



Area 57 Archives

Group History Project

Please help us preserve our past and our present!

Your Group's History – What, When, Why, How and to Where

Any Group's history may uncover facts and recollections that will strengthen that group's foundation. The facts discovered from doing a group history can be relevant, humorous, eye-opening and significant: 1) your group itself; 2) to your District; 3) to your Area Archives; and 5) to our Archives at G.S.O. (General Service Office in New York).

Assembling a group history is easier than you might think. We have put together the following form which hopefully - if you'll take the time to try to answer (or find the answers) you'll really enjoy the process.

Any GSR or member of your a group can collect the facts. Your group treasurer, your longtime members and/or your group secretary can also all participate in completing this group history project. Your group might consider having a special "business" meeting for the purpose of answering these questions. Such a meeting may provide good results for success in this group history project. However, the questions do not need to be answered all at one time.

Our Area 57 Archives are housed at the State AA Office (4509 N. Classen, OKC). We have files on each group and each district. Your group history will be added to the Area 57 Archives and a copy will be sent on (by the State AA Office) to the Archives at G.S.O. Your group history will be added to the many items that preserve the facts, the experience and the vital history that might otherwise be lost or get replaced by myths and half-truths.

G.S.O. has a "history date" for each group. If you do not have the recognized "start date" for your group, just call the State AA Office (405-840-1200) to get that date. Many times that "start date" is when the group registered with G.S.O. In order to officially change that date to an earlier date, we will need something in writing to show that the group was meeting prior to that. This happens frequently, since groups usually waited until they were up and running for some time before they registered with G.S.O.

Area 57 Archives thanks you (and your group's) efforts to preserve our past and present! Your response to this Group History Project could make a tremendous difference to an alcoholic out there still suffering -- who finds recovery in the future and finds this group history - years from now. Remember, this history record is considered confidential and "for A.A. use only".

If you have any questions about this project, feel free to E-mail: archives@aaoklahoma.org

Sample of a Group History - Triangle Group (Norman)

GSO History Date: 9/11/1987 (This was originally written for the 10th year anniversary & updated twice since)

First History - Written for 10th year anniversary:

In November 1986 at the [Norman] Big Book AA Group's monthly business meeting, a Group conscience was taken on whether or not to allow people to attend "closed" meetings without expressing either a desire to stop drinking or stating that they were alcoholic. It was passed.

A number of the group members objected. It seemed to them that the Third Tradition, "*The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking*" was no longer to be applied in the group. After the business meeting, some people declared it was time to form a new group.

Joyce J. went home and called Otto K. to let him know what had happened at the business meeting. He expressed the same concerns as some of the others when he was told of the group's decision.

Otto spoke with Dale S. It was decided to meet in Dale's garage that Friday night. Everyone on the Big Book Group's phone list was called and invited to attend.

There were probably fifteen to twenty people at the first meeting in Dale's garage. Several subjects were discussed, including:

1) What each of us hoped the Group would be; 2) What the meeting formats would be; and 3) Whether we should take the Al-Anons into consideration when looking for available space. Some folks who came to those first meetings did not agree with the decisions made - thus the Phoenix Group was started.

Those who remained continued to meet in Dale's garage until we had the necessary funds to rent a better meeting space. We named our new group the Triangle Group on December 10, 1986. The members present at the first meeting of the Triangle Group were: John C.; Sue D.; Scott H.; Joyce J.; Otto K.; Kyle N.; Dale S. and MC S.

Originally we met three times a week at 8:00pm: Monday (Step Study), Wednesday (Big Book Study) and Friday (Speaker and Pot Luck Supper). We invited everyone we knew. We tried to entice them to leave their groups and come over to ours. Many people came and went during the early days - a lot of the people from the Big Book Group and the Phoenix Group. We all had strong feelings about the split. We were excited and afraid. Some Big Book Group members were angry with us. They felt we had abandoned them and were then trying to make them choose between the groups.

Our first newly sobered members were: Mary Jane R. An Tallulah W. Then Buddy T. joined the group. He brought Charlie and many others came after that.

The group began to grow and we were soon too big for the small meeting room. Inquiries were made about a larger space. We found one and were paying \$125 per month for a space on North Flood Avenue. A better space across the way was available for \$175. At the time we wondered if we would be able to pay that increase, but we moved into our new space in June of 1988. Those who could afford it frequently put an extra check in the basket to make the rent.

Of course when we moved - we grew. We began to add more meetings. It was suggested that anyone wanting to start a new meeting commit to attend it for one year. Soon a Sunday night Big Book Study meeting was started, followed by a Tuesday night "As Bill Sees It" topic discussion meeting, and then Thursday night Daily Reflections topic discussion and Saturday night Beginners meetings.

We had red checkered plastic table cloths on the tables and were soon able to afford a vacuum cleaner (members no longer had to bring theirs from home.) We added more coffee pots, tables and chairs.

Many people have contributed so much to this group. New people came and took over from those who started the group and still others came to take over from them.

Through the authority of a Higher Power, the efforts of many, we have a strong group. Recovery from alcoholism and "a design for living that really works" are what the Triangle Group has tried to contribute to its members.

History Update - Written for 15th year anniversary (2001):

Two new meetings at 6:30 were added: a Monday Big Book Study and an AA Heritage Wednesday non-smoking meeting. Our rent increased to \$800.

Statewide, we were well represented at meetings and known for our service record. The Big Book and AA Literature are what we used for meetings and what we talked about. We continued to honor the Traditions as a group. Newcomers were attracted to this focus just as they were in the first ten years. The Triangle Group continued its commitment to recovery and to A.A.'s singleness of purpose.

Second History Update - Written for 20th year anniversary (2006):

Our group is maturing. The most recent five years have been different from the previous fifteen. Some of our original members and several of our very active members who came later to the Triangle Group died. Newcomers took the chairs left by those who came before, and we continued a healthy increase in attendance. The group voted to lease space to the No Expectations Al-Anon Group. That group now meets twice a week when the facility is not being used for A.A. meetings. This Al-Anon group has enriched our open meetings and provided assistance to A.A. family members and loved ones. We've added more 6:30 A.A. meetings. Besides the established Monday and Wednesday meetings, a Tuesday Big Book Study and a Thursday Twelve & Twelve meeting were added - doubling the number of meetings in 2001.

A Triangle Group conscience voted to make itself a smoke-free meeting place. Many thought that would never happen. Members who left after the vote frequently return to visit. The group has picked up new people attracted to the group because it is non-smoking. The Triangle meeting room was improved with new chairs, carpet and tablecloths and a new podium. Our rent is now \$880 monthly. We continue to be active at statewide service meetings.

Triangle looks forward to the future. May God continue to use us to help others recover from alcoholism. And may we always have the grace to extend a helping hand to those who suffer. 11/17/2006

Area 57 Archives - GROUP HISTORY PROJECT FORM

Prepared by: _____

Date submitted: _____

Group Name: _____

Your Phone Number _____

City: _____ State: _____

Your Email address: _____

District # (optional) _____ G.S.O. Group Number (optional) _____

(Please use separate paper – if more space is needed)

- Date the group started meeting: _____ GSO History Date (optional) _____
- The place, day and time of the first (or earliest) meetings, and the estimated numbers of members:
- How often did your group meeting at first?
- Did your Group separate (split off from) another Group? Why?
- What type of meeting was it? (speaker, discussion, Big Book study, etc) Has the meeting format changed over the years? How?
- Did your Group ever hold any public Open Meetings? Describe how they were (are) done.
- How were meetings added or changed in your Group? What is the place, day & time of your Group meetings today, and the number of members now?
- Do you know who brought AA to your town or was responsible for starting the group?
- Who were the early members “founders” (trusted servants) of your Group?

- Did they help start any other groups? Which one(s)?

 - List the members of your home group who are still living & have 20 years or more of sobriety (optional):

Name	Sobriety Date	Phone Number (optional)
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- Did the early members visit surrounding groups? Which ones?
 - What kinds of things did the early members do for fun and fellowship?
 - How many times has the Group moved? To what different sites (addresses)? Under what circumstances?
 - How has the Group evolved:
 - Has it ever changed names? If so, from what to what?
 - Has the makeup of group membership changed (all men, etc)? How?
 - Did the group ever split? If so, what Group names were the splits? When & why did it split?
 - Are there any special events that your Group hosted (or hosts)? What is it?
 - What do you feel makes your Group unique? (Best qualities)
 - Do you have any “unusual” or “unforgettable” characters who have been associated with your Group? Who and tell a little about each.
 - Do any of the original members of your Group still attend?
 - Does your Group have any particularly close relationship with another group?
 - Do members of your Group attend other groups together?

- Has your Group been involved in any outside activities as a group? (potlucks, institutional meetings, public information projects, 12-step work, workshops, holiday events, dances, conventions, outside speakers, etc.)

- What kinds of growing pains, problems, or any “feuds” happened? What were the solutions? Did any particular member lead the Group out of difficulties toward the resolutions?

- How does your group cooperate with outside agencies – treatment centers, detox centers, prisons, courts, probation & parole boards, etc? Has this changes over the years?

- Did your Group ever assign sponsors? How do you give phone numbers to new people today? Has that changed over the years?

- How does your Group welcome first-timers? Then? Now?

- How do (did) members of your Group keep in contact with each other between meetings - then? Now?

- How did/does your Group celebrate anniversaries – both for individuals and the Group? Does your Group have any annual dinners or picnics?

- How does your Group change people doing jobs (making coffee, setting up, etc)?

- Did your Group have “greeters” at the door – then? Now? Describe.

- Did/does your Group contribute literature to any libraries, hospitals, jails or treatment centers? What literature items did/does your Group give first-timers?

- Are there any other things or events in your Group’s history, which are particularly interesting? What are they?

- Does your Group give away Big Books? If so, how do you fund this?

- How has your Group's 7th Tradition of passing the basket changed over the years?
- Has paying rent for your Group changed over the years? How?
- Has the percentage your Group contributes to GSO, State (Area), Intergroup & District changed over the years? How?
- How did your Group pick people to chair meetings in the early days? Now?
- Does your group have Group Service Chairs? (Archives, Grapevine, Public Information, Cooperation with the Professional Community, Treatment, Corrections, Language Services, Media Services, Bridge-the-Gap, OK Gratitude Plan, etc.)
- Have any of your Group members participated in District or Area general service work? Who and what positions?
- If the Group is no longer active, when and why did it fold?

Please return to: Oklahoma State AA Oklahoma, PO Box 18415, Oklahoma City, OK 73154