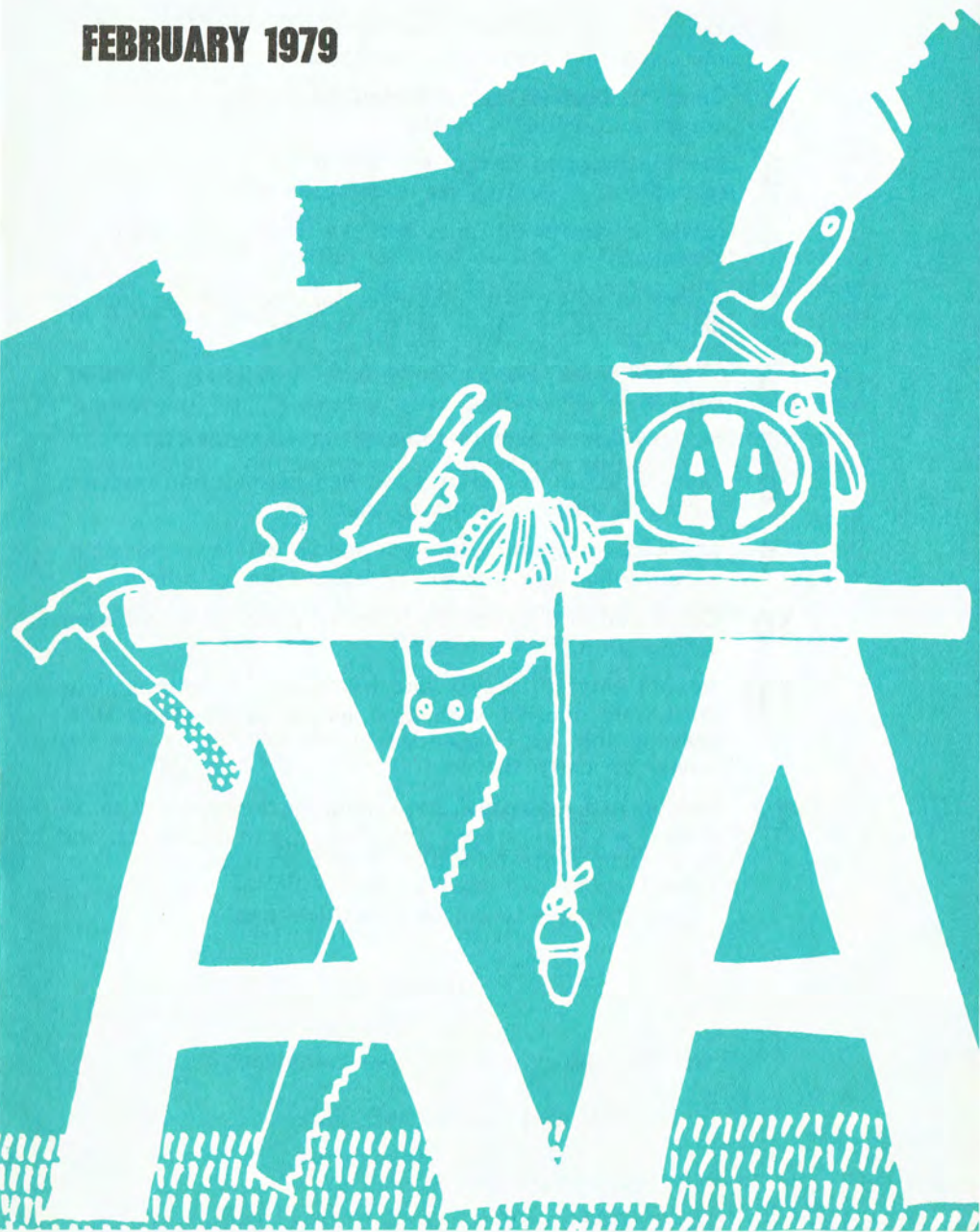


# MAINSTAY

FEBRUARY 1979



# AA

## the twelve steps

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

Vol. 24  
No. 5

# MAINSTAY

February  
1979

The Monthly Magazine

of the

NEW ZEALAND GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

of

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS



'Mainstay', the Monthly Journal of AA in New Zealand, aims to be an AA meeting in print, expressing the views and experiences of AA's recovering in all parts of the country. Opinions expressed in 'Mainstay' are not to be attributed to AA as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement either by Alcoholics Anonymous or 'Mainstay'. We aim to be representative of AA views and experiences throughout New Zealand, and are dependent upon literary contributions from members to obtain this objective.



Quotations of Conference approved literature are used in this issue with permission of AA World Services Inc.



**GOD grant me the SERENITY  
to accept the things I cannot change  
COURAGE to change the things I can  
and WISDOM to know the difference**



Subscription — \$7.00 Yearly: 60c per copy

P.O. Box 6458, Wellington

## **EDITORIAL**

This is Convention Month. AA conventions in New Zealand have now been held for many years and each year a theme is developed for the Convention. 1979 the theme is "SERVICE". I am therefore writing on the topic of service in this our Convention Month.

The Twelfth Step of our programme tells us that we try to carry the message to alcoholics who still suffer. The Twelfth Step really sums up all aspects of service. When we visit a hospital group we are taking part in service. When we visit a prison we are offering service. When we contribute to Mainstay or publish Mainstay we are taking part in the services of AA.

A lot of us seem to lose sight of the many aspects of service available to us. When we are asked to do a job in our group, we are being invited to take part in the services of AA. The Secretary is a servant, the Chairman is a servant. As we go around the groups we find there are many who are eager to take part in our various services but there are many who are content to attend meetings and look after their own sobriety. No one can criticise them. If that is their way of working the programme, so be it.

When we sober up we become aware of many talents that we have that have been subdued for years by alcohol. Often in our eagerness to serve, we overlook these talents and sometimes offer to AA talents that we do not have. Paul sums up the difference of talents in I Corinthians, Chapter 12. He tells us that we all have gifts—some are given the gift of languages, others the gift of writing, others have the gift of healing. The point he is making is that it is not possible for all of us to have the same gifts or talents. We are given different gifts or talents according to our nature and ability.

Sometimes when we put our talents into the service aspect of AA we try to put in talents we do not possess. How tragic it is to see a person who cannot write but who can carry the message by word of mouth spending all his time trying to write and refusing to accept a Twelfth Step call. How often do we see a group's services deteriorate because officers are appointed who cannot or will not do the job but want to accept the appointment so that they can show they are getting somewhere. I think that far too often we offer people a job in AA on the basis that it will do them good, rather than it will do good for AA.

This then is my plea in our Service Convention Month. Can we all have a good look at our involvement in service. If we look at ourselves carefully we can ask the question "Am I taking part in service and am I offering the talents I actually possess?"

When we meet at Massey for the Convention we will be talking service. We will be looking at the service aspects of the General

Service Conference and the way in which groups can offer service to their members and to outside organisations. We can all prepare for Massey by looking at ourselves and accepting the responsibility that was given to us with the gift of sobriety—namely to carry the message through the use of the talents which we actually possess.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Convention.

Peter

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### **World Service Meeting October 5-7, 1978**

KEYNOTE ADDRESS:  
**RECOVERY, UNITY, SERVICE**  
David Puerta — Colombia, S.A.

The event we are now opening is indeed wonderful. Here we are together, in a joyful and fraternal meeting, people coming from all corners of the world, with various backgrounds, with different professions, ages, creeds, political opinions, economic wealth, histories, hopes and paths. We have gathered because, in spite of all the differences already pointed out, we have something in common that binds us together with stronger ties: we know by experience the process of a painful sickness; we have achieved, by the grace of God, a recovery which now allows us to live and to love again; we are involved in the spirit of unity that gives us strength; we are impelled by a desire of service. We are the inheritors of the Legacy of AA.

The astronomers speak about certain bodies in outer space which, having lost their generating function, shrink slowly and inexorably, concentrating in themselves in such a way, that they get to acquire an infinitesimal size but with an impressive gravity. They are the so-called "black holes", tiny volumes with terrific weight. Their density reaches to such a point of concentration that a gravitational vortex is formed around them, a ghostly and catastrophic hole that devours everything that passes by; light, radio and energy waves are absorbed and drawn by that irresistible whirlpool.

The same happened with our alcoholic life. A concentration of all emotional load. A shrinking of our mentality. A gloomy emptiness surrounding us. A tremendous storage of negative energy, accelerated by our own guilt, suffering and sensibility. The greater our emotional load, the smaller our spiritual dimension. The larger the density of our selfishness, the shorter the scope of our horizons. "Black holes" in the space of our lives, sinking and paralyzing our will power, our capacities, our dreams, our ambitions, goals and outlooks.

Unlike those sidereal bodies, our condition did not have a way out. The life saving message of AA came to us. And the tiny

universe that confined us started to expand again. We began to untie our imagination, our mind and our good will. We were ready to live and let live. Spiritual life was reborn. We found harmony with ourselves, our brothers and God. And we called that "RECOVERY".

What is then Recovery for me?

It is not a lasting result, but a permanent improvement.

It is not perfection, but the search of it.

It is not a state of lethargy, but a state of awareness.

It is realising that there is a place for us in the world.

It is acknowledging that we alone cannot do anything, but with the help of God we can accomplish everything.

It is being sure that we walk along the path, even though "we make our path as we walk".

It is living today as we would like to have lived yesterday, and as we wish to live tomorrow.

It is knowing that our journey has a meaning, a reason for being.

It is a constant spiritual awakening.

And, above all, RECOVERY IS A WORKING FAITH.

As Bill W. said, "Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path." Let's try then "to practice these principles in all our affairs", so that our recovery will not decline, will not stop, will not fail.

The modern age of communications has made distances in our planet more and more reduced. Every day we learn more about the dreams and achievements of people and nations of which we had no former knowledge. There is a constant concern to link the countries in trade, science, art and huge enterprises of common benefit. Multinational reservoirs are being built; mutual aid funds are created; international organisations try to reach with their helping hand those countries which are suffering from hunger, drought and pestilence. It seems as if the commandment "love each other" is becoming an actual fact.

At the same time, man is thrown against man in terrifying wars due to political, religious, social and racial disagreements. Every day the number of places stained with blood poured out with hate, revenge and cruelty is growing throughout the world. No continent is free from this burden of violence that shakes the very foundations of mankind.

We alcoholics have already suffered enough from the violence that a powerful enemy decreed upon us. "We do not wish to fight against anybody, not even against alcohol." We have endured our illness physically, mentally and morally. We have been the battlefield of our emotions. We have seen tears in the eyes of our mothers, our wives, and our children. We have been beaten and defeated. When we awoke to reality, we stood amidst the

ruins of a shattered life, a destroyed morality and a smashed dignity.

By the grace of God, however, we have survived by joining a society of equals. We have realised that in the loving bonds of our alcoholic fellows we could find the support, the understanding and the encouragement that we always lacked. We have met our brother. His similar experience provided us with the bridge that we should cross to reach firm land. And we have also understood that we needed him as much as he needed us. It was necessary to create an harmonic environment so that we and he could survive. We need UNITY.

What is then Unity for me?

It is not a monody, but a symphony for individual voices.

It is not an absolute identity, but a permanent acceptance.

It is not a compact law, but a mixture of different opinions.

It is knowing that our alcoholic brother has the same right to life, happiness and peace as we have.

It is feeling that the word "we" stands before the word "I".

It is admitting that we are all equal in front of God.

It is accepting that different paths can lead us towards our final destiny.

It is stripping of our pride, so we won't feel greater or lesser than our fellows.

It is not doing to our neighbours what we wouldn't like to be done upon us.

And, above all, UNITY IS A WORKING HUMILITY.

Humility to accept that there is but one ultimate authority that expresses itself in our group conscience. Humility to welcome anybody who wishes the AA membership. Humility to understand that our service tasks do not grant us power, command or authority. Humility to keep anonymity that reminds us to place principles before personalities. Humility to share our experience. Humility to listen to our fellow's experience.

In our drinking days, when the world was only a large "nobody's land" which we felt compelled to conquer and rearrange accordingly to our will, we had to work, fight and suffer intensively. The reason was that we had selfishness as compass and our fulfillment as schedule. All our efforts were directed to achieve anything that could satisfy our vanity. Money, intelligence, imagination and initiative were used only as tools for constructing a universe fitted to our size.

But so much effort brought no result. We had to admit that we were wrong. And when that castle made out of cards fell down upon our own heads, someone else came to rescue us by means of a telephone call, a pamphlet, a visit or an example. Someone else helped us, understood us and delivered the message that

saved us. We were forced to believe in him, and in others that were like him, and to accept the help that they were offering to us. Much more was put at our disposal: a literature had already been written and printed so that we could read and meditate; an experience was freely and gladly given to us; someone had a meeting place where a cup of coffee was waiting for us.

At first we received and used these services, taking them for granted and almost without realising what we were doing. But gradually we began to feel that a treasure, which we had no right to hide away, was being placed in our hands. We were not supposed to keep going along the same path of selfishness that had led us to a dead end. We had to give the light of hope that had illuminated our darkness, to someone else. When we felt deep in our bones that an alcoholic can only be understood by another alcoholic, we looked around and saw a crowd of sick people that hoped for our understanding. It was unfair to let the fruits we had harvested rot in the barns of our laziness. And we had to join the SERVICE.

What is then Service for me?

It is not altruism, but a need of survival.

It is not charity, but an expression of gratitude.

It is the responsibility of lending a hand to our brother who is drowning.

It is recognising that, by giving ourselves to others, we will find our own souls.

It is realising that the personal gifts are worth nothing, unless we use them to help others.

It is learning that he who gives the most, receives the most.

It is returning to our alcoholic fellow the sobriety that was bestowed upon us.

It is working so that others get a permanent place in the new world we have discovered.

It is remembering the words said by Bill W., "We must carry AA's message; otherwise we ourselves may fall into decay and those who have not yet been given the truth may die."

And, above all, SERVICE IS A WORKING LOVE.

Love that works. Unselfish, patient, tolerant, anonymous love. Love that doesn't have a price tag on it. Love that has no envy, that endures everything, expects everything, bears everything.

In the name of John, my fellow delegate, and all the AA's of Colombia, I would like to thank you for your kind designation to address you with these words. May God help all the participants in this Meeting so that we may be able to find new and better approaches, in order to bring to all alcoholics in the world our Legacy of recovery within unity through service. And so that all our actions here may be inspired by faith, humility and love.

Finally, we should like to congratulate our Finnish fellows for having assumed in such a brilliant, responsible and effective way the organisation of this Meeting. May God continue helping them so that the Finnish AA community will always remain as a moving example of the good quality of AA practice.

Thank you very much.

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### A GAY AA GROUP



Pat, while in London, attended with others a meeting of this Gay AA Group. Pat was suitably impressed with this meeting, and he asked Neil over a cup of tea after the meeting if he would share his experience with Mainstay readers about his sexual condition in relation to sobriety, the difficulties in the formation of this Group, and finally about the Groups aspirations. Mainstay would like to thank Neil for his sharing.

"The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking" and "Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety": these are two vital elements in the definition of Alcoholics Anonymous; any group which lacks them cannot be AA. The group which calls itself Akron, say, or First London or maybe Umpteenth Auckland Afternoon, clearly does no more than distinguish itself from others—a harmless geographical, you might say. But 'Gay' in a group's name might appear to introduce another, exclusive element into the recovery programme, just as a "Musicians" Group would seem to exclude the tone-deaf, however desperate for sobriety they might be.

Members of the London (England) Gay Group do not think it exclusive, however, nor does our General Service Conference; at any rate, not now.

In the autumn of 1974, Henry R. and John C. decided to form the Group; for both men and women of course. John had been to several gay group meetings in the United States. They did me the honour of inviting me to help.

Here it might be informative to explain that I accepted with misgiving. At the age of 40 I was slowly and painfully accepting my own sexuality. As a very immature, dependent, black-and-white, spiritually proud Roman Catholic, I had tried with all the courage I could muster to change what I could not: to be, or at least appear to be, heterosexual. To my dismay, when at the age of about 32, the long incubation period of my alcoholism came to an end and I drank compulsively and daily, I lost control over my natural, God-given instincts and I sought men in public lavatories, at main-line stations, on commons (come sun, rain, hail or snow) and of course in pubs; but not in gay pubs, for that would have been deliberately wicked; I made cruising harder for myself because

I hated myself for doing it at all. I was in a state of great conflict. Unconsciously, I hated my alcoholism as well as this (to me) amazing result of it.

When by the grace of God I came to AA and started in my muddled way to sober up, I thought, in my continuing state of spiritual pride, that now I should become all pure and holy. I went to Confession immediately after the AA meeting which succeeded my last drink to date. I even gave up smoking for 13 whole days (then had a glorious smoking slip—and I haven't got back yet!).

Again to my dismay, I found as I recovered from alcoholism physically, mentally a bit, but in no further way, that my sex instinct recovered too. Control was painful and conflict acute.

A straight Catholic priest in AA, a great friend to me and my Confessor, rescued me, asking why I tried to be what God had not made me. I began to accept myself wholly. My higher power, an almighty God, did what I had thought Him incapable of doing: I was enabled to be a normal homosexual—sober too, a day at a time. This has been perhaps my greatest, totally unexpected fringe benefit in the Fellowship. I joined Quest, a Catholic gay group, now an important extra-AA part of my continuing recovery.

This acceptance was slow, however, and I co-operated with Henry and John reluctantly, fearing, quite unjustifiably, that one purpose of the Gay Group would be to foster liaisons among alcoholic queers. (I still despised them and myself.) I was soon proved mistaken. I have to forgive myself now for this sick thinking.

At first the Gay Group was indeed exclusive. Mistakenly, we feared that heterosexual and sick alcoholics might come to gawp at the alkies' puffs. While informally we were accepted as a source of help for alcoholic homosexuals, naturally we could not be recognised as a proper AA group by the General Service Conference so long as we were not open to all who desired to stop drinking. And, conscientiously, at the beginning of each of our weekly meetings, we would state something like, "Members who consider their alcoholism and homosexuality to be associated are urged to pursue sobriety also at other meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous". (A Ladies' Group at that time were using the same sort of formula.)

In time we realised our mistake in being perhaps rather cynical about heterosexual members of the Fellowship, and were as prompt as possible in admitting this. Now all our meetings are open to all members—and soon we might decide to have a meeting open once a month to anyone who would care to come. So, any time you are in London, look us up in the "Where to Find": if you have a drinking problem, we should be delighted to meet you and you would be so very welcome.

But what *would* you find? An AA meeting; pure and simple, we could fairly add. One of us uses eye-shadow, but much more

cleverly applied than some men's hair dye; none of the girls looks like a rompin', stompin' diesel dyke; and I have lost my ear-ring now—in my beard, I think. There's really nothing there to disturb even the most sensitive. Sometimes we wonder whether anyone coming to one of our meetings, not knowing it was the Gay Group, would guess that it was. Certainly I for one—and perhaps I should know!—cannot tell whether any newcomer is or isn't. And no assumptions are ever made, because they are not relevant. We meet, as we all do at other meetings, simply "to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety". And we hope that our Group provides yet a further answer to the query posed in the Conference-approved pamphlet, 'Do you think you're **different?**'

Speaking for myself, I reckon I get the bonus of being able to share totally, not with one or two other members only, but at a meeting, and to discuss any problem, sexual or other, which might crop up. This without upsetting anyone. Homosexuality is a condition which—like red hair in some cultures—has had a pretty bad press, so people tend to be sensitive about it; none more so than homosexuals themselves. Alcoholism, which we regard as a similarly random condition, is a total illness which, when active, consumes one, body, mind and soul. Intent as we are, most gratefully now, in keeping it dormant, we bring with us into recovery every element of our persons. In the Gay Group we like to think, and surely hope, that we are getting somewhere.

Thank you for letting me share with you. Thank you for being sober. Though you are thousands of miles away there in New Zealand, and I may never have the luck to meet you, it is great to know that you, too, are my friends in recovery just the same.

Neil M. (Gay Group, London)

### THE GIFT OF SOBRIETY

I find it hard to put into words just how wonderful life is for me today and how very different it is now from what it used to be like. Sobriety did not come easy for me and it took me nearly three years in and around AA to understand what the old timers were telling me. So many things they said seemed to go in one ear and come out the other and it has really only been in the last few months that I have realised that what they were telling me was all true. I seemed to hear over and over that "things would get better", that if I kept coming to meetings "something would rub off". I had for a very long time been searching for a Power Greater than myself, but could not find it and although for several months I did not drink I was a very unhappy, mixed-up person inside.

Looking back I can see now that all the difficult times I went through were for a reason, what I understand now to be God's will for me. When I first came into AA I was very young and I did what so many in AA have done, I looked for all the differences

and not the similarities. I can remember my sponsor saying to me one day when I was telling her some of these differences that I may not have been to an institution "yet". Sure enough she was right and my alcoholism took me to two institutions before I was ready to accept that I was an alcoholic and that my life was unmanageable. In all the time that I had been around AA I had never really done anything about the Steps or about changing myself and my attitudes. It got to the stage where I was so sick, mentally and spiritually that I had nowhere to turn. I think it was then that I had finally hit my rock bottom. I had wanted sobriety for a long time, but I had wanted it on my terms. I think I must have tried all the "softer and easier ways" imaginable before I came to the realisation that the "softer and easier way" was the AA way, as it tells me in the Big Book.

Although I have only been sober a relatively short time, just on seven months, these last few months have been the best days of my life. I really feel as though I am living for the first time. My whole attitude to life is changing, I am so much more aware of everything, of what is going on around me and for the first time I am communicating with people. They told me in AA it would get better and it really has for me. I often wonder how it could possibly get any better than it is now. I am so very grateful to my Greater Power, which I now call God, and to AA for giving me the life I have today. I understand now what it means to have been given the gift of sobriety.

Janie W. (Auckland)

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## **WE GET LETTERS**

The Editorial of January Mainstay was well written. Thanks for the introduction by name of the Editorial Committee and also for their kind wishes to subscribers for a happy, prosperous, and sober New Year.

What kind and meaningful words those greetings are. Sobriety brings Happiness, and in its turn Prosperity. All three things are easy to obtain providing one does not take that first drink.

Your Editorial predicts big and better things ahead for Mainstay and I'm sure with such a strong Committee, well experienced in the way of AA, we will see our Mail Box Meeting grow to the 24 precious pages.

You quote the number of subscribers as 652, and that we only need to double that figure to 1300 to launch a bigger and better Mainstay without increasing the subscription. Well, all I can say is "that's a bargain if ever there was one".

The figure 652 however, surprises me somewhat. I'm under the impression that there must be several thousands who owe their sobriety to Alcoholics Anonymous. Surely we can expect 1300 regular subscribers out of that number.

I'm forever grateful to Mainstay and so pleased that I'm one who has helped bring the number up to 652. For me it is an extra meeting and I wouldn't miss it for quids, as it gives me that grand feeling of belonging to the modern miracle that Alcoholics Anonymous help to maintain that miracle. Thanks Mainstay.

Yours sincerely in AA,  
Don (Palmerston North).

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Don was my first contact with Palmerston North AA in 1960. Neither of us could foresee the happenings of the next 19 years. One of the lessons I learned from him was "involvement" in AA. My present task is part of that involvement. I am thrilled to be able to publish this letter and offer my gratitude to Don for his part in my introduction to the God of my understanding.—Peter.)

Dear Members,

I am inspired to write this message from the December Mainstay where David R. of the Paparua Prison Group wrote of his story. As I am also in prison doing a sentence of 2½ years, I would like to share some of my story with other members of AA.

Three years ago I was a patient at the Queen Mary Hospital at the age of 23 years. I, like so many others, went there for the wrong reasons. Not for myself but for my wife and child to be. I also thought I was too young to be an alcoholic. When I left Hanmer I knew it would not be too long before I would drink again. All I was waiting for was an excuse to do so and as we all know it is not very hard to find one. After a short time my marriage started to fail and for the wrong reason again I started to attend meetings, like so many times after. As soon as the marriage started to look better I would find an excuse not to attend the meetings and the inevitable would happen.

I have now completed 11 months of the sentence. At the start I refused all help directed towards me in prison. I resented being called an alcoholic. Who were these people to call me an alcoholic? I had lost my family and I was in a bad emotional state. After about two months I decided to go to a meeting of the AA—this time for the right reasons. As I said before, I felt that I had nothing left. About four months later I found myself still just sitting at the meetings saying very little. It was then suggested that I become the Chairman of the Group. This was offered because I had some experience in the past and all the other members were new to AA. For the first time I was obliged to take an active part instead of just sitting there, with little giving.

The fear of having to speak hit me on the first night of being Chairman, but thanks to Gordon and Jim who come to our meetings, I found that I can speak quite freely in the sharing of my experiences and of my meager knowledge of alcoholism.

Two months ago I was privileged to go home for a weekend. I felt so good when I arrived back at the prison having not taken a single drink. I was able to say no for the first time in my life and actually mean it. Although my sobriety has been an enforced one, it has taught me that I cannot handle alcohol.

It goes to show that the AA principles work under any conditions if we want to be honest with ourselves and just give a little. If you have a difficult time in speaking at meetings just hang in there. I am sure that it will come to you as it came to me. There is so much that I could write about that it would fill a book. I just hope that some members can get a message from what I have said.

Thanks to AA in Prison,  
Jeff E. (Rolleston Prison Group).

Charlie L. of Waiheke Island asks in his letter (November Mainstay) if other small groups have the same problem as his group, in that, "What neighbours and friends of a problem drinker think if they saw he or she going to the open door of AA seeking help." All I can say to Charlie is, not to worry. Surely it would give the small town chin-waggers less to talk about if they saw he/she walk tall out of the AA door rather than fall or be thrown out of a hotel door.

Yours,  
Don McL. (Palmerston North).

## GROUP NOTES

### From Wanganui Prison Group

We would like to let you know of our very successful Open Meeting we held here at the Wanganui Prison last Monday (30/10/78). It was the first "Open" Meeting we've held for some months and we enjoyed the company of 15 outside visitors, including Rev. Brian Metherell from the Presbyterian Church and the Sisters from the St. Joseph's Catholic Church who added their much appreciated contributions. The Social Welfare was finely represented and had nothing but praise for Alcoholic Anonymous Groups in institutions.

We would like to thank the Feilding Group who have always supported our Open Meetings and also the Feilding Al-Anon members who brought up some interesting points. We owe a special thanks to Jeanne and Jim from the Wanganui AA Group for their tremendous support—for without them our meetings and even our group would not exist.

We are truly grateful to all outside visitors as they are essential for the continuance of our group and any AA institutional group. We hope this support will continue in the future and wish the same fortune to other institutions around the country.

Kevin (Group Secretary).

## SUMMARY GROUP DONATIONS 1st JANUARY TO 31st DECEMBER, 1978

(Recently formed Groups have not been listed except where a donation has been received.)

NORTHERN	CENTRAL	SOUTHERN
Northern area	Central Area	Sthn. Area
Assembly 1200.00	Assembly 200.00	Assembly 470.00
Auck. Service	Central Area	Southland Inter. 17.00
Centre 50.00	Assembly 137.00	Otago/Dunedin
Auckland	Thanksgiving	Intergroup —
Aroha —	Dinner —	Alexandra —
Avondale —	Wellington	Ashburton 120.00
Belmont —	Service Centre —	Balclutha 30.00
Birkenhead —	Blenheim 50.00	Bluff —
Campbells Bay 95.00	Carterton 170.00	Cheviot 2.00
Devonport 205.00	Feilding 50.00	<b>Christchurch</b>
Epsom 234.00	Gisborne 45.00	Avon
Family Group 102.50	Hastings 450.00	Discussion 235.00
Glen Eden —	Hastings East	Calvary 30.00
Glenfield —	Welcome 15.00	Central
Glen Innes —	Hawera 20.00	Christchurch 115.00
Harbourview 30.00	Levin 10.00	Dry Dock
Howick 30.00	Masterton 45.00	No. 28 92.00
Kai Ora —	Motueka —	Sun. Morning
Ladies Discussion —	Napier 3.00	Fellowship 23.00
Mangere 48.50	Nelson 100.00	Friday Lunch
Manukau —		Hour 85.00
Manurewa —	<b>New Plymouth</b>	Friday Night 25.00
Maraetai	New Plymouth	Hoon Hay 24.00
Beachlands —	Group 65.00	Hope 22.00
Middlemore 115.00	Otaki 10.00	Hornby 372.00
Mt. Roskill 295.00	Palmerston North 380.00	Ilam Campus 14.00
Otahuhu 10.00	Richmond 96.00	Mahu Sunday
Otago —	Stratford —	Morning 25.00
Pacific Islands —	Waipukurau 53.00	Mon. Midday 10.00
Parnell Crypt —	Wanganui 20.00	New Brighton 10.00
Pakuranga 89.00	<b>Wellington</b>	Papanui 30.00
Princess St.	Catacombs	Thurs. Night
Lunchtime 50.00	Sat. Night 10.00	Christchurch 3.00
Ponsonby 50.00	Central	Sumner 70.00
Pukekohe 35.00	Wellington 133.00	Sunday Night 23.00
St. Benedicts 336.50	Eastbourne 20.00	Wed. Night 25.00
St. Davids 422.50	Friday	<b>Dunedin</b>
Serenity 50.00	Catacombs —	Dunedin City
Takapuna 414.00	Lower Hutt —	Wednesday 25.00
Tamaki 118.61	Lunch Time	Mosgiel 60.00
Turning Point —	Friday 163.00	Port Chalmers —
Waiuku 108.00	Matthew Talbot 24.38	Sth. Dunedin 90.00
Way Out —	Naenae —	Gore 10.00
Waiheke Island —	Paraparaumu 100.00	Greymouth/
Western —	Porirua 50.00	Westland 110.00
Western Ladies —	Questions &	Hamner Village 920.00
Whangaparaoa 60.00	Answers —	Hokitika 50.00
Young Peoples 20.00	St. Johns 40.00	<b>Invercargill</b>
Cambridge —	Sunday Night —	Ascot 35.00
Dargaville —	Upper Hutt 80.00	Invercargill
<b>Hamilton</b>	Wainuiomata —	Central 250.00
Hamilton	Wellington	Kew Hospital 12.50
Mon. Night 30.00	Serenity —	Kaikoura 30.00

NORTHERN		CENTRAL		SOUTHERN	
Hamilton Group	—	Wellington South	26.40	Oamaru	30.00
Kaitiaia (Far North)	20.00			Otago Central (Cromwell)	5.00
Opotiki	10.00			Pleasant Point	25.00
<b>Rotorua</b>				Queenstown	23.00
Rotorua Central	166.50			Ranfurly	—
Geyserland	96.50			Rangiora	25.00
Taupo	190.00			Riverton	40.00
<b>Tauranga</b>				Temuka	104.00
Tauranga Group	150.00			<b>Timaru</b>	
Mt. Maunganui	123.00			Timaru Group	241.00
Te Awamutu	15.00			Timaru Thurs. Night	67.00
Te Kauwhata	13.00			Twizel	20.00
Te Puke	—			Waimate	—
Thames Valley	—			Westport	5.00
Turangi	5.00			Winton	32.00
Whakatane	—				
<b>Whangarei</b>					
Whangarei Group	200.00				
Ladies Discussion	—				
Whitianga	165.00				
<b>Jan-Dec '78</b>	<b>\$5,352.61</b>	<b>Jan-Dec '78</b>	<b>\$2,565.78</b>	<b>Jan-Dec '78</b>	<b>\$4,081.50</b>
<b>Jan-Dec '77</b>	<b>\$3,642.92</b>	<b>Jan-Dec '77</b>	<b>\$2,103.48</b>	<b>Jan-Dec '77</b>	<b>\$3,375.95</b>

## YOUR AA CALENDAR

### 1980 TOUR TO INTERNATIONAL AA CONVENTION IN NEW ORLEANS

A detailed circular about this tour will be posted to all Groups shortly. Send applications with \$50 deposit (make cheques payable to 1980 New Orleans Convention Account) addressed to Pat, 160 Barnard Street, Wadestown, Wellington.

### 19th AA NATIONAL CONVENTION

Perth, Western Australia, at Easter, 1979, from April 12th to 16th. Registration Fee — \$40. Application Forms available at G.S.O.

### SOUTHERN AREA ASSEMBLY INVERCARGILL — 24th FEBRUARY, 1979

Federated Farmers Building, Forth Street, Invercargill  
Assembly commences 1.45pm — Registration Fee \$4.00  
(PLEASE NOTE CHANGE IN DATE)

## 16th NEW ZEALAND CONVENTION 1979

AA — AL-ANON — AL-ATEEN

Massey University, Palmerston North

9th - 11th February, 1979

### 1979 CONVENTION PROGRAMME

**Theme:** THE AA GROUP — SERVICE IS OUR STRENGTH

#### Friday, 9th February

2.00pm to 4.30pm CONTINUAL SHARING SESSION  
7.30pm to 9.30pm AA MEETING  
9.30pm to 12.30am ALKATHON

#### Saturday, 10th February

8.45am to 10.00am WHAT IS SERVICE?  
10.45am to 12 noon THE GROUP SERVES THE FELLOWSHIP  
1.30pm to 2.45pm AA MEETING (Some relief from concentrated study)  
3.30pm to 4.45pm THE GROUP SERVES THE COMMUNITY  
8pm COMBINED AA, AL-ANON, AL-ATEEN MEETING  
Guest Speaker: Dr Jack Norris

#### Sunday, 11th February

8.45am to 9.45am CHURCH SERVICES  
10.30am to 12 noon THE GROUP SERVES THE SUFFERING ALCOHOLIC  
Afternoon  
(for those staying on) COMBINED AA, AL-ANON, AL-ATEEN MEETING  
"Quo vadis" — wither goest thou.

**Special Guest Speaker** DR. JACK NORRIS (Chairman Emeritus, G.S.B., New York).  
(Dr. Jack is being brought to N.Z. by N.S.A.D.)

### OPEN MEETING

DRY DOCK GROUP — WELLINGTON

N.S.A.D. Rooms, 54 Murphy Street, Wellington

Friday, 16th February, 1979

#### Guest Speaker:

Dr. JOHN L. (Jack) NORRIS (Chairman Emeritus, G.S.B., New York)

— Everyone Welcome —

**NORTHERN AREA ASSEMBLY**  
PAEROA — 17th MARCH, 1979  
Hosts: Hauraki Plains Group

**CENTRAL AREA ASSEMBLY**  
UPPER HUTT — 7th APRIL, 1979

Wellesley Centre, Cnr. Fergusson Drive & Benzie Avenue

**PROGRAMME**

9.00am to 10.00am REGISTRATION/MORNING TEA  
10.00am to 11.30am AA, AL-ANON AND AL-ATEEN MEETINGS  
11.45am BRUNCH  
1.30pm AA, AL-ANON AND AL-ATEEN BUSINESS MEETINGS  
—SHARING SESSION  
5.00pm to 6.00pm TEA  
7.30pm OPEN AA MEETING

Registration Fee: \$3.00 (minimum)  
Al-Anon — a donation

**GROUP NOTICES**

**NORTHERN AREA**

**Group Change**

FAR NORTH GROUP now meets 8.00pm Tuesdays at various localities (decided on at previous Tuesday's meeting). For further details phone Bill, Kaitaia 135, or Jim, Kaitaia 843.

**New Groups**

KAWERAU GROUP meets at 52 Balance Street, Tuesdays 7.00pm. Telephone Contact: Bill, 7367.

THAMES GROUP meets Day Care Centre, Thames Hospital, Tuesdays, 7.30pm (Open).

Telephone Contacts: John, 87-608, and Beros, 88-560.

**CENTRAL AREA**

CATACOMBS GROUP still meets at the same venue at 8.00p.m. on Fridays. Cnr. Ghuznee and Willis Streets (behind Church). Badly in need of support.

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# AA the twelve traditions

- 1 Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.
- 2 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.
- 3 The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.
- 4 Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.
- 5 Each group has but one primary purpose . . . to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
- 6 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.
- 7 Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
- 8 Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centres may employ special workers.
- 9 AA, as such, ought never be organised; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
- 10 Alcoholic Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
- 11 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.
- 12 Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.



Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organisation or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

Registered at G.P.O., Wellington, for transmission by post as a newspaper.