

## ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE OF IRELAND

**NEWS SHEET**

**The News Sheet is intended as an aid to SERVICE throughout the fellowship in Ireland.**

Any suggestions as to form and content will be especially welcome.

## Impossible Dream

The first Public Meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland was held in the Country Shop, Dublin, on November 25th. 1946. There were 45 people there and the speakers were Matt S., Richard P., and myself. From that meeting we got two members, Jimmie R. and Paddy B. Richard had come to us through Dr. N Moore, the only medical man who felt that A.A. would 'take' in Ireland. I was also encouraged by Fr. McCarron, S.J. of Gardiner Street and by Miss Eva Jennings, a social worker. Most people I talked with thought it was a new fangled idea, good for America, but not good for Ireland.

The first closed meeting was held on Friday, November 30th., and the nucleus for a Dublin Group was formed. I stayed in Dublin for a few more meetings and then returned to the North to spend Christmas with my wife. I got back to Dublin again in mid January on my way back to Philadelphia. Richard had now got a job travelling, and that left only three members. My ambition for a 25 or 30 members group in Dublin was no brighter than the dying embers of the turf fire we were sitting around.

After getting back to Philadelphia, Richard kept me posted on how the group was doing. Most of his time was spent keeping the peace between Paddy B. and Jimmie R. Paddy's cliché was "Easy Does It" and Jimmie's was "Now or Never, come hell or high-water." Matt, R.I.P. sat on the sidelines. I had a letter from Richard in early May telling me a retired Major from the British Army by the name of Sackville was attending meetings. Nobody was impressed by his appearance and he had little to say, but as time went on I heard more about Sackville and the keen interest he was taking in the very small group. He had a flair for publicity and small articles began to appear in The Evening Mail, the first paper in Dublin to publish anything about A.A. Those short articles kept the people of Dublin aware that A.A. was still in existence. On receipt of my first letter from him, I said this man was not retired from the Army for his drinking, but for his handwriting. Rejoice ... he now types all his letters...i received the first edition of The Road Back, founded by Sackville, in April 1949, now celebrating its Silver Jubilee. This magazine is welcomed in many parts of the world and by the many groups in all the counties of Ireland. If any one man rekindled the dying turf fire of early 1947, it had to be Sackville.

One of the greatest achievements of A.A. in the early days was to get the clergy of Ireland to accept A.A.; and Sackville did this by persuading Maynooth College to publish some favourable articles in their magazine 'The Furrow'. He didn't stop there; he took A.A. with Travers C. of Bristol to His Holiness Pope Paul VI., who was very impressed by what A.A. was doing all over the world. There is just one more goal for Sackville, which we hope is light years away...to take it to Saint Peter at the Pearly Gates.

Conor

Feb 1974

**A certain sponsor was worried over a backslider who once had been a regular attendant at meetings. He went to the man's home and found him sitting over an open fire.**

**Without saying a word, the sponsor took up the tongs, lifted a glowing coal from the fire and laid it aside on the hearthstone. In silence they watched it dying out, whereupon the backslider exclaimed:**

**"You need not say a single word. I'll be at the next meeting."**



The Moment of the Blessing of Alcoholics Anonymous by His Holiness, Pope Paul VI  
Sackville (Dublin) & Travers (Bristol)  
Visit to Pope 1972

# September Conference Cancelled

The reconvened Conference which was to take place last month did not go ahead. The items on it's agenda will be dealt with at a later date. The Board decide to cancel the meeting as it was highly unlikely a valid meeting of Conference could take place.

## Braille Big Book

There are Braille editions of both Alcoholics Anonymous (The Big Book) and the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in the Archives Room at our General Service Office in Dublin.

These versions of our literature were passed onto the Archives by A.A. members in Dublin. Ballyfermot Library passed them onto a local member in their area. The Board and Archives Convenor would like to thank the Dublin members involved for passing them onto GSO.

These Braille Books, were put together, it seems in Wheatfield Prison many years ago. With the help of Ballyfermot Library enquiries are being made to find out more specific details about their origin.

Both A.A. UK and A.A. New York sell the Big Book and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in Braille format. A.A. in Great Britain buy theirs from A.A. World Services.

## Directory

The A.A. Directories are confidential for internal A.A. use only. They should not be given to anyone outside the Fellowship and should never be used as a mailing list. A.A. does not list Specialist Meetings in our Directory. Conference does not approve of Specialist Meetings which might exclude or might appear to exclude any individual who has the desire to stop drinking.

## Connaught Tenth Steps Themselves

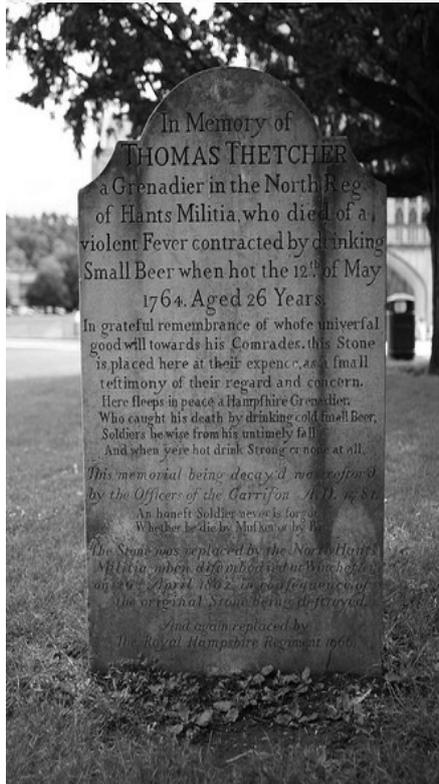
On the 20th of October next, Connaught Intergroup plan to have a meeting devoted to an honest and fearless discussion of the Intergroup's weaknesses— and strengths.

## Bill's Story

We landed in England. I visited Winchester Cathedral. Much moved, I wandered outside. My attention was caught by a

doggerel on an old tombstone:

“Here lies a Hampshire Grenadier  
Who caught his death  
Drinking cold small beer.  
A good soldier is ne'er forgot  
Whether he dieth by musket  
Or by pot.”



## Business Name

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous of Ireland registered **GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE** as it's business name on the 25th April 2013.

## Literature For One Day Events

Intergroups who are hosting an approved One Day Event such as a workshop may obtain literature they specifically require on the sale/return basis form GSO.

## European Service Meeting 2013

This years European Service Meeting will be held in Frankfurt, Germany on the 20th of October. We will be sending two delegates to represent A.A. and our fellowship here. A report has being put together by our World Service Delegates, on the state of A.A. in Ireland and it will be presented at this ESM.

The theme for this years ESM is “Carry our message, through Service”

## Electronic Transfers

GSO is to go ahead with paying suppliers and expense's via electronic transfers where possible. Paying by cheque costs .89 cents per transaction, and this does not take into account the price of postage and envelopes. Electronic transfers cost .15 cents (AIB).

## Obituary

Sebastian of the Big Book Group in Ballina passed away on the first of October last. He loved everything about A.A. even The News Sheet. R.I.P.

# Shock at Finding Meeting Closed

Members around the country have being shocked and annoyed when turning up at venues where meetings no longer take place. At a recent Board Meeting it was decided to put in place a system where Group information can be updated by direct communication between GSO and a Trustee.

If your Group's details change or need updating please contact the General Service Office as soon as possible **by submitting a Group Information Sheet (through the A.A. Structure). Where the information on the Website is obviously wrong, e.g. where a Group has changed to a temporary address**, the General Service Office will accept changes/updates to a Group's information from an alcoholic Trustee. This allows the website Directory and the Meeting App to be updated straight away.

This new mechanism does not proclude the need for a Group to fill in a **Group Information Sheet** to change its details in relation to the A.A. Directory but will help update and make accurate the information available on the website. This is very important as more and more people use the internet to seek information these days.

# Why Have A Home Group?

September 1986

In a recent letter to a member of the Fellowship, a member of the General Service Office staff referred to the home group as the heartbeat of AA. That made a big impression on me, and I believe that just as surely as we are aware of, sensitive to, and in need of our own heartbeat, each of us needs a home group.

It all began in the home group, didn't it? Not all of us readily identified that mysterious group of people who were trying to help us get sober as our home group. In fact, I am painfully aware that the commitment to become part of anything escapes many in the early stages of recovery.

Most members of the Fellowship will never have the rewarding experience of attending a General Service Conference. Only a few are even touched by our area assemblies, state and national conventions, and other functions which bring members together from many home groups. Even the district functions might be attended by only a small portion of the membership of the groups involved. To many, their only AA is the home group. If this is so, what should the home group be to the member, and why should a member have a home group?

When we took those first faltering steps to recovery, many of us would have stumbled and fallen once again if we had to make what was to be a miraculous change by ourselves. In my case, the first rays of hope came from those sometimes loving, sometimes cantankerous old geezers who sat around the table in my hometown. A long time before I believed, or even heard, what they told me, I began thinking there might be a chance simply because I thought if they could do it, so could I.

The first slogans I heard came from them. Later, when I heard the same things from speakers at a convention, I thought it was so wise; but it was months before I realized that I first heard those thoughts from the fat little guy who I thought was so windy and who eventually became my sponsor. In fact, after I got into service work, I thought I needed to go to conventions, assemblies, and Forums to get my batteries re-charged because things were so dull and routine in my home group.

Now I know that it's not the wonderful people I've met from throughout these great lands who have helped keep me sober most of the time, but those wonderful people sitting around the table in my hometown who loved me when I could not love, who waited for me to quit lying, who tolerated me when I would be a part of nothing, and who never asked me to leave when I was obnoxious. Because of their love and patience, I was able finally to get outside of myself and make some sort of commitment to the group.

It seems to me that, in the beginning, a home group is all most of us can possibly handle. It's where we first find a sponsor, where someone first sees that we get a Big Book, where we first see the Steps on the wall, where we learn again to pray, and where we first begin to recover. (Remember the heartbeat?) But most of all, because of the trust that develops through the meetings of a home group, it is where we might first begin to care about someone else so that we might eventually begin to love again, both in AA and among our friends and family.

It is where we first learn to take responsibility so that we might eventually take responsibility for our lives. In my case, that began with the simple chore of clearing out ashtrays. (How wise that they knew I could do no more!) It was there we learned to do Twelfth Step work so that we could eventually pass on to others what was so freely given to us, thereby assuring the very future and survival of the Fellowship. It was there that someone began answering the questions about all the mysteries of what makes the whole thing work.

Oh yes, the home group is the heartbeat of the Fellowship. There are many reasons why the groups need each and every member running through their life veins. But most important, we need our home groups. That's where it all began, and it's where it will all end for us. Yes, all of us have also had the job of burying some of those people who passed the recovery program on to each of us.

This phase of my service to the Fellowship as Conference delegate, begins to wind down. What will I do now? If I am very, very lucky, those who are doing such a marvellous job of serving the Fellowship in my home group might, just might, allow me to make coffee next week and maybe even talk to a drunk.

R.B., Neosho, MO.

**80th A.A . International Convention**  
**July 2nd– 5th 2015**  
**Atlanta, Georgia, USA**

## Conventions Ireland

<b>Donegal Area Convention</b>	<b>Oct 18th-20th</b>	Jacksons Hotel, Ballybofey, Co Donegal.	
<b>Kerry Area 48th Annual Convention</b>	<b>Nov 8th-10th</b>	The Brandon Hotel, Tralee, Co Kerry. Contact Convention Chairperson c/o the Brandon on 066 7123333	
<b>Mayo Area Convention</b>	<b>Nov 29th –Dec 1st</b>	Breaffy House Hotel, Castlebar, Co Mayo.	<b>One Day at a Time</b>
<b>Galway West Area Convention</b>	<b>Jan 10th-12th, 2014</b>	The Galway Bay Hotel, Salthill, Co. Galway.	

## One Day Events Ireland

<b>Belfast Area DOG</b>	<b>Nov 9th, Sat</b>	Farsert International, 466 Springfield Road, Belfast, Co Antrim, BT12 7DW.
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## Conventions Abroad

<b>AA Malta Int Convention</b>	<b>Nov 1st-3rd</b>	Seashells Resort at Suncrest, Qwara, Malta .
<b>5th Annual Hong Kong Convention</b>	<b>Nov 8th-10th</b>	The Mariner's Club, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong. www.aa-hk.org
<b>Lanzarote 5th Annual Convention</b>	<b>Jan 24th-26th 2014</b>	Barcelo Lanzarote Resort Hotel, Avd. Del Mar, 5-E-35508 Costa Teguisse, Lanzarote, Canary Islands, Spain.
<b>25th North Sea Convention</b>	<b>Jan 31st-2nd Feb 2014</b>	Ravelingen Vacation Centre, Zeedick 290,8400 .

### Alcoholics Anonymous



### 57th All Ireland Convention

*"There is a Solution"*

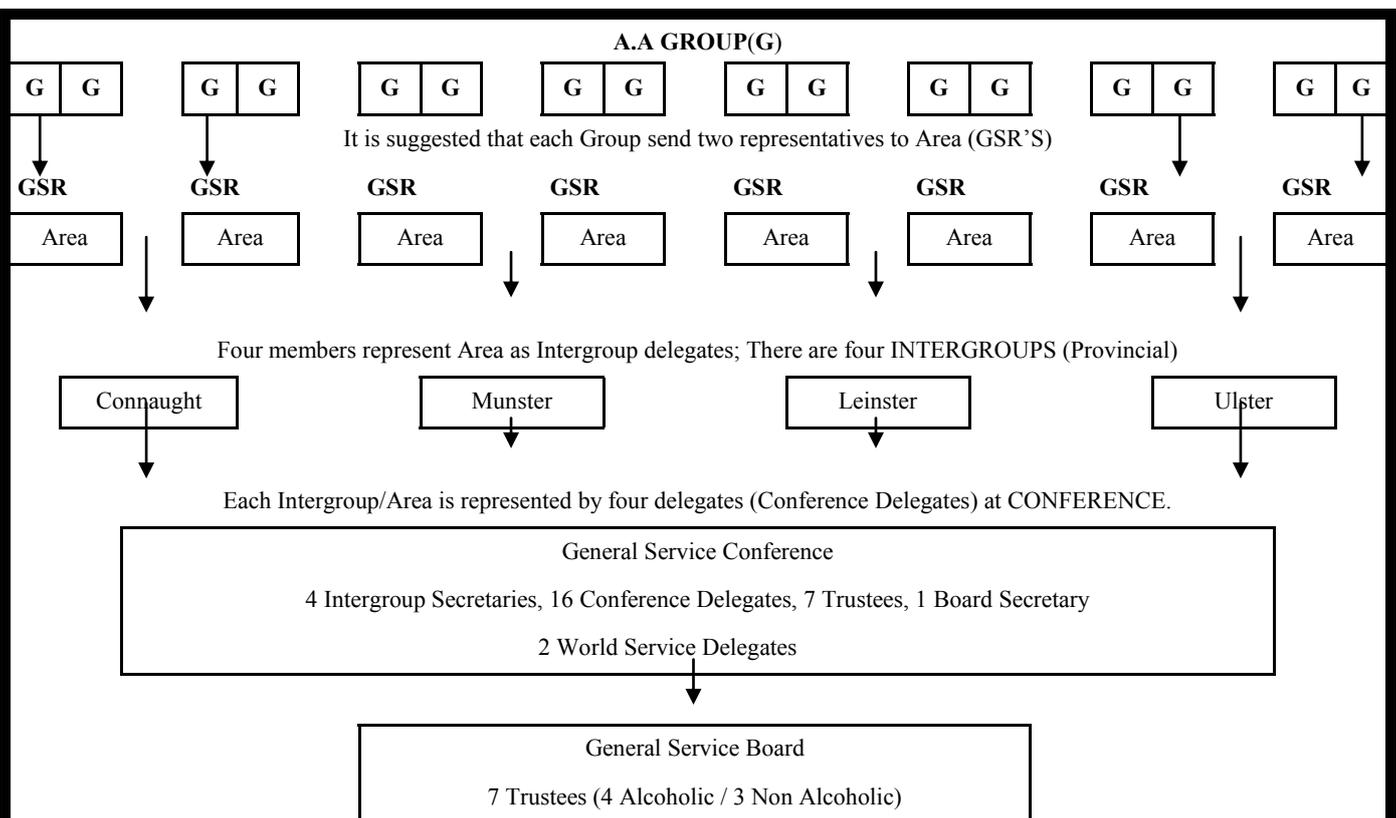
10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th of April 2014

Castletroy Park Hotel, Dublin Road, Limerick.

BOOKINGS...Phone;061 335 566

www.castletroy-park.ie

EMAIL; reservations@castletroypark.ie



"The views and opinions expressed in the News Sheet are not necessarily those of the Fellowship as a whole"