

Suggestions for Preparing a Group History Form

A. Who Prepares the Group History?

Many believe that the A.A. "long-timer" is the obvious choice to write the history of the Group since he/she played a major role in that history. Others believe that a newcomer, who played no role in the early history of the Group, is better able to dispassionately and impartially select the information to be incorporated into the Group history. Of course, the Group may select whomever they wish to be the Group Historian, according to their Group conscience, trusting that the selected member will place principles before personalities in the fulfillment of his/her task.

B. What Should Be Included in the Group History?

The length of the Group History is usually dictated by the length of time that the Group has existed, by the number and availability of long-time members, by the quality of the memory of the individual member, and by the availability of the supporting documents, and, not least important, by the enthusiasm, initiative, patience, and thoroughness of the Group Historian.

Of course, Groups may include as much or as little detail in the Group History as they wish. However, the Trustees' Archive Committee, G.S.O., has suggested that the items shown on the Group History Form (attached), and explained below, are basic to any A.A. Group History. (The explanatory comments are those of the Hawai'i Area Archives Committee Chairperson, unless otherwise stated)

C. Name of Group:

What is the name of the Group?

What is the source of the name? (Big, Book, Bible, etc?)

If the meaning would not be apparent to someone from out of state, what is the meaning of the name?

1. Date Founded:

When was the Group founded under its earliest name?

Did the Group continue without interruption from that date?

If Group meetings were suspended at any time, when and for what reason?

When did the meetings resume?

Why?

Extracts from A.A. Directories, meeting schedules and other archival documents can be provided which may be helpful in determining the approximate starting date of the Group. However, it should be noted that:

- *The appearance of a Group in an annual A.A. Directory can be interpreted as evidence that the Group came into existence (as far as G.S.O. was aware) in the year prior to the Directory date. That is, if the Group appears in the 1958 Directory, G.S.O. became aware of its existence during 1957. The Group may well have existed before that time, but did not register with G.S.O.*
- *The appearance of a Group in a meeting schedule would indicate that the Group came into existence subsequent to (or immediately prior to) publication of the last previous meeting schedule.*

- The “Group Information Sheet” which is periodically provided to the Hawai`i Area Registrar by G.S.O. usually includes a “History Date.” This date is usually the date of registration of the Group with G.S.O.

2. Founder(s):

Who was (were) the founder/founders of the Group? (Please use full names and addresses, if known.) If deceased, please indicate by placing an asterisk next to the name.

[Regarding the use of the full names of A.A. members, G.S.O. provides the following:

“Development of procedures seems to be a matter of local policy decision by the archives committee, but the necessity of protecting the confidentiality of correspondence and the anonymity of correspondence is without question an important consideration and a trust that falls upon all A.A. archivists and committees.”

“At G.S.O., the Group histories and correspondence files (going back to 1939) contain full names and addresses. ... Also, while adhering to the tradition of first name and last initial may be preferable, confusion can occur where two or even three people have the same name and last initials.”

The Hawai`i Area Archives Committee and Archivist will not release, for general circulation, any document containing the full name of any A.A. member, living or deceased. Documents intended for general circulation will carry only first name and last initial identification since such documents might reach outside the Fellowship. The Committee does not believe that it can be too careful about the protection of the anonymity of our members.]

3. Early Members:

Who were the earliest members, other than founders, who played a key role in the Group (perhaps as trusted servants, signers of the lease for the meeting space, financial underwriters, etc.?)

The comments, above, pertaining to founders also apply to these members.

4. Place of the First Meeting:

Where was the first meeting held?

Address?

Provide a description of the meeting room, if known.

What were the considerations that went into the selections of this facility?

5. Time of the First Meeting:

On what date, on what day, at what time did the first meeting take place?

What was the duration of the earliest meetings?

What was the format of the meeting?

6. Current Meeting:

Where does the Group currently hold its meetings?

On what day and at what time?

What is the meeting length?

What is the current format?

If more than one meeting, provide the same information about each.

7. Current Membership Numbers:

On average, how many people attend each meeting?
How many people claim home-Group membership?
On average, how many attend Group conscience (business) meetings?
If earlier membership date is available, please provide.

8. Did the Group Move?

Has the Group moved from its original meeting place?
If so, when did it move?
What was the reason for the move?
(If more than one move, please explain each move.)

9. Group History

Such as anniversaries,
Special meetings,
Guest speakers,
Notes about the founders
Etc.
Has your Group had any special anniversary celebrations?
Has the Group held special workshops?
Does it hold dances or round-ups?
Does the Group sponsor a meeting in a hospital, treatment center, or other institution?
Did it previously do any of these things?
Please provide details concerning these activities and include any/all information you may be aware of, not asked for on this form. This will result in a clearer and/or more factual account of your Group

10. Other Pertinent Details:

Have any members of the Group served Hawai`i Area as a Trustee,
Delegate (or Alternate)?
Area Chairperson?
or in another notable A.A. service position?
Has any member been the speaker at the International Convention, ICYPAA, or the Annual Hawai`i Convention?

Have any members had an article published in The Grapevine? Please provide details here or on additional preferably numbered pages.