

August 1947

Cleveland Is Host To 400 Visitors

More than 400 visitors came to Cleveland June 14 and 15 to participate in the observance of the 12th anniversary of A.A. There were four from Vermont, two from Florida and one from Texas. All of the intervening states were well represented, the largest contingents coming from Michigan, New York, North Carolina and Ohio.

The 83 groups in Cleveland entertained on Saturday with three open houses.

Sunday evening 900 persons attended a banquet in the large dining room of Masonic Auditorium and the two-hour affair included group singing and short talks by 20 "stalwarts" who included two women who had contributed much to the movement in Cleveland. A meeting followed in the Masonic Auditorium, attended by 1500 persons.

An operation made it impossible for co-founder Dr. Bob of Akron, originally scheduled to be chairman of the meeting, to attend.

The chairman explained that the gathering was called on a theme of thankfulness as he introduced the first speaker of the all-Akron cast, Bill D. who was referred to as the "guinea pig" for Doc and Bill. He told how he was "dried up" after waking up in City Hospital (Akron) 12 years ago; and how Doc and Bill had asked him the questions which now are fundamental; how important working with others was in achieving

uninterrupted success.

J. Paul S., gave the wives of the early members much credit for their faith and early encouragement, and stated that this was still vital today.

J. Richard S., brother of Paul, completed the program and gave interesting information relative to the Alcoholic Foundation (of which he is a trustee) and added factual information on conditions 12 years ago. In 1935 there were but four members; at the end of 1936, there were 10; and in 1937 there were 40. Now, he estimated, there are 1500 groups with an excess of 50,000 on their rosters.

Another interesting fact disclosed by Dick was that the 69th person of the 75 whom Bill tried to dry up unsuccessfully before A.A., had just come in a year ago - 11 years later.

In the course of leave taking we met a man from Pulaski, N.Y., who stated that he had been the 70th man whom Bill contacted. It took him more than nine years to see the light and he has enjoyed two and one-half years of sobriety today.

The meeting closed with the recognition of visitors from other states, who rose to acknowledge the applause as their states were called.

Cleveland enjoyed being host; many ideas were exchanged with the visitors.

-H.W.D., Cleveland