

# NEWS SHEET

## ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE OF IRELAND



### A Summer of Service!

AA service is not the monopoly of any particular part of the structure.

The group, the very heart beat of AA has a vital role in this ever increasingly important area. I was offered a libation of cider at our local super market recently. A glass of gold liquid and being presented very temptingly by a goddess! Marketing samples of alcoholic beverage in supermarkets is very much a new departure. Eternal vigilance is key in such insidious circumstances for the unsuspecting alcoholic in recovery. We most certainly need to be extra careful out there!

Back to service... an area that insures the alcoholic against the first drink is working with another alcoholic. Service in AA is all about carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers both inside and outside our rooms. Service in AA helps to guard against boredom and complacency. We engage with members and rekindle the dynamic of the full and thankful heart in which there is no room left for acrimony and corrosiveness.

Just because school's out doesn't mean that we all close up shop. There are ample opportunities for service throughout the Summer..

Maybe groups can explore some options e.g.

- organise an open meeting...invite in speakers from outside and at the same time widen the AA network
- Organise a workshop or "think tank" on service
- Explore opportunities with HR people in local companies in the area of Public Information
- Put up notices regarding your AA helpline (with prior permissions of course) in church foyers, doctors' surgeries, garda stations, health centres, community noticeboards etc
- Talk to your local clergy/GP

***Brainstorm further ideas with your group***

### AA Conference 2015

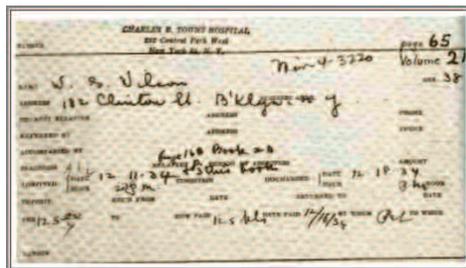
**Note:** The Conference continues from 21st to 23rd. August in Tullamore Court Hotel.

### A Most Important Piece of Paper



The afternoon of December 11th, 1934, at the age of 39, Bill Wilson staggered up the steps and through the doors of Charles R. Towns Hospital, 293 Central Park West, NY, NY for the last time as an inebriated drunk, waving his last bottle of beer at Dr. "Silky" Silkworth as he was

met in the hall. He had been there two times previously to dry out. Bill was admitted at 2:10pm, and so began the history of Alcoholics Anonymous in Sobriety. From that moment Bill never took another drink of alcohol. That beginning is recorded for all time on this piece of paper.



### ***Towns Hospital Record of Admission and Discharge of Wm. G. Wilson***

It also records for posterity the time frame of Bill's spiritual awakening that began the process of Bill recognizing the importance of carrying the message of sobriety to other drunks in order to stay sober himself.

Ebby Thatcher, an old drinking buddy, now sober,

The views and opinions expressed in The News Sheet are not necessarily those of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland as a whole.

had visited Bill in his kitchen in November 1934, had explained the Oxford Group teachings to Bill, who was drinking at the time, and planted the seed that would grow into Alcoholics Anonymous. What Ebby conveyed to Bill is the basis of what we know today as the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

"I learned that I had to admit I was licked; I learned that I ought to take stock of myself and confess my defects to another person in confidence; I learned that I needed to make restitution for the harm I had done others. I was told I ought to practice the kind of giving that has no price tag on it, the giving of myself to somebody. Now, I know you are going to gag on this, but they taught me to pray to whatever God I thought there was for the power to carry out these simple precepts. And if I did not believe there was any God, then I had better try the experiment of praying to whatever God there might be. And you know, Bill, it's a queer thing, but even before I had done all this, just as soon as I decided that I would try with an open mind, it seemed to me that my drinking problem was lifted right out of me." - AA Comes of Age, 58-59.

And now, a few weeks later, Bill found himself once again in the hospital for alcoholism, totally inebriated and helpless, suffering through the barbiturate and belladonna "purge and puke" treatment of that day for drying out a drunk.

He had been in bed a short while he heard the doctor talking to Lois by the door, saying that if her husband came out of this episode and did not drink again, he did not honestly believe he would live six months. When he heard these words he was immediately carried back to his talk with his friend Ebby and could not dismiss the idea that although Ebby might be batty with religion, he was sober and he was happy. He kept turning this over in his mind, in a mild delirium, and came to a vague conclusion that maybe Ebby did have something in a man's helping others in order to get away from his own obsessions and problems.

On his second day at Towns, Ebby, still sober, visited Bill, once again laying out what he had previously told Bill, then left. Struggling with his helplessness and his ego, sinking into a deep depression of incomprehensible demoralization, Bill finally surrendered the evening of the 14th, and the Spiritual Experience occurred, freeing not only Bill from the grips of Alcoholism, but countless millions of us down through the years

to the present day.

The following day, Ebby brought Bill a copy of William James' Varieties of Religious Experience and Bill devoured it, discovering the answer to, and significance of, his Spiritual Experience. Complete hopelessness, deflation at depth, and total surrender to a Power that none of us understand, and then it happens! The result of One Alcoholic talking to Another! The carrying of the 12th Step Message! That without each other, without continued surrender to our Higher Power, without continued practice of the Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, we are doomed to insanity, incarceration and death! There is no reprieve through our own will power!

Bill was released the morning of the 18th of December, immediately associated himself with the Oxford Groups, immediately began the practice of the steps and working with other alcoholics, a practice that continued for his lifetime, until his death January 24, 1971. He carried the message to my prime sponsors, Tex R., Cliff W., Chuck C., in the process, so that I too would hear the message and would recover from the alcoholic's seemingly hopeless state of mind and body.

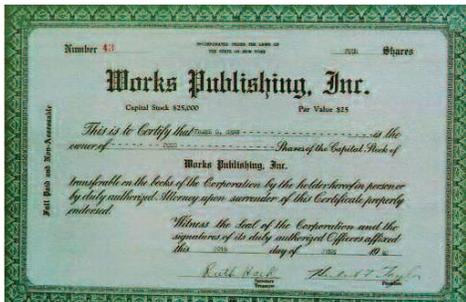
So many times since then recovered alcoholics have repeated this message to newcomers:

"The power and ways are given to us to be passed on to others. To think or do anything else is pure selfishness. We only keep them and get more by giving them away, and if we do not give them away, we lose them. What I have done, you can do too . . . if you live as I have lived in sobriety and do as I have done, applying the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous to my life in all my affairs."



## “THE ONLY TIME SPIRITUALITY AND MONEY MIX IS WHEN THE BASKET IS PASSED AROUND AT A MEETING”

The uniqueness of our fellowship in maintaining its self supporting tradition is indeed miraculous given the heady days of AA and the scramble for money to print the big book.



Copy of early share certificate in the Big Book

The wisdom that came from outside of the Fellowship in the pesonage of Rockefeller saying that “I won't be the one to spoil this thing with money” was a blessing in disguise.

AA is not compromised by any affiliation to outside agencies and neither endorses or opposes and causes. This absolute degree of independence and self government is a most unique feature of any organisation today. Coupled with our treasured

possession of anonymity we are well girded to withstand controversy and the vagries of economic fortunes.

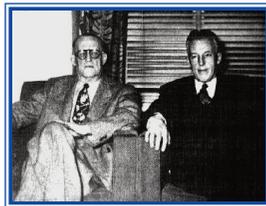
However as blessed as we are with these aforementioned values we also need to maintain and sustain ourselves. It once was said that if giving doesn't cause some bit of discomfort it ain't a sacrifice! That dreadful word 'money' needs to be invoked now and again.

AA is self supporting - relying as it does in the main for its income from table top contributions that reach GSO after progressing through the structure and meeting all the attendant financial needs that these service structures require.

Why does AA need money and what is it used for?

For as much as our founders realized that we were contained to our own locality in getting our message to the still suffering alcoholic if they did not circulate to a wider audience. Hence the rationale for the Blg Book. This latter revolutionized AA in the US and its bur-

geoning growth is almost singularly attributed to that first piece of AA literature coupled with the undoubtable help of the press of the day notably the Jack Alexander article.



Today AA has a vast literature bank. It's media and internet presence is becoming increasingly more significant.

We maintain offices at GSO in Dublin and CSO in Belfast. Rent, overheads and staff salaries all have to be paid.

Our website, which is a key tool in carrying the message in today's world carries a host of information and news, together with instant access to the edited edition of “The Roadback” DVD.

We also need to maintain and fund the structure of Conference to facilitate the voices of the AA groups nationwide in order to preserve our traditions and carry the message. And given the controversy that has marred Conferences in recent years it can be appreciated if members are despondent about AA and in turn slower than heretofore to contribute to our upkeep. We have to live with and accept the limitations that constrain us and try to change the things we can. Human nature is a factor in all our lives and sometimes we have to experience a setback to secure our footing into the future.

We have been entrusted with a history and tradition that forms the cornerstone of our recovery.

Sobriety brings with it certain awakenings and responsibilities. We have many opportunities of engaging with the concepts of Unity, Recovery and Service in meaningful ways. We know that in helping others we help ourselves. Our help may be direct and face to face or via a third party. We cannot do it all ourselves. Thus the need for fellowship. Ar scáth a chéile a mhairimid.

For it is in giving we also receive- and both the receiver and giver are blessed in the process.

## Lest We Forget



## FORTHCOMING CONVENTIONS IRELAND FORTHCOMING CONVENTIONS ABROAD

EVENT DETAILS	VENUE	INFORMATION	EVENT DETAILS	VENUE	INFORMATION
59th All Ireland Convention 15 - 17 April 2016	Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offaly	Theme: 'The Joy of Living see website	80th AA International Convention 2 - 5 July 2015	Atlanta, Georgia, USA	www.aa.org
West Cork Area Convention 12 - 14 June 2015	The Maritime Hotel, Bantry, Co. Cork	Theme: 'Sobriety through Sharing'	15th International Convention in Trogir, Croatia. 12 - 14 June 2015	Hotel Medena. Hrvatskih Zrtava bb., Seget Donji, 21218 Croatia	For more details see Irish AA website
Antrim Area Convention 19 - 21 June 2015	Drummond Hotel, Ballykelly, Co. Antrim	Drummond Hotel: 0044 287772 2121	Poros Island English Speaking AA Convention in Greece 24 - 27 September '15	Xenia Poros Image Hotel, Neorio, Poros Island, Greece, 18020	Download Flyer from www.aa-greece.gr Theme: "KISS"
35th Tipperary Area Convention 21 - 23 August 2015	Clonmel Park Hotel, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary 052-6188700	Theme: Our Primary Purpose 'Shoemaker Stick to thy last'.	29th Annual AA Netherlands Round-Up 21 - 23 Aug 2015	Mennorode Convention Center, Elspeet, Netherlands	For more details see Irish AA website
26th Clare Area Convention 8 - 11 October 2015	The Auburn Lodge Hotel, Ennis, Co. Clare	Theme: 'Serenity, Courage and Wisdom'	53rd New Zealand Convention 22 - 24 Jan 2016	Copthorne Resort, Waitangi, Bay of Islands	For more details see Irish AA website
Donegal Area Convention 16 - 18 October 2015	Mount Errigle Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal	Mount Errigle Hotel: 00353 74 9122700	1st Australasian Convention in Fiji 22 - 24 Jan 2016	Grand Pacific Hotel, Suva, Fiji	For more details see Irish AA website
Galway 40th Convention 9 - 11 January 2016	The Galway Bay Hotel Salthill	Theme: <b>Humility</b>			

## Service Structure of The Fellowship in Ireland



The News Sheet is intended as an aid to SERVICE throughout the Fellowship in Ireland.  
Your suggestions as to form and content of the News Sheet will be especially welcome



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