



The Santa Barbara

January 2007

MESSENGER

The Second Half (of the FIRST STEP)

I knew for many of my drinking years that I was “powerless over alcohol,” in the words of the First Step. That fact didn’t trouble me; I had a wife and a boss who were enablers, so my path to alcohol abuse was made easier by those around me. There were no threats of divorce or unemployment to keep me away from my favorite bar stool.

I foolishly thought the world operated in the same way as my little cocoon had, so I began a series of ill-conceived geographical cures, to three new towns and three new jobs in three years.

It was then I learned about the second half of the First Step, that my life had become unmanageable. My new employers were far less forgiving than my old one, and I found myself sulking alone among strangers in these new cities, far from the well-worn paths I had trod living my first thirty-three years in the same town.

In treatment, after a 36-hour ordeal with the DT’s, I was able to admit that I was an alcoholic without qualification. As my head cleared and I grew in Alcoholics Anonymous, I began to grasp the idea of individual responsibility. My misfortunes had not been simply someone else’s fault or bad breaks, as I had thought throughout my drinking years. This series of disasters had been my fault, I learned because, as an alcoholic my life had become unmanageable.

This unmanageability is the blessing that finally made clear to me my powerlessness over alcohol and over life itself. I didn’t drink because I had problems, as I thought, but rather my drinking caused and contributed to these problems, thus making my life unmanageable.

Twenty-six years later, a day at a time, I ask God to help me remember the unmanageability of my life when I fuel it with alcohol, and to remember how this same powerlessness extends beyond alcohol to countless other areas of my life.

THINGS CHANGE



This time of year is always one of reflection for me personally. I got sober in early January of 1983 so this is always a good time for me to look back and see how things, and I, have changed. One realization this year is that I have now been on this job for almost ten years. And what a great blessing those ten years have been for me! I truly cannot envision myself ever doing anything but what I am now doing. Some of you have been kind enough to say you thought I was doing a good job. I appreciate that very much. But what I need to tell you is that I have gained much more from this experience than you have gained from my being here. I am firmly convinced of that fact.

One thing that has been apparent to me for the last year, is that I could use a little help with certain aspects of the job. The outgoing Board has approved the hiring of an assistant. I am happy to report that I was able to find the absolutely perfect individual. He has been working only a short time and has already gotten a number of things accomplished. Things that benefit us all, because they help streamline the work of the office.

Also, just to reassure you, all of this has been accomplished at a minimal increase in cost to our local AA community. We are happy about that.

I want all of you to meet this asset to our operation. His name is John S. and I want you all to come by the office and meet him when you get the opportunity. We'll look forward to seeing you.

And just in case I haven't made it clear, I want to reassure anyone who may be concerned that I am not leaving my position, despite the rumors that started floating around almost immediately. I love what I do, and I love it even more now that I have such great help.

Tim

Thank you for letting me be of service.

Supporting Member Donation Coupon

I would like to become a supporting member of the Santa Barbara AA Central Office, and help it continue to carry the message and be there for the alcoholic who still suffers. I look forward to finding my monthly newsletter in the mail each month! Enclosed is my first contribution of \$ _____ . I will continue to donate this amount on a (circle one) monthly, quarterly, annual, other _____ basis.

I am already a supporting member. This is my regular contribution of \$ _____ .

Name _____

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please make check payable to: AA Central Office, S.M.C.
1213 State Street, Suite H
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Every AA group ought to be fully self supporting, declining outside contributions. —Seventh Tradition (short form), reprinted by permission of AA World Services, Inc.

“Is sobriety all that we are to expect of a spiritual awakening?

No, sobriety is only a bare beginning; it is only the first gift of the first awakening.

If more gifts are to be received, our awakening has to go on. As it does go on, we find that bit by bit we can discard the old life - the one that did not work – for a new life that can & does work under any conditions whatever.

Regardless of worldly success or failure, regardless of pain or joy, regardless of sickness or health or even of death itself, a new life of endless possibilities can be lived if we are willing to continue our awakening, through the practice of A.A.’s twelve steps.”

Grapevine, December 1957

Meeting Changes:

Tuesday Questions and Answers 8:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Moved to: 1st Congressional Church - 2101 State Street (State and Padre)

Bradford Room - entrance off Padre Street (was at Cottage Hospital)

Wednesday Gay & Lesbian Discussion, new location:

Unitarian Society Classroom #1; corner of Santa Barbara and Arrellaga Streets

@ 6:30-7:30 PM (was at Cottage Hospital)

General Service Representatives (GSR) now at Holy Cross Church Hall 1740 Cliff Dr.

Behind the Church 1st Monday at 6:00pm

NEW Meeting: Monday evening @ 6:30 PM

AA Big Book Study @ St Athanasius Orthodox Church,

976 Embarcadero Del Mar, Isla Vista

EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY ----Do you have it? We do!

A new book from Grapevine Inc, entitled:

Emotional Sobriety – The Next Frontier

Is now available at your Central Office for \$8.00 plus tax

First Step, Tradition and Concept:

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol--that our lives had become unmanageable.

Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of use will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

The final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship.

THE OXFORD GROUP CONNECTION

This article is an effort to put together in sequence the various events that took place in the years from 1908 to 1935 which made possible the meeting in Akron, Ohio between the AA founders, Dr. Bob Smith and Bill Wilson, and which resulted in the subsequent birth of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is an assemblage of facts gleaned from the following publications:

- * Alcoholics Anonymous
- * AA Comes of Age
- * Pass It On
- * Dr. Bob and the Good Old Timers
- * Not God (by Ernest Kurtz)
- * For Sinners Only (by A.J. Russell)
- * On the Tail of a Comet (by Garth Lean)
- * Akron Genesis of Alcoholics Anonymous (by Dick B.)
- * The Oxford Group & Alcoholics Anonymous (by Dick B.)

Do you know any of these names? Frank Buchman--Sam Shoemaker--Rowland Hazard--Jim Newton--Eleanor Forde--Ebby Thatcher--Shepard Cornell--Henrietta Seiberling--Rev. Walter Tunks--Norman Shepherd--Russell Firestone--T. Henry & Clarace Williams?? All of these people were instrumental in a scenario that contributed to making possible that historic meeting at the Gate House of the Seiberling Estate in Akron that became the birthplace of Alcoholics Anonymous. If it were not for these people, that meeting could never have taken place, and the fellowship to which we all owe our lives today might never have been born.

Where did the steps originate? In *AA Comes of Age*, (p.39), Bill wrote:

“Early AA got it’s ideas of self-examination, acknowledgement of character defects, restitution for harm done, and working with others straight from the Oxford Groups and directly from Sam Shoemaker, their former leader in America, and nowhere else.” (1)

We prepare to start this history with the story of Frank Buchman, the founder of the Oxford Group. You will see as we trace the paths of Dr. Bob and Bill Wilson in the years before they met, that the Oxford Group and the aforementioned cast of characters played a part in every twist and turn of the path that led Bill Wilson to Akron.

FRANK BUCHMAN AND THE OXFORD GROUP

Who were the Oxford Group (2)? In 1908, a YMCA secretary named Frank Buchman had a spiritual transformation that changed his life (3). Upon graduating in June of that year, he started a streetside church in Philadelphia (Church of the Good Shepherd) with a donation of seventeen dollars. The church flourished, and he started a hospice for young men which spread to other cities, and then he started a settlement house project. Frank had a violent argument with his trustee committee because they cut the budget and the food allotment. He resigned and went to Europe, ending up at a large religious convention in Keswick, England. The spiritual transformation occurred when he heard a woman speaker talk simply about the cross of Christ. He felt the chasm separating him from Christ, and a feeling of a will to surrender. He went back to his house and wrote

these words to each of his six trustees in Philadelphia: “My dear friend. I have nursed ill feelings against you. I am sorry. Will you forgive me? Sincerely, Frank.” Feeling an urge to share this experience, he went to nearby Oxford University and formed an evangelical group there among the student leaders and athletes.

Later the movement spread, and groups formed over the next twenty years in England, Scotland, Holland, India, South Africa, China, Egypt, Switzerland, and North and South America. Many of the basic things they did have carried over directly into our program. They practiced absolute surrender, guidance by the Holy Spirit, sharing bringing about true fellowship, life changing, faith and prayer. They aimed for absolute standards of Love, Purity, Honesty, and Unselfishness, which were an integral part of the first AA programs in Akron and Cleveland and New York. Above all the group was a fellowship: “A First Century Christian Fellowship.” They carried the message aggressively to others. They met in churches, universities, and homes.

The Oxford Group and their principles were carried to the United States so that in both New York City and Akron, Ohio an Oxford Group was in place and functioning when Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith hit their respective bottoms. These two groups would befriend and teach their principles to our co-founders before they ever met, and then go on to host the fledgling groups of newly dry and nameless drunks as they came together.

Here is how the Oxford Group came to the United States. One early member at Oxford, Ken Twitchell, had attended Princeton University and had a brother in New York City who was a mainstay in the Calvary Episcopal Church. This becomes one of several amazing coincidences. In 1918 during his travels, Frank Buchman met a young YMCA worker, Sam Shoemaker, in China and converted him to the Oxford Group principles. Years later, Sam became the minister of that Calvary Church in New York, and that same church became the titular headquarters for the Oxford Group in the United States. (The name was changed in 1928 from “A First Century Christian Fellowship” to the “Oxford Group.”)

The groups’ popularity peaked during this period. There were 10,000 people at one meeting at Stockbridge in the Berkshire Mountains. Business teams began to have their “house parties” in various cities (4).

In 1931 in England, a London newspaper editor, A. J. Russell, attended an Oxford Group meeting with the intention of exposing the group. But he wrote, “I came as an observer and became a convert!” (Russell later edited “God Calling”, which may have found its way into material used by the early AAs.) Some 9 years later, in 1940, Richmond Walker of the Quincy, Mass. group wrote the 24-hour book still used by us today. This was modeled after Russell’s “God Calling” but was slanted away from all spiritual to more of a 24-hour not drinking theme. Russell’s book, “For Sinners Only”, described his journey from prodigal son to the Oxford Group and became a best seller in the early 1930s in England and the United States, and was printed in eight languages.

One chapter of the book was devoted to Calvary Episcopal Church in New York City and its rector, Sam Shoemaker. Calvary Church became the virtual American headquarters for the Oxford Group during the 1930s. And it was here, (in the church’s mission) , that Bill Wilson’s sponsor, Ebby Thatcher, was living at the time of Bill’s last drunk.

(Next month we will feature: How the Message came to Bill!)



December Birthdays

Brad B.....	1 yr
Chana O.	1 yr
Jersey Dave	3 yrs
Laurie	4 yrs
Clay C.	6 yrs
Manny B.....	7 yrs
John L.	8 yrs
Martha K.....	8 yrs
Jay F.	17 yrs
Dinah M.....	17 yrs
Joan L.....	20 yrs
Bo S.....	22 yrs
Spencer W	24 yrs
Joe R.....	28 yrs
Jack W	32 yrs
Irish Tony.....	32 yrs

The Messenger is published monthly by:

23rd District Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous
1213 State Street, Suite H
Santa Barbara, California 93101

805-962-3332
sbaa@santabarbaraAA.com

Submissions Needed

The Messenger needs your submissions and letters. We especially seek submissions on the step or tradition associated with the month of the same number. For the second month, February, we need writing on Step 2 and Tradition 2. Send submissions to DinahMason@aol.com

Central Office Statistics

During December your Central Office had:

AA information calls.....	756
Al-Anon.....	33
Referrals to other programs	53
12-step via answering service.....	56
Out-of-town visitors	14
12-step via office	12
Office walk-ins	888
Hits on our Web site	1,023

Service Meetings

GSRs (Group Service Representatives) Meeting Change:

General Service Representatives (GSR) 1st Monday at 6:00pm meet at:
Holy Cross Church Hall 1740 Cliff Dr. Behind the Church

IGRs (Intergroup Representatives) meet at 6:00 P.M. the second Tuesday each month at First Presbyterian Church, 21 E Constance, in Santa Barbara.

H&I (Hospitals & Institutions) meets at 6:00 P.M. the second Monday each month at the Central Office.

PI (Public Information) meets the fourth Saturday of each month.

Call 687-7673 for more information.

22nd ANNUAL Santa Barbara Convention Committee -2nd Thursday of Month, 6:00 PM @ 3523 Modoc Rd. Commitments Available!

Recovery Trivia

Q. What was the name of the first AA group in Santa Barbara?

A. See next month's Messenger.

Answer to last month's question:

Q. What was the name of the first men's recovery house in Santa Barbara?

Donations by Group December 2006

	Dec 06	Nov 06	Jan - Dec 06		Dec 06	Nov 06	Jan - Dec 06
001 Sunrisers	93.00	0.00	93.00	094 Questions & Answers	0.00	0.00	28.75
002 Courage To Change	0.00	0.00	120.00	097 Almost Saints	0.00	0.00	237.00
003 Eye Opener	275.00	160.00	3,497.00	099 Sink Or Swim	0.00	100.00	240.00
004 Monday At A Time	0.00	0.00	356.15	100 UCSB Discussion	0.00	0.00	127.89
006 Start Your Week Right	0.00	100.00	1,987.18	101 Big Book Study, Friday	0.00	0.00	3.05
007 Sound Off	0.00	0.00	100.00	111 Carpinteria Canalino	0.00	0.00	600.00
008 Beginner's Group	0.00	68.00	68.00	112 Montecito/Carpinteria	0.00	0.00	394.00
010 Foundation Group	39.00	69.00	848.44	113 Sought Through Prayer & N	0.00	38.00	160.10
011 Sundowner Group	0.00	248.00	1,255.00	114 Schooner Group	0.00	84.00	663.00
013 New Pair Of Glasses	0.00	0.00	60.00	115 Eleventh Step Meditation	13.64	25.00	143.11
019 Onward & Upward	0.00	0.00	150.00	117 Way Of Life	25.00	0.00	1,625.00
020 Cambridge Group	0.00	0.00	265.00	120 Sat. Morn. Home Boys	151.00	150.00	1,260.07
021 Summerland Monday Group	0.00	0.00	180.00	130 Saturday Night Sobriety	0.00	0.00	144.00
022 There Is A Solution	0.00	0.00	255.00	133 Action Participation	0.00	0.00	648.00
023 For Women Only	0.00	150.00	364.00	139 It's A Hell Of A Deal	0.00	0.00	534.02
025 Grateful Group	0.00	0.00	120.00	140 Gay Discussion, Sunday	75.00	0.00	325.00
026 Carpinteria Study Group	0.00	0.00	269.75	141 Off Center	597.00	0.00	2,311.20
028 The Mother Group	0.00	0.00	64.00	144 Back To Basics, Young Peo	178.22	0.00	550.67
030 Sisters In Solution	0.00	0.00	148.00	146 Out Of Town Speaker, NH II	0.00	0.00	274.66
034 Women of Change	0.00	0.00	404.62	148 San Ysidro	0.00	0.00	300.00
035 12 & 12 Study, Tues.	0.00	100.00	240.00	149 Getting To Know You	0.00	0.00	650.00
036 Tuesday Trudgers	0.00	0.00	100.00	150 Goleta Sun. Night Speaker	0.00	30.00	110.00
045 Alternative Group	0.00	75.00	400.00	153 Happy Destiny	0.00	400.00	750.00
047 Tuesday Men's Stag	0.00	0.00	410.40	156 Start Your Day Right	0.00	0.00	650.00
051 Men's Group At St. Mary's	0.00	182.00	412.00	161 Back To Basics Group	0.00	274.00	279.80
052 As Bill Sees It, Weds.	0.00	0.00	71.29	163 Mustard Seed	0.00	0.00	166.00
053 Both Oars In The Water	0.00	100.00	240.00	164 Men Who Have Lost Their L	0.00	240.00	1,819.00
055 Staying Alive	282.20	0.00	672.25	165 Junkyard Dogs	0.00	0.00	641.35
056 Women By The Books	0.00	0.00	161.50	166 Serenity Sisters	0.00	0.00	228.00
062 Do The Steps Or Die	88.58	54.23	503.69	170 Barefoot Group	34.00	13.00	118.00
064 Women's Serenity Group	0.00	0.00	251.00	177 Key Group	0.00	490.00	3,330.00
067 Rigorous Honesty	12.00	192.00	659.00	181 Keep Coming Back Group	0.00	0.00	1,343.51
068 Stepping Stones	0.00	0.00	179.72	183 Summerland, Thurs.	349.13	0.00	1,797.53
070 Success roup	0.00	0.00	80.00	186 Sunday Night Alternative, N	0.00	72.00	72.00
071 The Loft	0.00	0.00	1,030.00	186 Turning Point	0.00	0.00	1,028.00
072 Discussion Gay Wednesday	0.00	0.00	110.00	200 Anonymous Donations	0.00	0.00	213.00
073 Young People's	0.00	0.00	342.48	201 Birthday Donations	236.00	42.00	799.00
074 Casa Serena (BB Study)	0.00	0.00	6.00	202 Supporting Members	1,625.00	526.00	16,176.09
076 11th Step	0.00	100.00	265.00	203 SBYPAA	0.00	0.00	105.65
079 Harbor Group	381.00	515.00	4,947.82	204 Memorial Fund	500.00	0.00	600.00
083 Sober Students, Tues Eve	0.00	0.00	240.00	211 Rent Received	169.00	155.00	1,952.00
089 Here & Now	0.00	0.00	170.00	212 Special Events	0.00	0.00	4,274.00
091 New Life	0.00	0.00	440.00				
093 Into Action, Thurs	100.00	0.00	240.00	Totals:	\$3,952.99	\$4,752.23	\$70,449.74

Central Office
1213 State Street, Suite H
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 962-3332

