

Area 35 Archives is a repository for official and unofficial records that document A.A.'s history in the eighteen (18) Districts that comprise the Area. (District 1-9; 11-18; and District 21). These include personal collections, manuscripts, correspondence, publications, photographs, and memorabilia related to the origin and development of the A.A. Fellowship. It is the obligation of the Area 35 Archives to care for these records permanently and to provide proper facilities and procedures to ensure their preservation.

Archives Committee

Is responsible for establishing policies, budgets, and procedures. It undertakes and maintains final responsibility and authority for the use of the archives and exercises its group conscience regarding matters of general policy. In all its actions, the archives committee needs to be mindful of and guided by A.A.'s primary purpose.

One of the most important functions of the archives committee is to establish creative parameters for the selection of material to be collected. These parameters will guide the archivist in gathering material of historical significance and will reduce the time and space of preserving random bits and pieces of dubious value.

Archives Committee Chair: Chairs meetings and reports to the Area on Archive activities and needs.

Archivist: Appointed by the Area Chair

Qualifications:

- Candidates should have a reasonable period of sobriety (minimum of two years) and have the time and ability to access the Archives.
- Avid interest in Area 35's history
- Knowledge of or willingness to learn preservation and acquisition skills as they relate to material in the Area Archives

Duties: The Archivist acquires, catalogs, and preserves material and historical data of interest to Area 35, makes portions of the Archives available for display at Assemblies, Conventions, and other events as requested. The Archivist traditionally sits on the Archives Committee and works with that chair to bring forward agenda items related to the committee and to improve the collection. The Archivist inventories the materials and hopefully, is willing to sponsor a successor.

Collection Scope

- Publications: released by A.A.W.S., including books, booklets, pamphlets, magazines, newsletters, and other media relations materials.
- *The Grapevine* magazine, and other materials produced by The A.A. Grapevine, Inc
- Materials published outside A.A.W.S. that describe the program of A.A., the problem of alcoholism generally, or that otherwise have significance to the Area, such as books, articles, speeches, reviews, television, and media programming, and more.
- Audiovisual collections including photographs, videos, and sound recordings significant to A.A., speeches and talks by A.A. members.

- Minutes and other documentation of the Area meetings, committee meetings, Spring & Fall Assemblies, and Delegate reports.
- Oral histories and stories of figures significant to the Area or AA.
- District and Group histories, selected reports and newsletters of districts and groups, District meeting minutes and reports by the Secretary and Treasurer.

Acceptance of Donated Materials

The Area Archives is happy to accept donations of archival materials that fit the above collection scope. Anyone wishing to donate items of archival value should contact the Archivist to discuss the donation and determine the items' suitability for donation to the Archives.

Any collection we accept commits us to the task of organizing and preserving it, which involves hand labor and costs for archival supplies. Donations that require expensive conservation, special housing, intensive processing, or other excessive demands on the Archives' resources may not be accepted.

The donor will be asked to sign a Deed of Gift, transferring his or her property over to the Area Archives. We prefer that title to the property be transferred without restriction.

The Area Archives does not do monetary appraisals for donors and will not comment on the financial value of any material. If a monetary appraisal is necessary, it is recommended that such appraisals be done by a disinterested third party before title to the material is conveyed to the Area Archives.

The Area Archives generally does not purchase archival records, books, or artifacts, except as outlined in the Area Collection Scope. The Area Archives generally does not accept items on loan.

Exclusions

The Archives of the General Service Office generally does not seek to acquire collections with a focus on other Area's or intergroups/central offices.

Area Archives also generally does not collect the following types of documents:

- Drafts, raw statistical data, or incomplete documents
- Three-dimensional artifacts such as framed artwork, T-shirts, mugs, jewelry, etc.
- Multiple copies of any one item

Retention and Deaccession

In most cases, a maximum of three copies of any item will be retained.

The Archives may decide to digitize, microfilm, or otherwise reformat donated collections for preservation purposes. In these cases, the original material may be kept by the Archives, sent to off-site storage, or removed from the collection.

Usually, donated archival materials are considered extremely important and are intended to be kept permanently. However, no individual or institution can predict or govern the changing attitudes of future generations, nor guarantee permanency beyond the best available preservation procedures.

The Archives reserves the right to reevaluate historical material and carefully and judiciously deaccession and dispose of certain items from its collection in a manner consistent with professionally accepted standards. The Archives may decide to deaccession an item if any of the following conditions are present:

- The item is not relevant to Alcoholics Anonymous or to the Archives' mission and purpose.
- The item would be more appropriately housed in a different archival repository.
- The item has deteriorated beyond usefulness.
- The item is made of hazardous materials or is actively decomposing in a manner that directly affects the condition of other items and/or the health and safety of the G.S.O.'s staff and/or visitors.
- The Archives is unable to continue to provide care and storage for the object in keeping with professionally accepted standards.
- The item's care and storage are far more expensive than the value of the object as it relates to the Archives mission and purpose.
- The item may be replaced with a similar object of greater significance, quality, and better condition.
- The item is subject to legal and ethical standards requiring its removal.

Complete records will be maintained on all deaccessioned items and their subsequent disposition. A deaccessioned item may be disposed of in one of the following methods (in order of desirability):

- Transfer to another more appropriate Alcoholics Anonymous archives repository, at the level of the region, intergroup/central office, area, district, or group.
- Donation to an appropriate non-A.A. archives or scholarly institution.
- Return to the original donor.
- Destruction of the item.

Archives Facilities, Equipment and Security

Experience indicates that the archives should be housed in rented space rather than in a private home. It seems important that access be available to all A.A. members and researchers during regular hours by appointment. This avoids the appearance of being a private collection.

Equipment

- One or more good general reference material on the preservation of historical
- Documents
- Supplies for preservation and repair—for example: Mylar sleeves, acid-free tape to
- repair tears, nondamaging adhesives
- Shelves to hold material
- Display cabinets to hold books and/or memorabilia
- Cabinet for audio recordings and portable recording device

Arrangement and Description

A: Open to all

1. Material published outside A.A.

- On A.A. specifically
- Magazine articles on A.A.
- Newspaper articles, TV/video recordings
- Material on alcoholism in general (reprints, talks, newsletters, etc.)

2. Published within the Fellowship (available to the public)

- A.A. books and pamphlets
- Annual reports to the public
- Surveys
- International Conventions and publicity
- Obituaries
- Awards
- Pictures of nonalcoholic, friends of the Fellowship, background
- Access to scrapbook and obit books
- Co-founders' biographical information
- Historical material, background data on A.A.

B: Open to A.A. members

G.S.O. published material (in addition to items in #A above)

- Bulletins, newsletters
- World Directories or listings from them
- Conference reports
- Group history records
- Photos: A.A. events
- Selected tapes or cassettes

C: Open with approval - approval—access requires review and approval of the Area's' Archives Committee

D. Closed (at this time)

Closed at this time—not available to anyone because of sensitivity or contributor’s request.

Materials with AA member names should not be included in displays where non-alcoholic persons are in attendance and are not open to research in the archives by non-AA members.

Security of Electronic Records

As the Archives are organized and catalogued there may be a need for digitizing the material. At this point, the focus is on aligning the material with the parameters outlined in the Scope, completing the inventory, and creating displays that protect anonymity. Once the foundation for the collection is in place, research on the next steps will be completed by the Archivist and Archives Committee.

If cloud storage is used for records, the username and password, and if relevant the URL, will be shared with the following: Archives Committee Chair; Archivist; the Area Secretary; and the Area Webmaster. This prevents the loss of information.

Preservation and Storage

The main steps in preservation are cleaning, repairing (if necessary), disinfecting and placing the documents in a clean (dust- and mold-free) and acid-free environment. Procedures, such as using a deacidifying spray or interfilming acid-free tissue papers between the document sheets, establish the appropriate environment at the document level. The properly preserved documents are then placed into acid-free containers: Mylar sheets and envelopes, acid-free folders and boxes that are easily available from all major archival supply distributors.

Be aware that chemically balanced storage boxes have been developed for all media types besides paper, and special cases are available for audiocassettes, reel-to-reel tapes, CD-ROMs, etc.

Photocopying Policy

The policy is to protect the physical and the intellectual integrity of the collection. In addition, the policy’s purpose is to protect the anonymity and privacy of our members, nonmembers, and to comply with the U.S. Copyright Law as it affects the collection.

Photocopies of copyright material and certain other materials authorized by the Archivist will be provided at the discretion of the Archivist based on this policy, within the minimum standards for fair use, for purposes of private study, scholarship, or research, and not for further reproduction. Understandably, we would have to decline any request for photocopying that, we believe, would result in a violation of U.S. Copyright law. It is the responsibility of the person requesting copies to obtain use rights from the copyright holder. If a person makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes more than “fair use,” that person may be liable for copyright infringement.

Original correspondence and unpublished manuscripts frequently cannot be reproduced because of:

1. Copyright law prohibitions or restrictions.
2. The need to preserve the anonymity of persons in accord with A.A.'s Traditions.
3. The parties' expectation of privacy; or
4. The physical condition

Photocopies of early pamphlets and other miscellaneous publications will be made available only when the physical condition of the material allows for photocopying. The physical condition, the fragility of the item or the brittleness of the paper may prevent us from photocopying some of these items.

Area Archives in its discretion may refuse to permit photocopying of certain sensitive material.