

June 1965

### **Foundation of the Fellowship**

From Sacramento, Calif.:

January 8 was the twenty-seventh anniversary of my dry date, January 8, 1942, on record at Doon Men's Group in Cleveland, Ohio. For an alkie to live those 9,934 days (give or take a leap-year day or so) without a drink, it takes the contributions of so many people. I am the most fortunate of men to have been the recipient of these benefactions.

Among my benefactors are: Reverend Sam Shoemaker, Silky, and Fitz, for helping to put the Big Book into printable order; Jimmy B., for fighting for "his" chapter in the book; Bill D., for being in bed at Akron City Hospital when Bill W. and Dr. Bob needed him. For me, in those early struggling days, there were also Sister Ignatia and Jack D. and George M. and Clarence S. and Bobby B. and my sponsor, Norm E. These last names, unknown to most of today's members of our Fellowship, loom ever larger in my success in those periods of introspection on "How did I get here?"

Of course, there were hundreds of Joes and Jims and Annies and Dorothys who shored up my program and my sobriety all along the way. In 1960, in Long Beach, Reverend Sam said, "Behind all successful people are other successful people." But in the beginning there had to be a foundation, and every one of those blocks of granite had a name, and I knew them.

So, when someone in a meeting says, "AA works, but I do not know how it works," let them ask me.

J. H.