

In 1965 the Vergennes Group (also known as the Otter ⁹ Creek Group) appeared for the first time in the Directory; Floy W. and Earl S., as well as Richard S., were listed in connection with it.

In 1969 The Middlebury Group's name appeared in the Directory for the first time.

In Burlington, the Tuesday Night Discussion Group was formed and met at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception; after the fire, the group met at the Methodist Church.

There was a "Forum Group" in Shelburne, but it is no longer in existence.

There was a group called "The Young Generation and Beginners' Group" that met for a time at the Farm in (approximately) 1972. Subsequently, a group with the same name met at the DeGoesbriand Hospital on Sunday nights; the meetings held were open and they were "speaker-discussion" in format. With the major changes at the hospital, the group began to hold its meetings down at North Champlain Street, at a place called "REACH". From there the group went to St. Michael's College (Mc Carthy Arts Building, 2nd floor) .

At some point the name was changed to the "Easy Does It" Group and the rent at St. Michael's was found to be prohibitive, in proportion to the collection. Therefore, the meeting was moved to the Fanny Allen Hospital in (approximately) 1978.

There was no closed discussion meeting scheduled in the Burlington vicinity until 1973. Several members contacted area churches and they made arrangements to hold meetings at St. James' Church, Route 2 A, Essex Junction. The first meeting was held in the summer of 1973. Members who came on a regular basis formed a group and called it "The Serenity Group". One of its members, Debie D. suggested that a "Step Meeting" be held on Tuesdays. (The "regular" weekly closed discussion meeting was on Thursdays.)

Membership increased eventually, because of expenses of travel, (the price of gas was rising) two other groups were begun by members who originally started to come to Essex: the Stowe Group and the Fairfax Group. The former meets on Tuesdays and the latter on Thursdays.

Several members, over the years, have accepted the opportunity to serve in A. A. in Vermont who began their journey to sobriety by attending Serenity Group meetings. One has been elected Area Treasurer for '84 and '85; another is finishing a term as District Committee Member and had served as Meeting List Chairperson and Public Information Chairperson, District Two; another was District Treasurer; and one Past Delegate began her "service" by acting as group treasurer.

Other groups were formed as A. A. membership increased, and the need arose for more meetings. The following groups emerged in approximately this order;

the High Noon Group (in 1973 at St. Paul's Cathedral)
the Saturday Night Group (met at St. Anthony's, then St. Joseph's.)

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Gratitude Group (met in Hinesburg, Monday night, United Church)

YES Group (Young People Enjoying Sobriety) at first this was an "offshoot" of the YES Group, and met on Sunday afternoons at 2. Discussion

TGIF met on Fridays (naturally!) at noon, College St. Congregational Church OD.

Thank God Group- Step Meeting Thursday evenings, St. Mark's

Happy Hour Group- 5:15 Mondays, College St. Congregational Church Discussion

The Colchester Group- met at Our Lady of Grace Church on Tuesday evenings: Open Speaker

Big Book Meeting- Thursday Noon, Methodist Church, S. Winoski Ave., Burlington

Gone Gay Tuesday evenings, 346 Shelburne Rd., Burlington

Richmond Group- Speaker discussion, Sundays, Congregational Church

Prior to 1974, the groups operated pretty independently from each other; the G. S. R.s' attended Area meetings (mostly alternating between Rutland and Barre) and there was no "structured" district.

Don D. (Delegate, Vermont, Panel 24) made a number of trips to Burlington from Arlington to meet with G. S. R.s' at "the old St. Anthony's School". Don patiently discussed the Service Manual.

Those of us present at those meetings realized our first order of business was to select a District Committee Member; there wasn't too much competition for the position. Eventually, George W. accepted the "opportunity to serve".

The Answering Service headed our list of items to be attended to, and a list of members was compiled to serve when people called Alcoholics Anonymous.

Serving from April of 1975 to July of 1977, George did an admirable job as District II's first D.C. M.

Grace H. served as District Secretary-Treasurer, and painstakingly wrote to us before each meeting. It was Grace who really started several of us in going to Area meetings; she became Alternate Delegate, and became very ill just after she began her term as Delegate.

Paul H. served briefly as D. C. M., after George.

Then, Jim S. became District II's D. C. M., serving in '79 and '80.

Vivian H. was the first woman D. C. M., and served in '81 and '82.

Maureen C. currently serves as D. C. M., having previously chaired the Public Information Committee.

To end these few pages the writer would like to quote from the Washington Area archives pamphlet, "The Washington Group: Foundations, 1936-41" p. iii. The wording is slightly changed.

In the writing of history there is room for criticism on grounds of undue emphasis. The writing of history is a very subjective project and incorporates the view of the historian. Many members made contributions during those first years.

.....This...is intended to give a general idea of when and where A. A. started in the Burlington area, and roughly what happened.... Hopefully, it will stir some memories in people who were around in the early days and act as a beginning point for an exchange of information to uncover more of our A. A. history.

Monday Night Beginner's

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The Monday Night Beginner's Group, an open discussion meeting held at Howard Mental Health, began in 1979 as a satellite meeting of the Wednesday night MidTown Group. This group gave the new meeting financial assistance for books and refreshments, and also provided members to sustain the new meeting; in its first year Bill V., Jay W., Bruce L., Colin B., and Bob D. helped the meeting get a start, and in 1980 Darrel and Theresa L. provided instrumental support. District II also helped arranging for groups to put on the meeting on a rotational basis Monday Night continued in this status until 1981.

Then a group of people, both members of Midtown and regulars at the Monday meeting, decided to take steps toward establishing Monday Night as a self-supporting group. This was a fine example of preparation coinciding with opportunity; now Monday Night Beginner's is an active, vital meeting that attracts from thirty to sixty alcoholics, and the participants at the meeting range from the newest member to old-timers, including everyone in between. The group has been active since its establishment in the District structure; Peter G. was the first G. S. R., and Bill S. currently serves in that capacity.

RANDOM NOTES

Objectivity in setting down historical aspects involving District Two can be maintained, but with difficulty. Those who had any length of sobriety had a considerable influence.

No matter how optimistic we might have been, fourteen years ago, not one of us present in the early meetings could have foreseen the growth in A A membership not only in District Two, but also in the Area Assembly meetings.

The District Two meeting places were, to say the least, quite dissimilar and were chosen because of availability at the time.

Among the meeting sites were the following:

The Plateau Club (both the one on lower Church Street,
and the one on North Street)

The BEAM Office (firehouse on Church Street)

The building to the north of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

The living-room of this writer

The Cathedral of St. Paul, Burlington

St. James Church, Essex Junction

Being a GSR meant a "commitment" to attend an Area Assembly (usually the first Sunday of the month, at first) as well as a group conscience meeting of one's "home group", as well as a District Two meeting (wherever that would be!).

Not all "happenings" were completely "service-oriented." Round-Ups were sponsored by the District and will be described in further detail below. The Midtown Group sponsored summer ferryboat rides with music and buffets. To celebrate A A 's Golden Anniversary, the District hosted a buffet luncheon at St. Joseph's School, and invited "earlytimers" to speak and to share their reminiscences.