

Jerry reports that no more than a quarter was acceptable in the collection basket because they didn't want the poorer members to feel out of place (*I understand the usual donation was a dime—ed.*). The monthly collection averaged around \$20. One afternoon Jerry stopped by Bob Berhman's wallpaper store and innocently inquired as to how the \$50 rent was being paid when the basket produced less than half that much. Bob smiled and said, "I'm glad you asked, Jerry! He then explained how 'quiet money' was donated each month by the more affluent, and Jerry was invited to participate! Jerry then happily joined with Bob, Roy, Gertrude Page and others in said financial servitude.

Jerry joined Gertrude Page (DOS 1950) on even more clandestine ventures; she owned a food locker at West 1st and Richmond Avenue; consequently they would slip up and quietly place most welcome packs of meat on the doorsteps of the less financially fortunate members.

Jerry tells of an austerity program by which there would be no doughnuts, but this lasted only a few weeks. Just before the meeting Bill Meier marched in waving a whole sack of doughnuts stating emphatically, "Who the h___ ever heard of an AA meeting without doughnuts!"

But apparently, rumblings began to develop throughout this closely knit group, so the second split (The first being the 1948 Quaker City Group) came to pass.

The West Side Club

(1953—1960)

The small white dot on the bottom left of this picture marks the spot of a one time garage. In 1953 this small garage became quarters for The West Side Club, located at 33 N.W. 'J' Street in the Fairview section of town. The rent was only eight dollars a month and the electricity was hooked up to the generous owner of the large building. Also, a trench was dug and water was connected to the benefactor's meter.



Sam Meier remembers this as a plumbing business, but as a grocery store by others.

Roy Hirshburg furnished much of the furniture and the others made this into such a well functioning meeting place that it lasted nearly seven years. Jerry mentioned that the 1954 Thanksgiving Dinner was held there. Among the regular club attendees were Jerry Markey, Jess Corman, John Mooreman, Jim Crawford, Charlie Crawford, Pete Johnson and of course their wives. Don't forget, AA, during this period, was a family affair! The Al-Anons had a large and on-going Tuesday evening meeting in room #205 in the Hibberd Building up until 1956; there was great unity between both organizations.

So, in 1956 there were two well functioning recovery clubs in Richmond, but no other outside meetings; radical change was in the making.