

# Area 85 Archives Sub-Committee

## Manual of Information And Guidelines

(Version 1.3 – 11/06/09 Revision)

There is both a need and an obligation to save the history of our Fellowship within our Area. To be preserved for present and future generations. It is highly important that the factual material be placed in our files in such a way that there can be no substantial distortion.

— Bill W. 1957

Whenever a society or civilization perishes there is always one condition present; they forgot where they came from.

— Carl Sandburg

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## **Mission**

The mission of the Alcoholics Anonymous Area 85 Archives is to document permanently the work of Alcoholics Anonymous, to make the history of the organization accessible to A.A. members and other researchers, and to provide a context for understanding A.A.'s progression, principles and traditions.

## **Purpose**

"The purpose of the archives is to keep the record straight so that myth does not predominate over fact as to the history of our Fellowship. This record can easily dissipate unless the material is properly cared for. The function of the archives is to give the Fellowship a sense of its own past and the opportunity to study it; while at the same time protecting the material itself from damage or loss and assuring the privacy of all individuals in keeping with A.A. traditions."

— Colorado Area 10 Archives

Consistent with A.A.'s primary purpose of maintaining our sobriety and helping other alcoholics achieve recovery, the Archives of Area 85 will:

- Receive, classify, and index all relevant material, such as administration files and records, correspondence, and literary works and artifacts considered to have historical importance to Area 85.
- Collect and preserve the history of how the A.A. message has been carried to the alcoholic by groups, members and literature.
- Hold and preserve such material.
- Provide access to these materials, as determined by the archivist in consultation with the Area 85 Archives Committee, to members of Alcoholics Anonymous and to others who may have a valid need to review such material, contingent upon a commitment to preserve the anonymity of our members.
- Conduct historical Archives displays at Area assemblies, conventions, workshops and local A.A. events by invitation.
- Serve as a resource centre for groups/districts and other Areas to stimulate and nurture learning.

## **Committee Composition**

The Area 85 Archives Committee of Northwestern Ontario (NWO), hereinafter referred to as the Archives Committee, Area 85 Archives or the NWO Archives is composed of any AA members interested in preserving the history of the fellowship in Northwestern Ontario (NWO) and willing to attend the scheduled meetings of the committee. Scope of the servants' positions is the same as other service committees in the area.

The traditional Chairperson will also be the Archivist whose term is recommended to be an appointment serving at the pleasure of the Area Committee. Therefore, it is hoped that the Archives Chair position will not change frequently.

The Archivist will inform the committee of his/her intentions of continuing on with this very important position. Because of the special demands and qualifications for this position of responsibility, the Archives Committee needs as much time as possible to search for a replacement.

In the unusual event of the Archivist's departure before a replacement can be found, an Alternate Chairperson will take the responsibility for all of the area's archival material.

The Area 85 Archivist is elected by the Area 85 General Service Committee and performs their delegated responsibilities based on the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholic Anonymous. Archivists recognize that whoever retains our history directs our future and understands their role in contributing to the informed group conscience of their Areas.

The Committee may name ex-officio members for temporary, clearly defined periods, e.g. persons with expertise in specific areas of interest or special knowledge. Ex-officio Committee members may be non-AA persons, friends of AA who may be asked to serve on the committee for temporary, clearly defined periods and who adhere to our primary purpose, as well as all of our AA Traditions. Ex-officio members of the Committee do not have voting rights.

No member of the Committee shall receive any financial or other compensation for work performed. Reasonable expenses for Area 85 approved events (e.g., Assemblies, Area Committee Meetings, and other events as determined by the General Service Committee) will be reimbursed to the Archivist by Area 85. In cases of the Archivist's inability to attend, an Alternate Chair or another member of the Committee may be

designated by the Committee to do so, in which case the same expense policy applies for the designated person.

## **Role of the Archives Sub-Committee**

The chief function of the Archives Sub-Committee is to be responsible for all archival material belonging to the Northwestern Area of Ontario - General Service Conference Area 85 and to be responsible for establishing policies, budgets, and procedures. It undertakes and maintains final responsibility and authority for the use of the archives, and exercises its group conscience in regards to changing Archives Sub-Committee Guidelines. In all of its actions, the Archives Sub-Committee needs to be mindful of and guided by A.A.'s primary purpose. Thus, if non-A.A. friends are asked to serve on the committee, which is possible because of interest and special knowledge and expertise, they ought to be people who are familiar with our primary purpose and our A.A. Traditions.

One of the most important functions of the Archives Sub-Committee is to establish creative parameters for the selection of material to be collected. These parameters will guide the archivist in gathering material of historical significance and will reduce the time and space of preserving random bits and pieces of questionable value.

The Archives Sub-Committee meets regularly in open sessions at the call of the Area 85 Archives Chairperson. The Chair presides over the meeting and maintains final responsibility and authority for the uses of the archives.

Archives Sub-Committee duties and responsibilities are to:

- Establish basic guidelines for the selection of archival material to be collected. These guiding policies are oriented to gathering material of historical interest and value.
- Provide continuity and oversight to ensure that the Area 85 Archives functions in a manner that is in compliance with the principles of the Twelve Steps, Traditions and Concepts. The A.A. publications A.A. Guidelines – Archives (MG-17) and Archives WORKBOOK (M-44I) are the literature sources for defining Area 85 Archives guidelines.
- Serve as advocates to encourage and attract members, Groups, Districts and other service entities to actively participate in Archives services.
- Implement possible archival projects including long-timer Interviews, preservation and cataloging of audio tape library, scanning documents and indexing by keyword, group histories, creation and maintenance of database records and the design and maintenance of displays that travel to Conventions, Assemblies, and Workshops.
- Provide adequate tools to the Archivist to do the job.

- Conduct business within the Committee using customary rules of order. Matters involving large financial consideration or major issues should always be decided by substantial majority vote (2/3).
- The Committee may seek performance evaluations using a form system at the display booth. Archives Sub-Committee Members are encouraged to call for comments from their district GSR's when preparing their report at the Assembly.

In summary, the sub-committee's responsibility is to help carry the message of hope and recovery to all alcoholics via the gathering and storing of the area's history. In all its actions, the NWO Archives Sub-Committee should remain ever mindful of and guided by the Fellowships' primary purpose of helping alcoholics to achieve and maintain sobriety.

The primary duties of the NWO Archives Sub-Committee are to:

- Maintain oversight of Area Archives acquisitions and content.
- Ensure Archives activities are firmly based on A.A. principles.
- Encourage membership participation in Area, District and Group Archives services.
- Implement approved archival projects.

## **Role of the Archivist**

The Archivist recognizes that the preservation of records and papers that have a lasting value to A.A. assists in the continuity of our common welfare and should take every possible measure to ensure that the Area's papers of the past and the present are preserved with equal enthusiasm and endeavour. He/she works for the best interests of the Area and A.A. as a whole in encouraging adherence to sound archival standards, and protects the Area's records against physical peril, alteration or defacement and ensures that these are not impaired in the course of conservation.

The archivist is the focal point of the collection, determining on one hand what to include in the collection, and on the other hand working towards making the collected material available to the greatest extent possible to members of our Fellowship and those in the public realm with a valid interest in A.A. The Archivist is also the traditional trustee of all the Area's memorabilia and is the guardian of each member's anonymity, both the living members and our departed siblings and will solicit, acquire and accumulate historical material and information about the Fellowship since its inception from early members.

Archival material will be classified by the following headings:

- Open to all.
- Open to A.A. members.
- Open with approval.
- Closed.

(For clarification of terms above, see appendices "Classification of Archival Material.")

### **Archivist duties and responsibilities:**

- The archivist collects, organizes and preserves material of historical interest. Typically, the archivist selects a representative sample of the collection and arranges those into a traveling display.
- The archivist is responsible for both the physical and the intellectual integrity of the collection. All reasonable steps are taken to prevent damage to or loss of the archives material during collection, storage, transport and display. It is important to ensure the privacy and protect the anonymity of members whose names are included in the collected documents.
- The archivist reports regularly to the Archives Committee, Area Committee and Assembly about new material received, updates about ongoing Archives projects and recording the donations of Archives materials (see sample letter and form in Appendices). Donations are recorded in a manner that provides a clear trail of accountability.
- The Archivist will consult with the Archives Committee before granting a request to reveal sensitive materials. The full committee will need to render a decision before the Archivist can give or withhold data. (See appendices "Classification of Archival Material")
- The Area 85 Archivist will impartially select and retain Area records that have a lasting value and diligently dispose of those that do not. In doing so, he/she acts as an agent for future generations of A.A. members. He/she takes no action that could affect A.A. as a whole without consultation with the Archives Committee. If this Committee believes that such action will affect the "Common Welfare," then it will be their responsibility to take this matter to the entire General Service Committee of Area 85.
- The Area 85 Archivist will cooperate with other A.A. Archivists to ensure the preservation of A.A. papers and material in repositories where they will be secure and effectively utilized.
- The Area 85 Archivist perceives the Area Committee as a spiritual entity and understands that our shared experience is a rich resource for support of A.A.'s primary purpose and endeavours to promote access to the Area's records to the full extent consistent with the public interest, making the Area's documentary holding freely

known to prospective users through finder's aids (i.e. inventory lists) and personal consultation.

- The Archivist will explain any restrictions to potential researchers and apply them fairly and equally to all. The Archivist may share knowledge and experience with other Area Archivists through archival activities that are designed to assist others with less training and experience.
- In the discharge of their A.A. service, the Archivist can never bind him/herself to any outside entity. The Area 85 Archivist and the Archives Committee seek to cooperate, but will never be affiliated with any outside organization. They will be especially careful that they never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any outside enterprise. The Area 85 Archivist should always perceive the spiritual value of their Area Archives collection; never collecting items based on any outside entity's expression of their material value. Our A.A. papers, publications, and records are preserved in recognition of their historical and spiritual value only.
- The Area 85 Archivist's activities are fully funded according to the spirit of the Seventh Tradition of Alcoholics Anonymous, being supported by the voluntary contributions of money and materials by A.A. members and are never in competition with other Area Committees for funds; although, they may have a budget set by the Area 85 General Service Committee.
- They arrange transfers of records and acquire papers in accordance with their Area's purposes and resources, appraising them with impartial judgment based on spiritual principles, ever mindful that the purchase of A.A. materials by their Area Committees at other than market value for such an item is never necessary and is not in the spirit of the Seventh Tradition. The Area 85 Archives Committee applies the spirit of the Seventh Tradition to their archive policies; members of Alcoholics Anonymous freely donate materials. These contributions are never accepted however, if they entail any obligations, restrictions, expectations or encumbrances, except those pertaining to access for legitimate reasons and for limited periods of time. The Archivist supports their Area's Committee in their endeavour to discourage the accumulation of large funds in their budget for no stated AA purpose, beyond a prudent reserve.
- The Area Archivist will be recompensed by the Area 85 General Service Committee for services requiring special training, such as conservation of materials or for expenses related to Archival display at approved events. These expenditures will be included in the committee's annual budget.

## **Training**

It is helpful and desirable for the archivist to have some familiarity with archival procedures or the willingness to learn the basics of such procedures. Depending on the location of the archives, the local college, major library or historical society might offer basic courses in handling historical records. It is helpful and desirable that the archivist takes at least an introductory course in archival science or library science.

## **What to Collect?**

An archival collection takes form through a natural process that helps to capture the rich texture of our history. We build historic collections that are unique in many ways, through the contributions that the Archives receive and through collecting material that is unique to NWO. The following is a suggested list of items that might be considered:

- Books/pamphlets about A.A.
- Documents developed locally to support Twelfth Step work
- Photographs
- Directories
- Meeting lists
- Newsletters (particularly those published by our area/districts)
- Audio recordings
- News clippings
- Magazine articles
- Correspondence
- Minutes of service committees

(This list is taken from the Archives Workbook: page 14)

The Area 85 Archives collection is organized into related arrangements of donated A.A. historical items, artifacts and memorabilia (See appendices item "Archives Sorting"). Where possible, materials are placed in protective covers and are contained in binders/folders that externally identify the subject matter.

The Archives Collection, as tangible assets of the Area, is comparable to other Area 85 Archive resources (e.g. PC/software, audio/video equipment, etc.). The Area 85 Archive's Chair or an Alternate Chair is responsible for safekeeping, preservation and administration of the Archives Collection.

The Archives Collection belongs to A.A. - not an individual. Archives donations are accepted on behalf of the Archives of N.W.O. - Area 85. The position of Committee Member or the position of Archivist does not imply that any ownership or any rights are bestowed upon those persons.

Donations are formally acknowledged in writing via a "Letter of Acknowledgement" to define a clear transfer of ownership from the donor to the Archives. A sample "Letter of Acknowledgement" can be found in the Appendices. The letter of acknowledgment will be mailed to each donor by the Archives Chair or an Alternate and will include a "Deed of Gift" form. The form is an itemized listing of the donation together with a description of its physical condition and any terms and conditions specified by the donor. This transfer of ownership and rights is not an absolute requirement, but items without this transfer remain the property of the donor and shall be clearly identified as such.

The contents of the Archives Collection are recorded in an inventory report, which is reviewed by the Archives Committee and presented to the Area Secretary on a semi-annual basis.

Copies of the "Letters of Acknowledgment", "Transfer of Gift" forms and the "Inventory Reports" are a part of the Area 85 Archives collection and are available for review by any A.A. member.

The trustees' Archives Committee of the General Service Board of AA adopted the following suggested guidelines for local archivists regarding archives property on January 27, 1994.

- All archives material that is the property of the area should be recorded in a written inventory.
- The archivist should prepare and sign a statement, to be appended to the inventory list, which clearly indicates that ownership of the property listed in the annexed inventory resides in the area, and that such property is not the personal property of the archivist.
- Copies of such statements, with original signatures, should be maintained in the area files, in the archives files and with the archivist's personal papers.
- If, upon his/her death or incapacitation, the archivist or other custodian wishes to donate to the area those materials which had been on loan to the archives, then such a donation will usually have to be made as a bequest provided for in a valid will, or other document appropriate for affecting a transfer of ownership.

## **Deaccession of Materials**

The Committee reserves the right to re-evaluate historical material and to carefully and judiciously deaccession and dispose of certain items from its collection in a manner consistent with professionally accepted standards. The Archives Committee may decide to deaccession an item if any of the following conditions are present:

- The item is not relevant to Alcoholics Anonymous or to the Archives Committee's mission and purpose

- The item has deteriorated beyond usefulness
- The item's care and storage are far more expensive than the value of the object as it relates to the Archives mission and purpose
- The item is subject to legal and ethical standards requiring its removal

A deaccession item may be disposed of in one of the following methods (in order of desirability):

- Transfer to another more appropriate Alcoholics Anonymous archives repository, at the level of the region, intergroup/central office, area, district, or group
- Donation to an appropriate non AA archives or scholarly institution
- Return to the original donor
- Donation to individual AA members who have a legitimate interest in the item(s)
- Destruction of the item

(GSO Archives Collection Policy DOC# 12-2006 AF)

## **Ownership of Material**

Area 85's ownership of, rights to, and use of any material in the Collection may be limited as specified in writing by the donor at the time of donation. The Committee shall faithfully respect the donor's wishes and items in the collection bearing such limitations shall be clearly identified to enable the Committee to conform to those wishes.

Where no such limitations are made at the time of donation, the donor conveys full ownership and all rights to Area 85. (Area 81 Archives Policies and Procedures Guidance Document)

## **Oral Histories**

As part of the mandate for repository collection, it will be necessary to interview AA old-timers. As it may not be possible for the NWO Archivist to personally record these interviews, it may be helpful to set up a team of archives assistants or volunteer helpers to record oral histories from old-timers. Therefore, a condensed and easily understood Oral History Guide will be made available to those who wish to record and interview Old-timers. This can be found in the Appendices at the end of this document.

A release of some kind, establishing ownership of rights to the interview, should be obtained from every oral history interviewee, whenever possible. This form is found in the appendix and is included in the Oral History Guide.

## **Repository**

The Area 85 Repository will be housed in the Area 85 Archives filing cabinet at the Lakehead Intergroup Office. All tools provided by Area 85 to manage and maintain the collection are the property of Area 85 G.S.C. and are held, managed and used by the Archives Committee in exercising its responsibilities. The Committee shall take steps to ensure the tools are used properly.

In order for the Archivist to properly perform his or her duties it will be necessary to be in possession of basic archival equipment. The following is a suggested supply list:

- One or more good general reference books on the preservation of historical documents
- Supplies for preservation and repair—for example: Mylar sleeves, acid-free tape to repair tears, non-damaging adhesives
- Acid-free storage boxes for letters, papers, pamphlets and magazine articles and/or archival scrapbooks for newspaper articles (available from archival catalogs)
- Shelves to hold material
- Fireproof file cabinets for vertical files
- Work table, chairs, desk
- Display cabinets to hold books and/or memorabilia
- Framed photos (with acid-free mattes and backing) of events, places and nonalcoholic friends who have been helpful to the group (keep our Tradition on Anonymity in mind!)
- Cabinet for audio recordings, a supply of audiocassettes or CD-Rs, portable recording device, computer, printer, and/or scanner that can handle various media (This suggested list comes from The Archives Workbook page 15-16)

Any items recommended to be purchased for Archives Committee use must be submitted for prior approval to the Area 85 General Service Committee.

## **Archival Procedures**

As soon as an item is received in the archives, it should be added to the inventory list. Next, the conservation and preservation needs of the collected item should be evaluated and followed up on. As a general rule, any action on a document or item that is not reversible should never be performed. For example, scotch tape or lamination ought never to be used. Removal of staples, tape, repair, de-acidification and encapsulation are some of the steps necessary to protect the integrity of a document. Sometimes it may be necessary to seek outside professional help to ensure the integrity of an item.

Once prepared, an archival item should then be categorically classified. The NWO Area 85 Archives has the following classifications: “Open to all,” “Open to A.A. members,” “Open with the approval of the Archives committee” and “Closed at this time.” This final

classification means that it is not available to anyone—sometimes donors request that documents remain sealed for a certain period of time to come. The item should then be entered into a retrieval system, either manual or computerized, in order to provide readily accessed information to researchers. Archival items should be indexed with reference to the Archives Sorting document in the appendices.

## **Research in the Archives**

A researcher is any individual wishing to view the archives. Research can be done by AA members or non-AA persons by request through the Archivist. Researchers should provide their reasons and exact needs. Permission to research will then be considered by the entire Archives Committee. (See Appendices Research Application)

Researchers working in the archives ought to be informed that they will be expected to strictly adhere to our Anonymity Traditions - only first names and last initials of A.A. members may be used by them. Further, the General Service Board trustees' Archives Committee has recommended that there be no photocopying of private correspondence. This recommendation is also designed to assure anonymity protection, and to maintain the physical integrity of archival documents. In addition to the preservation of the anonymity of the author of the correspondence, the writer's private opinions and observations, some of which might be highly controversial, must be treated with extreme delicacy. It might be remembered that members share these documents with a trust and expectation that their remarks will be held in confidence. No one has an intrinsic right to view another's private correspondence at will; it is essential that the archivist's chief concern of assuring this spiritual wholeness of the collection be understood and supported.

## **References**

A.A. Guidelines - Archives (MG-17)  
Archives WORKBOOK (M-44I)  
The A.A. Archives (F-47)  
Area 10 - Colorado Archives Policies and Procedures DRAFT - 6/18/08  
Area 65 – Northeast Texas Archives Committee Information and Guidelines  
Version 1.3 - 08/19/04  
Area 81 – New Brunswick / Prince Edward Island Archives Policies and Procedures  
DRAFT - 6/18/08  
www.aa.org - GSO Archives Collection Policy DOC# 12-2006 AF



## **Appendices**

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**\* Taken from the Archives Workbook M-441. Area 85 Archives Committee has adapted these forms for local use.**

**\*\* Taken from [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org). Area 85 Archives Committee has adapted these policies for local use.**

**\*\*\* Taken from the U.S. National Archives and adapted for local use.**

**\*\*\*\* Taken from the NETA Area 65 Archives Committee Information and Guidelines and adapted for local use.**

## GLOSSARY OF ARCHIVES TERMS

1. access: The right to enter or make use of.
2. archives: An organized body of records pertaining to an organization or institution. A place in which such records are preserved.
3. archivist: One who is in charge of archives. A custodian of archives.
4. artifacts: Documents, magazine and newspaper articles.
5. A.A. area: A geographical division within a state or province. A Conference delegate comes from an area. Normally there is one area to a state or province, except in heavily A.A.-populated places, where there may be two, three, or more areas in the state or province. (The A.A. Service Manual).
6. chairperson: A person who presides over an assembly, meeting, committee, or board; chair.
7. code of ethics: A systematically arranged and comprehensive collection of moral principles and values; rules of conduct.
8. committee: A group of people officially delegated to perform a function, as investigating, considering, reporting, or acting on a matter.
9. conserve: To protect from loss or depletion.
10. copyright: The right granted by law to an author, composer, playwright, publisher, or distributor, to exclusive publication, production, sale, distribution or a literary, musical, dramatic, or artistic work. In the United States, this right extends for a period of 28 years, with the privilege of being renewed for an additional 28 years.
11. copyrighted: Protected by copyright.
12. documents - Any type of A.A. publication or written materials (e.g. minutes, newsletters, reports, letters and correspondence, flyers, brochures, etc. - does not have to be Conference approved).
13. editorials: Individual opinion that cannot be proved or disproved.
14. equitably: Impartially or reasonably; justly.
15. ethics: Any set of moral principles or values.
16. evidentiary: Capable of being used to support a judgment or conclusion; present and plainly visible.
17. history: Provable fact-based reporting.
18. integrity: Completeness; soundness; unity.
19. judicious: Having or exhibiting sound judgment.
20. memorabilia: A.A. related correspondence and photographs
21. myth: Fiction based on imagination or belief.
22. odds and ends: Documents and items having little or no historical importance.
23. policy: Any plan or course of action adopted and designed to influence and determine decisions, actions, and other matters. A course of action, guiding principle, or procedure considered to be expedient, prudent or advantageous.
24. preserve: To protect from injury, peril, or other adversity; maintain in safety. To keep in perfect or unaltered condition; maintain in an unchanged form.

25. privacy: The condition of being secluded or isolated from the view of others; concealment, secrecy.
26. repository: A place where things may be put for safekeeping.
27. restricted: Confined; limited.
28. testimonial: Personal account of experiences.

This is from the U.S. National Archives, but provides helpful guidelines that apply to all archivists.

## NWO ARCHIVES — INFORMATION REQUEST LOG

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Date answered: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of requester:

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information:

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:

\_\_\_\_\_

Request received via:

- Telephone
- E-mail
- Mail
- In-Person

Question or subject:

\_\_\_\_\_

Note information found and source used:

\_\_\_\_\_

Researched by:

\_\_\_\_\_

## NWO ARCHIVES — RESEARCHER APPLICATION

This application applies only to researchers working with original, unpublished archival materials on-site in the Area 85 Archives. It does not apply to those who simply call or write because they are seeking an answer to a certain question. Prior approval of the Archives Committee must be obtained before a researcher will be given access to unpublished archival material for on-site research.

I hereby apply for permission to consult the following archival material, for the following stated purpose(s).

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE  
PRINT)

Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone:

\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail:

\_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation (if any):

\_\_\_\_\_

Items requested:

\_\_\_\_\_

Subject of research:

\_\_\_\_\_

Purpose or expected product of research (book, article, thesis, dissertation, film, area/local archives use, personal/family research, other):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **MATERIALS USE POLICY**

The materials in the Area 85 Archives are available to all A.A. members and other serious researchers who have an interest in the legacy of A.A. However, access is controlled. Controls are necessary to ensure the anonymity of all persons mentioned in archival materials, in accordance with A.A. traditions. Access also must be controlled in order to protect the materials themselves from loss or physical damage.

The following policies were established in an attempt to balance the needs of users, the exclusive rights of copyright holders, and the Archives' own responsibilities toward its collections.

### **GETTING ANSWERS**

Visitors and all interested parties are invited to make requests for information about any aspect of A.A. history. Normally an Archives member will conduct the research, find the answers you seek, and deliver them via mail or email.

Typical requests involve:

Information about the events that led to the founding of A.A.;

Biographical information of A.A.'s early pioneers;

The origins and growth of the Lakehead Intergroup Office;

Information about various editions and/or statements in the Big Book and other works;

The uses of A.A. prayers, slogans and logos, as well as chips, tokens, and medallions;

Historical group practices and meeting formats;

Group and district histories;

Information about the history of A.A. among special populations, minorities, and women;

Old issues of newsletters;

Old versions of A.A. pamphlets and literature;

Published photographs of A.A. founders, pioneers, and events;

The origin and growth of the Area 85 Round-up;

Actions of the Area 85 General Service Committee, recorded in meeting minutes;

Various actions of the General Service Conference since 1951.

We always welcome your questions! Please contact the archives anytime you are curious about an element of A.A.'s legacy.

### **ACCESS**

All visitors are welcomed to the Archives. There they can see selected materials and speak with the Archivist about our holdings, about archival activities in their districts and about how they might be able to take advantage of the Area 85 Archives.

If a researcher would like to physically handle, read, and review a large quantity of archival material, he or she should contact an Archives member ahead of time to make arrangements. In most cases an Archives member can provide access to published

information, such as books, newsletters, magazines, pamphlets, service pieces, and reports, in some cases dating to the earliest days of A.A.

However, if a researcher wishes to use any unpublished materials in the Archives (correspondence, meeting minutes, financial information, manuscripts, etc.), a written request for access must be made to the Area 85 Archives Committee. The user must give full information about the subject, scope, and purpose of the research being undertaken. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **PROTECTING ANONYMITY**

Because of the special nature of the materials in our collection, all researchers must learn and respect all A.A. traditions that may bear on their research; in particular, the preservation of anonymity of all A.A. members.

The permission to conduct research is granted conditional on your agreement to strictly maintain the anonymity of all A.A. members, alive and deceased, including A.A.'s co-founders. You are respectfully asked, if citing these materials, to quote only the first name and last initial, thus preserving A.A.'s Eleventh Tradition: the anonymity of its members at the level of the public media. No researcher is ever given permission to publish full names of individuals. Anyone who does so will be denied further access to the A.A. Archives.

### **PHOTODUPLICATION (SCANNING AND PHOTOCOPYING)**

Photocopies or scans of published materials, such as pamphlets, articles, and newsletters, will be made available if the physical condition of the materials will allow for duplication. Original correspondence, unpublished manuscripts, and some other confidential materials will not be duplicated.

All photoduplication will be done by the Archivist. On-site researchers will not be permitted to use scanners, cameras, photocopiers, or other devices to make copies. Researchers may designate a limited number of pages (of published items only) to be photocopied or scanned by the Archivist. Depending on the quantity requested and the workload of the Archivist, the copies may have to be mailed or emailed to the researcher at a later date.

### **COPYRIGHT AND OWNERSHIP**

The A.A. Archives have a large variety of materials, which may or may not be in the public domain. In some cases A.A.W.S. does not hold copyright for the materials in its collections. The permission to access and research does not include or imply permission for the use of intellectual property or any right to intellectual property in the Archives' holdings. It is solely the responsibility of the researcher to obtain the permission of the copyright owner before publishing, reprinting, or making extensive use of any copyrighted material. Any agreement as to intellectual property – such as publishing, reprinting, or quoting from any archives material – must be separately requested in writing.

**PERMISSION TO PUBLISH**

As stated above, permission to access our materials and have copies made does not signify that a researcher has been given permission to publish, distribute, or further copy the material. Researchers who wish to use the Archives' materials in a publication, performance, or broadcast must complete and submit a separate application.

Researchers who plan eventual publication of their work are urged to make early inquiries concerning publication rights as they begin their research.

In giving permission to publish a manuscript, the Archives does not surrender its own right thereafter to publish the manuscript or to grant permission to others to publish it; nor does the Archives assume any responsibility for infringement of copyright or of publication rights in the manuscript held by others.

## **POLICIES FOR ON-SITE RESEARCH**

The following procedures are designed to make the researcher's visit as useful as possible while preserving the archival materials for future generations.

Please note that if you wish to review any unpublished materials in the Archives (correspondence, meeting minutes, financial information, manuscripts, etc.), a written request for access must be made to the trustees' Archives Committee, and must receive Committee approval before access will be granted. See the Material Use Policy for more information.

1. All researchers should notify staff of the day(s) they plan to visit. Planning the visit ahead of time will help ensure that the researcher's time is used efficiently. Researchers and archives staff should work together before the visit to identify all relevant materials, so that staff can locate and retrieve them. Some materials are stored off-site and these require advance notice to be retrieved. If we do not receive advance notice of a visit, we will be limited as to how we can assist with research.
2. Materials may only be used in the Archives offices, at the tables provided.
3. Researchers may use laptop computers to take notes, or use pencils only. To avoid possible permanent marks on materials, pens are prohibited. Post-It notes, paper clips, and other potentially damaging flags are also not permitted.
4. All photoduplication is carried out by Archives members. Additional information concerning photoduplication policies is available in the Materials Use Policy. Cameras and scanners are not permitted, and researchers are not permitted to make their own photocopies.
5. All material must be handled with extreme care to ensure its preservation for future generations. Always preserve the existing order and arrangement of all materials. Turn pages carefully, make no marks on the materials, and do not rest books or other objects on the surface of items. When handling certain items staff may request that researchers wear cotton gloves.
6. Eating and drinking are not permitted in the Archives.

## NWO RESEARCHER AGREEMENT

By signing below, I signify that I have read and understood the “Materials Use Policy” and the “Policies for On-Site Research.” I understand that if I do not adhere to these policies, my privileges as a researcher may be revoked.

I acknowledge and agree that an essential condition of the permission granted to me is that I will abide by the anonymity policy. I will not identify any member of A.A., including its co-founders, other than by the first name and first initial of the last name. I agree that any publication of full names at the level of press and media is a breach of this agreement.

I \_\_\_\_\_ the researcher will defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the NWO Area 85 Archive Committee, G.S.O. archives, the A.A. General Service Office, A.A. World Services, Inc., and its officers, employees, and agents against all claims, demands, costs, and expenses including attorneys’ fees incurred by any copyright infringement or any other legal or regulatory cause of action arising from the use of NWO Area 85 Archive materials.

Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINT) (PLEASE

Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_



**NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO  
GENERAL SERVICE COMMITTEE**

**PO BOX 10073  
THUNDER BAY, ON  
[www.aa-nwo-area85.org](http://www.aa-nwo-area85.org)**

Archives Chair  
Area 85 Archives Sub-Committee  
Suite #3, 516 East  
Victoria Avenue  
(807) XXX-XXXX

May 16, 2011

RE: Archival Donation

Mr. Robert Smith  
123 Fellowship St.  
Elliot Lake, ON P7T 1L0

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for your generous contribution to the Area 85 Archives of Alcoholics Anonymous. Contributions such as yours have made it possible for us to continue building a comprehensive history of our Fellowship in Northwestern Ontario.

Please know that we are most grateful for your contribution and we will handle it with loving and professional care. We are sure you understand that this is a permanent contribution and we hope you are confident that we will make the best possible use of it. We encourage you to visit the Archives. We think you will feel that our history is alive and strengthening the Fellowship.

Thank you for your loving generosity. Please fill out and sign the attached "Deed of Gift" form and return it to the Archives Sub-Committee.

Thank you again for your loving generosity.

Sincerely,

Area 85 Archives Chair

## Deed of Gift

I, \_\_\_\_\_, residing at \_\_\_\_\_,  
hereby give, transfer, convey and assign to the Area 85 Archives Sub-Committee of  
Alcoholics Anonymous all of my right, title and interest in and to the following property,  
of which I am the sole owner and which property is free of any liens, claims or  
encumbrances: (list of items)

This gift is made free of any terms and conditions except:

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Receipt of the property listed above by the Area 85 Archives Committee is hereby  
acknowledged and accepted:

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Area 85 Archives Chair

# CLASSIFICATION OF ARCHIVAL MATERIAL

## A. Open to All

1. Pictures of founders/friends of A.A.
2. newspaper & magazine clippings
3. books/pamphlets
4. memorabilia

## B. Open to A.A. Members

1. Final Conference Reports
2. Group Histories
3. Some pictures (with permission)

## C. Open with approval

1. Minutes of business meetings

## D. Closed (at this time)

1. Member's correspondence
2. Member's pictures

This is the system that GSO Archives uses to file, store, and exhibit our archives, at the discretion of the Archivist..

## THE ARCHIVISTS CODE

8. The Archivist has a moral obligation to society to take every possible measure to ensure the preservation of valuable records, not only those of the past but those of his own times, and with equal zeal.
9. The Archivist in appraising records for retention or disposal acts as the agent of future generations. The wisdom and impartiality he applies to this task measure his professionalism, for he must be as diligent in disposing of records that have no significant or lasting value as in retaining those that do.
10. The Archivist must protect the integrity of records in his custody. He must guard them against defacement, alteration, or theft; he must protect them against physical damage by fire or excessive exposure to light, dampness, and dryness and he must ensure that their evidentiary value is not impaired in the normal course of rehabilitation, arrangement, and use.
11. The Archivist should endeavor to promote access to records to the fullest extent consistent with the public interest, but he should carefully observe any proper restrictions on the use of the records. He should work unremittingly for the increase and diffusion of knowledge, making his documentary holdings freely known to prospective users through published aids and personal consultation.
12. The Archivist should respond courteously and with a spirit of helpfulness to reference requests. He should not place unnecessary obstacles in the way of researchers, but should do whatever he can to save their time and ease their work. He should not idly discuss the work and findings of one researcher with another; but where duplication of research effort is apparent, he may properly inform another researcher.
13. The Archivist should not profit from any commercial exploitation of the records in his custody, nor should he withhold from others any information he has gained as a result of his professional duties -- either in order to carry out private professional research or to aid one researcher at the expense of another. He should, however, take every legitimate advantage of his situation to develop his professional interests in historical and archival research.
14. The Archivist should freely pass on to his professional colleagues the results of his own or his organization's research that add to the body of archival and historical knowledge. He should leave to his successors a true account of the records in his custody and of their organization and arrangement.

This is adapted from U.S. National Archives and Records Administration.

## A CODE OF ETHICS FOR ARCHIVISTS

1. Archivists select, preserve, and make available records and papers that have lasting value to the organization or public that the archivist serves. Archivists perform their responsibilities in accordance with statutory authorization or institutional policy. They subscribe to a code of ethics based on sound archival principles and promote institutional and professional observance of these ethical and archival standards.
2. Archivists arrange transfers of records and acquire papers in accordance with their institutions' purposes and resources. They do not compete for acquisitions when competition would endanger the integrity or safety of records and papers; they cooperate to ensure the preservation of these materials in repositories where they will be adequately processed and effectively utilized.
3. Archivists negotiating with transferring officials or owners of papers seek fair arrangements and benefits; copyright; plans for processing; and conditions of access. Archivists discourage unreasonable restrictions on access or use, but may accept as a condition of acquisition clearly stated restrictions of limited duration and may occasionally suggest such restrictions to protect privacy. Archivists observe faithfully all agreements made at the time of transfer or acquisition.
4. Archivists appraise records and papers with impartial judgement based on thorough knowledge of their institutions' administrative requirement or acquisitions policies. They arrange records and papers selected for retention in conformity with sound archival principles and as rapidly as their resources permit. Archivists protect the integrity of records and papers in their custody, guarding against defacement, alteration, theft, and physical damage, and ensure that their evidentiary value is not impaired in the archival work of restoration, arrangement, and use. They cooperate with other archivists and law enforcement agencies in the apprehension and prosecution of thieves.
5. Archivists respect the privacy of individuals who created or are the subject of records and papers, especially those who had no voice in the disposition of the materials. Their neither reveal nor profit from information gained through work with restricted holdings.
6. Archivists answer courteously and with a spirit of helpfulness all reasonable inquiries about their holdings, and encourage use of them to the greatest extent compatible with institutional polices, preservation of holdings, legal consideration, individual rights, donor agreements, and judicious use of archival resources. They explain pertinent restrictions to potential users, and apply them equitably.
7. Archivists endeavor to inform users of parallel research by others using the same materials, and, if the individuals concerned agree, supply each name to the other party.
8. Archivists may use their institutions' holdings for personal research and publication if such practices are approved by their employers and are made known to others using the same holdings. Archivists may review and comment on the works of others in their fields, including works based o research in their own institutions. Archivists who collect manuscripts personally should not compete for acquisitions

within their own repositories, should inform their employers of their collecting activities, and should preserve complete records of personal acquisitions.

9. Archivists avoid irresponsible criticism of other archivists or institutions and address complaints about professional or ethical conduct to the institution concerned, or to a professional archival organization.

10. Archivists share knowledge and experience with other archivists through professional activities and assist the professional growth of others with less training or experience.

11. Archivists work for the best interests of their institutions and their profession and endeavor to reconcile any conflicts by encouraging adherence to archival standard and ethics.

(National Archives Institute, National Archives, Washington, D.C.)

## Guidelines for Donations to the AREA 85 Archives Collection

The items listed below would be most gratefully welcome as donations for preservation in the AREA 85 Archives

Categories	01 Groups & Members	02 AREA 85	03 Delegates & Trustees	04 Central Office/GSO
<b>Sub-Headings</b>	<p><b>A</b> Group history *</p> <p><b>B</b> Facility photos</p> <p><b>C</b> Founder testimonials of ...Group history *</p> <p><b>D</b> Old-timer testimonials ...of A.A. history *</p> <p><b>E</b> Early literature ... (books &amp; pamphlets)</p> <p><b>F</b> News clippings and magazine articles about the Group</p>	<p><b>A</b> Area history *</p> <p><b>B</b> Area Assembly minutes</p> <p><b>C</b> Area Committee minutes</p> <p><b>D</b> Area Newsletters</p> <p><b>E</b> District Committee ...minutes</p> <p><b>F</b> District Histories</p> <p><b>G</b> Documents and ...correspondence of ...historical importance ... (OPC/ODC/ECRF)</p> <p><b>H</b> Important documents for ...permanent retention</p> <p><b>I</b> Copy of Registrar data ...base of Groups and ...Trusted Servants</p> <p><b>J</b> Assembly, Convention, ...Round-Up &amp; Workshop ...materials</p> <p><b>K</b> Service Committee history and testimonials *</p>	<p><b>A</b> Testimonials *</p> <p><b>B</b> Documents and ...correspondence of ...historical importance</p> <p><b>C</b> Service diaries</p> <p><b>D</b> Documents related to ...service experience</p> <p><b>E</b> 1<sup>st</sup> printings of new A.A. ...literature (as well as ...galley proofs &amp; review ...copies)</p> <p><b>F</b> Board, Conference and ...Regional Forum ...documents/memorabilia</p> <p><b>G</b> Special Assembly ...memorabilia</p> <p><b>H</b> International ...Conventions</p>	<p><b>A</b> Office history *</p> <p><b>B</b> Office Mgr. and ...Steering Committee ...testimonials *</p> <p><b>C</b> Newsletters</p> <p><b>D</b> News clippings and ...magazine articles</p> <p><b>E</b> Group Histories *</p> <p><b>F</b> Facility photos</p> <p><b>G</b> Documents and ...correspondence of ...historical importance</p> <p><b>H</b> Early literature ... (books and pamphlets)</p> <p><b>I</b> Early directories</p>

\* Note: histories and testimonials can be written or audio-taped. Word processing formats are also welcome (diskette or CD).

# ORAL HISTORY GUIDE

## ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW INFORMATION FORM

This form details the scope of the oral history and provides invaluable information for future historians. Complete this form after the interview and keep it with the physical recording.

Narrator (Interviewee):

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Date of Interview:

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Address:

---

Telephone Number:

---

Email Address:

---

Interviewer:

---

Address:

---

Telephone No. and Email Address:

---

Place of Interview:

---

Length of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Cassettes or  
Discs: \_\_\_\_\_

Oral History Release Form Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Unrestricted: \_\_\_\_\_ Restricted:

---

Nature of Restrictions, if any:

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Transcribed: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by Interviewee?: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

No \_\_\_\_\_

Abstract of Interview:

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## ORAL HISTORY RELEASE FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of narrator), hereby give this interview recorded on \_\_\_\_\_ (insert date) to the Area 85 Archives as a donation. With this gift, I transfer to the Area 85 Archives legal title and all literary rights, including copyright. I understand the interview may be made available for research and such public programming as the Area 85 Archives may determine. This includes right and license to reproduce, copy, modify, display, distribute, perform, broadcast, transmit, and create derivatives from the recording. This may include use of the interview material in print and in live or recorded programs for radio, television, or any electronic publishing medium.

I transfer all of the above rights without limitation, to support the mission of AA and to disseminate information about AA, upon the condition that I, and any other A.A. member I identify, remain anonymous at the level of the public media.

Narrator's Signature:

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Address:

---

City, Province, Postal Code:

---

Date:

---

Interviewer's Signature:

---

Address:

---

City, Province, Postal Code:

---

Date:

---

Comments:

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# NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO AREA 85 ARCHIVES GROUP HISTORY

GROUP REGISTRATION # \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
DISTRICT NO: \_\_\_\_\_ DCM (NAME) \_\_\_\_\_  
NAME OF GROUP: \_\_\_\_\_  
PREVIOUS NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE FOUNDED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE 1st MEETING: \_\_\_\_\_  
PLACE OF 1st MEETING: \_\_\_\_\_  
FOUNDER(S): \_\_\_\_\_ HOME GROUP: \_\_\_\_\_  
EARLY MEMBERS \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*  
CURRENT MEETINGS: TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ DAY: \_\_\_\_\_  
PLACE: \_\_\_\_\_  
CURRENT NUMBER OF MEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_  
DID THE GROUP MOVE? \_\_\_\_\_ WHEN? \_\_\_\_\_  
WHERE TO? \_\_\_\_\_  
REASON: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*  
GROUP HISTORY: (Outline Anniversaries, Special Meetings, Outside Speakers, Notes about the Founders, etc.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

GENERAL NOTES & COMMENTS:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

YEARS SOBER:  
a) GROUP'S "OLD TIMERS" \_\_\_\_\_ YEARS    b) AVERAGE MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ YEARS

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE USE THE BACK OF THIS FORM.

## **Version History**

Version 1.0 in Draft presented to the Area 85 Archives Sub-Committee July 6, 2008.

Version 1.1 Revision by the Area 85 Archives Sub-Committee September 7th, 2008.

Version 1.2 Revision by the Area 85 Archives Sub-Committee November 16th, 2008.

Version 1.3 Revision by the Area 85 Archives Sub-Committee June 9th, 2011.