA Meetings List on the website.  
Maintains a members-only area on the website which contains issues of *The Serenity Times* for download, AA news and coming AA events.  
Administers and maintains the District and Roundup websites.  
Administers the District office account with Telstra and the NBN or whatever ISP is being utilised at the time.  
Is responsible for the maintenance of the District office computer; its software updates and backups to OneDrive.

## TREATMENT AND CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES COORDINATOR

Attends Office sub-committee Meetings and quarterly District meetings.  
Submits a report to each monthly Office sub-committee meeting and to each quarterly District meeting.  
Takes AA into treatment and correctional facilities in Darwin.  
Cooperates and coordinates with Area A in all T&CF activities.  
Maintains 12 Step roster for T&CF activities.

## ONLY POSITIONS WITH VACANT ARE AVAILABLE AT MOMENT.

All the others will be vacant at rollover for each role, and notification will be sent out.  
Come to a Committee Meeting, all Darwin members are welcome to come and observe.  
Now our meetings are held on Zoom, details on website.

We do have a Vacancy for **DARWIN DISTRICT TREASURER.**

**WE ALSO REQUIRE VOLUNTEERS IN THE OFFICE, (MIN 6 MONTHS SOBRIETY) IF INTERESTED  
SPEAK TO THE GSR OF YOUR GROUP.**

## SERVICE WORK IS A GREAT HONOUR!

"Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people around us" Into Action, P77  
Alcoholics Anonymous

Service Work is a great Honour – to be given the trust by our fellow alcoholics, who know of our failures, insecurities, misdeeds, and fears - as they have suffered them also.

Service Work is an Opportunity – to repay what has been, so freely been given to us, to edge our spiritual boundaries, to use our attributes, for we have many – to put into practical application our quest for a Spiritual Way of Living.

How often have we heard or even shared ourselves, at meetings, "if it wasn't for AA, I would be dead."

And yet, how often do we ever hear from the floor, sincere gratitude, let alone a mention of the gift of sobriety, the miracle of freedom from alcohol, that was made available to us, simply because for 85 years, truly humble, unselfish, courageous, and loving members, have done more than just "open the doors" of AA meetings, more than just picked up a tea-towel, more than just put out chairs. Important, worthy, worthwhile, and necessary as these things maybe, have we ever asked ourselves the "bigger questions"?

Was it sheer good luck when we found an AA meeting open, when we stumbled through its doors - lost, alone, terrified, full of fear, guilt shame and remorse? And yet, an AA meeting was available for us when we so desperately needed it.

Was it providence alone, that created the 12 Steps for our Recovery?? To release us from the grip of that terrifying madness.

*Did the 12 Traditions miraculously appear, to create the UNITY in the fellowship, holding AA together until you appeared and so the doors were still open.*

Was it serendipitous that the 12 Concepts were forged, giving AA the Structure through which Service work kept the doors open, waiting for you?

Where does the literature come from?

How do those AA ads get on TV and how does AA literature get into my Doctors clinic, Hospitals, Police Stations, Sobering up Shelters, Domestic Violence Refuges?

No, the members who came before us surrendered their time, their skills, their money, their families, their leisure hours to ensure that the doors to your first meeting, to my first meeting were open, that there were pamphlets, big books, everything required to "carry the message" to you and me.

Magical as it maybe, the magic is created by those willing to serve to ensure that the next newcomer has what was so freely given to us.

**"FOR WE STAND ON THE SHOULDERS OF ALL THAT HAVE GONE BEFORE US IN ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS"**

Anon.

## SERVICE KEPT ME SOBER

My drinking story mirrors so many that I have heard in the rooms of AA – never felt quite right growing up as a kid. Like a square peg in a round hole is one of my favourite descriptions.

I could easily blame the destruction of my family unit at the age of ten and I used to, but I have come to believe over time that I was born with an alcoholic mind and that while childhood trauma may have brought about the onset of my alcoholism sooner, it was inevitable eventually after picking up that first drink.

I can still remember that first drink like it was yesterday. It was my year 7 graduation party at Wanguri Primary School and a few friends, and I were sneaking sips of fruity lexia from a cask at a table when the parents were not looking. My friends all stopped when they got a bit tipsy – I stole the whole cask and went and hid with it. The obsession was there with me from that very first sip.

Needless to say, I was violently ill shortly afterwards with the room spinning at a hundred miles an hour and me “calling herb on the great white telephone” with my Father standing behind me saying “that’ll teach you!” I knew even at that moment that it would not. I would chase that immediate feeling of *relief* that came with the first drink, often followed by oblivion every time I drank for the next 29 years.

I never had a conscience over my often deplorable actions when drinking until I was in my mid-twenties with most of my antics being written off as *just an Aussie bloke* by myself and the company that I kept – even my first high range DUI at 18 years of age where I wrote off a company vehicle in Perth, narrowly avoiding wiping out a family of five that I rear-ended did not manage to serve as a warning of things to come. God was certainly looking after me that night although I could not see it back then. The police officer that attended the accident scene was also the one that came to arrest me at work the following Monday morning (I was in hospital for observation over the weekend) and he told me that he had never seen someone my age so drunk and still standing. He suggested that I have a look at my drinking. Instead, I wore that statement like a badge of honour – such was my mental state and my level of denial.

When I was twenty-three, I met a woman who was sick enough herself to tolerate my behaviour and I gained an instant family as she had a six-year-old daughter. We ended up in the Kimberly’s (Derby) and my drinking hit a whole new level there. I was surrounded by people who drank like me and the drama my drinking caused my family was commonplace within our circle of so-called friends. I recall this as the time that I began to experience the guilt, remorse and shame that is so commonly shared in our stories. It is impossible for me to forget that look of fear in a child’s eyes and I could not drink that away, try as I might.

Several geographical moves through the NT and Pilbara, a marriage, and a new child later, we landed ourselves in Gladstone QLD, where we stayed for around seventeen years. My career prospered even though now in my thirties, I was a daily heavy drinker and going on a proper bender about one weekend out of three. These benders sometimes resulted in violent rows. Several of them ending up with one of us being arrested. At court after our fourth DVO appearance courtesy of the police (I am not sure if that was one of mine or hers) the magistrate stated to us both; “It is obvious that you are both in a highly toxic relationship and you should do yourselves a favour and simply end it” We were both gobsmacked and offended by his insensitive comment. I used to tell myself that I was OK because I was never physically violent towards her or the kids. That seems so ridiculous to me today.

I had experienced the AA fellowship for the first time in the Pilbara town of Tom Price several years before after a particularly humiliating incident involving a secretary from work in front of most of the town on a Melbourne Cup day function at our local. I was so determined to stop drinking after this that I pleaded with the publican of our only pub in town to ban me from drinking and purchasing booze there which he gladly did. The Yardie at the pub was a member of our fellowship and was present on the day of the incident. Hearing of my request to be banned, he twelve stepped me into the local fellowship. With me there were now four members in town! I didn’t pick up a drink for a little over twelve months, largely due to the copious amount of marijuana I was smoking. When we left town bound for QLD, I knew I would drink again soon and was by then looking forward to it, but I think back then a very small seed was at least planted.

It took me many more years of drinking to finally come to the rock-bottom that I needed to get myself back into the fellowship with just enough desperation to stick around for a while. My rock bottom was nothing too spectacular for me – well, just grabbing the steering wheel of a vehicle my wife was driving during a domestic and threatening to steer us into oncoming traffic on the Bruce Highway with someone else’s child on board along with my own, that I was coaching in football. Fairly standard bender-behaviour for me by then.



## SERVICE KEPT ME SOBER (CONTINUED)

Desperate as I was to stop drinking and stay stopped, I was still heavily afflicted by an enormous ego and from the moment I walked back into the rooms in Gladstone, I felt superior to those around me. I heard it shared “lying in the gutter looking down on everyone” thinking back, that may well have been aimed at me. Most suggestions offered to me went in one ear and out the other and as the fog lifted after a few months, I think initially my ego only got worse.

There is no doubt whatsoever in my mind today that the one thing that kept me in the rooms long enough to gradually get the message was service.

One of the wiser members in our fellowship asked me if I would open the Friday ID meeting and the Tuesday Living Sober group meeting for a while and I ended up getting stuck with those keys for eighteen months. I am certain that is the only reason that I am still sober today. There were many times that I was thinking about drinking but the prospect of letting down my groups kept me coming back long enough for the love and tolerance shown to me in the rooms to slowly start chipping away at that ego.

It was not until around three years of insane white-knuckle sobriety, that a member was put in my path who saw through my rubbish and was wise enough to use one of my defects (people-pleasing) to get me to start doing some of the suggested work. He approached me after a meeting and said “it’s about time you started working on the steps. How about I meet you at your place Wednesday night and we make a start?” I agreed to this although I still had major fears around sharing my inner most secrets with another person, but people-pleasing won out that day and that first introduction to doing the steps turned out to be an enormous turning point in my life, and my sobriety and I credit that action and that man for the beautiful quality of life that I have today. I have done the steps twice since and each time it was easier and better than the last. Being a person of good sobriety himself and with his own sponsor – even after 30+ years of sobriety, he will take none of that credit. “This is God working through me – I have nothing to do with it” is his response to any kind of praise from me. He is still my sponsor today, and one of my dearest friends.

Today, service to the fellowship that I quite literally owe my life to is an extremely important part of my program of reco demon ego in check, then helping other alcoholics and our fellowship, at a group and more recently at a district level does and without it I know I will slowly revert back to my ego-centred default self, even if I continue regular meetings. I may not drink again, but I will definitely lose much of the inner peace and joy that I have in my life today. *This is not just a theory to me. I have experimented with it many times over the years because I am a slow learner when it comes to spiritual growth - The term “The Educational Variety” talked about in Spiritual Experience (Page 567) I can relate to very strongly.*

In pretty early sobriety, an older sober member used to regularly share “you can have a life beyond your wildest dreams”. I could never believe that would happen for me and used to hate hearing it, but I am happy to say that it absolutely has happened for me. It took a while to happen for me because I took a while to do what is suggested. It is as simple as that. The life that I have today, I could not have imagined back then.

It works. It really does.

Yours in fellowship,

Dan.T

## THE TWELVE STEPS

### Step One

*"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable."*

### Step Two

*"Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."*

### Step Three

*"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand Him."*

### Step Four

*"Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves."*

### Step Six

*"Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."*

### Step Seven

*"Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings."*

### Step Eight

*"Made a list off all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all."*

### Step Nine

*"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."*

### Step 10

*"Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it."*

### Step Eleven

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

### Step Twelve

*"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry the message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."*

## THE TWELVE TRADITIONS

### Tradition One

*"Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity."*

### Tradition Two

*"For our group purpose there, is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."*

### Tradition Three

*"The only desire for AA membership is the desire to stop drinking."*

### Tradition Four

*"Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole."*

### Tradition Five

*"Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers."*

### Tradition Six

*"An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose."*

### Tradition Seven

*"Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, Declining outside contributions."*

### Tradition Eight

*"Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centres may employ special workers."*

### Tradition Nine

*"AA, as such, ought never be organised; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."*

### Tradition Ten

*"Alcoholics has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy."*

### Tradition Eleven

*"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films."*

### Tradition Twelve

*"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."*

## A HAND AND A HEART REACHED OUT THROUGH ZOOM

Hello, my name is Caroline I am an alcoholic.

A statement in our Big Book says nothing happens in God's world by mistake. In the wide world of Zoom I got to see that very statement became a beautiful experience for me. Last December 2020 I was attending my home group Big Book Recovery AA meeting via Zoom. A lady zoomed in from Spain that night was her first ever AA meeting, she was desperately seeking hope and a solution, she stayed behind after the meeting to ask questions I asked her if she would like my phone number and to give me a call anytime, I felt for her pain as I could see in her. I wanted to be a support. We left the meeting and within minutes she called me. I knew there and then that I have the chance to be responsible to the hand that reaches out. I asked her would she be willing to have me take her through the steps from the big book "yes I must do something I cannot go on like this "was the reply from her place of pain and desperation. From that night I became her sponsor. That same week she video called me with her big book in hand, ready to begin her journey, along with absolute willingness, we began step one, her eagerness was so overwhelming that it gave me hope and joy. I could see that Zoom was a miracle for two Alcoholics. Five months later she is still sober and up to step 8 & 9 and made her first amends. Who would of thought that through Zoom which to be honest I struggled with at the start of the covid 19 pandemic for it was something that seemed to be a bit out of my comfort zone. I never dreamed it would have brought about the hope, joy and there it was the solution to that suffering alcoholic. I got to see someone recover from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body to a woman bursting with hope, joy who now has the solution that the program brings. Yes, nothing happens in God's world by mistake. She calls me her armour I call her my special miracle from Zoom.

Thank you for the opportunity to share!

A very grateful Alcoholic

Caroline B

### **THE PROMISES:**

*We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.*

*We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.*

*We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.*

*No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.*

*That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.*

*We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.*

*Self-seeking will slip away.*

*Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.*

*Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us.*

*We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.*

*We will suddenly realise that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.*

*Are these extravagant promises?*

*We think not.*

*They are being fulfilled among us-sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly.*

*They will always materialise if we work for them.*

*(The Big Book pages 83-84 Fourth Edition)*

*These are the promises in Step Ten.*

## Emotional Sobriety - more will be revealed.

After two wonderful years of sobriety and through working the 12 Steps with my sponsor and finding a God of my understanding, my obsessions and cravings for alcohol have disappeared. And thank God for that!

So I was disappointed recently when I realised I had slumped back into the mire of my 'grosser defects', the ones I had unearthed when completing my 4th Step, - self-pity, resentment, fear, self-centeredness. Without realising it, I had taken back the reins and suddenly, I found my thinking had turned really stinking again.

Straight up I prayed for guidance and attended more meetings until those dark gloomy clouds dispersed and I could feel the sun's warmth once again. This took about a week.

What I learned: -

~ that sobriety, or living alcohol free, is just the beginning of my road to recovery.

~ Bill warns us of this. sitting on our laurels. in the Big Book. At first, I thought he was just referring to not drinking.

~ that those defects of character have only been uncovered in the 4th & 5th Steps, but they have not been removed yet.

~ this is where Steps 6&7 come into play. I invite God into my life, and we work together on eliminating them one day at a time.... forever.

~ but I must remember to invite my Higher Power into my life *every day*.

~ that I must use Steps 10 & 11 to review how I dealt with these defects each day. Did I succumb to self-pity, etc.? Did I forget that God's in charge and forget to ask God what my next right step might be?

~ did I try to be God conscious in all my interactions and activities? That is, did I talk quietly to God and ask what God would have me be, do or not do ... many times a day?

I am beginning to realise that living a spiritual life has many disciplines. I need the Power I have found in AA to keep me on track. It does not take me too long to fall off those tracks and find myself feeling lost, despairing, and alone once again saying "AA doesn't work after all". That is just the way my alcoholism manifests. It is ever ready to undermine me and my commitment to recovery. For me, this is where the solution to *all my problems* resides, - by living a God-centered life by working the wonderful, all-encompassing program of Alcoholic Anonymous.

Bless you all and keep coming back 🍷

In loving service Jenny

Alice Springs Women's Meeting

Saturday 9am

ID - 476-077-040

Password 476077040

Emotional Sobriety Zoom Meeting

Sunday 6pm

Brisbane

ID - 943- 808- 77149

Password gratitude



**HISTORY OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS IN DARWIN  
AND THE  
NORTHERN TERRITORY  
PART 9**

41) In the mid-seventies, meetings would still often attract just a few members. There were only meetings and no groups. Sometimes meetings did not take place or were opened late—but older sober members say AA was always there for them. Although our first Roundup was a great success in carrying the message to the public our Roundup Chairman (Clive B.) was drunk the next week. We wrote letters who could possibly be interested in Alcoholism in the Government and outside and around fifteen observers came along. By the middle of the decade the fellowship had started to grow and change. Claude from Victoria would talk about groups and structure and eventually after Kevin C. (also from Victoria) came to Darwin a effective Intergroup was established in 1978. This Group operated under a Central Service Committee (CSC) Plan of Procedure although we had no office. We knew nothing of the National Structure as there was no literature on structure available in Darwin in those days. Zenon says: "We were small in number, but close and the general theme in those days was caring and sharing and I am responsible.....we few alkie would meet at the three different meetings but we had a close bond and we rang each other regularly". Maurice M. was rebuilding a house that partially survived Cyclone Tracy. Took in a couple of "AA" borders with the result his house became an unofficial drop-in-centre with members calling in day and night. We were all welcome at one-another's homes at any time. Later it became customary for members to spend Christmas Eve and or New Years Eve at John S's or Bob W's home. This gave newcomers and others somewhere to go at what would have otherwise been a lonely time.

42) Members around meetings at that time included Hugh S. (deceased), Neville D. (deceased), Jack from Katherine, Barbara F. (deceased), Maurice M. (deceased), John S, Zenon, Teacher Brian, Jack D. (deceased), Charles, Paul V. (deceased), Natalie, Clive, Gordon (deceased) and Jeff the journalist (deceased). The small group doing organised service work was enthusiastic but did not know a lot about AA procedures.

43) Members held talks at Fannie Bay Gaol and held fortnightly meetings at Gunn Point Prison Farm (about 50km N.W. of Darwin-a long Sunday drive) for about 3 years with a maximum of 12 in attendance. For a while, the AA message was also taken to the Day Centre of the Psychiatric Ward on Thursdays. Members were very keen on getting recruits. John S. said one or two members would go around the Hospital to each ward and ask the nursing staff if there were anyone with alcohol problems who may want to go to an AA meeting. Sometimes 4 or 5 newcomers would march into the (old Darwin) Hospital Meeting. Radio advertisements were also aired on 8DR and 8DN, placed in the NT News every week also meeting cards were printed and distributed around town. Only a few members were helping at the end of 1979, so this work was continued by a few individuals until 1982. Darwin meetings were often given a lift by visitors from remote areas like Warren, Pearl, Les and Eunice, Pat C. Jimmy D. and Yvonne D. Seamen members were also enthusiastically welcome to provide a new story to the meeting.

44) Organised 12<sup>th</sup> Step work resumed in 1982 with Alice Springs and Darwin Roundups going, social events were held monthly (trips to Howard Springs, AA films and BBQ's)-these were held to provide some social life for newcomers-all of us except Paul V (deceased). *There was a great uproar when one member had his personal number listed as the AA contact without consulting anyone else. At that time, a CSC Chairman was elected by the majority vote of those in attendance (from Detox on this occasion) at a 'General Meeting'. He was just out of Detox himself. This showed us the need for some formal structure.* There were more than 3 flights for camping and carrying the message to those who lived in the picturesque Aboriginal Tiwi Island. It was a very pleasant way to spend a weekend camping. Local members would arrange hunting and fishing trips for us, and they knew some good spots. A meeting started on the island because of talks between Don K. and Michael B. while Don was working on the Island for some months. This meeting held its fourth anniversary on 4th November 1982. There was still a meeting running at Nguuu, Tiwi Island when this was originally printed in 2007. (sadly, there is no meeting there today, due to lack of availability of someone to run it). Michael B. Maintained his sobriety until his death in 1986 and passed on the message to many Islanders.

***To be continued....***

## 2021 NATIONAL FORUM

Treatment & Accessibility, Correctional Facilities  
& PI/CPC



**REGISTRATION IS OPEN  
SEE OVERLEAF FOR DETAILS**

**AUGUST 27TH - 29TH**

### LOCATION

**The Colmslie Hotel,  
Morningside**

Qld

## Registration

**\$50**

Please register using bank transfer.

### Bank Details

Account: Area C National Combined T&CF

BSB: 633000

Account # 173460288

(Use your Surname or Homegroup name if you prefer.)

If you have any questions please contact  
Syd ; 0458 668 675

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## Accommodation

Accommodation is available at our venue

**The Colmslie Hotel Morningside.**

**GOD GRANT ME THE SERENITY  
TO ACCEPT THE THINGS I CANNOT  
CHANGE,  
COURAGE TO CHANGE THE THINGS I CAN,  
AND THE WISDOM  
TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.**