

Northern Illinois (Area 20) Archives Committee **Policies and Procedures**

Mission Statement

The mission of the Northern Illinois (Area 20) Archives Committee is to document permanently the work of Alcoholics Anonymous, Northern Illinois, its districts, groups and members, to make the history of Northern Illinois and Alcoholics Anonymous accessible to AA members and other researchers, and to provide a context for understanding the progression of this work, and the principles and traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Purpose

Consistent with AA's primary purpose of maintaining our sobriety and helping other alcoholics achieve recovery, the Northern Illinois (Area 20) Archives Committee and Archivist will:

- Receive, classify and index all relevant material, such as administrative files and records, correspondence and literary works and artifacts, considered to have historical import to Northern Illinois (Area 20) and Alcoholics Anonymous;
- Hold and preserve such material;
- Provide access to these materials, as determined by the Archivist in consultation with the Northern Illinois (Area 20) Archives Committee, to members of Alcoholics Anonymous and to others who may have a valid need to review such material, contingent upon a commitment to preserve the anonymity of our members;
- Serve as a resource and laboratory to stimulate and nourish learning;
- Provide information services to assist the operations of Northern Illinois (Area 20);
- Promote knowledge and understanding of the origins, goals and programs of Northern Illinois (Area 20) and Alcoholics Anonymous

Trusted Servants

Archives Chair and Alternate

The Area Archives Chair and Alternate are to

- Perform all duties as outlined in the "Service Committee Chairperson" and "Alternate Service Committee Chairperson" sections, respectively, of the Northern Illinois Area Service Manual.
- Work in coordination with the Area Archivist.
- Collect materials (i.e., written materials, photographs and audio tapes) to preserve Area history.

They are elected to two-year terms of service to begin in even-numbered years.

Archivist

The Archivist functions as the curator of the Archives collection. He recommends the storage location, maintains the archived materials and presents the materials for general viewing by the Fellowship at conferences and workshops. The Archivist works closely with the Archives Committee to add to the collection and to determine the contents of the collection. More specifically the Archivist is to

- Perform all duties and responsibilities as outlined in the Responsibilities of Appointees section of the Northern Illinois Area Service Manual.
- Maintain a repository for archived material.
- Display materials at Area events and the State conference.
- Collect materials (i.e., written materials, photographs and audio tapes) to preserve area history.
- Consult the "Handbook for Setting up an Alcoholics Anonymous Archival Repository" for some conservation and preservation procedures.
- Outline criteria for material that is to be archived in order to keep the collection organized and manageable.
- Keep updated inventory lists including documentation of date and type of donations.
- Keep inventory organized by category.
- Set up policies for the preservation of the anonymity of the authors of archived materials and correspondence.
- Set up guidelines for loaning of Archives materials.

The Area Archivist is appointed by the Area Chairperson to a two-year term of service to begin in odd-numbered years. An individual may serve in this position for more than a single term.

Acquisition Criteria

The primary focus of the Archives collection is the documentation of the formation and development of Alcoholics Anonymous and its service structure and of Northern Illinois (Area 20), its service committees, districts, groups and members. The collection includes items that relate to the East Central Region and its member areas, in particular, Chicago (Area 19) and Southern Illinois (Area 21), as the activities within the Region and those areas have impacted Northern Illinois and the growth of AA within it. It also includes items relating to the history of alcoholism, its effects and treatment.

The types of items sought for preservation in the Archives include hard copy and/or digital versions of

- Records (e.g., General Service Board, AAWS and AAGV board, and Area and district minutes, Area financial records);
- Reports (e.g., Final Reports of the General Service Conference, NIA event reports, group histories, research and service committee pieces);

- Periodicals (e.g., AA Grapevine, La Vina, Concepts and district, intergroup and service committee newsletters);
- Other publications (e.g., AAWS and AAGV books and pamphlets, International Convention souvenir booklets, and AA and district directories);
- Correspondence (e.g., written histories, transcripts of talks, NIA delegate papers);
- Mass media items (e.g., newspaper and magazine articles, scrapbooks)
- Photographs (historical sites and people)
- Recorded media, including records, tapes and cassettes, CDs and DVDs (interviews, NIA conferences and quarterly meetings, workshops, service videos and PSAs)

All Area and district officers, service committee chairs and other trusted servants (including specifically Area, district, committee and conference secretaries) are encouraged to forward hard copy and/or digital versions of such items to the current Archives Chairperson or Archivist for inclusion in the Archives. Members of the Fellowship and their families are encouraged to consider donation of personal materials to the Area Archives for preservation.

Classification

With respect to the question of anonymity as it applies to archives collections, the Alcoholics Anonymous Archives Workbook (M-441) states:

Development of procedures seems to be a matter of local policy decision by the archives committee, but the necessity for protecting the confidentiality of correspondence and the anonymity of the correspondents is without question an important consideration and a trust that falls upon all AA archivists and archives committees.

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When new material arrives from groups and individuals, we continue to protect the anonymity of individuals by placing the incoming material in its category of classification, and monitor carefully each occasion when research permission has been granted a person to review the history files. (at p.10)

In general, the current Northern Illinois classification policy is as follows: All holdings not considered sensitive or of a highly confidential nature are part of the collection used at AA events at which Archive materials are displayed. The holdings are generally accessible to District Archivists and members of the Fellowship conducting research. More specifically, the archived material falls into four categories:

1. Open to all (including the general public upon request)
 - Material published outside AA
 - Material published within the Fellowship and made available to the public (e.g., AA books and pamphlets, annual reports to the public, surveys, international convention souvenir materials, obituaries)

2. Open to AA members
 - GSO published materials (e.g., bulletins and newsletters, World directories, conference and forum reports and related materials, photos)
 - NIA published materials (e.g., minutes of Area meetings, conference and workshop reports, service committee materials, district minutes and directories, and related materials)
3. Materials open with approval – access requires review and approval by the Area Archivist in consultation with the Area Archives Committee. E.g.,
 - Correspondence among and between members of the Fellowship and AA or its service structure entities
 - Oral history tapes and interviews
4. Closed at this time – not available to anyone because of sensitivity or contributor's request

Topical Index

The current collection has been generally organized as follows:

1. Alcoholism: Its History, Effects and Treatment
2. Alcoholics Anonymous: Its Formation, Book and Principles
3. The AA Service Structure
 - General Service Board
 - Board weekends
 - General Service Conference
 - Final Reports
 - Advisory Actions and Additional Considerations
 - Manuals & kits
 - Conference Committee materials
 - Miscellaneous materials
 - AAWS
 - Guidelines
 - Highlights
 - Directories
 - Intergroup seminars
 - AAWS Publications
 - Books
 - Pamphlets
 - Free pamphlets
 - Binders
 - Other service materials
 - Braille
 - General Service Office
 - Quarterly Reports
 - Box 459

- Staff assignments
- Group services
- Markings
- Grapevine
 - Magazines
 - Miscellaneous
- International AA
 - World Service Meeting reports
 - International conventions
 - Other countries
- 4. Northern Illinois
 - Conferences
 - Big Book
 - Spring
 - State
 - Districts and Groups (by district)
 - Financial Records
 - Guidelines
 - Meetings
 - Assemblies
 - Committee Meetings
 - Pre- and Post- General Service Conference Workshops
 - Service Committees
- 5. Other Service Entities
 - East Central Region
 - Forum reports
 - Forum miscellaneous materials
 - Regional Conference
 - Conference of Delegates Past & Present
 - Other Areas
 - Area 19
 - Area 21
 - Other
- 6. Personal files
- 7. Unsorted materials

Certain of these materials are currently organized in a number of binders for purposes of preservation and reference. (See Attach. 1) Some materials are also available on CD's. (Attach. 2) For further itemization and description of the materials in the current collection, please see the General Index of NIA Archives.