



District 23 Home Group Histories

Area 60, District 23 Archives
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Home Group Histories

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Greensburg 12 & 12

Our Greensburg 12 & 12 group of Alcoholics Anonymous was founded on November 12, 1984 by Ed G and Mary R.

This meeting grew out of a need that arose from the Monday Night Big Book meeting that was founded 5 months earlier that same year on July 7, 1984. It was customary that if a newcomer came to the Big Book meeting, Ed would take the men and Mary would take the women into a side room to explain something about the steps. The meeting took place then at the Episcopal Church across from St Clair Park. So it was decided that a 12 & 12 meeting was needed to meet this need. They did not want to take anything away from the Big Book meeting by pulling these newcomers aside.

By group conscience it was decided that Sunday night would be the meeting night. It was important to consider the Tuesday night Greensburg group, the Thursday night Latrobe group, and the Friday night Jeannette group. In those days it was of paramount importance to consider all of this on choosing a meeting night.

On November 12, 1984 the first meeting was held. It was the practice of the group that beginners would meet in one room to go over steps 1, 2 and 3, and other members would meet separately to go over the remaining steps and traditions. The founding members began with the forward of the book because "many people, nonalcoholic, reported that as a result of the practices of AA's 12 steps, they have been able to meet other difficulties of life...they see in them a way of happy and effective living for many, alcoholic or not" (pg 15-16 of the 12&12).

The founding members saw the effect of these principles at work in their own families. The group would sometimes take up to a month to read and discuss a step. Step 9 once took 3 months.

As the years passed the size of the group grew and shrank, as is the experience of AA groups.

In the beginning of 2002, by group conscience, we decided to go back to the roots of our home group and restart the beginners group. It was a huge success, but at the expense of the 12 & 12 meeting. Finally group conscience spoke again. It was decided in order to keep the 12 & 12 alive, the beginners meeting would have to be dissolved. At the time only 3 to 5 people attended the 12 & 12, while 15 to 20 attended the beginners meeting. Once again our numbers grew to 20 to 30 a night.

Our group is deeply grateful to our founding members and the countless trusted servants who have kept the hand of AA extended on Sunday night for all of us when we reach out for help. We now extend our hands so this meeting will be here for the next suffering alcoholic.

Unity Twelve Step

The Unity Twelve Step Group commenced with its first meeting on Friday, January 25, 1991 in the St Vincent College cafeteria at 8pm. It was stated that hopefully the group would follow the format used in 12 Step groups in Maryland. Namely, instead of having group discussions as based on the reading of the steps in the context of the meeting itself, the new group presumes that the participants have read the step sometime during the week before it is to be discussed. At each meeting, a Step Presenter shares his experience, strength and hope in working the particular step for ten to fifteen minutes and states where he is with regard to sobriety and the 12 Steps. Then he opens up the discussion to the other people present.

Newcomers stay with the long timers for the step discussion. In this way they can learn how to work the steps from those who have worked them. They can also hear the long timers share their experience, strength and hope. Thereby, the newcomers can gain strength and hope themselves in recovery, looking forward to a better and more fulfilling way of living life in sobriety according to the spirituality of the program found in the *Big Book* and the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

This meeting was begun as a 12 Step discussion meeting because the group holds the firm conviction that a psychic change and spiritual recovery occur through the working of the 12 Steps.

Nineteen people were gathered at the first meeting: Larry H, Chairperson; Joe W, Presenter of Step One; Richard C; Xavier E; Daniel L; Sue M; Kathy; Ralph H; Jonathan T; Joe; Ted V; Bob S; Jim C; Tom W; Tom; Ed N; Bill; Scott; and Jerome H.

Latrobe In-Depth Big Book Study

This meeting was officially founded on November 1, 1995 by Father Larry H (deceased). Charter members were Homer W and John Y, who joined soon afterward. There were about 6 people at the original meeting. At the present time this meeting has 23 active home group members. Each home group member usually chairs the meeting for two weeks a year. Members keep active by accepting various jobs within the home group on a rotating basis such as greeter, literature, set-up or tear down. This is, of course, in addition to the usual jobs of secretary, GSR, Grapevine, etc. The group takes meetings into Torrance State Hospital and Gateway Rehab on a regular basis also.

The format of this meeting is that the chair reads the paragraph being studied from the first 164 pages of the Big Book, comments on it, and opens up the meeting to discussion from the group. The meeting usually averages three paragraphs a night and takes around three years to read the entire book. At first the dust jacket, preface, the contents and the foreward were all read. And of course the Doctor's Opinion is always read before beginning the first chapter. The stories are not read or discussed at this meeting.

Since 1995 the group has been through the book three times and is now on its fourth trip through the book. Meeting time is 6pm at St Vincent College. The official meeting place for the group is the Metten Room behind the cafeteria, located near the Basilica, but other meeting locations near the cafeteria, including the rooms upstairs and even the Steeler Dining Room, have been used from time to time.

Irwin Back to Basics Group (Red Door Meeting)

The Irwin Back to Basics Group began on July 21, 1994. I have heard of meetings that have begun with a resentment and a coffee pot; fortunately, that was not the case with this meeting.

I was standing watching our small parade on Memorial Day of 1994 when an AA friend came over to say hello. The conversation came around to how nice it would be to have a small discussion meeting during the week in Irwin, early enough to accommodate people's school and work schedules. The idea became an action as Mary Dee S and Tom m began to spread the word and seek out a meeting place. Reverend Larry Dunster of the First Presbyterian Church was open to the concept, and suddenly the meeting had found a home.

Beginning with a small borrowed coffee pot, a "New Group" kit from the New York Central Office and five or six interested members of AA, the meeting began to grow and take shape. At the first group conscience, it was decided that the format would be to read a few pages of AA's "Big Book" every week and discuss what was read. That format has not changed to this day.

The first trusted servants were Mary Dee S, secretary; Tom M, treasurer; and Joe N as GSR. The first money accumulated went to buy a group coffee pot and some literature. Today, enough Big Books have been acquired (thanks in part to a gift of books from Bob McC) to supply anyone at the meeting who doesn't have their own.

The first group anniversary was celebrated on July 20, 1995, with desserts and beverages. The group has grown and thrived and as of 2001 had 30 home group members – but we always welcome more.

Greensburg Big Book Study

Our Monday night GBBS began as the "sister" meeting to the Sunday night Greensburg 12&12.

Founded in July of 1984 by Mary R, Ralph D, and two women no longer members of AA, our GBBS had their first meetings at Twin Lakes Pavilion in Greensburg. With weather being a huge factor, our founders began meeting indoors at the Episcopal Church on Maple Avenue in Greensburg.

As more and more newcomers came to our Big Book Study, many questions were asked about the 12 steps of the program. So as not to interrupt the Big Book Study, Mary R and Ed G would pull aside these newcomers and basically explain something about the steps to them.

After having seen another very specific need for recovery, Mary R and Ed G, along with a GBBS group conscience, decided that Sunday night would become the 12 steps and 12 traditions meeting, which was founded 5 months later in November 1984.

With the size of the Big Book Study increasing, we outgrew our Maple Avenue place and parking became a problem. Mary R made contact with the Trinity Church of Christ at 139 North Main Street in Greensburg and they agreed to let us use their facilities, which is where we still meet today every Monday at 8pm.

Our GBBS was the first of its kind in District 23, the next closest Big Book Study being in Monroeville.

God willing, in July 2004, we will be celebrating our 20th Anniversary. The GBBS has been able to continue to carry the message of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous to all who come through our doors.

For this, we are ever so grateful to our active home group members and the trusted servants, both past and present. We also wish to acknowledge "fellow" groups and their support to help carry the Big Book message of hope to a new way of life for all alcoholics. Just keep coming back!

With love, enthusiasm, and good cookies,

Greensburg Big Book Study

Latrobe Wednesday Noon Group

The first official meeting of the Latrobe Wednesday Noon Group was held on March 6, 2002 at the Trinity Lutheran Church at 331 Weldon Street.

The chairperson at the first meeting was Cheryl S. Ten people attended the first meeting.

The second meeting of the group was held on March 13, 2002. Dan C chaired and 15 people attended.

Over the years Cheryl S, Jim G, Tom W, and Fran F serving as secretary, have been instrumental in keeping the group running.

At the present time the average attendance has grown to 20-30 people.

Regional #5 Correction Facility

The Regional #5 Correction Facility AA Group, located at Rt 119 South Greensburg, was started on April 15, 1981. This group, at the request of Mr Thomas Fulcomer who was superintendent (warden) at the time and also a member of the Westmoreland County Drug and Alcohol Commission Board of Directors, was formed by Jean M.

After prison board approval, the meetings were permitted under the supervision of the Prison Chaplain, Reverend Arthur Papenmeier. *It should be noted that Reverend Papenmeier, not being a member of AA, did not participate in the meetings in any way, but he was responsible for notifying the inmates about the meetings and arranging for the coffee, etc.*

The first AA member who agreed to facilitate the group was Joe J of Elizabeth-Forward. He managed the group for several years until poor health necessitated his leaving.

Since that time, the group facilitator has been Kenneth P of Scottdale. Within the past year he has enlarged the program to include a Saturday morning small discussion meeting.

Scottdale Sunday Night Group

Started November 12, 1980 at the Trinity Reformed United Church of Christ, 106 North Chestnut Street, Scottdale, PA. The founders were Ken and Rose P. The pastors, Led and Nancy B, as well as the consistory H.E.B, Lowell and Dave F, Dick R, and Kathryn W were instrumental in getting the meeting started.

The original group officers were Rose – Secretary; Ken P – Treasurer, GSR and Steering Committee.

The speaker at the first meeting was Fred N from Uniontown, PA. The chairperson was Rose P. The meeting attendance was between 20-40 people. This was the first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous ever held in Scottdale.

The first anniversary speaker was Scott B from Rector, PA. Attendance at the meeting was between 80-90 people. The chairperson was Ed K.

The second anniversary speaker was Pete K. Attendance at the meeting was between 80-90 people. The chairperson was Ken P.

I want to thank the Scottdale Sunday Night Group for helping us remember how our district expanded.

The Twin Lakes Group

The Twin Lakes Group was started on February 16, 1984. Attending the first meetings were Jean M, Ron M, Gene B, Craig T, Kim M and Bruce A. The first few years of meetings had a small attendance, usually 10 people. Over the years the meeting has grown dramatically. Someone suggested we have an outside meeting to coincide with the inside meeting. Now we have two meetings weather permitting.

Our meeting has been unique in several ways. Our doors have been open for a meeting every Saturday for over 15 years. Sometimes it has been in different locations such as Twin Lakes Park, Joane and Dan M's house and Trinity UMC in Greensburg, but there has always been an open discussion meeting of the Twin Lakes group since it was founded. We also have breakfast and luncheon meeting several times a year. In the summer we have an annual picnic at Twin Lakes Park.

We are grateful to the many trusted servants we have had since our conception. We are very fortunate to have such an active group. We are also thankful to the Luxor UMC for the use of their facilities.

"We are people who would normally not mix. But there exists among us a fellowship, friendliness and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful" – *Alcoholics Anonymous*, page 17

Sunday Serenity Group

During the last week in January 2007 a few alcoholics thought it would be a great idea to start a Sunday morning meeting. Initially there were four of us and we were blessed with the experience, strength and hope from hundreds of alcoholics. This helped us to formulate a simple plan. A decision was made to contact the local hospital to see if the conference rooms would be available. After discussing the purpose of AA and the importance of the AA Traditions with hospital administrators, a decision was made and we were welcomed as guests. Sunday March 4th, 2007 at 10:30am was selected as the 'official' start date and time.

Prior to the first meeting, announcements were made at several meetings, the district and area newsletters. Furthermore, we were blessed with several excellent ideas. We decided the first two group conscience meetings were to be 'open' in the truest sense. Both meetings were attended by 24 alcoholics and they were all provided an opportunity to share and care with us – And many did. God was certainly in charge.

During the first group conscience meeting we agreed on a name and type of meeting – Sunday Serenity and Open Discussion. Members rotated into the following positions: Secretary, Treasurer, GSR, Alt GSR, H&I and the Hospital Contact person. We all understood the responsibilities and accepted the fact that change will take place. We also decided on readings and the venue for the meeting. The 'Twelve Traditions – Long Form' was adopted while reading the customary short form at meetings. We fully understood that the traditions are not binding over and group or groups; therefore, it seemed wise to openly adopt them with the understanding that reading them at meetings will reaffirm the adoption.

We all recognized how helpful it would be to open up lines of communication with the GSO, District 23 and Area 60. The group became registered in April 2007. Sunday Serenity Group became listed on the district's meeting list.

At the second group conscience meeting we took care of business regarding prudent reserve, obtaining literature, donations to the hospital for room and coffee, and a few loose ends. Since literature is the primary way to carry the message; especially to the still suffering alcoholic, we were able to obtain some literature.

Since March, attendance has varied from 14 to 24. Our GSR and H&I Rep regularly attend monthly meetings to carry the message and bring back the latest news. We also receive regular mailings from the region and GSO. During the summer, the Group Conscience accepted responsibility to carry the message to a local treatment center.

Guests are greeted with a 'little' welcome message on the literature table that includes an introduction to the Grapevine. Many visitors have commented that "it's great to start the week off with a meeting and to enjoy the fellowship". Although we are in a hospital and have limited use of the facility, we will plan 'something' for our anniversary.

DISTRICT 23 GROUP HISTORY

Name of Group: Monday Night Derry Under the Bridge

Current address: North Chestnut St & 3rd St, Derry, PA 15627

Date of the first meeting: April 1987

What was the original format of meeting when it started: Open Discussion

Has the format of your meeting changed: No

Who were your original home group members: ????

Who were your first home group officers: ???

Is your current meeting place the same: Yes

What is the day and time of your meeting: Monday @ 7:30pm

What is your groups average attendance: 17

Any particular reason why your meeting was formed: To help newcomers

Is there any interesting information about the group that you would like to share with future generations of AA's: None

Name(s) of person(s) recording this history: _____

Date of this recording: 7/18/2011

DISTRICT 23 GROUP HISTORY

Name of Group: Greensburg Wednesday Noon

Current address: 23 Windihill, Greensburg, PA 15601

Date of the first meeting: ????

What was the original format of meeting when it started: collection was taken at end of meeting

Has the format of your meeting changed: yes - collection taken at beginning of meeting

Who were your original home group members: see below

Who were your first home group officers: Mary R; Garnette; Patricia E; Richard K

Is your current meeting place the same: yes

What is the day and time of your meeting: Wednesday @ noon

What is your groups average attendance: 15-20

Any particular reason why your meeting was formed: to help newcomers

Is there any interesting information about the group that you would like to share with future generations of AA's:

A lot of SPSHS and court ordered new people come to this meeting. We try and make this meeting as welcoming as possible to meet and greet the newcomer and they seem to keep coming back.

Name(s) of person(s) recording this history: Kimberly R

Date of this recording: 7/2/2011

DISTRICT 23 GROUP HISTORY

Name of Group: Latrobe Thursday Night Big Book Study

Current address: Trinity Lutheran Church, 331 Weldon Street, Latrobe, PA 15650

Date of the first meeting: 06-01-2000 (official 07-05-2001)

What was the original format of meeting when it started: read big book

Has the format of your meeting changed: no

Who were your original home group members: _____

Tom S, Earl F, Denny B, Nick N, Camille W, Katherine

Who were your first home group officers: not really sure

Is your current meeting place the same: yes

What is the day and time of your meeting: Thursday 8:00 - 9:00 pm

What is your groups average attendance: 18-Dec

Any particular reason why your meeting was formed: _____

To discuss the Big Book's realy meaning and the true stories of people's problems

Is there any interesting information about the group that you would like to share with future generations of AA's: _____

Name(s) of person(s) recording this history: Camille W (treasurer/secretary)

Date of this recording: 2011

DISTRICT 23 GROUP HISTORY

Name of Group: Latrobe Keep Coming Back

Current address: 1005 Cedar Street, Latrobe, PA 15650 (Assembly of God - Tree of Life Church)

Date of the first meeting: 08-10-2004 (official - 07-05-2000)

What was the original format of meeting when it started: 3/22/1996

Has the format of your meeting changed: no (open discussion)

Who were your original home group members: _____
some deceased. Nick N, Denny B, Tom S to name a few

Who were your first home group officers: not really sure
Earl F, Denny B, Nick N, Tom S, Camille W, Jim D

Is your current meeting place the same: yes

What is the day and time of your meeting: Tuesday 7:30 - 8:30 pm

What is your groups average attendance: 20 - 28

Any particular reason why your meeting was formed: _____
For open discussion for different reasons of your problems of drinking and why and how it works.

Is there any interesting information about the group that you would like to share with future generations of AA's: _____
This group has a lot of attendance coming in and out due to court slips, but on a regular basis it has a nice flow coming in and out.

Name(s) of person(s) recording this history: Camille W (treasurer/secretary)

Date of this recording: 2011

DISTRICT 23 GROUP HISTORY

Name of Group: Mount Pleasant Big Book Study

Current address: Good Shephard Lutheran Church, 822 West Main Street, Mount Pleasant, PA 15666

Date of the first meeting: 2/15/1994

What was the original format of meeting when it started: Big Book Study

Has the format of your meeting changed: no

Who were your original home group members: _____

Mark F (treasurer), Carl L, Mark W (secretary), Bill K (GSR)

Who were your first home group officers: as above

Is your current meeting place the same: yes

What is the day and time of your meeting: Tuesday night 8pm

What is your groups average attendance: 37

Any particular reason why your meeting was formed: need

Is there any interesting information about the group that you would like to share with future generations of AA's: _____

Meeting started with four guys and a coffee pot. Other formats were explored including tapes which were so good that members did not wish to interrupt a good reader. The first woman joined approximately 1997. The purpose of the meeting was to have a meeting - a basic need.

Name(s) of person(s) recording this history: Bill K (as recorded by Barb R, GSR)

Date of this recording: 5/3/2011

DISTRICT 23 GROUP HISTORY

Name of Group: Dinner with Bill

Current address: 9610 Barnes Lake Road, North Huntington, PA 15642

Date of the first meeting: 9/20/2011

What was the original format of meeting when it started: As Bill Sees It

Has the format of your meeting changed: No

Who were your original home group members: Ron H, Chris J, Tony, Karen, Mark B

Who were your first home group officers: _____

Chris J - GSR; Tony - Secretary; Karen - H&I/Grapevine; Ron H - Treasurer

Is your current meeting place the same: Yes

What is the day and time of your meeting: Tuesday @ 6pm

What is your groups average attendance: N/A

Any particular reason why your meeting was formed: _____

Necessity; Set time early so other meetings still available in evenings

Is there any interesting information about the group that you would like to share with future generations of AA's: _____

Started by 3 strangers with a common problem in hopes of helping others

Name(s) of person(s) recording this history: Chris J

Date of this recording: 9/2/2011