

# The House Call

The Official Newsletter of Dr. Bob's Home

Spring 2016

## After Hours

By Ryan G.

Dr. Bob's Home is open to the public year-round, except Christmas Day, but the volunteer work doesn't have a quitting time. There is much love and service after hours and it takes a great deal of effort to maintain the condition and atmosphere of the home. Volunteers devote countless time and energy to make the Smiths' home a clear vision of the way it was when it all first began in 1935.

Since acquiring the home, historians and archivists have studied the Smith family. As research has been collected, changes are being made to preserve the original integrity of the home, located at 855 Ardmore Avenue in Akron, Ohio. Preservation experts uncovered the original color of the home and it has recently been painted black and gray with white trim. These are the same colors as when Dr. Bob sobered up and when he and Anne opened their doors to suffering and searching alcoholics. The porches and windows have also been reconstructed and spouting replaced. It is truly... BREATHTAKING! Valuable possessions and personal items have also been collected and returned to their proper location throughout the home. Other books, photos, literature and items of significance are displayed at the neighboring home at 859 Ardmore.

It is important to preserve the home and personal items which once belonged to Dr. Bob, Annie, Smitty and Sue. This is not a responsibility taken lightly and steps are being taken to ensure these priceless items are available for many generations to come. A house manual is being produced and procedures implemented to provide proper cleaning and preservation



protocols for these precious items. Only the safest cleaning products are used and a temperature/humidity control log is being kept to ensure the maximum "life" of the wood furniture, photos, books, etc.

Positive changes are taking place to enhance the atmosphere and educate visitors about the history of the home. The house played a vital role for many people that began when Bill W. was the first alcoholic guest of the Smiths. It became a refuge for many more and offered a feeling of acceptance and hope. Since that time, its very existence has influenced and impacted the lives of millions of alcoholics world-wide. Much time is devoted to making Dr. Bob's Home a memorable experience for all and it is with great privilege that volunteers continue to do whatever necessary, even when it requires giving after hours. We want to not only welcome you home, but provide and maintain the home for years and years to come.

## A Founders' Day "Welcome Home"

This year, the Founders' Day celebration marks the 81st year since the infamous meeting between Bill Wilson, a rum hound from New York, and Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith, an Akron physician. As visitors step along the tree-lawn of Dr. Bob's Home, their eyes will capture what Bill W. saw when he first set eyes on 855 Ardmore. Since last year's Founders' Day, the home has been restored to the original colors as when Dr. Bob and Bill first met. We invite you to come celebrate in this phase of our restoration during this Founders' Day weekend. Catch a free shuttle from The University of Akron, enjoy a tour of "our" home, pick up a souvenir in the gift shop and enjoy a hot dog and beverage in our back yard with many friends. We are looking forward to celebrating and commemorating this historical moment with you.

June 10-12, 2016



855 Ardmore Avenue, P.O. Box 449, Akron, OH 44309 330.864.1935 DrBobsHome.com drbobhouse@sbcglobal.net

# Support Dr. Bob's restoration project

HELP US REACH OUR \$150,000 GOAL

As Phase II renovations are being completed we look forward to Phase III.

## Phase III includes:

- Replacing the HVAC systems in both Dr. Bob's Home and archive house
- Interior renovations to Dr. Bob's Home and archive house
- Exterior carpentry, painting of lap siding

We hope to see you at Dr. Bob's Home soon so you can see the amazing changes. Visit [DrBobsHome.com](http://DrBobsHome.com) to see photos of the project in process.

## Make a gift today!

To complete this restoration, **we need your help.**

Your gift may be directed toward:

- Renovations
- Endowment
- Operations

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

## We thank the following foundations for their gifts to support our renovation project:

- Kenneth L. Calhoun Charitable Trust
- The Henry V. and Frances W. Christenson Foundation
- Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation
- The Lehner Family Foundation
- John A. McAlonan Fund of Akron Community Foundation
- W. Paul and Thora J. Mills Memorial Foundation
- The RC and Katharine M. Musson Charitable Foundation
- David D. Noble Foundation
- Northern Ohio Golf Charities Foundation
- Charles E. and Mabel M. Ritchie Foundation
- The Lloyd L. and Louise K. Smith Foundation
- Georgia Urda Fund of Akron Community Foundation
- Welty Foundation

## Chairman's corner

### Preservation, restoration and education

The year 2016 has untold opportunities for the continuation of preservation, renovation and restoration of Dr. Bob's Home at 855 Ardmore Avenue.

In 2015, we completed Phase I and Phase II of a three-phase external restoration project called "The Second Century Campaign." This project will take us into the "second century" as Dr. Bob's Home turned 100 years old in 2015.

Since we have the elite designation of being a National Historic Landmark, we are required to meet the highest standards when it comes to historical accuracy. To that end, we contracted a specialist who completed a diligent and systematic inquiry to discover the exact colors, designs and all the properties of the original house. This working document, completed after extensive research, is phenomenal! We now have a paint analysis and construction drawings as well as construction and carpentry recommendations for use now and into the future. This document will be in existence in perpetuity.



Since the completion of Phase I and Phase II, there has been a remarkable transformation of the house. Please come see the new-old house. This is an experience you must not miss!

Phase III of this project, which will be completed this year, includes carpentry, painting, lap siding and trim work, and of course, additional construction drawings and management.

This project, however, does not include the requisites of the interior of the home. We also need to keep in mind Dr. Bob's Home has the "house next door," which is used for archives, historical displays, administrative offices and our gift shop. Obviously, much of the same scope that is used for Dr. Bob's Home is applicable for this house, too.

For example, both houses need new HVAC systems so we may protect our records and maintain our archival excellence. Both these systems will be replaced this year. Both houses are also scheduled for interior remodeling, maintenance and repair throughout 2016.

These major undertakings that are planned for 2016 will be partially funded by supplementary initiatives and grants. However, a substantial amount of the funding that is needed will have to come from the traditional source of individual contributions. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Your gift will help us preserve the past, protect the present and help us preserve into the future. Once again, thank you. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit.

Harmon V.  
Chairman, Dr. Bob's Home

## RENOVATION UPDATE



# Fun, friends & fundraisers

In 1984, Dr. Bob's Home was secured and efforts began to raise funds and preserve the Smith legacy. While primary responsibility for the physical maintenance, operation and adherence to our by-laws rests directly on the shoulders of the managing board of trustees, the many dedicated volunteers and our non-managing trustees both nationally and internationally are the "wind beneath our sails."

Our sincere gratitude and thanks go to the dedicated non-managing trustees across the country who organize fundraising events to support our ongoing work and mission statement: to preserve 855 and 859 Ardmore Avenue. More importantly, the awareness they bring to their local communities about Dr. Bob's Home is directly responsible for the increase in visitors to the house as well as to those attending the Founders' Day weekend.

We are grateful that both homes have just celebrated their 100th birthdays. In order to keep up on the daily maintenance and continual repair and renovation, we need to secure additional funding. Over the past several years non-managing trustees have generously stepped in and organized events to raise funds and awareness. These events have turned out to be fun for all who attend. Fundraisers come in all shapes and sizes and can include evening sit-down dinners, events where a part of the day can be earmarked for Dr. Bob's Home or entire days with speakers, lunches and history, similar to "Old Time AA."

Many years ago, Joe and Charlie recognized the need to support our early efforts and created a special fund for both "The Wilson House" and "Dr. Bob's Home." While we are grateful for all this fund has done and will continue to do in the future, this fund has many restrictions placed on it and can only be used for limited purposes.

Currently there are annual friend-raising events scheduled in Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, Philadelphia, New York, Seattle and England. If you would like more information on how you can join us and become part of Dr. Bob's Home please contact us at 330.864.1935 or email our non-managing trustee board members: Carol: [lavalleecarol@hotmail.com](mailto:lavalleecarol@hotmail.com) or Gail: [glacroix@aol.com](mailto:glacroix@aol.com). Our current non-managing trustees are also available to assist in helping get a new event started.



## Welcome managing trustee Ryan G.

Dr. Bob's Home would like to introduce the newest member of the team, Ryan G. Ryan grew up in New Philadelphia, Ohio and has been a resident of Carroll County for more than 25 years. He is a long-term employee of a successful Akron-based business. He has one son who is currently attending The University of Akron.

Ryan has two home groups, Carrollton Wednesday Night and Waynesburg "Just Be Nice." He also attends meetings in surrounding areas where he is very active. He cooks and assists in several anniversaries annually. Ryan devotes one Thursday of each month to the Tuscarawas County Jail. He speaks at meetings from Cleveland to Columbus and other states when work takes him away from home.

Early in his sobriety, Ryan began volunteering at Founders' Day where he learned about Dr. Bob's Home. He became a volunteer and has since dedicated his Sunday afternoons to the house. He often says that 855 Ardmore is his favorite place to be and that it has been most significant in his spiritual growth. At any time, you may find him working in the gift shop, giving a tour or welcoming visitors. He also stops by each week after hours to clean. Ryan says, "I love cleaning and taking care of the house, especially at night time. I also love to water Annie's flowers."

As a trustee, Ryan will serve the building and grounds and housekeeping. He has already begun developing and implementing a house manual. This manual provides proper procedures for cleaning and preserving the home, furniture and personal items, which once belonged to the Smith family. When asked how he feels about joining us, Ryan simply said, "It is an honor and privilege to serve wherever and whenever I can." As always, we are devoted to providing education and making Dr. Bob's Home the best it can be! Ryan is a wonderful addition to our efforts in preserving and restoring the Smith home and legacy. His peace and humility is reflected through his eyes and warm smile. He is a strong example of *love and service*.

## UPCOMING FUNDRAISERS FOR DR. BOB'S HOME:

### Dr. Bob's Appreciation Day

Tacoma, WA

May 7, 2016, 5-10 p.m.

**For more information call:**

Dan W.: 253.576.5654

Elisabeth D.: 253.250.6997

### An Evening for Dr. Bob's Home

Levittown, NY

May 21, 2016, 6 p.m.

**For more information call:**

Alan R.: 631.871.7282

Richard H.: 516.983.5899

### Founders' Day Weekend

Akron, OH

June 10-12, 2016

**For more information visit:**

[foundersdayregistration.akronaa.org](http://foundersdayregistration.akronaa.org)

# Visit DrBobsHome.com

With the completion of the exterior renovations of 855 Ardmore, we have also completed a renovation of the website at DrBobsHome.com. Just as the exterior of the home received a new coat of paint and color, our "online home" has received a facelift as well. The home page features a variety of photos including: a view from the street showcasing the updated colors of the home, photos of both Bob and Anne and a scrolling photo featuring pictures taken during the second phase of the renovations. Check back for updates on Phase III of the restoration where photos will be added as they are available. We've also included new photos from throughout the house that are organized by individual rooms. Also, on the site you may



- Plan your visit
- Make a gift
- Purchase items in our online store
- View the site on your mobile device or tablet

Visit the site and let us know what you think! We will continue to update it regularly for your enjoyment and information.

## Receive our newsletter

Call 330.864.1935 or email [drbobhouse@sbcglobal.net](mailto:drbobhouse@sbcglobal.net) to join our newsletter mailing list and continue to receive updates from Dr. Bob's Home about upcoming events, Founders' Day and Phase III!

## We love volunteers!

Looking for an opportunity to serve Dr. Bob's Home? We welcome your time and your talents! Here are a few opportunities:

- Cleaning and housekeeping
- Home tours
- Data entry
- Photography
- Fundraising events
- Translation
- Gardening
- Writing for newsletter

For more information please contact Wayne at 330.864.1935.

## WISH LIST

- Period-specific items for the house
- 1930-1940s Christmas ornaments/replicas
- 1930s boxing gloves
- Diamond lion's head pin
- 1930s comic books
- Winnie the Pooh books
- Agatha Christie books

## GENERAL NEEDS

- Folding tables 60" or 72" x 30"
- 4' x 8' boardroom table
- 40" flat screen television with DVD player
- Cabinets and peg board for garage
- Computer/laptop
- House supplies: coffee, toilet paper, etc.
- Office supplies: copy paper, envelopes, etc.



## 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

**Executive Committee**  
Harmon V., chairman  
Kent C., vice chairman  
Melissa M., treasurer  
Dennis T., secretary

**Trustees**  
Dolly A.  
Wayne A.  
Justin C.  
Bob F.  
Ryan G.  
Carol L.  
John S.  
Michael S.