



# Guidelines for Area 50 Archives

Area 50 Archives  
111 Crocker Street  
Sloan, NY 14212  
[www.area50wny.org](http://www.area50wny.org)

## MOTTO

“Whenever a society or civilization perishes, there is always one condition present; they forgot where they came from.”  
*Carl Sandberg*

## Mission Statement –WNY Area 50 AA Archives

The WNY Area 50 Archives purpose is to receive, classify and index all related materials which are relevant to the origin and historical development of the fellowship of AA in Western New York Area 50. These materials include but are not limited to administrative files and records, correspondence, literature and artifacts.

Area 50 includes the following intergroups: Buffalo Central Committee; NYPENN; Niagara; and the now inactive Genesee-Wyoming Intergroup. The Archivist and Archives Committee will hold and preserve the materials, making access possible to members of WNY Area 50, mindful of maintaining the anonymity of our present and past members.

## The Repository

The WNY Area 50 Archives is the repository of personal collections, manuscripts, publications, photographs, and memorabilia related to the history and fellowship of AA in WNY, that can be properly preserved and stored. The WNY Area 50 Archives Committee will collect items that fall into the following categories:

1. Literary-i.e. books, pamphlets etc.
2. Historical-i.e. flyers, program, correspondence, agendas, reports, records, etc.
3. Archival-i.e. administration, organizational, legal, financial items
4. Artifactual-i.e. photos, awards, citations, plaques, gavels, display items

## Access to the Repository

Access to the Archival information will be guided by the necessity to protect the physical and intellectual integrity of the materials as well as to protect the anonymity of individual members. Requests for research shall be permitted with approval of the Archivist and the Archives Committee.

## Archival Donations

The Archivist shall keep a permanent record of all donations. If the donation is an item of significant value, the donor will be requested to sign a transfer form indicating that the item henceforth belongs to WNY Area 50 Archives.

## The Collection

All relevant AA publications, documents, and reports, both local and national can be considered materials for the Archives. It is recommended that the Archives Committee audiotape long-timers with permission, adding local oral histories to the collection. The Archives Committee is the custodian of the archival materials donated to the Archivist.

All material donated to the Archives should be noted and added to the Inventory List. The Archivist shall determine the conservation and preservation techniques necessary for items which are donated. Proper archival preservation techniques must be used by the Archivist to insure the permanent retention of the collection.

## **Housing the Archives**

The WNY Area 50 Archives should be housed in a rented space (currently in the Buffalo Central Office). They should not be housed in individual members' homes. This precludes any difficulties concerning ownership if they were in a private home. It also makes accessible to the members of AA, the displays of archival materials.

## **Role of the Archives Committee**

The Archives Committee is responsible to the WNY General Service Assembly. It is responsible for establishing policies, budgets, and procedures for the committee and the Archivist to function. It is responsible for taking and setting up displays at group anniversaries. Days of Sharing, workshops and conventions as requested. It maintains final responsibility and accountability for the use of the Archives.

The Chair of the Archives Committee is elected for a two year term by the General Service Assembly and is responsible for holding monthly meetings of the Archives Committee. The Chair attends General Service Assembly meetings and gives a written report at the meetings. The Chair may also give reports at Central Committee or other Intergroups in WNY Area 50.

The Secretary is responsible for taking minutes of the meetings of the Committee and submitting and compiling them in the archival files for future reference. The Secretary and Treasurer will serve at the behest of the Archives Committee.

The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining the checking account and disbursing funds as needed. The Treasurer will give monthly written reports of the finances, including group donations, to the Committee and to WNY GSA. The Treasurer shall establish an annual budget. There should be two signatories on the checking account.

The Archives Committee believes in the spirit of rotation. However, because of circumstances, officers may retain their positions at the request of the Committee.

## **Role of the Archivist**

The Archivist will serve at the behest of the Archives committee and the WNY GSA. It takes considerable time to become familiar with collecting and preserving important historical information. Therefore, it is recommended that the Archivist position not be rotated frequently.

The Archivist maintains and protects the archival collection, documents, and artifactual items. The Archivist is responsible to maintain the anonymity of members and the confidentiality of the records. The role of the Archivist is both data gatherer and data protector.

The Archivist should be knowledgeable in conservation techniques. Outside help from local historical societies and professional archivists may be obtained to learn “hands on” conservation methods.

## **Collecting, Sorting, Filing, Cleaning, Retrieval, Conservation**

The Archivist shall supervise the maintenance of the archival materials. The Archives committee or a subcommittee may assist the Archivist. The materials will be catalogued and arranged according to the general service structure. If there are duplicates, the best copy will be retained.

Staples should be removed. Materials that are worth preserving but are in poor condition will be conserved by methods learned by the Archivist.

Acid-free folders should be used for filing in acid-free boxes. After the materials have been arranged according to category, they may be filed chronologically.

An accurate method of retrieval should be developed for the materials, such as assigning numbers for stacks, shelves, and boxes. Materials should also be recorded on the computer and on disks or back-up files. Notebooks can be developed such as a “Finder’s aid” to assist in research.

Items should be categorized and kept on computerized records such as CDs.

The items may be categorized in the following ways:

1. Open to AA members only
2. Open to non-members
3. Open with the approval of the Archives Committee
4. Closed due to a request for confidentiality

Researchers must be told to maintain and honor the anonymity of members and that no photocopying of private correspondence will be allowed.

## **Travel Display**

Whenever a group, convention, or event requests an archival display, the Archives Chair and Committee shall be responsible for transporting the travel display and setting it up at the event. They shall also take it down and return it to the repository. Care must be taken when transporting items to minimize damage. Proper frames, notebooks, albums, boxes, etc. should be used to preserve damage.

Shifts shall be assigned at events that last for a day or longer. Food and Beverages will be discouraged in the Archives Display room.

Groups will be requested to give the Committee a minimum of 30 days notice prior to the display.

## **Oral and Written Histories**

Members who have 20 or more years of sobriety may be interviewed regarding their experiences in AA. Past Delegates may be interviewed regarding their years of service. Relevant historical information may be obtained from other members.

The recording may be done in one of the following ways:

1. A written memoir;
2. An interview with a Committee member;
3. A taped session.

The interviews must have the permission of the interviewed and may be transcribed on written materials, the computer, or CDs. Histories of groups should be included on the Group History Questionnaire. A History may be developed of the WNY Area 50 from its beginning in the 1940's and 50's.

## **Taping Sessions**

1. No videotaping will be done.
2. The tapes are for the exclusive use of the WNY Archives Committee.
3. Allow sufficient time for taping and do the interview in a place where there is minimal distraction.
4. The emphasis of the interview is to be on the participant's time in the Program and the changes that have occurred over the years. It is not to be a drinking story.
5. Identify the interviewer on tape and the interviewed and the date of the taping. Ask for the sobriety date of the participant.
6. The interview may be one of reminiscence or the interviewer may follow the set of questions in the GSO Oral Histories Kit.
7. The interviewed will be asked to sign an assignment of copyright form.
8. The interviewer should refer to the GSO Oral Histories Kit.

## **Workshops and Support**

The Archivist or a designee from the committee should (if possible) attend the National Archives Workshop to learn techniques necessary for preservation and conservation of materials. This shall be financed by the Committee if there are sufficient finances. The Archivist may attend other workshops and seminars with the approval of the Committee and depending on the availability of funds.

If it is necessary for a committee member to attend a scheduled event, the Committee will provide the cost of the registration, if there are sufficient funds available.

The Handbook for Setting up an Alcoholics Anonymous Archival Repository, published by GSO should be the guidebook for the Archivist as well as the AA Guidelines for Archives. The Archivist should also contact other knowledgeable sources, such as the Society of American Archivists who can assist in methods of preservation and conservation.

The Archivist shall receive \$200.00 for supplies which will be replenished as needed. Receipts of purchases will be given to the Treasurer.

## **Application for Position of Archivist**

The Archivist is responsible for the Archives collection of WNY Area 50 GSA which is bordered by Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, and the Pennsylvania border. The applicant should apply to the Archives Committee. Such attributes as archival experience, interest in AA history, organizational and computer skills or strong willingness to develop these skills should be cited. The applicant should have at least 5 years of sobriety.

The applicant should have adequate time available to spend recording, conserving and preserving the archival collection. The applicant should be available to attend conventions, group anniversaries workshops, and days of sharing where there will be an archival display. An applicant should be willing to attend the national Archives Workshop and other learning experiences.

The Archives Committee will recommend to the Chair of WNY Area 50 GSA their selection for Archivist. The chair of the WNY Area 50 GSA shall notify the Assembly who has been selected for Archivist.

The Archivist shall remain in that position at the behest of the Archives Committee and the WNY Area 50 GSA.

### **Applications should be sent to:**

**WNY AREA 50 ARCHIVES  
BUFFALO CENTRAL OFFICE  
111 CROCKER STREET  
SLOAN, NY 14212  
e-mail: [AREA50ARCHIVESCHAIR@GMAIL.COM](mailto:AREA50ARCHIVESCHAIR@GMAIL.COM)**





# Guidelines for Area 50 Archives

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www.area50wny.org

## DONATION SUMMARY FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_ DO HEREBY DONATE THE FOLLOWING  
ITEM(S) TO THE WNY AREA 50 ARCHIVES IN PERPETUITY: \_

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SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

WITNESSED BY ARCHIVIST OR ARCHIVIST CHAIR OR REPRESENTATIVE:

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DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



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### Assignment of Copyright Form for Tape Recordings

1. I hereby give this interview as a donation to the WNY Area 50 Archives. I therefore transfer to WNY Area 50 Archives all legal and literary rights.
2. I give permission to the WNY Area 50 Archives Committee to use this recording and obtain all right therein.
3. I hereby give permission to WNY Area 50 Archives Committee to duplicate this recording or publish it in written form.
4. I understand that the Archives Committee will ensure that my anonymity is protected.
5. At my request a copy of the recording may be given to me.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed by Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_