

is certainly
group, but in
served its pur-
believe that,
is now have
if you could
if you per-
that some
all other
y try it

is certainly
group, but in
served its pur-
believe that,
is now have
if you could
if you per-
that some
all other
y try it

is certainly
group, but in
served its pur-
believe that,
is now have
if you could
if you per-
that some
all other
y try it

is certainly
group, but in
served its pur-
believe that,
is now have
if you could
if you per-
that some
all other
y try it

From AA's Scrapbooks: 1941

ON MARCH 1, 1941 the Saturday Evening Post published the first Jack Alexander article on Alcoholics Anonymous. Mr. Alexander started on this assignment from his editors with considerable skepticism, but after weeks of research and many AA meetings he became a sincere and dedicated "convert" to the AA program and in fact served for many years afterward as one of our non-alcoholic trustees, resigning only last year. His conviction and understanding of AA came through so strongly in his report on AA that the impact on the public was instantaneous and so powerful that our few scattered groups were almost overwhelmed.

AT THIS TIME our "central office" consisted of a small room on Vesey Street in New York City, staffed by Ruth Hock, our loyal non-alcoholic secretary (as well as overworked and underpaid) and Bill W., plus assorted and occasional volunteers. The fading carbons of Ruth's letters of those days reflect the deluge in the New York "headquarters." *Twelve days* after the article appeared, Ruth writes: "Forgive the haste. There have been 920 inquiries so far as a direct response to the SEP article. Can you picture the state of this office?"

BY THE MIDDLE OF APRIL Ruth was reporting to her non-alcoholic opposite Grace, in the Chicago Central Office: "This is the first real minute I have had for a breathing spell for two months. We've added two new typists. There have been to date 2,000 inquiries directly in response to the Post piece, about 300 of them from the metropolitan area. It is the first time we have had any response worth mentioning from this area on any publicity. In addition to the 2,000 from the Post we have had 400 from other sources. Some of the

groups are reporting double attendance since the article appeared, our New Jersey groups in particular. The New York clubhouse was so overcrowded that we now have two general meetings, on Tuesday and Thursday, and two closed on Thursday and Friday!" (Ed. note—the New York metropolitan area now has some 250 groups.)

ALL OVER THE COUNTRY the impact of the Alexander piece was being felt. Typical of the problems this influx presented was this one reported in another letter from Ruth: "We have sent over 120 names to the Los Angeles group, but that isn't so bad as they have 80 active working members, but in San Francisco we have only about 6 members and have sent *them* 75 names to follow up."

THE MAIL FROM THE NEW YORK OFFICE shows only the response in the "home office," but in every center where AA was established and locally known the story was the same. The press reviewed the Post article as if it were a new, best-selling novel, and this kept the public stimulated long after that March 1st issue of the Post had disappeared from the newsstands.

THROUGH THE YEARS other news sources, broadcasts, and magazine articles continued to tell the story of Alcoholics Anonymous, but it was the year 1941 that should be labelled the Year of the Great Growth. At the end of that year, the hardworking small crew at Vesey Street made a report to the trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation, a report in which statistics—usually dry and flat—somehow manage to convey the astounding events of that busy year better than any amount of adjectives. A portion of the report follows. . . . (Please turn the page)

12. Praying the Lord's Prayer, the AA prayer and our own prayers. With all this action—all this practicing, trying, reviewing, re-arranging, preparing, going, talking, working, telephoning and praying—can find time to take the first drink? No wonder it works!

appreciate the slip. What harm to the individual? The consequences are that on

I we i
frien
At I
need
prepa
exper
This
of the
on the
of Trust
new fee
Amos an
alcoholi
Bob and a
with
with
friend
to
the mo
han
ough
enough
ought
Yet
the
B
Fo
like
The
So
and I
centric
Publish
Hank P.

to this
knicker
ward just
AA munde
After my
five days later
playmen" (Be
working while
How) I'll never
here. Our

October 1957

*(Continued from previous page)***MEMORANDUM****TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE ALCOHOLIC FOUNDATION***A Review of 1941 and An Estimate of Our Needs for 1942**(Excerpt from the files)*

THE YEAR 1941, just closed, was an extraordinary one for Alcoholics Anonymous. In this year, the seventh of AA, it was demonstrated that we have little to fear from rapid growth. Moreover, it was shown beyond doubt that our growth can continue indefinitely on a purely amateur basis—that we shall never have to have paid alcoholic organizers for new groups.

The growth figures for 1941 are striking. Approximately they are:

	<i>Jan. 1, 1941</i>	<i>Dec. 31, 1941</i>
Total membership	1500	5500
Well organized groups	25	100
Partially organized groups and isolated members	20	60

Summing up the foregoing: At the beginning of 1941, we had about 1500 members in 45 vicinities. At the close of that year, there were approximately 5500 members in 160 localities. It is estimated that our membership is now increasing at the rate of 500 alcoholics per month, so there seems little question that AA will number 10,000 alcoholics by January 1, 1943.

By a member, we mean an alcoholic who maintains a degree of interest; who has already recovered or is making good progress in that direction. We believe that at least two out of three of our active members have fully recovered. Almost every such case is employed. For several years, our employment figures have appeared better than the average for the country as a whole. Many of our members are to be found in the military and government services; some have posts of heavy responsibility.

In this rapid development, The Alcoholic Foundation office at 30 Vesey Street has played an indispensable part. During 1941, 7,665 inquiries from alcoholics and their families were answered by personal message, each letter containing our pamphlet and an invitation to visit the nearest group. Large quantities of AA pamphlets and reprints were purchased by established groups, 50,000 copies in all. In addition to these activities, a

friendly and constant correspondence was maintained with almost every group as well as those isolated individuals attempting to start new centers. Some of our people are traveling men who were supplied with lists of prospects in towns they covered. In this manner, lots of new groups have been formed. . . .

Besides local radio programs and the large number of newspaper articles which appeared all over the United States, there were several magazine pieces of national importance. . . . Then came strong reviews of our book by Father Dowling, S.J., which were carried in the Jesuit publications "The Queen's Work" and "The Director," both of St. Louis, Missouri. These articles did an immense amount of good, as the Saturday Evening Post piece brought us into national prominence and Father Dowling's reviews highly recommended us to Catholics everywhere.

Special attention is called to another favorable development. In March, 1941 the groups throughout the country came to the financial rescue of the Vesey Street office, then facing a heavy deficit because of the high rate of activity following the Saturday Evening Post article. A system of twice-yearly voluntary contributions to The Alcoholic Foundation for office overhead was inaugurated. During 1941, the groups contributed about half our central office expenses. . . .

