

RESEARCHING A.A. GROUP HISTORY

The General Service Office Archives Department is frequently asked how A.A. Groups can write their group history. Listed below are some typical questions that the Archives Department uses when writing a group history. It is suggested that groups try to answer these questions and, as needed, contact both the General Service Office Archives and their local Archives for information. If groups are conducting an oral history, the G.S.O. Archives has prepared Guidelines For Conducting Oral Histories that can be used as a guide – experience has shown that many groups have found it to be helpful. The Guidelines For Conducting Oral Histories is available on the Archives portal of G.S.O.'s A.A. website at www.aa.org.

- What is the group's current name, Area and District numbers?
- Have there been any changes to the group's name over the years?
- Who were the founding members of the group?
- Where and when was the first meeting held? In date order, list where later meetings have been held. Include city, state, building, residence, church, clubhouse, etc.
- Did the group list with the General Service Office at the time the members first met?
- What initiated the meeting: was it the offshoot of a parent group; was there a split due to disagreements; did a few A.A.s simply decide to start a hometown group, etc.
- How did the founding members let the community know that a new A.A. meeting was forming?
- How many members attended the group's first meeting?
- Describe member composition, for example, men only, women, young people, etc.
- How did the group experience growth over the years?
- Are group inventories conducted regularly and have they been helpful?
- Who were the early group officers? List, for example, GSR, Group Contact, Chair, Group Secretary, etc.
- Has the group used a steering committee?
- Have any group members participated in District, Area or other service to the Fellowship?

- How often were meetings held and has that changed over the years?
- What meeting formats have been used – closed, open, discussion, etc.
- Does your group hold virtual and in-person meetings?
- How did the group navigate growing pains, worldly controversies, natural disasters, or global health crisis, etc.?
- How does the group celebrate group member’s anniversaries of sobriety?
- How has the group celebrated the anniversary of its’ founding?
- Describe how the group has cooperated with professional agencies (by signing court cards, supporting a meeting in an institutional setting, taking regular phone duty at the Intergroup or Central Office, or participated in the General Service Structure.
- Has the group participated in special local or regional A.A. functions, such as conventions, conferences, round-ups, forums or workshops?
- Does the group have a website?
- Does the group have anonymity protected minutes or recordings of its meetings?
- Does the group have anonymity protected recordings/minutes of its history?

We suggest groups provide their group history to their local district, area, Central Office or Intergroup. For information on how to contact your local A.A. entity, please go to the [Find A.A. Near You](#) page. G.S.O.’s Archives Department can be contacted via email at archives@aa.org or by calling (212) 870-3400.

Please see the [Archives Workbook](#) as a resource.