

A HISTORY OF AA IN THE HARRISBURG AREA

**and its
surrounding
communities**



(R)

Second Edition

HARRISBURG INTERGROUP SERVICE COMMITTEE

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Acknowledgements

We express our appreciation to GSO, the old-timers, Harrisburg Area Intergroup, Alanon Association Inc., and to the excellent cooperation of groups for providing information on their current status.

Preface

This is the Second Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous in the Greater Harrisburg Area. This edition encompasses the period from early 1940 to August 31, 1989.

A sincere effort has been made to capture the essence of growth in our community of Alcoholics Anonymous.

This history does mention facts that are not part of Alcoholics Anonymous. They are included for their historical values and general interest.

Service Committee

Chet A.

Leigh L.

Lucy H.

Moses B.

Nancy M.

Forward

It is not uncommon to hear expressions of gratitude for being sober a day at a time, day or evening in the greater Harrisburg area. This is possible because there are at least 38 AA groups available to serve the recovering alcoholic.

These groups may have Closed, Open or Speaker meetings, as well as Big Book, Step, or various Institutional meetings. There is also a blend of social activities provided by the Fellowship House which is open many hours each day, seven days per week, for recovering alcoholics. Additionally, the Harrisburg Area Intergroup, which consists of elected or appointed representatives from all local AA Groups, provides the communication network and other related functions in carrying the message of AA.

AA meetings today are generally held in churches, hospitals, and other established community landmark facilities. The general attitude and atmosphere in and around Harrisburg is supportive to the recovering alcoholic. In reflection, and based upon the results of our study, the present picture of AA in the Harrisburg area is in dramatic contrast to that of the past.

Harrisburg celebrated its 125th birthday during 1985. The first recorded AA meeting was established in this city on June 1, 1941. It was an unpretentious beginning in that it was not readily received by either alcoholics or non-alcoholics. In 1941, the Saturday Evening Post printed an article written by Jack Alexander which described the disease of alcoholism. The message received national attention. In response to this daring and informative reporting, 1,100 inquiries were received at the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous, NYC, NY. According to the GSO, "there is no record of an (immediate) inquiry from the Harrisburg area in response to this "Post" article."

The purpose of this history is to present AA in Harrisburg as to its origin and its growth....what it was like....what happened...and what legacies of the past remain with us today.

We received, analyzed, and compiled large amounts of data, both written and verbal, during this study---a) GSO archives, b) newspapers, c) verbal and written group records, d) personal interviews with consenting AA members with over 30 years of sobriety, e) group ques-

This information was condensed and reported in chronological order.

Some of the old records were found to be informative and useful. They should be preserved in a permanent display. The GSO information provided us with dates of early AA meetings, their locations, group secretaries, and membership.

The personal interviews provided insight and depth into group functions at that time, as well as membership interaction. We realize that some gaps in reporting may exist but continued interest and studies should resolve this matter.

* * *

The Essence of Growth

"The essence of growth is a willingness to change for the better and then an unremitting willingness to shoulder whatever responsibility this entails. Let us never fear needed change. Certainly we have to discriminate between changes for the worse and changes for the better. But once a need becomes clearly apparent in an individual, a group, or AA as a whole, it has long since been found out that we cannot stand still and look the other way."

Excerpt: "As Bill Sees It."

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Excerpt: **As Bill Sees It**

District 36

In 1956 District 36 consisted of 122 groups in 13 areas in Eastern Pennsylvania. As of September 3, 1989, there were 36 districts having a total of 1594 groups.

Boundaries and names used to designate what is now District 36 have changed with the growth of AA. Areas became Conference Areas, Conference Areas became Districts. Cities and towns in Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin and York counties comprised our Conference Area in 1977.

By 1980 District 9A included the Dauphin, Cumberland, and Perry County groups and the Dillsburg Group from Northern York County. The Districts were renumbered for the GSO computer system during 1981-82. Previously known as District 9A, our district then became District 36. The boundaries remained the same.

Since the earliest days of the General Service structure, our area has maintained its link with AA as a whole. In 1951 Pennsylvania sent a state delegate to the first General Service Conference in New York. Through monthly meetings of group General Service Representatives (GSR), District 36 continues to help groups carry the message and to keep them informed of General Service level activities.



map: district 36

Harrisburg Area Intergroup

What is Intergroup?

Intergroup is a Service Board comprised of one or more representatives of each AA group in the greater Harrisburg area wishing to participate.

The stated purpose of Intergroup is to serve the AA community and to address those tasks and engage in those activities which provide common benefits and which require the effort, cooperation, and participation of more than one group. Intergroup currently has a membership of 38 groups.

Activities

1. **Answering Service.** Intergroup provides a commercial telephone answering service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Calls for help and other inquiries are referred to AA volunteers for follow-up activity.
2. **Meeting Schedules.** Meeting schedules are updated, printed and distributed semi-annually.
3. **Public Information.** Video and audio tapes of AA public announcements are purchased from the General Service Office (GSO). These tapes are provided to local TV and radio stations to be aired as a public service.
4. **Sobriety News.** This is a monthly newsletter which contains pertinent information of interest to the AA community: new meetings, meeting changes, and business and social events.
5. **Institutional Meetings.** Committees responsible for these meetings arrange for the attendance and participation of members at hospital and prison AA meetings.
6. **Literature.** This committee purchases literature from GSO for distribution to new groups on a "to be reimbursed" basis. Pamphlets are provided free of charge as a public service to prisons and health fairs and in response to special requests from professionals---pastors, physicians, etc.

Participation.

1. Each group in the greater Harrisburg area has the opportunity to participate in Intergroup activities and is encouraged to do so.
2. Group representatives are selected by each group based upon qualifications established by the individual group.
3. AA members who are not selected representatives may attend Intergroup meetings and participate in committee work. They do not have voting privileges.
4. Intergroup meetings are held at 7:00 PM the first Thursday of each month at Fellowship House, 1251 S. 19th St., Harrisburg.

Financial Support and Expenditures

Voluntary contributions are received from member AA groups. All expenditures in excess of \$50.00 must be authorized by a majority of the membership. Exceptions are expenses for telephone service, answering service, Sobriety News and the printing of meeting schedules.

History of Harrisburg Area Intergroup

1. The initial meeting, held on August 26, 1980, was attended by representatives of five groups:
 - Moses B.---Hershey Group, Hershey.
 - Leigh L.---19th Street Group, Harrisburg.
 - Helen M.---West Shore Area Group, Camp Hill.
 - Lucy E.---West Shore Area Women's Group, Camp Hill.
 - Pat W.---21st Street Group, Camp Hill.
2. The first and all subsequent meetings are held at 1251 S. 19th St., Harrisburg. This facility is now Fellowship House.

3. Highlights of Growth

August 26, 1980

- a) Five groups represented at the first meeting. Officers were elected and committees were established for Telephone, Schedules and Prison.
- b) East and West Shore commercial telephone answering services were combined to create one central answering system serving the Harrisburg area.
- c) The printing of group schedules was consolidated into one schedule.
- d) Intergroup was committed to carry the message to correctional institutions.

July 27, 1981

Intergroup By-Laws approved

December 24-25, 1981

First Christmas Alkathon at 1251 S. 19th St.

September 28, 1982

Public Information Committee provided television and radio stations with approved AA spot announcements.

November 15, 1982

Fellowship House officially opened with a Speaker meeting. This facility was known as the 19th Street Group Clubhouse, 1251 S. 19th St. It was opened on a daily basis from 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM. The facility is now open from 6:30 AM to 1:00 AM daily. Thirty-three weekly meetings are now held at the facility.

March, 1983

Sobriety News first issue published, Joe O., editor. Serves to highlight new meetings, meeting changes, speaker, institutional, business meetings and social events. Sobriety News has been published monthly since March of 1983.

June, 1986

The History of Alcoholics Anonymous in the Harrisburg Area, first edition, was compiled by Moses B., Steve S., Leigh L., Chet A., and Lynn M. and distributed to member groups.

June, 1987

Social Activities Committee formed. The committee has sponsored annual speaker meetings, dinner dances, picnics and Easter egg hunts for the AA community and their families.

April 22, 1989

Intergroup hosted its first dinner dance, which was attended by approximately 300 members and guests. The success of this event has encouraged the committee to plan it as an annual affair.

The original three committees (Telephone, Schedules, Prisons) are now supplemented by committees for Service, Hospital, Public Information, Literature, Sobriety News and Social Activities.

Of the 38 registered groups in the Harrisburg area, an average of 25 groups participate in the monthly meetings.

Fellowship House

In 1982 the 19th Street Group was experiencing a financial crisis. Many new groups had started in the area and attendance as well as contributions had dropped. The expense of maintaining the property at 1251 S. 19th St. far exceeded the group's income. Members were considering moving their meetings to a church and leaving the operating responsibility of the building to Alanon Association, Inc.

Ed H. spoke to members of the 19th St. Group about the possibility of using the building as an open house for recovering addicted people. It was the consensus of the group to accept the idea if satisfactory ways and means to implement it could be developed.

Ed H. presented the idea to Harrisburg Area Intergroup during their regular business meeting of June 29, 1982. A committee was appointed to develop a plan to implement the open house idea. After two meetings the committee, consisting of Ed H., Leigh L., Jethro W., Pete H., and Lucy H. presented a plan to operate the facility. The Intergroup voted, in agreement with the proposal, to authorize the committee to proceed with the plan to open Fellowship House on a daily basis.

As the committee's work continued, Geiri H., the acting secretary, referred to 1251 S. 19th St. as "Fellowship House" in the minutes. The committee considered this name appropriate and directed the secretary to record Fellowship House as the official designation of the facility.

Fellowship House was officially opened on November 15, 1982. It was originally open from 9:00 AM to 10:00 PM. During its first year of operation the facility was staffed by volunteers from various area groups. The 19th Street Group was responsible for securing the building on their meeting nights.

In the winter of 1982-1983 the Coffee Room, later referred to as the Half-Measure Room, was heated by a kerosene heater and the fireplace. Kerosene was donated by members five gallons at a time and members also donated wood for the fireplace.

Fellowship House gradually became financially solvent through contributions by the 19th Street Group, area groups, individuals, and Fellowship House meeting collections.

The building's central heating system was put back into service for the

winter of 1983-84. All meetings were held in the Coffee Room until the spring of 1984 when they moved to the current meeting room. During this time the meeting room was insulated, painted and papered; a drop ceiling was installed, the tile flooring removed and the floor painted. All of this work was completed by members of the recovering community under the guidance of Dick P.

Originally Fellowship House was responsible for 20 weekly meetings. In 1986 the 19th Street Group absorbed the Fellowship House Tuesday, 8:30 PM and Saturday, 7:00 PM meetings. Fellowship House sponsored the Tuesday noon meeting previously sponsored by 19th St. Group. In 1988 the Late Night Group assumed responsibility for the late night Fellowship House Friday and Saturday meetings.

As a result of these changes all daytime meetings held between the hours of 7:00 AM and 4:30 PM are Fellowship House meetings and are not registered group meetings. Contributions from these meetings are used for the operation of Fellowship House---literature, coffee and current bills. All meetings and other uses of the premises are available to all recovering alcoholics and drug addicts. The meetings are conducted as AA meetings.

Fellowship House is operated as a nonprofit, tax exempt organization. All decisions by its Executive Board concerning operational procedures adhere to the Twelve Traditions as closely as possible. "The purpose of Fellowship House is to provide a meeting place for recovering addicted people and to introduce active alcoholics to the AA Program. AA meetings are scheduled on a daily basis to make a meeting accessible to all recovering members."

Since the official opening of Fellowship House, there have been: (1) increased attendance at meetings, (2) additional meetings scheduled, (3) greater utilization of the facility, (4) added social activities, (5) a slow but progressive improvement in building maintenance and (6) improvements to the grounds and site.

Today, Fellowship House is the result of many recovering people sharing their experience, strength and hope as well as their time and expertise.

The History of Alcoholics Anonymous in the Harrisburg Area

Early 1940: On or about August, 1940, Roger B., a native of Philadelphia, who traveled often to Harrisburg, tried to carry the AA message as well as seek assistance for his alcoholism. He met with little or no success here.

Early 1941: John L. arrived in Harrisburg from New York for the purpose of establishing a program for alcoholics. This was the first contact recorded by GSO of such action in Harrisburg.

March 3, 1941: Roger B. was transferred by his company to Harrisburg, after which he became a resident. He wrote to GSO and requested information and their support to start an AA group in Harrisburg. GSO was elated and promptly responded since this was the first inquiry from Harrisburg since the famous Post article was written and had drawn 1100 responses from other towns and cities across the country.

June 18, 1941: Roger B. became the initiator of AA in the Harrisburg area. Along with the help of five other recovering alcoholics, he started a meeting in his sister's home on Lewis Street, north Harrisburg. Through his influence, John L. volunteered to speak to area hospitals concerning the disease of alcoholism.

July 20, 1941: Roger B., in a letter to GSO, stated that he had had a slip. In spite of this, Roger emphasized that "trying to help other alcoholics has helped me beyond words." By this time, doctors at Harrisburg Hospital had begun to call Roger B. to assist suffering alcoholics through Twelve Step work.

August 16, 1941: The meeting, having grown to nine members,

shifted from Roger's sister's house to 4th and Market St., Downtown Harrisburg.

August 20, 1941: It was announced that a regular Thursday, 8:30 PM meeting would be established and held in the Blue Room of the Hotel New Governor Cafe's dining room. Secretaries for this new group included Tony S. and Ralph W.

March 12, 1942: Ralph W. reported to GSO that the Thursday meeting was still going strong with ten members in attendance. "For the past two weeks the group had been meeting in my apartment where we have more privacy than we previously had in the hotel restaurant."

1942 through 1947: The group remained active. Membership increased from 10 to 25. There is no record of where the group met during this time.

August, 1947: The group relocated to 2nd and Chestnut Sts., Harrisburg. It was known as the Harrisburg Group. It was now 50 members strong! This was the only group between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Members from outside the area traveled 50 miles or more one way to attend a meeting.

Records also show that another group had begun at 1822 Green St.

August, 1950: The Harrisburg Group, 100 members strong, commemorated its "10th Anniversary" by holding an open public meeting at the State Forum. For this anniversary, the group invited and coordinated the activities with the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Department of Properties and Supplies, GSO and the Harrisburg Evening News. The Harrisburg Group was proud to stake its claim as being one of 3000 groups now meeting in the United States. Total estimated U.S. membership in AA at this time was 90,000.

1950 (cont'd) Recovering alcoholics in the Harrisburg area pledged to build a 'house' at 1251 S. 19th St. This 'house' would be conceived as a place to hold meetings, for sponsorship and consultation, and to provide an environment of recovery for the alcoholic community. Under this proposal, Alanon Association, Inc. would become the owners.

1951: A majority of members of the Harrisburg Group, commonly known as the 2nd and Chestnut Street Group, decided to purchase land and erect a building at 1251 S. 19th St. (See "Mid City Group," Page 12.)

February 28, 1951: The Alanon Association of Harrisburg filed for its "Article of Incorporation." Its initial address was 201 Chestnut St. Officers included Leo S., Foster K., Steven S., C.B. and C.G. This non-profit corporation had personal property of \$3,000 to initiate its corporate function. The purpose of the Alanon Association was "to encourage sobriety amongst its members by inculcating the principles and practices of Alcoholics Anonymous; to render relief and assistance to all alcoholics as may be judicious and necessary; to maintain and conduct a club hour to provide refreshments, entertainment, and social and physical diversions for its members; and to promote their moral, mental, and physical improvement."

April 9, 1951: State of Pennsylvania approved Articles of Corporation for the Alanon Association.

September, 1952: Alanon Association secured a \$10,000 loan to be used for the building construction at 19th St. The original loan papers and deed for the building are kept by the Alanon Trustees.

The first meeting at the clubhouse was conducted from a make-shift table consisting of a pair of saw-horses and a sheet of plywood amidst all the rubble of construction.

The group continued to use the clubhouse but could not be registered with the GSO since the Twelve Traditions do not permit AA to own property. The old timers referred to the group as the 19th Street Clubhouse.

1953: The Hill Group meetings were started by Herb S. with seven members at Evangelical Lutheran Church, 17th and State Sts., Harrisburg. This group remained active until 1965.

Editor's note: Further events of historical significance to the recovering community will be found on the following pages--- interspersed among histories of AA groups

Mid City Group

The decision to construct a building at 1251 S. 19th St. caused dissension among members of the 2nd Street Group. (See "1951," Page 10.) When the group moved its meetings to the Alanon Association of Harrisburg Clubhouse in 1951, members opposing the construction continued to meet at 201 Chestnut St. When they became unable to pay the rent the group split. As a result the following groups were formed:

The Hill Group - meetings started by Herb S. with seven members at Evangelical Lutheran Church, 17th & State Sts., Harrisburg. This group remained active until 1965.

The Mid City Group - registered with GSO in 1953, John F. secretary, and a membership of 12.

The Mid City Group met at many inner city locations before renting the basement office at 112B N. Second St., Harrisburg, in 1960. Meetings were held Thursday and Saturday at 8:30 PM with attendance of 10 to 20.

The location of the Mid City Group meeting place made it readily accessible to drifters and panhandlers. After listening to their stories any drifter who was hungry and without shelter was asked if he would go to Bethesda Mission. If he answered "yes," members would "chip in". After the meeting they would see that the needy person got food and a bed for the night. It is an unwritten rule to never give a drunk money.

Mert S. and John B. were instrumental in maintaining the group after the death of Marlin Z.

The group met at 112B N. 2nd St. for 12 years. The Agnes flood of 1972 forced the group to relocate to 122 Chestnut St., Harrisburg. From 1972 through 1980, group membership fluctuated between two and ten members.

The influence of "Old Timers" Mert S. and John B. at meetings kept the group on track. During 1982-83, the group became known as the No Bullshit Group. The group has experienced steady growth and now has a membership of 40.

After meeting for 17 years at 122 Chestnut St., the building was sold. The group now is meeting at Pine Street Presbyterian Church, Third & Pine Sts., Harrisburg.

The Mid City Group has remained active since its initial meeting in 1953---a period spanning 36 years!

1955: In order to meet the needs of the growing AA community, Alanon Association added a meeting room with a seating capacity of 75 to the original building at 1251 S. 19th St.

Hershey Group

In December, 1957, 12 people began a meeting at Wally's House in the Village of Ebenezer (Lebanon County). This was the beginning of the Hershey Group.

Early in January, 1958, the group began to meet at All Saints Episcopal Church, Hershey, on Wednesdays at 8:00 PM. This was a Closed meeting and it was the first in the area to begin before 8:30 PM.

As the membership grew to approximately 75 members, in early 1971 a larger meeting place was located in the Hershey Medical Center. The meetings were increased to three per week to include Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 PM.

The Medical Center's expansion during the 1980's forced the Hershey Group to find a new meeting place on short notice. Since January, 1984, the group meets at the Derry Presbyterian Church, Hershey.

Its current membership is approximately 60.

19th Street Group

Upon completion of the Alanon Club facility, 1251 S. 19th St., Harrisburg, the majority of the original Harrisburg Group members (i.e. 2nd & Chestnut St. Group) began to attend meetings at the new facility. The "Club" could not be registered as a group with GSO because of ownership of property. Members wanted to belong to a registered group and in 1958, the 19th Street Group was formally organized and registered. The group met at the Alanon Club House with Open meetings Wednesday and Friday. These meetings were the largest in the Harrisburg area during the period of 1952 through 1979.

The group was responsible for maintaining the property. This responsibility was much more costly to support than the previous arrangement at the 2nd & Chestnut St. location. During the winter meetings were held in the coffee room to save fuel. It was not unusual to "pass the hat" for additional funds when expenses were higher than contributions. Some members objected to this procedure but the bills had to be paid. Coffee was 10 cents per cup which was collected by a volunteer stationed at the coffee bar. Raffles for "Big Books" and "12 and 12s" were held at the Friday Speaker meetings. Poker games were conducted by some members with little financial aid to the group.

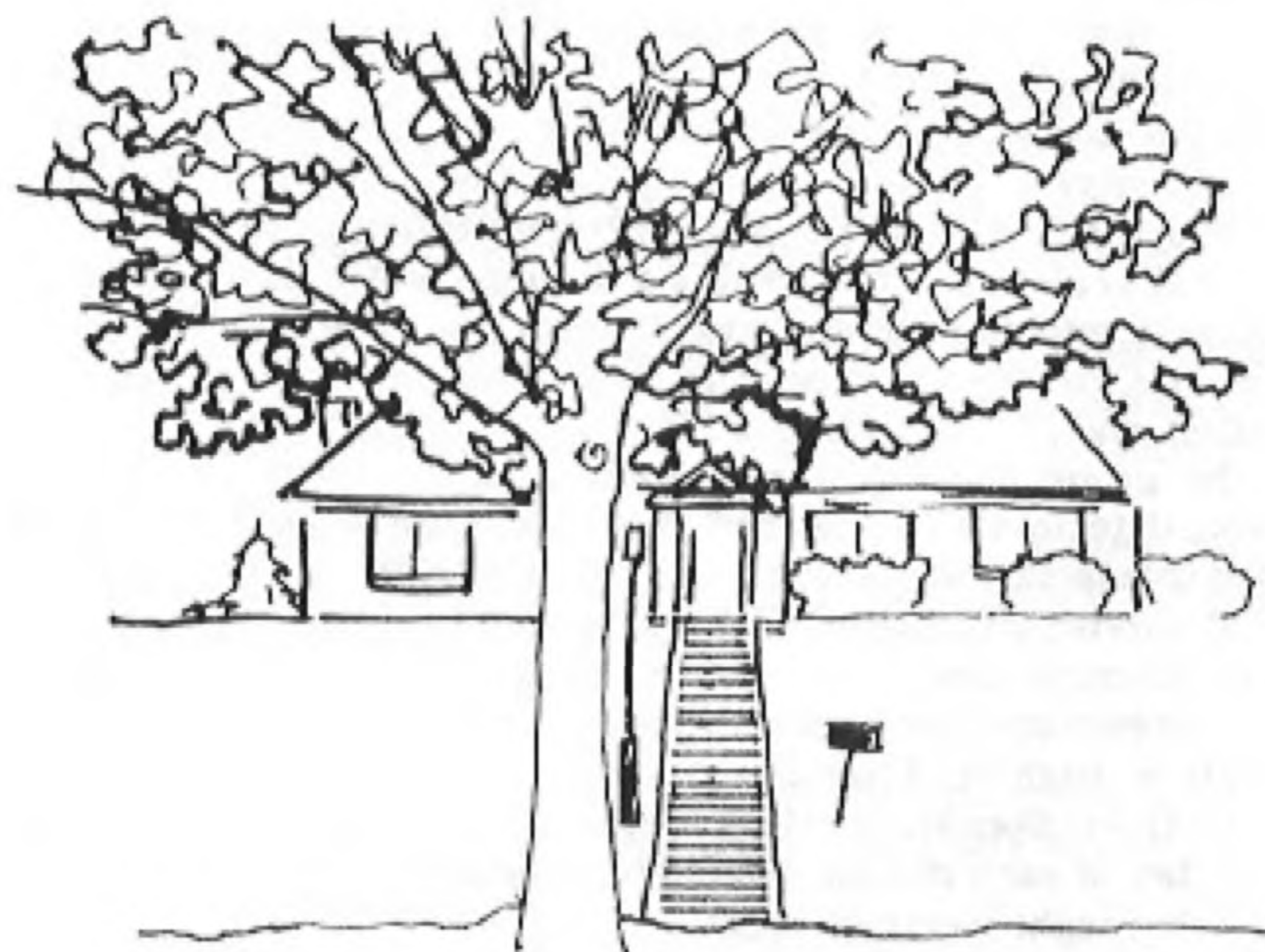
Meeting nights were expanded to include Monday, Thursday and Saturday. Membership continued to grow until late 1979. As many new groups formed in the area, attendance and contributions decreased. When financial responsibilities became impossible to meet, the group considered moving its meetings to another location.

The cooperation of Fellowship House and 19th St. Group in 1982 resulted in a variety of registered and non-registered meetings and the membership grew rapidly. Many members attending Fellowship House wanted to belong to a registered group and made 19th Street Group their home group. Other members chose to attend non-registered meetings or both.

In 1979, the 19th Street Group gave permission to Intergroup to hold its first Christmas Alkathon in their facility. The group sponsors many social activities for the recovering community, including the New Year's Eve Dance, the Valentine's Day Dance, Thanksgiving Day Alkathon, Thanksgiving Day Dinner, and Sunday Afternoon Speaker meetings.

Closed Discussion meetings are held Monday through Thursday at 8:30 PM; an Open Speaker meeting Friday, 8:30 PM; and an Open Discussion meeting Saturday at 7:00 PM.

Meetings are attended by 20 to 50.



FELLOWSHIP HOUSE

1251 SOUTH 19TH STREET

1962: Central Pennsylvania Intergroup Service Committee was established by Joseph C.

The 19th Street Group continued to function and expanded to four meetings per week with 30 members attending.

1963

Carlisle Group

Eugene R., a native of Newark, Ohio, founded the Carlisle Group in 1963 "because the nearest meeting at that time was 20 miles distant in the AA Clubhouse in Harrisburg. A small group met weekly in Gene's home but then disbanded. The active members attended meetings in the surrounding communities.

The Carlisle Group was reactivated in 1967 with Open Discussion meetings on Tuesday at 8:30 PM and Closed Discussion meetings on Saturday at 8:30 PM. These meetings were held in the basement of the Church of the Brethren on the corner of Walnut and S. West Sts., Carlisle.

Mainly due to the annoyance of left-over cigarette smoke from the Saturday night meetings to the Sunday morning parishioners, in 1981 the group was forced to move its meetings to the Carlisle Hospital's cafeteria. The threat of a smoking ban at the hospital and problems with maintaining anonymity at this busy location precipitated the group's next move to the Salvation Army building on Pomfret and Hanover Streets.

The group learned, immediately after moving, that sensitive smoke detectors were alarmed to the local fire department. Smoking at this facility was also banned. Most smokers learned that they could survive an hour without a cigarette.

Conflicting Salvation Army and Carlisle Group meeting schedules necessitated their recent move to Safe Harbour Place, located at 120 W. High St., Carlisle.

An Open Speaker meeting is now held at 8:30 PM on the last Saturday of each month. Average attendance at the Tuesday and Saturday night meetings is 30.

1966

West Shore Area Group

From 1953 through 1965 attempts had been made to establish groups on the West Shore.

On September 11 1961, about 20 members of the Mid City and 19th Street Groups, basically residents of the West Shore, met at Dick and Lucy E.'s home to discuss the feasibility of starting a West Shore group. The consensus was "Let's try it!"

The next several meetings (Thursdays-Closed, Sundays-Open) were held at Dick and Lucy's home. Eddy S. then offered the group the use of the office at the New Cumberland Wire Rope Co.. The Wire Rope Co. discontinued business in 1969 and the building, being adjacent to the railroad, became a haven for drifters. The office had to be cleared of its empty whiskey and wine bottles, beer cans and related trash before each meeting could begin.

Between 1967 and 1971 several churches were contacted to provide a meeting place without success. In 1971 Polly C. contacted Trinity Lutheran Church of Camp Hill and the group received the church's permission to hold its meetings on Tuesdays as well as on Thursdays and Sundays.

When the 21st Street Group started its Sunday Open Speaker meetings, Sunday's attendance at the West Shore Group's meeting dwindled and it was discontinued. A Wednesday evening Beginners Meeting was initiated during that time.

Meetings are now held on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday with 50 to 60 members attending their choice of smoking or non-smoking meetings.

1968: A group known as the Bailey Street Group began holding Sunday meetings. Secretary was William R. There were ten members.

1968 (Cont'd): By the late 1960's the disease of alcoholism had become recognized by governmental agencies. The Pennsylvania Department of Health, with federal government assistance, began to concentrate on drug and alcohol educational programs. At this time, Charlie Detrich was recognized for his success in starting "Synanon" in California. New York City's "Phoenix House" was an offshoot of this program.

1969: The first rehabilitation center in the area was opened at Harrisburg State Hospital by Dr. Dean Olewiler and Administrator Herbert Johnson. This was a 20-bed facility serving referred and "off the streets" clients. The only requirement for admittance was prior detoxification. The facility served clients with alcoholism and a history of mental illness. This endeavor was supported by the AA community by speaking at and chairing meetings at the hospital. The facility closed its doors in 1974 after the success of ASI was established.

1971: A group called the New Chance Study Group was established in Camp Hill with Robert S. as secretary.

The Hershey Group began meetings at Hershey Medical Center with approximately 75 members.

1972: In this year, the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and the National Council of Drug Abuse were established to educate and provide counsel. Pennsylvania's Senator Hughes became interested and lobbied for additional funds to be appropriated for recovery programs. The Governor's Council then offered \$100,000 for the establishment of a recovery center. Margaret S., Joe B., Jerry B. and Guy D. formed a committee to investigate and develop guidelines for a rehabilitation center. As a result, Alcoholic Services Incorporated (ASI) was born. Its first manager was Rick E., who had managed rehab centers in Maryland.

During this period Gaudenzia was started, its primary emphasis being on drug abuse. This was another giant step in the effort to help addicted persons.

1973: A new group formed in Steelton; secretary was Ruth L.

1974: The Holy Spirit Hospital Detoxification Unit was opened on September 1, 1974. Members of the AA community carried the message to patients through Saturday AM Rap Sessions and Sunday Open Speaker meetings. These meetings were sponsored on a rotating weekly basis by the 19th Street, Mid City, Carlisle and West Shore Area groups. There was a problem in scheduling groups to chair meetings, but it was resolved by the formation of the 21st Street Group.

Pine Street Group

The Pine Street Group was started by Joe B., Bob D. and Jimmy P. in the late summer of 1974.

The Wednesday noontime meeting is held in the basement of the Pine Street Presbyterian Church, 3rd and Pine Sts., Harrisburg.

The main purpose of this closed meeting was to make available a midweek noon meeting for workers in the downtown Capitol area.

This was the first noon meeting in the Harrisburg area. Membership has grown from an initial three members to 25. After three years a Thursday noon meeting was added.

1975: Groups formed this year were: Brother and Sisters Group, which met Sunday and Thursday, secretary, Willie J., 25 members; and East 22 Group, which met Wednesday and Friday, secretary, Richard B., 22 members.

1975 (cont'd)

21st Street Group

It was late 1974 when a meeting attended by Jay and Norma H., Ed L., Bob Mc. and Greg Mc. was held to organize the 21st Street Group. With the approval of the Holy Spirit Hospital administrative staff the group designated meetings at 8:30 PM on Thursday and Sunday to be held in the Solarium on 5 East. The first Thursday Closed Discussion meeting and Sunday Open Speaker meeting were held in the hospital's Detoxification Unit in early 1975.

Attendance at the Sunday Speaker meeting grew rapidly. The overflow from the Solarium packed the hall on 5 East. In 1975 the Sunday meetings were moved to the rear section of the cafeteria and shortly thereafter the entire cafeteria was used to accommodate 150 to 200 people. This was the largest meeting in the area.

It is the policy of the Detox Unit that their patients attend these meetings.

The 21st Street Group continues to supply the Detox Unit with meeting schedules and AA literature and to transport patients to other facilities. The group also provided cigarettes for the patients until the hospital adopted a no-smoking policy in 1988.

Attendance is 30 to 40 on Thursdays. Sunday attendance is approximately 100.

Desire Group-Lakeside Desire Group

The Desire Group was started and registered by Morgan "Mugs" B. in 1975 for the clients of 818 N. 21st St., Harrisburg, which was an Alcoholism Services Inc. (ASI) half-way facility. The group held meetings Thursdays at 8:30 PM and Sundays at 10:00 AM. These meetings were supported by many members of the alcoholic community.

When "818" was closed the group meetings were transferred to the detox and rehab facilities of ASI, 2835 N. Front St., Harrisburg. The Thursday meeting grew too large and Mary J. made arrangements with Lakeside Lutheran Church, Green and Division Sts., Harrisburg., to hold meetings in their facility.

The first Thursday meeting at Lakeside Lutheran Church was chaired by a client from the rehab center who had **one week of sobriety!**

Jethro W. prepared a format for the meetings and contacted GSO to change the group name. January 6, 1981 the Lakeside Desire Group was officially registered.

Upon the closing of ASI the Sunday meetings were also held at Lakeside Lutheran Church.

The meetings are now held Wednesday and Friday with 15 to 30 in attendance.

1976: New Life Group began Wednesday night meetings; Secretary, Betti S.

Millersburg Group

When Wilson "Red" D. founded the Millersburg Group in January, 1976, he was breaking pioneer ground in upper Dauphin County.

His early recollections were "No AA had been here before, and I guess that some people weren't happy about us being around."

The tiny group took its meeting first to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, then to the Millersburg Municipal Building and finally to Wilson's home where it has been for the past ten years.

"We just hang in and keep going one meeting at a time. Sometimes there are ten of us and sometimes only two or three, but a meeting is a meeting and we've watched a lot of people get sober and stay sober!"

Closed meetings are held Monday at 7:30 PM.

1977

West Shore Area Women's Group

The first women's group in the Harrisburg Area was started by Lucy E. at her home at 201 S. 17th St., Camp Hill, during February of 1977.

Women in the area did not feel free to discuss many physical and emotional problems in a mixed meeting. A poll of the women confirmed the need for a women's meeting.

The initial Closed meeting, held at 1:00 PM on a Wednesday, was attended by approximately 15 ladies who afterwards continued to attend on a regular basis.

During the summer of 1977, the group moved to its present location at the Trinity Lutheran Church, Camp Hill.

Regular membership is 10, with attendance of 15 to 20.

Concordia Group of Hummelstown

The Concordia Group held its first Closed Discussion meeting on Tuesday, April 12, 1977 at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Main and Rosana Sts., Hummelstown. The group was started by Sonnie M. who, upon losing her driver's license, found it difficult to attend meetings. Sonnie M., John D., Seth W., Dick F., John B., Leigh L., and Jay H. were the initial members of the group. Sonnie M. saw the word *Concordia* in a church bulletin. She consulted Webster's Dictionary and found that the definition of *Concordia* meant "All in harmony for the same purpose." The group agreed upon *Concordia* for its name.

For the first six months the meeting was "shaky" with only two or three members attending. As attendance grew, some controversy arose regarding visitors from a local rehab who outnumbered the membership and monopolized the meetings. "These recovering people didn't know if they were drug addicts, alcoholics, dual addicts or, in some cases, if they even had a problem." A group conscience meeting decided that all rehab patients were alcoholics even if they didn't know it yet.

During the first year a group conscience decided that the meetings would never exceed ten or twelve people. A head count was taken at each meeting ---the group was split into two or three groups meeting in different locations of the room. This procedure continues to be followed today. The group's yearly anniversary meeting is the only exception.

Meetings were expanded to include a Sunday night Closed Discussion in January 1982. A Speaker meeting was added, later changed to a Step meeting and finally to a Lead/Discussion meeting. During April of 1989, Concordia received the church's permission to meet on Wednesday evening as well.

Perhaps the number one problem for the group has been smoking. The meetings are held in the church's basement where ventilation is poor. Air purifiers, purchased by the group in 1982, proved ineffective. A large exhaust fan installed by the church was too noisy, and smoke detector false alarms caused three responses from the local fire company during a one-year period. The church eventually adopted a no smoking policy in all of its buildings which settled the smoking issue.

The membership is approximately 15 and attendance ranges from six to 20 per meeting.

Dillsburg Group

The Dillsburg Group was started on the first Wednesday after Labor Day in 1977. Ed H. of Mechanicsburg convinced Ed L. of Dillsburg to start an AA meeting in Dillsburg. This became the first AA meeting in northern York County. In the beginning, Ed L. opened the meeting room in St. Paul's Lutheran Church, made the coffee, sat and and read the Big Book---all alone. He often wondered *why he was there!* When out of town members and newcomers began to attend the meetings, his patience and dedication were rewarded.

The group has grown from the original one member to the current membership of 25. In addition to the regular Wednesday Closed Discussion meeting, the group's schedule now includes Step meetings on the first three Fridays of each month and a Speaker meeting held on the last Friday of each month.

Stay Alive Group---Fairview

The first meeting of the group was during September of 1977.

Dick B. shared his experience, strength and hope with Bob G. of Fairview Township. Bob G. died in an alcohol related fire. Bob's death motivated Dick B. to contact the Township fire chief and request permission to hold Sunday meetings at 9:00 AM in the Fire Company Hall, Rte. 114, Lewisberry Rd., New Cumberland. Permission was granted. The Stay Alive Group was so named because of Bob G.'s death.

The first three Sundays Dick kept himself company. Shirley W. was the second member to attend the meeting, later to be joined by Matt Mc. and Betty S. Dick used the ASI van to transport patients from "818," ASI's half-way house, to the meetings. After Joe B., Joe S. and others chaired meetings, the Stay Alive Group "took off"

The membership of the group is 20 to 25, but attendance at meetings is 60 to 70.

Lambda Group

On April 19, 1979, a group of gay recovering alcoholics gathered at Friends Meeting House in Harrisburg to discuss their needs. They called themselves "gay alcoholics all together" and used the principles of the AA program. At the first meeting were Sheila D., Gloria M., Shirley W., Sandra M. and Dennis S. (who was making this his first AA meeting and went on to become the group's first GSR).

News of the meeting spread by word of mouth and the following year, 1980, the group officially registered with GSO as Lambda Group. As a special interest group, primarily for lesbians and gay men, we believe that we fill a need within the gay community. Our group statement of policy maintains that "we of the Lambda Group are gay alcoholics; however, we are at this meeting because we are alcoholics, not because we are gay." Lambda is the only registered gay group within District 36.

The group meets on Monday at 8:00 PM and on Friday at 3:30 PM at Friends Meeting House, Herr and 6th Sts., Harrisburg.

Attendance at meetings averages approximately 40 persons.

1980

Winner's Circle Group

During July, 1980, Wilbur T. and Dave R. started the Winner's Circle Group at the Penn-National Race Track, Grantville, Pa.

Wilbur T. wanted to stay sober and did not have a way to attend meetings so he and Dave R. started a meeting at the track. The first Open Discussion meeting, Tuesday at 8:30 PM, was held near the "back stretch" of the track in the Chaplain's office. It was attended by eight members.

The group needed more space so they moved into the track's kitchen. Since this location interfered with other employee's activities, the meeting was moved to the track's "Brickhouse". Located at the "North Gate," the Brickhouse was easier to find by visiting members of other groups.

The meetings, originally held on the second floor, were later moved to the first floor. Meetings are held at 8:30 PM on Tuesdays during the off-racing season and are changed from Tuesdays to Mondays during the racing season.

The membership is approximately 15.

1981

Mechanicsburg Serenity Group

For several years members from Dillsburg, Carlisle, York Springs and Mechanicsburg had discussed starting a meeting in Mechanicsburg. These recovering people had to travel to either Camp Hill or to Harrisburg for meetings. An influx of newcomers was another reason for the need of a meeting in Mechanicsburg.

In August, 1981, Randy M., Jim B. and Matt Mc. started the Serenity Group. The meeting was held at the Presbyterian Church, 300 East Simpson Ferry Rd., Mechanicsburg, Monday at 8:30 PM.

A Step meeting was started on Thursdays at 8:30 PM during 1982, but was later discontinued due to poor attendance.

During 1983, the Monday meeting was divided into smoking and non-smoking meetings. The groups meet in separate rooms, socializing before and after meetings.

Group membership is 20. Attendance is 15 to 20 at the regular meeting and 25 to 30 at the non-smoking meeting.

Talbot Place Ltd., a center for the treatment of addictive diseases, opened in October, 1981.

1981 (cont'd)

Women's Serenity Group

During 1981 Ruth Z. started a full time job and needed a women's meeting. Ruth contacted several churches without success. She then contacted Leo Mc. of the Holy Spirit Hospital Detox Unit and received permission to hold meetings in the Detox Unit classroom. Ruth Z., Helen M., Marilyn B. and Shirley F. were involved in getting the meetings started. Monday 6:00 PM meetings were chosen since there were no other meetings in the area at this time.

The Women's Serenity Group worked in conjunction with the Detox Unit. All female patients were required to attend the group's meetings.

In two years the group outgrew the classroom's capacity and relocated in the solarium. The group moved to the Trinity Lutheran Church, Camp Hill, in 1985 when once again more space was needed to accomodate the attendance at meetings.

The Women's Serenity Group continued its service to the female patients of 5E by sending two members of the group every Monday night until 1988 when Harrisburg Intergroup assumed the responsibility.

The group, originally having about ten members, now numbers approximately 40 to 50 women at each meeting.

1982: ASI filed for bankruptcy and closed in April.

Wellsville Group

The Wellsville Group first met on October 26, 1982, in the Wellsville Borough Office, where its meetings are still held on Tuesday at 8:00 PM. The group was founded by Ed S. and Gerry C. to fill a geographical need for an AA meeting in Wellsville.

This is a Closed Discussion meeting. Occasionally, through a group conscience decision, it is an Open Discussion meeting when a newcomer is accompanied by a spouse or a friend.

The Wellsville Group averages about eight members per meeting although the ranks are sometimes boosted by out of town members. The group says that you can be sure of one thing when you come to Wellsville---lots of socializing, both before and after meetings.

Ed S. and Greg C. like to relate the story about their attending an out of town meeting and announcing Wellsville's need of support. Afterwards a girl came up and asked them for directions to Wellsville. While giving directions they noticed that the girl chuckled now and then. Ed asked her what was funny. She paused and then asked if Wellsville was where members went when they got well. Ed and Greg assured her that Wellsville was where members come to get better.

1983: First Step Program was opened by Goodwill Industries, Inc. in April, 1983. This is a seven day detoxification and educational program.

First Step Group

In April, 1983, Dick B. initiated a 12:00 Noon Closed Discussion meeting for the clients of the First Step Program and the recovering AA community. The group was registered as the First Step Program Support Group of Goodwill Industries, Inc.

The meetings were held seven days a week at 1838 N. Second St. Harrisburg---the location of the First Step Program. Attendance the first six weeks was from two to four. Meetings on Saturday and Sunday were discontinued later in the year.

In March, 1987, the meetings were moved to 627 N. Cameron St. Harrisburg, when Goodwill Industries, Inc. relocated the First Step Program to its new building. Sometime during 1983 to 1987 the group's name was changed to the First Step Group.

The noon meetings, Monday through Friday, are supported by two to ten recovering members of AA.

Susquehanna Valley Center opened in November, 1983, under the auspices of Harrisburg Hospital. The rehabilitation center was located in Brady Hall. The facility was closed in May, 1986.

Late Night Group

In October 1983, a Saturday 12:00 Midnight candlelight meeting was held at the Fellowship House, 1251 South 19th Street, Harrisburg. Meetings were held under the auspices of the Fellowship House Executive Committee with George C. and Renee B. responsible for the meetings and the housekeeping chores. average attendance was 10 to 12.

Candles and candlesticks rapidly disappeared between meeting dates until one night there were none on hand. George C. filled styrofoam cups with quick setting plaster, inserted candles and the candlelight meeting was held. Those makeshift candle holders and candles lasted for several meetings.

In the spring of 1985, a second candlelight meeting was added on Friday at 11:00 PM.

A desire was expressed to register the group but was voted down. Unhappiness with the decision led to the formation of a registered group meeting Sunday and Wednesday at 11:00 PM. This was initiated by Jerry Y. Meetings expanded to include Sunday through Thursday.

During 1988 the two groups blended. The Late Night Group assumed responsibility for Friday and Saturday meetings.

The average attendance through the week is 10. Weekend attendance is about 20.

First Things First Group

The Hershey Medical Center Staff requested the First Things First Group to hold at least one meeting a week at the Medical Center for the convenience of the patients. During 1984, the Hershey Group had moved its meetings from the Medical Center to the Derry Presbyterian Church, Hershey.

Priscilla S., Tom O. and several other Hershey Group members agreed to start a Thursday 8:00 PM Beginners meeting at the Medical Center. The subject matter of the meetings has remained basic, concentrating on living sober and the first three steps.

The group has approximately 12 members. Attendance, including patients and doctors, varies from 15 to 20.

Progress Group

In 1984 Nancy G., using a borrowed coffee pot and the support of ten men and women, held the first meeting of the Progress Group in her home. The meeting was one of the first non-smoking meetings available in the Harrisburg area. The objective of this meeting was to place special emphasis on welcoming newcomers and to focus on the 12 Steps.

Later, the Progress Group relocated to the Ridgeway Community Church on Progress Avenue, Susquehanna Township, Dauphin County. A group conscience decision later changed the meeting from Closed to an Open Discussion meeting.

An average of 30 members regularly attend the Progress Group's 8:30 PM Wednesday meetings.

Upper Dauphin Group

The Upper Dauphin Group was formed in March, 1985, in the home of Bill C. Bill sat for several weeks by himself reading the Big Book and drinking lots of coffee.

Eventually, the word got out and recovering alcoholics began to gather from all areas of Upper Dauphin — along with strong support from the greater Harrisburg area members.

In August of 1987, when the meeting had outgrown Bill's home, it was moved to a ramshackle building in Fisherville.

Recently, the Messiah Lutheran Church of Fisherville completed its new educational wing. Thanks to the expert help obtained from members the Group was able to hold its meetings on the second floor of the new wing prior to the wing's completion.

Today, the Upper Dauphin Group has a steady membership of 12-15. Closed Discussion meetings are held at 8:00 PM Wednesdays.

Walnut Bottom Group

The Walnut Bottom group meeting was started at the Helen Stevens facility on Walnut Bottom Rd. in August, 1985, by Bob R. because there were only two AA meetings in Carlisle. The Wednesday night meeting got off to a slow start with only Bob R., Terry T. and Jim S. in faithful attendance each week. This put to the test that all that is needed for an AA meeting are two drunks, a Big Book and a resentment.

By July of 1986 if you came late you sat on the floor.

Memorable events for the group are its annual anniversary Speaker meeting and having had speakers such as "Smokey" from York Haven.

The group was locked out of the Christmas of 1986 meeting when the facility was closed for the holiday. The weather was bad that night and roads were icy. Joe W. went in search for the key. Upon returning, he was surprised to find about 50 members waiting in their cars. Forrest B. chaired that night and his topic was "Faith!"

In October of 1986 a very popular Thursday night Step and Tradition meeting was started by Gene H., Liz E., Bobby M. and Cindy P. Both Wednesday and Thursday night meetings are well attended and continue to grow in numbers.

1986

Colonial Park Group

The Colonial Park Group was started by Pat D. in January of 1986. This was the first group in the Colonial Park area. The initial meeting was attended by six members.

The group holds Open Discussion meetings Monday at 8:00 PM in the United Methodist Church, 450 Colonial Rd., Colonial Park. Average attendance is 10 to 12.

New Beginning Group

Ken D. and Deb, both from New Bloomfield, were in counseling together when they decided to form an AA group in their home town. Ken and Deb conducted the first meeting on a Monday night at 7:00 PM during February, 1986, at St. Bernard's Catholic Church, McClure St., New Bloomfield.

During November, 1988, the group moved its Closed Discussion meeting to the Keboch Methodist Church, Main Street, New Bloomfield.

In March, 1989, a Tradition meeting was started on Thursdays at 7:00 PM.

The group's membership has grown from two to eight. Attendance at meetings is from 10 to 18.

Stoney Creek Group

For the first two years after its founding in April, 1986 by Priscilla S., the Stoney Creek Group met at the Dauphin Fire House. Here members were as likely to hear blaring radio emergency calls as they were to hear "How It Works."

In March of 1988 the group found true serenity---or at least more quiet quarters---in the basement of St. Matthew's Catholic Church, Allegheny Street, Dauphin, where Closed meetings are now held Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:00 PM.

Today the Stoney Creek Group has about 25 members.

Sunday Night Group

In December of 1986, Gene H. began discussions with Joe W., Had C., Jim A., Craig S., Amy B., and Kim F. regarding the need of having a Sunday night meeting in Carlisle. The idea was to provide a local meeting as an alternative to the long drive to attend other existing meetings. The primary interest of this group's founders was to accomodate the newcomer.

The initial meeting of the Sunday Night Group was held on February 8, 1987, at the Saint Paul's Lutheran Church, Carlisle, with seven members in attendance. The group has since grown to approximately 25.

1987

40th Street Group

The 40th Street Group was started by Leo B. and Jan D. on April 24, 1987. Meetings are held in the Rectors Meeting Room of St. Catherine Laboure Church, 40th and Derry Streets, Harrisburg.

The reason for starting this meeting was that there wasn't a Friday evening Discussion group on the East Shore.

During May, 1988, by a group conscience decision, smokers and non-smokers sat on opposite sides of the table. This system did not eliminate complaints from the non-smoking members. Smoking is now allowed before and after meetings, but it is not permitted during meetings.

In 1988, a Saturday Closed Discussion meeting was added to the 40th Street Group's schedule.

Membership is 15 to 20. Attendance at meetings is about 40 persons.

Lykens---Winding It Up Group

Kris L., Rhonda S., Bill B., and Steve L. were new to the community. To their dismay they found that there were no AA meetings in the Lykens area. They decided to start a meeting close to home.

The first Open Discussion meeting was held at Our Lady of Help Christian Church, 732 Main St., Lykens, Monday at 7:00 PM during May of 1987. In July, 1987, a Friday Open Discussion meeting was added to the schedule.

During the first year the group consisted of the four original members and a young man just out of rehab.

The Winding It Up Group is pleased to report that the attendance at meetings is now 25 to 30.

1988

Ain't You Had Enough Group

This group was formed on March 21, 1988, because Forrest B. and others determined a need for an AA meeting in Carlisle on Monday nights.

The Open Discussion meetings are held at Dickinson College, Holland Union Building, Women's Center. The group continues to enjoy the "blessings" of the College's administration and student counseling departments. It has had a small but consistent turnout and feels confident that the future will bring growth both to its numbers and to each of its recovering alcoholics.

1988 (cont'd)

Lemoyne Men's Club

Bill L. started this men's group during June of 1988 with five recovering men in attendance. The group meets at 8:00 PM Thursday in the Grace United Methodist Church, 313 Herman Avenue, Lemoyne.

The purpose of this meeting is to allow men to share their experience, strength and hope by examining the effects of alcoholism from a man's perspective. We must remember that the men we were will drink again, but the men that we can become won't have to. Frank talk is welcomed. We do not take each other's inventory nor do we give advice without being asked to do so.

Currently 8 to 12 members attend each meeting.

Carlisle Women's Group

Sue L. and Geiri H. discussed the need for a women's AA meeting in Carlisle. While attending various AA meetings they asked other women if they agreed to this need. Their response was a definite "yes". A suitable meeting place was arranged at the Carlisle Army Barracks. Sunday evening meetings were chosen to enable women with children an opportunity to attend the women's meeting with a minimum of family conflict.

The response has been most gratifying. Beginning with eight to ten women in October of 1988, the group has grown to 20-25 in attendance at each meeting. Every Sunday new faces are seen and all members agree that it is a *super-great* meeting. The group is growing by leaps and bounds! Thanks to all!

Millerstown Group

Jim H., Ken D., and Cliff L. started AA meetings in Juniata County on November 19, 1988. The meeting place is in the Millerstown Methodist Church House. The meetings are Closed Discussion and are held on Saturday evenings at 8:00 PM.

The group's current membership is six.

1989

Where You're At Today Group

Judy S. was attending a Sunday meeting at Holy Spirit Hospital when she met a woman who was attending her first AA meeting. Judy shared her strength and hope with her and they made arrangements to meet Monday at the Women's Serenity Group meeting. There were approximately 70 women in attendance and the room was heavy with smoke. Judy S. decided a non-smoking woman's group was a must. She contacted other women in the area and found they too felt as she did. With strong support from Ruth A., Judy decided to go ahead with her idea.

The result of a first encounter with a newcomer led to the start of another women's group. The first Closed Discussion meeting was held on Wednesday, January 25, 1989, at 6:15 PM, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Camp Hill.

Attendance ranges from 10 to 25.

Rebellion Dogs Group

George A. of Carlisle wanted a noon meeting on the West Shore that concentrated on the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. Finding several other interested people, George received permission to have noon meetings at the Presbyterian Church of Mechanicsburg, 300 Simpson Ferry Rd. The group's first meeting was held on March 20, 1989.

The group name was found in Step 7: "A whole life-time geared to self-centeredness cannot be set in reverse all at once. Rebellion dogs our every step at first."

Attendance is usually five persons.

"Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions"—Page 74

More to Life Group

Judy S. was interested in attending a group meeting right after work. She was looking for a mixed group interested in all that life has to offer to the recovering individual. Judy believes "There is more to life than just not drinking."

The More To Life Group was formed and their first Closed Discussion meetings were held 6:00PM Friday, April 14, 1989, and 10:00 AM Saturday, April 15, 1989 at Community United Methodist Church, 16th and Bridge Sts., New Cumberland.

At the first Friday meeting Judy S., Randy M. and Gerry began to think that they were going to be the only members attending. Arriving one by one, at 5:55 PM the group's first meeting was attended by 25.

Attendance now varies from 10 to 25.

Chit Chat of Harrisburg opened on July 10, 1989. The rehab's first patient was admitted on July 17.

First Things First Group---Dauphin

A sense of sweet irony filled the room at the initial meeting of the First Things First Group August 4, 1989. For good reason. The group had just taken over the "Pink Pony," which until recently had been a high-flying tavern on Rte. 322 north of the Boro of Dauphin.

"A lot of alcoholics got their start drinking here," said Ed S. who along with Tim K. started the group. "And now a lot of alcoholics will spend Friday nights here recovering from alcoholism instead of feeding the disease."

About 15 members of the fellowship showed up for the first meeting, surrounded by pool tables and other reminders of those days gone by. The topic for discussion, fittingly, was gratitude.

Ed S. said "The meeting will continue to be held as a Closed Discussion at 7:30 PM Friday. We have access to the building for as many meetings as we want. If the need arises, we'll add more, but first things first."



SERENITY LODGE DAUPHIN, PA

We Keep On Growing

Alcoholics Anonymous continues to grow in the Harrisburg Area as evidenced by the formation of new groups since the deadline passed for inclusion in this volume.

It is our hope that as the fellowship grows and as more information becomes available, Intergroup will continue to revise this publication.

Listed below are groups which, according to our most recent knowledge, were formed since work began on this issue of our local AA history.

**Young Persons' Group—Saturday, 7:30 P.M.
Community United Methodist Church
16th and Bridge Sts., New Cumberland**

**Latino Unidos Group—Monday, 7:00 P.M.
Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
125 S. 13th St., Harrisburg**
