

December 1957

LITTLE DID I REALIZE when my area chose me last March as their delegate to the General Service Conference, what they were letting me in on.

Realizing that it was an important job, some sense of responsibility seemed to be present. I started immediately to make plans, which included seeing several things of inter-

of what Bill meant in St. Louis when he said, "The Third Legacy of World Service will henceforth be for all members of Alcoholics Anonymous to have and to hold for so long as God may wish our society to endure."

Each day I became more enthusiastic, more alerted to my sense of responsibility. Each day the picture



Delegates' Corner

Service_____

The Key to Happiness

est—but upon my arrival in New York and after registration, the whole picture changed. After meeting the other delegates, the trustees (both alcoholic and non-alcoholic) and the entire staff, and seeing their devotion to the job of rendering a service convinced me more fully that I hadn't as yet got the true picture

of service became plainer and the realization of how little I'd given in comparison to what I'd received dawned on me.

Having had experience in attending other conferences, such as church and lodge, my thoughts were about the same when I started out: I'd take notes, get a mental picture

and report to my groups at home. This I began to do but I found this Conference was different; there was something about it you couldn't find words to express. Everyone had something to give away ... all were so friendly, so devoted to their task, so sincere and so appreciative of kindness.

My wife and I got chummy with a couple from B. C., with a couple from Louisiana and with a couple from Colorado. We made friends with guys and gals from all forty-eight states and all the provinces of Canada and also a man and his wife from Puerto Rico. And from the entire group of people no one was there to get a better job, a raise in pay or to make an impression on the boss.

Everyone was there to do his part in performing a service—carrying the message to the millions who still suffer.

I couldn't write how I felt so how could I tell the people when I returned home? How could it be arranged so everyone could get the picture? That problem really was foremost in my mind. Among these swell people I'd met were two other delegates from Ohio. They too were concerned about getting this wonderful experience across to their groups. We met, we talked and talked to other delegates—who told us about their State Conferences.

This we thought would be the ideal way to get the message across, but it would cost money, and that we

didn't have—but we had faith, we had a vision of what this would mean to the AAs of our state, and we had friends who had had confidence enough in us to select us as their delegates. We knew if we thought this good for AA they would give us some financial backing.

Plans were started on Sunday, the last Conference day. Since Columbus was located in the center of the state we decided on that as a site for our State Conference, as a beginning. We also asked two of the General Service staff members if they would be available to meet with us.

We came home from the General Service Conference very enthusiastic because we felt we would now be able to render a service that was much needed in our state.

We all started to work making reports, meeting the groups and talking to people about the State Conference. In May, we met with group representatives, committeemen and a newly-elected delegate from the Cincinnati-Dayton area and final plans were laid to hold our "First Ohio Conference of AA" at Columbus in July.

As far as time is concerned that Conference has passed, but for the ones who attended it has only started ... they now have the same feeling we delegates experienced at the General Service Conference in New York in April, and have gone home to their respective groups with a stronger desire to render better service and a deeper sense of gratitude

for this wonderful way of life.

Now I get the full meaning of a
little motto I have on my wall,

"What you seek, you shall not find
unless you share!"

Pete W., Gahanna, Ohio

Postscript from Hazel

LITTLE DID I KNOW when I was invited by the Ohio delegates to share their First State Conference what was in store for me. But by Saturday afternoon I realized that a new awareness of my own AA story was unfolding. As I spoke on Saturday evening at the banquet—I knew. My whole life seemed to kaleidoscope before me for the first time. I was home. I was born in Cincinnati, had my first drink in 1935 and left Ohio that year searching for the window in the clouds. Yes—I found romance, excitement and satisfaction in my airline work—but the inner me seemed to find true warmth only in the bottle. What I didn't know was that Bill W. and Dr. Bob were founding in Ohio—the very year I left—the answer to my search. In Columbus I truly knew, as I felt the warmth and love in the room, that AA was home to me. I shall remain forever grateful to the Ohioans for giving me the privilege of this new insight. Only now can I really say that I had to leave home to know what being Home can really mean.

Hazel R., General Service Staff