



Quarterly Report *from the Board*

MAY 2025

An update from the
General Service Board

Welcome to the General Service Board Newsletter

We have been very busy following Conference, with the February Board Meeting and with the 80th year celebrations at the 59th National Convention. Here is our latest news!!

Introducing Neil Schafer - Class A Trustee

AA's debt to those who do not share our disease but willingly share our problems is immense, going back to the beginning. Bill W wrote: "In the days when AA was unknown, it was the nonalcoholic Trustees who held up our hands before the general public. They supplied us with ideas. They voluntarily spent hours on end, working side by side with us and among the grubbiest of details. They gave freely of their professional and financial wisdom. Now and then they helpfully mediated our difficulties." Written in 1966, those words hold true today. Nonalcoholic Trustees remain a rich source of wisdom and perspective. Here in Australia, we have two Class A Trustees and this quarter we introduce Neil Schafer.

"When the opportunity to serve as a Class A (non alcoholic) Trustee on the General Service Board of AA came up, and as I learned more about AA and how it works, I became increasingly keen to be a part of it. And already I am so glad that I have. AA resonates deeply with me for a number of reasons including a close family experience with addiction, and my wife's career as a neuropsychologist working with many alcoholics as they strive to put their lives back together.

I grew up in country NSW (Grafton and Armidale) and have been lucky to have worked in banking and investment roles in Sydney, New York, London, Switzerland and Malaysia, and to find time for family, swimming and cycling whenever I can.

Since joining I've attended regular AA meetings in Sydney, Chicago and New York and have never failed to be inspired by the courage, honesty and openness of our wonderful members. And I've been able to see first-hand how we all do better when we spend more time trying to help others.

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Introducing Neil Schafer - Class A Trustee

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My personal hope is that we can find more ways to connect with others who have yet to find or even hear about AA, and to help them experience the unique support and fellowship of AA. To help in this, I've been assisting where I can with our public relations and also helping to update and simplify our governance and By Laws.'

Welcome to David M - Southern Region Trustee

My name is David, an alcoholic and the recently elected Southern Region Trustee. I joined AA and got sober in Bendigo in 1993. My first Home Group was the Bendigo Steps Group. Soon after, I moved to Melbourne and have been a member of various AA Groups in both Northern Suburbs and Inner Southern suburbs. My current Home Group is the Mill Park Group in Area D of the Southern Region.

AA Saved my life and it's in AA that I found a Higher Purpose – To stay sober and help other alcoholics.

For the first two decades of sobriety, I was always involved with various committees. District, Central office, Area D and later Area C and on event committees including a National Convention (2001), VicYPAA and the Melbourne AA Steps Weekend.

My professional background is in Software development and internet technology. So I've also been a volunteer developing and maintaining AA websites both here in Victoria as well as the suite of websites for the General Service Board.

My great passion is in educating people about AA – The Twelve Step program, The Traditions, the Twelve Concepts and the history of AA.

And for the past 17 years my wife Chris (who is also a member) have been speaking and presenting workshops inside and outside AA - in Rehabs, at AA events, and at conventions and forums - wherever we are invited! This has enabled us to travel and meet AA member around Australia and even overseas to the USA and Russia.

I look forward to doing service in new ways as a member of the Board.

Communications Committee

The General Service Board is looking for someone to fill the position of National Technology Co-ordinator, if you believe you have the relevant experience and a willingness to serve, have a look at the job description and application process on the website.

[Click HERE](#) to see available service opportunities.

The Technology & Social Media Working Group are chipping away at the mammoth task of renewing a redesigned and updated website suite. Design stage completed, content stage close to finished, with hosting, testing and live release all scheduled over the coming months.

[Click HERE](#) to hear a presentation on the new website, technology & AA from recent National PA Forum.

AA Around Australia and other communications from GSB and the GSO have ramped up with increased capacity, functionality and graphic style. If you want to sign up for communications [click here](#) to sign up for AA Australia emails.

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The ChatNow feature on the website continues to deliver results!

Since commencement in November in 2023 to April this year 43,726 chats with 29% of them being newcomers, that's an average of 85 chats a day with 24 being newcomers. To become involved as a responder contact chatnow.chair@gmail.com

AA ChatNow Australia

AA ChatNow Responders Wanted

AA ChatNow Australia is growing exponentially and we are looking for more frontline responders to join the already 30 AA members that volunteer their time to this great cause by connecting with others and the newcomer through this online platform and by carrying the message to the still sick and suffering.

Have you seen this little chat box on the AA Australia Website

ChatNow is an online platform run by fellow members of Alcoholics Anonymous (not by the GSO). We have been live on the AA Australia Website since November 1st, 2023. In that time we have responded to over 31,000 online chats and from those chats more than a third have been from newcomers. We believe that this platform has benefitted AA through having further reach to the still sick and suffering.

How can I be of service?

ChatNow currently runs between the hours of 10am and 10pm AEST. We have at this stage 30 responders. If you are after a different kind of service position, want to help carry the message or are unable to attend face to face meetings to be of service this could be a great position for you.

Requirements

A desktop, iPad or Laptop and basic computer literacy. A minimum sobriety of 2 years and a thorough understanding of the 12 Steps and the 12 Traditions. Service Guidelines ask for availability of 4 hours per week per responder this is broken down to two 2 hour shifts per week. All training will be provided.

Modern to modern or face to face. A's speak the language of the heart in all its power and simplicity.

chatnow.chair22@gmail.com

Service Committee

Chair – Garry S.

Message Stick – an audio version of the Message Stick is underway with 10 out of the 15 stories already recorded and we are going ahead with those for now. These are in post-production and publishing details are being considered.

An Armed Forces video is underway, and a Video Production Company has been appointed.

Position Vacant:

- **National Online Coordinator**

The National Online Coordinator will be responsible for overseeing and facilitating online operations across the AA Fellowship in Australia. This role will focus on ensuring smooth communication, coordination, and the continued development of online recovery resources.

[Interested in this role? Apply HERE](#)

From the Western Region Trustee

The main projects I am involved with at the moment are an audio version of the Message Stick which is in the final stages of being recorded and distributed and will be available very shortly.

I've also been given to go ahead to create a video for the Armed Forces which will be produced here in W.A. using members of AA and the director producer is also a member of AA.

And another project I am involved in is a project called 30 by 30 in where we would endeavour to have 30 areas by the year 2030. We currently have 22.

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From the Western Region Trustee

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I will be attending the Southwest district and encouraging them to become an area and will keep you filled in on the progress.

The deadline for submission of topics for conference this year is now Closed. I am also involved in the conference steering committee which handles the topics prior to going to conference.

As the Western Region Trustee, I attend approximately 8 to 9 meetings a year with the board, three face-to-face and the others are on zoom. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time during the service and considerate it a privilege and an honor to be given this position.

Dom H.

Document Review Committee

The Service Manual rewrite is continuing with the General Service Board outsourcing the final editing and review of the document. We aim to have the first draft ready for Conference 2025.

Member Surveys

We currently have two membership surveys underway. Please encourage all members via District and Area Meetings to participate in these surveys.

Advisory Action #015/2024 AA Australia, one united structure. Seeking feedback re appetite in the fellowship for this topic.

[Click HERE or scan the QR code](#)



General Service Board Membership Survey – seeking feedback from the fellowship that will assist with a number of initiatives including stories for a new Australian Big Book, Press Releases, future conferences and communication campaigns.

[Click HERE or scan the QR code to complete the membership survey](#)



Management Group

Finance Report

In the final quarter of 2024, we recorded a small deficit, primarily due to higher-than-usual costs related to literature sales. This was mostly the result of a large purchase of literature stock for future distribution. In the first quarter of 2025, literature sales rebounded strongly, leading to a healthy profit and contributing to an overall surplus of \$52,223 for the period.

This result was further supported over the two quarters by bank interest of approximately \$13,000 and a small surplus from a Forum of around \$1,500. However, we have not included these amounts in our core funding calculations, as they are not guaranteed sources of income. We want to emphasise the importance of member donations as the most reliable and sustainable way to support our ongoing work.

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Management Group

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The fluctuations are part of the normal financial rhythm of our operations and do not suggest any significant change in our longer-term financial outlook, which remains steady.

The Board has set a goal to cover as much of our operating costs as possible through member donations, (rather than literature sales) in keeping with our Seventh Tradition. Based on last year's audited accounts, we estimate that we would need at least \$19,000 per quarter in member donations to meet this target. Achieving or beating this objective this would allow us to:

- Keep the cost of literature as low as possible
- Reduce our reliance on literature sales to subsidise our operations
- Strengthen our financial independence
- Improve and expand our services through new projects to help us carry the message.

Our operating costs cover a wide range of essential services, including:

- Our Office operations
- ChatNow and the 1300 helpline

- Our website
- Producing new resources to carry the message.
- Archives,
- Covering the expenses of our volunteer service coordinators
- Our international service responsibilities

We continue to maintain a healthy prudent reserve, which will ensure we can keep our services running smoothly in the event of unexpected disruptions—such as those experienced during COVID-19, when both donations and literature sales were significantly affected.

Self-support through our own contributions remains the most sustainable path forward. We're pleased to report that over the last two quarters, we've made real progress towards our goal of becoming fully self-supporting—and that is thanks to your continued generosity and commitment.

Thank you again for your support.

Income	Goal Per Quarter	Quarter 2: Oct - Nov - Dec 24	Quarter 3: Jan - Feb - Mar 25
Contributions (Self Support)	\$119,885.50	\$119,016	\$107,792
Literature Sales		\$83,377	\$114,410
Total Income		\$202,393	\$222,202

Expenses		Quarter 2: Oct - Nov - Dec 24	Quarter 3: Jan - Feb - Mar 25
Cost of literature sales		\$90,359	\$51,608
Operating Expenses		\$128,742	\$118,371
Total Costs		\$223,077	\$169,979
Net Profit / Loss		-\$20,684	\$52,223



The 59th National Convention

On behalf of the AA80 Host Planning Committee, I would like to extend our deepest and most heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of the AA80 National Convention.

This Convention would not have been possible without the combined efforts, generosity, and spirit of countless members of Alcoholics Anonymous from across Australia. Your dedication to carrying the message — often in ways seen and unseen — helped make AA80 a true celebration of recovery, unity, and service. — Garry S, Chair AA80 Host Planning Committee.

A closing poem from Steve R – Past North Eastern Region Trustee

I flew into Sydney — full of **trepidation**.

I had made the decision to come — well, after the **procrastination**.

Found my way to beautiful Town Hall — that filled me with **admiration**,

And reunited me with you all, my tribe. It was pure **jubilation**.

Thursday night we arrived and shared a special meal. What a **sensation**.

A few sponsees bending my ear with their life's problems — I listened to their **narration**,

Looking for the true **motivation**.

But to be fair, some weren't long out of **rehabilitation**.

Laughter, love, and coffee — the alcoholic's classic **libation**.

We kept sharing stories over and over— oh the **regurgitation**.

Friday dawned — the official start to our weekend **celebration**,

And the crowd swelled for the opening **declaration**.

Eighty years of AA in Australia —

Thanks to our pioneers for their awe-inspiring **dedication**.

Australia's story told by the descendants of those coming before us — with tender, funny, tragic, and moving **articulation**,

And received by one and all — with our heartfelt **appreciation**.

As the weekend rolled on, old and new friends appeared — What a joyful **validation**.

We shared our journeys, our memories — with warmth, understanding, and caring **consideration**.

We spoke of what we were like, what happened, and what we are like now —

The trauma, the pain, and the **humiliation**.

But then ... the miracle of our spiritual **transformation**.

Then came the play — a lively **dramatization**.

Each state and territory laying AA's **foundation**.

The performers played their parts —

Some with wild **improvisation**.

It was riveting, it was powerful — it got a standing **ovation**.

Saturday's dinner dance — now that was a **revelation**.

Food was great, the band was tight — and filled the room with **elation**.

First-time sober dancers leading the rotation — I saw some dance moves that looked like....**levitation**

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We got to meet Bob from Baulkham Hills —he gave a booming **recitation**.

We clapped and laughed in full **participation** —
From newcomers fresh to seasoned **veneration**,
We stood as one AA **generation**.

The First Nations meeting brought me **contemplation**.

Their message stick, the didgeridoo — stirred in us a real **meditation**.

The committee and the volunteers — they worked so hard; you could see the **perspiration**.

And despite endless silly questions, and requests for **information**,

They never showed any **frustration**.

They were all happy, joyous and free — being of service.

Well, ... that was my **observation**.

I didn't make it to the Twilight Harbour Cruise —
Those that went, said it was a wonderful **navigation**,

Sailing around the magnificent Sydney shores

On an AA cruise ship **exploration**.

So now as we are coming to a close,

We look towards the 2026 Gold Coast Convention —oh, let's call it a **vacation** —

As they extend to us a friendly Queensland **invitation**.

But a word of advice —

Don't try to copy this great **celebration**.

Just make it different.

Don't try to emulate this — avoid that **temptation**.

So here's my hope —

Well, it's really an **expectation**:

This time next year, if you're looking for **rejuvenation**,

Join us at the Goldie — fill out that **registration**.

For we are bound together by a common **desperation**,

And no matter how wild our inner **fluctuation**,

We stay the course — we stay in the herd —

For this is AA... no outside **affiliation**.

And so, my friends — with no **exaggeration** —

Thanks for the memories from this wonderful **congregation**.

Until next time, yours in fellowship and **salutation**,

And to one and all...

Congratulations.

From the World Service Desk

Andy P and Brian F

As Founder's week is fast approaching the "Brown Paper Bag Appeal" has been launched. The flyer with all the required information has been sent far and wide, including this year a QR code to allow for banking arrangements. Please remember the motto "When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that I am responsible". Seventy per cent of this appeal goes to the Country-to-Country Sponsorship and the other thirty percent to the World Literature Fund. In the past twelve months Australia has assisted Bhutan and the OASM fund financially and sent funds to the International Money Fund for their work.

In October our two World Service Delegates (WSD) Andy P and Brian F will be attending the Asia Oceania Service Meeting (AOSM) in Singapore. Of the four AA Zones in the world the Asia Oceania is the largest by area and population, making up approximately two thirds of world population of which Australia is the "Older Sober Country".

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From the World Service Desk

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It is at meetings such as these that relationships with other countries are made and an understanding of the barriers that some people face in establishing AA within their country EG: Language, Culture, Religion and sometimes Government. We are truly blessed with AA in Australia BUT remember our foundations were laid with assistance from USA office and travelling members from that country, so we need to continue that legacy with others.

At the recent eighty-year convention hosted in Sydney the program had an International Meeting which was stated in the program as AOSM. The four speakers were three former WSD's Greg B, Lynne W, Trevor H and current WSD Brian F. It was so pleasing to see the room full, with even some members standing at rear of room, easily the largest attendance at one of these meeting that any past WSD's had seen. I am not sure if was the content or speakers but perhaps the clue lays in what a young member said to me at the door of the meeting QUOTE: "What does the A stand for in front of Older Sober Member (AOSM)" not to lose the opportunity I told him it could mean ANY (AOSM).

If every member gave just \$1, we'd exceed \$20,000!

Brown Paper Bag Appeal - Founders Week 2025

Supporting Our AA Family in the Asia-Oceania Region



As one of the "older sober countries," Australia has a special responsibility to help spread the AA message where it's needed most.

Why

Many years ago, our World Service Office in New York responded to a call from "Down Under"—and AA in Australia was born. Now, it's our turn to carry that spirit forward by supporting the 72 countries in the Asia-Oceania Region, many of which are developing nations with limited resources. Last year, we raised \$9,773. Let's aim higher this year!

When

When to Give: Founders Week
Monday 9th - Sunday 15th June 2025
Please contribute during your group's meeting closest to Founders Day, June 10.

How

BSB: 012 006
Account: 009750529

Bank transfer

Reference: FDISF

If your bank does not accept letters in the reference

field, use: 10061935 (AA's founding date)

PayPal

Scan or click the QR code.

Payable to: "GSB of AA"

Mail to:

FDISF, GSO of AA

1/1 Garnet Street

Rockdale NSW 2216

Cheque

Need Help or More Info? Reach out to your World Service Delegate
Brian: 0401 253 211 or Andy: 0421 571 077