

The House Call

The Official Newsletter of Dr. Bob's Home

Fall 2018

Let's Talk About Annie Smith . . .

By Sue Smith Windows

We all have heard much about Bill and Lois, and about Dr. Bob, but very little has been said about Annie Smith. I would like to have you see her as I see her and also how other people have seen her as taken from letters written to Bill and Dr. Bob after her death.

One of the earliest memories of AA is of several big, strong and real he-men sitting around my mother, listening to this wonderful woman reading the Bible and of them being quiet—listening for any guidance they might receive. Many of them—maybe all—thought at that time that it was a hopeless, drunken life for them until they met my mother and father. No family, minister or doctor had done for them what my mother and father had done and were doing for them—sharing their experiences and their love and their home.

I also recall Archie T. staying with us. I'm sure all of you have read his story in the first big book, "The Fearful One." He would never have made it, I don't believe, if my mother had not solaced, coached, encouraged, and allayed his fears—but it took a year before he was spiritually and physically able to go back on his own and return to Detroit, where he started Detroit groups and where he did find a job.

My mother was also a counselor and anchor for the wives of newer alcoholics coming into the program. She gave them all a good understanding of compassion, patience, love and helping their mates overcome their problems.

So I want to give my mother a lot of credit here today for her role of sympathetic advisor, stabilizer and giving the women

the desire to help their mates overcome their affliction. It sure seems to have worked for almost all of the early drunks as we affectionately called them and still do. She would also hold Dad and Bill back when they went off on some wacky idea they'd get (and they did get some, same as is done today by some).



I'd like to quote from an article written by Fred B. on the subject of "Annie," my mother: "She knew by instinct the tremendous courage it took for a doubting newcomer to attend an AA Meeting for the first time. She was always prepared to greet a stranger properly and express a welcome. She was not personally ambitious; she never held office of any kind, big or little; she headed no committees; addressed no clicks. Yet somehow this woman with the big heart knew in her soul that here was something that for 1900 years the world had needed. Here now was the answer." And another: "There seemed never to be a striving for self-glory or a setting herself up as an authority."

Henrietta Dotson wrote, "In the early part of 1936, Anne organized a "Woman's Group" for wives of Alcoholics, whereby in her loving way, she tried to teach us patience, love and unselfishness. She wanted no credit for herself, it was God."

These quotations from others proved that she was a great "morale builder." I just wanted all of you out there to know my brother Bob and my mother as others saw her. Bill W. called her the "Mother of AA".

Save the Date

Visit drbobshome.com/events for more information.

2019 Founders' Day weekend

June 7, 8 and 9 | Akron, OH

855 Ardmore Avenue, P.O. Box 449, Akron, OH 44309

330.864.1935

DrBobsHome.com

Help us renovate “122”

The purchase of 122 Everett Ave. gives Dr. Bob's Home an opportunity to expand the current campus to create a welcome center, library and archive space. Phase 1 will include replacing the failing roof, upgrading the windows and repairing other exterior structural problems. We are currently in the process of receiving estimates to complete this work.

Why give?

Making a gift to this project will allow Dr. Bob's Home to continue the mission to educate and honor Dr. Bob and the Smith family for the legacy they have given us. The purchase of this property also helps us protect Dr. Bob's Home and the story it tells.

Make a gift today!

Your gift may be directed toward:

- Renovations
- Endowment
- Operations

To make a gift, call 330.864.1935, go online at DrBobsHome.com or mail the included envelope to: Dr. Bob's Home, PO Box 449, Akron, OH 44309.

A heartfelt thank you to non-managing trustees!

We thank our non-managing trustees for their continued commitment to raise funds to support Dr. Bob's Home. We now have non-managing trustees from New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Georgia, Florida, Nevada, Kansas, Texas, Arizona and Washington. We also have non-managing trustees as far away as England, New Zealand and Australia. Fundraising events support our primary purpose to maintain, restore and preserve the property at 855 Ardmore Ave.

Anyone interested in hosting an event can call Dr. Bob's Home at 330.864.1935.

We thank the following foundations for their gifts to support Dr. Bob's Home:

- Akron Community Foundation
- Donald and Alice Noble Foundation
- Welty Family Foundation

Chairman's Corner

Things Happen in 3's

We have all heard this spiritual axiom before and probably experienced it as well. At Dr. Bob's Home, we know things happen in threes!

The spiritual significance of the number 3 is huge. It's come to mean wholeness. Number 3 also symbolizes the principle of increase, growth, expansion and abundance on the mental, emotional and spiritual level.

We are familiar with the three pertinent ideas in "How It Works," but also we have three pertinent ideas in our mission statement at Dr. Bob's Home. They are:

1. Maintain, restore and preserve 855 Ardmore Ave.
2. Help preserve the atmosphere of acceptance
3. Educate the local community and beyond about Dr. Bob's Home

To that end, our recent acquisition of 122 Everett will give us the opportunity to fulfill this and expand on "The Dr. Bob's Home Experience."

This will be accomplished by the A. W. E. at 122 Everett, which represent the following:

- A. Archival Center
- W. Welcome Home Center
- E. Educational Center



This is an exciting time on the campus of Dr. Bob's Home and we invite you to be part of this phase of our development.

Already we've seen, felt and experienced "The Touch of The Master's Hand!" As we approach the close of another decade, we of course look at our past, our present, but especially toward our future. Our future in God's Hand is as promising as ever; however we need your help. We want to thank you for your past support and ask for your future considerations, because without your contributions, these dreams could not become realities.

We want Dr. Bob's Home to always be a beacon of light, love and hope for all who make the journey to the "House Full of Miracles," so we may greet you accordingly and say, "WELCOME HOME!"

Godspeed,
Harmon V., Chairman, Dr. Bob's Home



122 Everett Ave.

Founders' Day Weekend 2018

By Paul G.



The first weekend in June is by far the busiest time of the year at Dr. Bob's Home. Starting early in the week before Founders' Day, a noticeable uptick in visitors occurs. It begins gradually but, by Wednesday, it is clear to all involved that the train is fast approaching the station and the anticipation starts to build. This is when the early arrivals to Akron come to the home, so they can absorb the ambiance and reflect on the significance of the happenings which occurred here in a less hurried and more intimate fashion, knowing that in a few more days, the campus will be alive with throngs of excited visitors.

This is not, of course, to say that throngs of excited visitors are anything near to being an interference in the total experience. To the contrary, each and every visitor is direct evidence of what many see as the touch of the master's hand. In my experience, there is a certain feeling that becomes apparent when we find ourselves shoulder to shoulder with many likeminded, spiritually based individuals, who are all walking the same direction in life. It seems at times like these that, as Aristotle so aptly observed, the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts. This feeling is almost palpable when we stroll through the campus and hear the "gay chatter" of hundreds of excited conversations.

Similar to approaching a city on a dark night and seeing its warm glow reflected in the sky, so it is when, after parking our vehicles (sometimes far away), we approach the campus on foot through our typically quiet residential neighborhood that we gradually hear the crowd and the cumulative voices. A mixture of reverence, excitement, respect, laughter and even motorcycles rings forth like music in the air.

It was on this year's sunny Saturday morning that I was walking to the campus to fulfill my service commitment when I realized, though still a block away, I could already hear the festivities and laughter. I stopped for a moment to listen from afar and, while looking around, I also realized that, as far as the eye could see, every parking spot was taken. In that moment I briefly saw our proceedings through the eyes of an "outsider." The noise, the commotion, the traffic. Then, I quickly realized that, in fact, we may be the outsiders. These neighbors lived here. They raised their kids here and spent their lives here. We were actually in their house. I reflected, in that moment, on the impact and disruption our neighbors experienced on this weekend every year as the world flocked to our doors.

I had only ten minutes to get to the office, so I proceeded but, as I got to the corner a block away from the campus, I observed one of our neighbors pulling into his driveway. I also saw where the street

parkers had actually encroached on his driveway apron by a foot or so. It was not blatant, but it was encroachment nonetheless. I saw the homeowner open his hatch and begin removing his bag of groceries. On a whim, I decided to try to engage him in conversation (while ignoring the thought that I was "leading with the chin"). My idea was to somehow apologize for the restricted entrance to his driveway.

I bade him good morning and introduced myself. I told him I was sorry for the bad parking and speculated it may have been one of our attendees. With a wave of his arm he dismissed my concern and told me it was quite alright. I asked him how long he had lived there and he said 30 years.

"Oh", I joked, "Then, you have attended more of these celebrations than I have."

"Yes I have" he replied.

Sensing an opportunity for community outreach, I continued: "So, as a whole, after all these years, how have we been? Any complaints?"

"Well..." He thought for a moment and then said: "Actually you guys have been beautiful! An asset to the community and great neighbors! The neighborhood is particularly excited that you have recently acquired the new property (122 Everett) and fully expect you to contribute more now that you have ownership of the entire corner. Keep up the good work!"

After I bid our neighbor good day and proceeded on to the campus, I must say that I was surprised to get such a positive progress report and I felt a sense of gratitude for being affiliated with our fellowship. I reported this encounter to our trustees and volunteers, and we realized that with high praise comes high responsibility. From those to whom much is given much is expected.

While our journey thus far has yielded many blessings and much progress, it has really just begun. We realize the responsibility for the good stewardship of our growing Dr. Bob's Campus is great, and the continuing fulfillment of the Mission Statement is a marathon, not a sprint. Though still near the starting line, we are excited at the short-term goals and long-term possibilities being developed, while also remembering that not the least of these goals is to conduct our mission as good neighbors both to our local and our worldwide communities and to ultimately allow ourselves guidance by the Master's hand.

As always, we may remember that when we watch well our beginnings, the results will manage themselves.



Receive our newsletter

Visit the website to sign up for our newsletter and never miss an update about the great things happening at Dr. Bob's Home!

Welcome to our online home

We are excited to announce that we will be making several changes to our website and enhance it with:

- New photos
- New content and historical information
- New pages that will include (but are not limited to) an introduction to the board members and non-managing trustees
- A video tour of the home at 855 Ardmore
- Enhanced gift shop with new products
- Anne's Garden

Our primary goal is to provide a site that will inform and educate all who visit about the family home of Dr. Bob and Anne Smith. We will use the latest technologies to enhance the website and create an environment as if you were actually visiting 855 Ardmore Ave.

Our prevailing attitude is simply expressed in our greeting, "Welcome Home," and now for the website we can say, "Welcome to our Online Home."

New hours at Dr. Bob's Home

11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day

Noon – 3 p.m. The day after Labor Day through the day before Memorial Day



Big Book covers in the gift shop

Visit our gift shop and check out our custom-made Big Book covers. The inscription on the cover comes from a plaque on Dr. Bob's desk defining humility. Covers also include an area to insert your Sobriety Coin or a Dr. Bob's Home coin. The covers come in black, blue, green and burgundy. They can be purchased for \$22.00 each at the gift shop or online at drbobshome.com/shop.



OUR MISSION

Our primary purpose is to maintain, restore and preserve the property at 855 Ardmore Avenue, which was the family home of physician Robert Holbrook Smith, affectionately called Dr. Bob, one of the founding fathers of Alcoholics Anonymous. This historic site in Akron, Ohio is the birthplace of this internationally known fellowship, which subsequently became the foundation of numerous 12-step programs that are improving the lives of millions.

Second, our ongoing mission is to help alcoholics by preserving the atmosphere of acceptance where early members achieved and maintained their sobriety. This prevailing attitude is simply expressed in our greeting, "Welcome Home."

Third, we educate the local community and beyond on how Dr. Bob's Home played a part in the formation of Alcoholics Anonymous and the manner in which alcoholics were helped in the early days.

BOARD LISTING

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