

March 1945

Tampa's First Birthday

After a year of the usual "way-ups" and "low-downs," trial and error, failure and success, thirty solid A.A.s were proud hosts at an open meeting of the now firmly established Tampa group. We are all so proud that we think no one else ever had so much before. And yet I think that this group is about the poorest there is. There isn't a moneyed member, but with our limited resources we had a wonderful party. One girl did a lovely thing; she made a corsage and boutonniere for everyone. 125 people wearing flowers is quite a sight.

About 15 came from the Orlando group, the same from Daytona, and a few all the way from Jacksonville. Their support meant much to us. They came, and with gasoline so hard to get, it meant sacrifices. Then we had one of those lucky blessings that seem to befall good A.A.s at the right time. Ed F. and Connor F. from Philadelphia, and Fred M. from Baltimore, were here to be on the program. Relatives and guests gave awe-struck attention to what can be achieved by the A.A. plan of life, and the Rev. Bramm of St. Andrews Episcopal Church said in his address that what he had seen and heard was truly a miracle.

After the meeting, the supper (a decided credit to our five feminine members) was served in our clubroom. Yes, we have one now, and a

telephone too.

Chairman of the meeting was Roy Y., whose pet caution to his little flock is "A.A. must be kept free from personalities." An impossible task to this writer who has watched Roy's tireless effort; seen the unselfish spending of his time, his energy and his money to help this bewildered gathering of lost sheep find its way back into the green pastures of life. He was never too tired; it was never too late; no distance was too far to go. Many times his patience was strained to the breaking point, but the tolerant, loving-kindness of this man never failed. To try and shut out this personality would be like trying to cover up the sun with a 10-cent eye-shade.

Roy, as you other A.A.s may know, was cofounder of the Houston, Texas, group and Dave A. says that his counsel and encouragement is partially responsible for the splendid growth in Orlando. Roy is now turning his eyes across Tampa Bay, where he plans to help Fred M. organize a group in St. Petersburg, and he has also laid the groundwork for a group in Bay Pines Veterans Hospital.

So now Tampa wants its place on the A.A. map. We are proud, we are happy, and we are truly and humbly grateful to God.

Mary S.