

Richmond's First AA Meeting Location

Consensus from several interviews sets the first liquor store meeting as late winter/spring of 1946. Sam M. (Serenity Sam) remembers having cocktails in the nearby Elbow Room Tavern while waiting for his father, Bill M., to leave that first meeting. The founding four members were Bob B., Roy P., Bill P. and Bill M. As this spark of hope spread throughout the city, meeting attendance increased quite markedly; by early 1947 an event was announced that would officially launch AA meetings into recovery clubs and church basements throughout the city.



Pikes Liquor Store

Richmond's First Breakfast Meeting

Alcoholics Anonymous Holds First Meeting

The Richmond group of Alcoholics Anonymous held its first breakfast meeting Sunday. The group was addressed by a man from the Fort Wayne organization. He told the Richmond members that through Alcoholics Anonymous he overcame his drinking habits and is now a successful businessman.

Twenty-two persons attended the first meeting. Two members came from Cincinnati, seven from Indianapolis and one from Fort Wayne.

Alcoholics Anonymous, members report, is not an organization in the ordinary sense because it has no constitution, by-laws, officers or necessarily fixed meeting places. It is a group of individual alcoholics who wish to spread their knowledge of alcoholism and break the hold of drinking through voluntary self-discipline and mutual cooperation.

This meeting took place in the very nice downtown Blue Note Restaurant on January 26th, 1946. Needless to say, the bar remained closed. There were apparently twelve AA members, families included, in attendance. One cannot help but wonder whether Doherty Sheerin, a well known Indianapolis member who helped start many meetings, was present at this event. It is notable that almost half of the attendees were from distant cities! The Blue Note later became a hangout for sober AAs, - Guess what? The coffee was free. This was a classy joint, and it was to the benefit of all that these drunks stayed off the hooch!

—Anyone wishing to contact Alcoholics Anonymous write P. O. Box 34, Friends Station, Richmond, Ind. Consultations strictly confidential.

This was Richmond's first known Newspaper advertisement, Monday, January 20th, 1947. Finding AA in those early days was obviously no simple matter, but a phone number appeared later that year. The PO Box at Friends Postal station was located at West 5th & Main Streets.