

June 1970

# Around AA

Items of AA information and experience

## General Service Conference Reaches the 20-Year Mark

Held April 20-25 at the New Yorker Hotel in New York City, the 1970 Meeting of the General Service Conference was the 20th annual expression of the group conscience of North American AA. Day-long sessions attended by 90 Delegates, from the 90 Areas of the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico, included workshops and other discussions on such topics as: "How can group meetings be stimulated to be more interesting?"; "Should AA be concerned about AA members being employed as 'AA counselors?"; "the AA member and 'pills'"; "soliciting of business by an AA member at meeting places"; "How can AA better cooperate with outside agencies?"

Just as the AA group keeps each individual member from being alone in his efforts to reach and maintain recovery, so the Conference insures that no AA group need be alone in its striving for unity and effectiveness. Each group that wishes to participate elects a General Service Representative; the GSRs choose the Area Committee members and join with them in electing the Area Delegate. Through this chain of representatives, the groups share experience, strength, and hope with each other at the Conference, just as individual AAs do at a meeting. The problems and solutions discussed are those that have been drawing attention at the group level, and when the Delegates return to their Areas, they

take with them the fruits of this continent-wide sharing.

Another 1970 workshop subject was: "How specifically has the new *AA Service Manual* affected service activities in your local areas?" This 1969 publication, a revision of *The Third Legacy Manual*, is recommended to any AA who wants a clearer picture of the Conference and of the Fellowship's structure in general. It may be reassuring and strengthening to see the broad scope of AA, offering help and the opportunity for service wherever we may go.

In common with each AA group, the Conference respects the Fifth Tradition; it "has but one primary purpose... to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." The 1970 Conference theme, "Service: the Heart of AA," emphasized the continuing search for better means of reaching more and more sick alcoholics.