

XII.

ARCHIVES

AGENDA

Joint Meeting of Conference Committee on Archives and Trustees' Archives Committee

Wednesday, April 21, 2021, 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Via videoconference

Trustees' Committee Members

Jimmy D.
Mark E.
Ino F.
Francis G.*
Sister Judith Ann Karam**+
Mike L.

Conference Committee Members¹

Panel 70
Mary F.
Sheri P.
Jerry S.**
J.J. S.*

Panel 71
Glenn N.
Russell R.
Connie R.
Russ R.

* Chairperson

** Alternate and/or vice chairperson

+ Nonalcoholic

¹ Members of this committee serve on this as a secondary committee assignment.

+ Agenda item forwarded from the 70th G.S.C.

- ◆ Introductions – Francis G., trustees' committee chairperson.
- ◆ Review Conference committee Composition, Scope and Procedure – J.J. S., Conference committee chairperson.
- ◆ Review history of Conference committee – Michelle Mirza+, secretary.
- ◆ Report of trustees' committee – Francis G., trustees' committee chairperson.
- ◆ Discussion and acceptance of trustees' committee report.

Note: 1989 Conference Advisory Action

Each Conference Committee carefully consider their Agenda items and strive to make their recommendations for Advisory Actions to the Conference at the policy level. To be more financially responsible, when a Conference Committee recommendation involves a substantial expenditure of money, an estimate of cost and its impact on the budget be part of that recommendation.

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- A. [+Review Archives Workbook.](#)
 - B. [Review report on "Proposed Book on A.A. History."](#)
 - C. Election of chairperson. *
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*Election of chairperson

1. All Panel 71 members are eligible except for the 2022 delegate chairperson and 2022 Conference Committee chairpersons.
2. All committee members vote by written ballot (no verbal nominations).
3. Election by plurality. Second place becomes alternate chairperson.
4. New chairperson serves one year beginning at the close of the Conference.

2021 Conference Committee on Archives

ITEM A: +Review Archives Workbook.

Background notes: +Agenda item forwarded from the 70th G.S.C.

Workbooks for Archives, C.P.C., Corrections, Public Information, Treatment Committee and Accessibilities are reviewed by the appropriate Conference Committees during each General Service Conference.

Between Conferences, ideas for changes to a Workbook may be received. These may be reviewed by the appropriate trustees' Committee and implemented.

Alternatively, the trustees' Committee may choose to forward an idea to the Conference Committee for review. Members of the Conference Committee then have an opportunity to review proposed changes to a Workbook during the next General Service Conference.

Note: Workbooks are service material, and suggested changes to content do not require recommendations; rather, they are put forth as Additional Committee Considerations. The Archives Workbook (M-44I) is available on G.S.O.'s A.A. website (www.aa.org).

Background:

1. Archives Workbook. **Available on G.S.O.'s A.A. website at**
www.aa.org/assets/en_US/archives-committees/m-44i-archives-workbook

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2021 Conference Committee on Archives

ITEM B: Review report on “Proposed Book on A.A. History.”

Background notes:

This report is in response to a 2020 Conference Committee on Archives committee consideration:

The committee considered requests to develop a book on A.A. history from 1955 through the present and following a lengthy discussion, suggested that the trustees' Archives Committee consider possible themes, content ideas and the time period such a book might cover. The committee requested a report be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Archives.

History of discussion:

Trustees' Archives Committee, August 2, 2020 meeting report:

The committee reviewed the 2020 Conference Committee on Archives committee consideration regarding the suggestion to consider possible themes, content ideas and the time period that a book on A.A. history might cover. The committee requested the archivist provide a summary of the discussion and ideas expressed by the Conference Committee on Archives, as well as suggested content ideas, and continue the discussion at the committee's November 2020 meeting.

Trustees' Archives Committee, November 1, 2020 meeting report:

The committee reviewed a report on the summary of the discussion and ideas expressed by the 2020 Conference Committee on Archives, on the proposal to develop a book on A.A. history from 1955 through the present. In addition, the committee reviewed a report from an internal G.S.O. Working Group that includes the G.S.O. Publishing department and G.S.O. Archivist. Following discussion, the Archivist will prepare a report encompassing all the sharing expressed and present a final report to the committee for review at the January 2021 meeting.

Trustees' Archives Committee, January 31, 2021 meeting report:

*The committee reviewed and accepted the draft "Report on Proposed Book on A.A. history." The committee **agreed to forward** to the 2021 Conference Committee on Archives the "Report on Proposed Book on A.A. history."*

Background:

1. 12/20/2020 "Report on Proposed Book on A.A. History."

Memorandum

TO: 2021 Conference Committee on Archives
FROM: Trustees' Archives Committee
CC: Michelle Mirza, G.S.O. Archivist
RE: Report on proposed book on A.A. history
DATE: December 2020

This report is in response to a 2020 Conference Committee on Archives committee consideration:

The committee considered requests to develop a book on A.A. history from 1955 through the present and following a lengthy discussion, suggested that the trustees' Archives Committee consider possible themes, content ideas and the time period such a book might cover. The committee requested a report be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Archives.

REPORT

Part 1

The considerations presented below were culled from notes of the 2020 Conference Committee on Archives (CAC) meeting and in consultation with the 2021 chair of the CAC.

Summary of notes:

- Most committee members were in favor of the idea and thought it important to publish a book for historical documentation. It was expressed all involved should proceed with caution.
- The book must be historically accurate, neither biased nor representative of the author's interpretation.
- Creating an acceptable time frame to complete such a book is a concern.

CONFIDENTIAL: 71st General Service Conference Background

- A single volume may not be sufficient to cover 1955 to the present. Multiple volumes may be a better idea.
- What will the financial impact of this project be? How much will it cost? Is this how we want to allocate our financial resources?
- Is it appropriate that this book is being considered by the Archives committees rather than by the Literature committees? Is the purpose of the G.S.O. Archives to produce books or to preserve A.A.'s history?
- Is there consideration for e-book format?
- A professional writer/historian should be hired to undertake the task of writing.
- The question was asked whether G.S.O. is able to write this history book and present an unbiased account.
- It was expressed that the recently published book, *Our Great Responsibility*, has had slow sales.
- How does such a book support Twelfth Step work?
- Given present circumstances, is pursuing such a book a prudent use of our resources?
- Is this how we want to spend our time, or are there more significant projects?
- It was suggested that we consider a thematic approach (events, service entities, etc.).
- Do the collections within the G.S.O. Archives contain sufficient primary resources to support the content?
- How do we select what aspects of our history to include?
- It was suggested that the trustees' Archives Committee bring forth ideas regarding content.

Part 2

Report from G.S.O. working group, which included members of the Publishing and Archives departments.

The working group discussed the request from the trustees' Archives Committee to provide suggestions regarding possible content, themes and ideas that a book on A.A. history might cover.

The working group shared a few abstract ideas of possible content including inclusivity in A.A. and A.A. events. However, the group expressed that it would require at least three to five months of regular access to the archival holdings (documents, audio, video, images, etc.) to begin to develop a framework for such a book. Given that the office is closed due to the coronavirus (COVID -19), the working group is unable to commence any research at this time.

It was also suggested that the working group consult with the trustees' Archives Committee and Conference Committee on Archives for guidance.

Part 3

Sharing from the trustees' Archives Committee:

- Publish in e-book format instead of print and embed links to audio files, as appropriate, to supplement the historical material.
- Develop a book based on the Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service. For example, incorporate sharing and oral histories from longtime A.A. members; discuss unity through group life; and depict the evolution of service structure.
- Possibly develop content organized in five-year increments.
- Capture A.A. today as the Fellowship continues to evolve through the decades.
- It was expressed that we are living the history of A.A. today; the stories of today become our history. Consider incorporating present-day stories and experiences that will hold meaning and resonate with members.
- Who should write the book?
- Discussion of whether photographs should be included.
- It was suggested to organize the content in a clear and easy-to-read format to keep readers engaged — more casual than the writing style in *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*.
- Determine the audience. Whom are we serving with this book?

Note: Report reviewed and approved by the Trustees' Archives Committee, January 31, 2021.

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