

ORIGINAL GOLD QUARTZ

Date Founded: 1949

GSO#: 609021

History Updated: May

2020*

Location: First meetings at someone's home, then Peace Lutheran Church, the Rod and Gun Club on Alta Street, the GV Fellowship, and finally back to Peace Lutheran Church.

Meeting Day and Time: Friday, 7:00 p.m. (1-1/2 hour meeting)

****This history of the Original Gold Quartz Group of Alcoholics Anonymous is a compilation of histories written first, by Clayton G (transcribed by Edna), covering formation through the 1960's, and continued by Scottie H., in 1998 for a Unity Day Project. Updated by Susan L and Beth M., both of whom have regularly attended the meeting for more than 25 years)***

According to Clayton G., AA started in the Western Nevada County area, in Grass Valley, in 1949 with what is now the Original Gold Quartz Group. While it is clear that the meeting continued on Friday night at 8:00 PM for many years, it is unclear who the founding members were or where it met. Presumably, it started in someone's home. At Clayton's first meeting in Grass Valley (in late 1956), there were five local members and six members from Roseville. Floyd Bowers from Roseville brought a carload of members to the Grass Valley meeting almost every Friday night for years. The Secretary of the group in 1956 was Earl Vincent from Alta. He had been Secretary at this time for three years. Earl had been driving over from Alta, rain or shine, snow banks or storms, many times having to dig his way through snow banks and chop down fallen trees on the road. His great pride was he had never failed to get through and open the meeting on time. He kept asking for members to take over the meeting, but to no avail. He was Secretary for three more years after Clayton came in 1956. Clayton became Secretary in 1959 and was Secretary for two years before a new volunteer took over.

At this point, the two original groups (Gold Quartz and Gold Diggers) had not had any new member stay sober for one year, so Clayton was the pride of both groups. It is said that Clayton did not understand the principle of "Attraction rather than Promotion", so he would walk the streets of Grass Valley telling everyone he knew, or anyone who would talk to him about AA and how he loved his sobriety. Soon Clayton started getting calls from troubled relatives about their family members who were in trouble with alcohol. He would go see the person or call the person on the phone. Within his first year of sobriety he had two new members. Within his first three years he had recruited six members in one way or the other and many failed attempts, also. He would take a car load of his new "babies" to out of town meetings twice a week: to Marysville, Citrus Heights, Group 3 in Sacramento, Auburn or Roseville. One of Clayton's "babies", Harry C., after hearing Clayton's account of how he had gotten his babies (i.e., one from a city dump, one from a parking meter in town, one from a phone call and all of the other strange ways he had of getting babies), named Clayton the "Cadaver Grabber." The group in Grass Valley began to grow rapidly.

By 1984, when Scottie H. started attending the meeting, it met in the fellowship hall at Peace Lutheran Church. The room was smaller then than it is now as they have remodeled a couple of times, and the room was packed. The meeting was a Chair/Participation meeting (as it is now), but once a month, it was a speaker meeting, with speakers from out of town. It also had a birthday meeting once a month. Prior to formation of District 20 in 1986, the two original groups (Gold Diggers and Gold Quartz) financed the AA notice in the Union Newspaper and the telephone answering service hotline.

Shortly thereafter, probably at the time of the Peace Lutheran expansion, the meeting moved to the Rod and Gun Club on Alta Street, Grass Valley. After the move, attendance was down somewhat and the group was having some financial struggles. This could have been the motivation for the group to join the Grass Valley Fellowship when it opened in 1987. The meeting was assured it could keep its name (Gold Quartz) and be a birthday meeting. That's why the Friday night meeting at GVF was and is called the Gold Quartz meeting and has always been the Fellowship's birthday meeting.

In 1993, a group of AA members (Jerry D., Dan. D., Terri H., Bruce J., et al), felt a meeting in the style of the original Gold Quartz meeting was needed. Peace Lutheran Church was available, with the requirement that it be a non-smoking meeting. The group asked the Fellowship for the Gold Quartz name back, but that request was denied. Accordingly, the group went back to Peace Lutheran Church as a non-smoking, open meeting called the Original Gold Quartz Group. Some of the members (in particular, Dan D. and Scottie H.) fought hard to retain the meeting's original GSO registration number, and thus it is considered the same meeting that was formed in 1949 and met at Peace Lutheran Church in the 1980's.

Attendance at the meeting has fluctuated widely throughout its long history, and there have been a few times when its future looked dim; however, the meeting has held on through thick and thin (attendance) and has always made a comeback. OGQ meets at 7:00 pm every Friday night and is an hour and a half meeting. According to its tradition, the meeting is an open Chair/Participation meeting in which Alanon's are not only welcome, but fully participate in the meeting. Birthday night is the last Friday of each month.