



Founders Wall

Story By: Ellis H. & Harry A.

Ellis Currently the longest remaining home group member of AT since 1987 as of 2024.

Group Co-Founders: Mickey Carson & Collen Fitzgerald 1984

1987 Expansion: Harry Anderson & Rob Unger

The roots of Alcoholics Together go far back as the 1940's as gays and lesbians came to AA seeking refuge.

Over the next 35 years what happened was the evolution of AA to meet the needs of its many diverse members. In particular then called "homosexuals", later Gay, now LGBTQ.

And so, the first Gay groups go back as far as 1967 in San Francisco. They finally made a decision and held an exclusive gay meeting in downtown San Francisco at the Episcopal Church on Fell Street. Allan Klein recalls Alcoholics Together started in Los Angeles in 1969 and Spread out from there. Because gay groups were not officially listed as "G" at that time, they used the name Alcoholics Together and spread the word these were Gay meetings. Eventually being unofficially founded in Las Vegas Circa. 1984 by Colleen Fitzgerald who has passed, Marty (passed), & Mickey Carson. This was a difficult time for the LGBTQ population with the Aids Epidemic & Violence against Gay people. A Safe space was needed.

BB Appendix I, *The A.A. Tradition*, p.563

Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.

And so, the first meetings began in **Colleen & Mickey's** Apartment in 1984, not then officially listed with central office as Alcoholics Together, or as a gay meeting. Mostly made up of women at the time. Over the next three years the group grew, as Harry Anderson Recalls he and Ron Unger discussed after a meeting at the Triangle Club the need for a similar clubhouse for Gay AA members. And so, the founding of the Non-profit Lambda Alano LTD and the Alcoholics Together Homegroup formed in Las Vegas after the group's namesake that had been flowering throughout the country since 1969. AT Center Still Surviving today at 1773 Griffith Park Blvd in Los Angeles, although they do not call their meetings Alcoholics Together.

AA first came to Las Vegas unofficially in 1945 at Baskins Restaurant. The First Official group was in 1961 The Downtown group, they Met at 7/11 on Fremont street.

The AT Club at 1610 East Charleston was located on the South Side of Charleston between 9th and 15th St., it had two rooms & refrigerator. Occupying 2 suites in the center of the building. Ironically It was a Gay Bar 1610 before a clubhouse. They built a coffee bar great for socializing and fellowshiping. Originally AT was a clubhouse with membership dues that held meetings. Volunteers ran the club throughout the day. Unfortunately, there were break-ins through the windows to steal the cash box. The landlord got fed up and put up plexi-glass, and eventually evicted the group.

Then moving to State Street was found by Ellis Holdren and Mickey Carson who put up their personal credit to open the room. Meetings became very slow in 1994-Annette H. recalls-and the minutes from a secretary meeting from 2-7-1996 by Daniel S. General Secretary stated a concerning of meetings branching off. There was much trouble with Central office getting listed as a Gay meeting. Although GSO approved the designation in 1974 after much controversy, this was slow to unfold in many cities. Now "G" is a common designation such as women's meeting or a men's stag etc.... To cater to specific or special composition groups, for interests and needs for AA members today. 57+ Years later AT survives.

Soberfest the first and largest LGBTQ Roundup in Las Vegas & Ran for ten years 100-150 people would attend from around the country. This was an LGBTQ Roundup that started in 1990 and ran until 2002. 93' was the largest gay and lesbian Soberfest, in LV. It was held at the old Aladdin Hotel. Mickey C and Scott J were the co-chairs/president. Gay and Lesbian roundups have been going on around the country for years back then. We have some historic memorabilia from this time-T-shirts donated by Scott J.

Story By: Harry Anderson 11/24/2013

Ron Unger & Harry Anderson opened a room on Cleveland Street when Harry was newly sober, into a low rent district. Two other members helped at that time. 1986-87. originally created as Lambda Alano Club with dues & Alcoholics Together.

They moved from **Colleen & Mickey's Apartment** to Charleston to Cleveland in Naked City Between Las Vegas Blvd & Tam Drive behind Stratosphere, they would have fellowshipped at the IHOP nearby and Denny's, then to MCC church During Re. Ralph Conrads tenure, on Main Street in a converted store front warehouse, to 2630 State Street Ste. 233 in Commercial Center building owned by Homegroup Member Vincent Frey's Father Circa. 1994, then to 900 Karen Ave June 1st, 2004, Ste. A202, which is now Liberace Ave New Orleans Square.

Harry's Father got sober at AT five years after Harry Circa. 1992 and became involved in various levels of service-Harry's Father Harry Sr. would Joke he would say I got "Straight at Gay AA" he was known for this saying over the years. Harry Started the first non-smoking meeting at AT called-No Joke-No Smoke in 2002. Ellis and Harry lost all their photos.

Today the Story of Alcoholics Together is still being written. Lambda Alano faded into the past in 2002. After a group inventory a New Lambda Board was formed in 2014, filing on 7-7-2014. Lambda was formed as a clubhouse to keep business & AA separate. Meetings continue to carry on at Alcoholics Together. Currently at 900 Liberace Ave in New Orleans Square A202 from 6/1/2004. There have been many years with memorable moments, of Cherished friends and a thriving fellowship of Diverse Alcoholics. From New year's Eve marathons, trusted servants workshops, group inventory workshops, meetings still 7 days a week following most of the original formats for over 40 years, including a big book study, 12 X 12 Study, Saturday Speaker meeting, As Bill Sees it, Daily Reflections, Living Sober, What's Happening, Grapevine meetings, topic meetings, mediation, pancake meetings, newcomers meetings, and evolving meeting formats for today. You are sure to find fellowship before and after the meetings, birthday celebrations, chips given at every meeting, many remembered friends who have passed on as Home Group Members have left us with the legacy of their love. AT is actively involved in general service through its GSR and Intergroup rep, and is a group that contributes to its local central office, area 42, GSO in New York and District 9

Loving compiled from Home Group Members and Written by Paula Sadler Home Group Member since 2002.
Sobriety 8/18/2002

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A Brief History of LGBTQ groups beginnings

From: SPECIAL COMPOSITION GROUPS IN A.A.

Barefootworlds.net

Homosexual Alcoholics

Homosexual --i.e., gay and lesbian alcoholics have found help and recovery in Alcoholics Anonymous from its very early days. Bill W. refers to them in Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and in a 1958 letter expresses deep sympathy and concern. The dedication and talents of gay and lesbian A.A. members have often led them into service, where they have contributed enormously in all capacities including Delegate and Trustee. Almost never overt in their lifestyle, they have been completely accepted.

In 1975, Lillen Fifield published a study of alcohol abuse in the Los Angeles gay community entitled, "On My Way to Nowhere: Alienated, Isolated, Drunk." Its title suggested the author's theory to account for the high incidence of alcoholism among homosexuals -- which is reflected in the number of homosexual A.A.s in that city. The point was made that A.A. serves unique needs for gay and lesbian alcoholics over and above those of straight alcoholics. The former are frequently estranged from their families at an early age, and hence feel rejected, lonely and "different" -- which makes them especially vulnerable to alcoholism. Add to this that their social life usually revolves around gay bars, partying and drinking. When they reach their bottom and come to A.A., they find in recovery not only a new way of life and new values, but also an acceptance and, indeed, a new "family" they have never had before.

Therefore, in large cities with a significant homosexual population -- New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, Boston - gays and lesbians came to A.A. as early as the 1940's and in increasing numbers ever since. Going back to the late '40's and more noticeably in the '50's and '60's, there were groups in certain neighborhoods such as Greenwich Village and the East Side of Manhattan in New York, and downtown San Francisco, which were primarily composed of gay people, though they were not listed or designated as gay groups. "We were getting along fine," recalls a gay A.A. member in San Francisco, "with plenty of gay people getting sober in groups downtown or Marin or East Bay which were predominantly gay but also had a rich diversity of people."

However, although the gays identified with the drinking and the feelings of straight A. A. 's, they sometimes had difficulty being comfortable or openly sharing their experiences and problems. And so, in San Francisco in about 1967, some people felt they wanted a group which was exclusively gay. It is recalled that there was considerable debate and controversy within the gay A.A. community whether or not to do it, but it was finally decided to give it a try downtown at the Episcopal Church on Fell Street. At first, the members identified themselves

with names and "I'm a gay alcoholic." Shortly, however, most of them dropped saying "gay" and said simply, "I'm an alcoholic." "We regarded this just as a place where homosexual alcoholics could come who were intimidated in coming to a straight A.A. group," a founder says. "We had no idea of creating something in which people would come in and get sober and spend their entire A.A. life. But that's what's happened, and if we hadn't done it, someone else would.

And someone else was indeed doing it in other cities. In Washington, D.C., for example, four alcoholics - two gay and two lesbian - gathered for a meeting in a private home on December 8, 1971. All of them found an exclusively homosexual group extremely helpful. They continued meeting on Sundays at two homes in nearby Virginia until the summer of 1972, when Cade W. and Bob W approached Fr. Goodrich of St. James Episcopal Church and requested meeting space. He gave his permission. A later pastor said, "If it had gone to the Vestry Council, it would have been turned down." Soon a Wednesday Step meeting was added to the Sunday meeting at St. James. Besides Cade and Bob, early members included Blanche M., Gerry Kay T., Tom H., Ray C., Vern W., Barbara C., Nancy T. and Dennis L.

In early 1974, Ray C. started the St. Margaret's open speaker meeting on Friday evenings. The Lambda group in Virginia followed on Saturday nights. A Big Book meeting began at St. Thomas in late '75, and the Montrose group began a month later. A.A. groups for gays continued to grow and in 1985 Washington, Maryland and Virginia had 15 groups with about 40 meetings a week.

As similar patterns of growth occurred in other cities, and A.A. groups for gays began to appear in other locations, the need was felt for a directory of gay/lesbian groups. (Since 1974, they were listed, without special designation, in A.A.'s Directories for U.S./Canada, by Conference action.) For this purpose as well as to provide a contact point for homosexual alcoholics, the International Advisory Council for Homosexual Men and Women in Alcoholics Anonymous was organized. They also publish a helpful pamphlet. The Council is listed in the front of the A.A. Directories, along with contacts for other special composition groups, and the Council has worked with G.S.O. to help provide workshops and social events for gay/lesbian A.A.'s at International Conventions since 1980. However, gay members in other cities are quick to point out that the Council does not speak for all gay A.A.'s, nor is it responsible to them. "Some of us out here," says a member in San Francisco, "are a little nervous and a little resentful at the recognition given to this particular bunch."

The question of listing groups for homosexuals raged in Los Angeles (and some other localities) long after the Conference had decided it at the national level. The problem in Southern California was due not only to the large number of such groups, but it was further complicated by the existence of a whole coterie of groups for gays who called themselves "Alcoholics Together." They pressured the Los Angeles Central Office to list them in the local meeting directory. Actually, however, "Alcoholics Together" were religious in origin and, though they patterned themselves after all aspects of the A.A. program, they were not A.A. -- which finally settled the issue.

In 1975, an ad hoc group of gay A.A. 's in Northern California decided they would put on an A.A. round-up. A gay member who tried to help them says the trouble was, none of the Sponsoring group had more than two years' sobriety. "They made a lot of mistakes, including putting out a flyer that was carefully designed to offend almost everybody, without their realizing they were offending anybody." Howls of protest were heard as far as the G.S.O. in New York, and the local Delegate was asked to meet with them and try to straighten them out. Subsequently, a second flyer was produced, and when it was shown to staff member Cora Louise B. during the Conference, she remarked, "My, this is as proper and decorous as an invitation to a coming-out party in Greenville, Mississippi!"

That first round-up in 1976 was a great success, with about 200 in attendance from as far away as Vancouver, British Columbia, and Los Angeles. They immediately wanted to go home and have a similar event of their own and so the idea spread. The format of the ICYPAA conferences was followed in many cases. Criticism has been heard that the largest of these round-ups in New York and San Francisco, drawing around 2,000 people, have gotten far afield from A.A. in their workshops. But other recent local gatherings of gay A.A.'s have been "pure, basic A.A. -- absolutely marvelous!" according to one discriminating member.