

CENTRAL AND SOUTHEAST OHIO GENERAL SERVICE AREA 53 ARCHIVES COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

(Updated 12/17/2023.)

AREA 53 ARCHIVES COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

The Area 53 Archives Committee works to aid groups, districts, and the Area Committees in preserving our AA story. This includes maintaining a repository for valuable artifacts and records from our past and present to ensure the integrity of Area 53 history.

I. AREA 53 ARCHIVES PURPOSE

The main purpose of the Area 53 Archives, consistent with A.A.'s primary purpose, is to keep factual records so that myth does not predominate over fact as to the history of the fellowship. One of the best ways to assure the future of the A.A. fellowship is to protect its past. Without the message of recovery shared by those who came before us and the hand of AA reaching out to the still suffering alcoholic, our hope would be lost to the past. Archives strengthens the link between the past and the future of our program. We do this with the study of and appreciation for those who have carried these gifts to us. AA's primary purpose remains, of course, to carry the message of hope to the still suffering alcoholic.

The information found throughout the cities and counties on the formation of our fellowship is not only interesting, but also very informative. It can provide insight as to where we have been and in what direction we are headed. These items need to be preserved and made available for guidance, use and research of A.A. members, not only for the present but also for generations to come.

II. ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

The Archives Committee is responsible to the Area 53 Assembly and is directly responsible for the operation and general welfare of a centrally located archives repository. It is the responsibility of the Archives Committee to select the Area 53 Archivist.

A. Membership

1. The Committee is open to any AA member willing to serve. A.A. members serving on the Committee should have a reasonable length of sobriety, preferably one year. The composition of Archives Committee is open to any member of an Area 53 Group. The number of Committee members is not limited.

2. The Archives Committee is responsible for establishing policies, budgets, and procedures. The Committee undertakes and maintains final responsibility and authority for the use of the archives and exercises its group conscience regarding matters of general policy. In all its actions the Archives Committee needs to be mindful of and guided by A.A.'s primary purpose and support the work of Area 53 Committee and Assembly.

CENTRAL AND SOUTHEAST OHIO GENERAL SERVICE AREA 53 ARCHIVES COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

(Updated 12/17/2023.)

3. The Archives Committee may establish Officers such as Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and alternate positions as deemed necessary to best accomplish the mission of the Archives Committee. Officers serve two-year terms consistent with the Area 53 panel. The Archives Committee may create committees to conduct the business that needs to be completed.

B. Meetings

1. Archives Committee meetings are held every month. Meetings, whenever possible, are to be held on the fourth Saturday of each month.

C. Quorum

1. At least five members, two of them officers, must be present to constitute a quorum of the Archives Committee.

D. Voting Procedure

1. Most Archives Committee business may be passed by a simple majority vote.
2. Unusually important matters such as, but not limited to, selection of an Archivist, long-term policy decisions, making contractual obligations, and approval of the annual budget, will be decided by the principle of substantial unanimity.

III. ARCHIVIST ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Archivist along with the Area 53 Archives Committee will determine what to include in the collection and how to make the collected material available to the greatest extent possible to members of our Fellowship and those in the public realm with a valid interest in A. A. The Archivist must have a strong interest in A.A. history, ensure the physical and the intellectual integrity of the collection, and be able to relate well to a wide range of people. The Archivist is a member of and reports to the Area 53 Archives Committee.

A. Duties of Archivist:

1. Duties include but are not limited to.
 - a. Set up and maintain the Archives Repository
 - b. Inform the fellowship of the need for the archives and the preservation of A.A. history.
 - c. Represent the Area 53 Archives at AA events.
 - d. Collaborate with other Area 53 Committees and Officers

CENTRAL AND SOUTHEAST OHIO GENERAL SERVICE AREA 53

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

(Updated 12/17/2023.)

e. Develop and provide support for archives displays and presentations.

B. Reference Services, Access Practices and Outreach

Archivists identify and preserve records of enduring value, but most importantly they make them available for use. One of the roles an archivist plays in this effort is assisting people in their research and helping to answer their questions. (Refer to GSO Archives Checklist and Workbook for further details on establishing policy and practices).

C. Preservation and Storage

Archivists employ techniques to prolong the useful life of archival materials by improving the physical storage environment. Preservation actions include replacing acidic storage materials with materials constructed of archival quality which help stabilize and protect the historical materials from deterioration. It is imperative to remember the first rule of archival work: DO NO HARM. Preservation is expensive and time consuming, and it is not always possible to achieve optimal environmental controls; thus, priorities must be set. Identify materials that have long-term significance to the collection or that require immediate care. (Refer to the Archives Preservation Guidelines for more detailed information).

IV. Collections

Present guidelines are to aid in deciding what to collect, how to preserve and classify, and how to make these materials available. There is both a need and an obligation to preserve the experience, history, and memorabilia of the fellowship within Area 53 and items related to the development of AA's Twelve Steps, Traditions, and Concepts as well as the Conference Structure.

A. Scope

The first consideration in developing an Area Archives collection is to determine what history or memorabilia there is on hand and what more is needed. Keep in mind that, although all past A.A. material is interesting and inspiring, our main purpose is to collect material pertaining to our own Area. The purpose of collecting material pertaining to the history of the fellowship is secondary. Hence, the collection may include items such as:

CENTRAL AND SOUTHEAST OHIO GENERAL SERVICE AREA 53 ARCHIVES COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

(Updated 12/17/2023.)

- a) Area 53 assembly meeting agendas, financial reports, and meeting minutes
- b) District meeting minutes and group flyers on workshops and events
- c) Correspondence with GSO (The beginnings of meetings)
- d) Oral and written histories
- e) Recordings of old-timer’s speaker meetings, conventions, and workshops
- f) Publications released by Area 53, including agendas, reports, booklets, directories, surveys, pamphlets, newsletters, public service announcements, press releases and other media relations material.
- g) The Committee permanently retains all Area 53 documents and financial records associated with the International Convention
- h) Items which document the development of AA’s Twelve Steps, Traditions, and Concepts as well as the Conference Structure
- i) Conference approved and AA Grapevine publications including books and pamphlets that demonstrate the changes in our literature that have taken place over time.
- j) Recordings of our co-founders and other prominent or influential members

B. Cataloging and Classifying Materials

Committee members will use the following naming convention when storing electronic records to be consistent with the Area 53 Web Administrator’s current standard:

[Panel No.] _[Year]_[Month]_ [Collective Group] _[Specific Item]

The finding aid will provide a directory of where items in the collection are stored and filed. Refer to **appendix A** for the comprehensive list.

Finding Aid, Archives of Area 53 Alcoholics Anonymous	
Key to Box #s for Area 53 Repository	
100 Districts within Area 53 (Group Info kept within Districts)	600 Books and Pamphlets: Both Conference Approved and Non-Conference related to alcoholism, AA History, and Spirituality
200 Area 53 Assembly, Area Committee, Standing Committees, Minutes, Reports, and Events	700 Recordings: Reel to Reels, Cassettes, CD's and Digitized Media
300 Delegate and General Service Conference	800 Non-Print, Non-Recording Items, Pins, Badges, Coffee Pots, Banners, Coffee Mugs, Tee-Shirts
400 AA General Service Board, General Service Office, AAWS, AA Grapevine Early AA History, Pre-Conference (Through 1950), And Influential	900 Miscellaneous: Travel Boxes, Display / Presentation Boards Supply Items, Unsorted Items
500 Members Outside Area 53, History of 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts	

CENTRAL AND SOUTHEAST OHIO GENERAL SERVICE AREA 53

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

(Updated 12/17/2023.)

C. Accession: Establishing Legal, Physical and Intellectual Control

Accessioning is the process of transferring legal and physical ownership of material through a documented process, such as a Deed of Gift. To complete an accession, an archive must establish physical custody and legally assume physical and intellectual control over the materials (cataloging and inventorying).

D. Facilities, Equipment and Security

Experience shows that A.A. archives are generally housed in either a rented space or in a room that adjoins a central office, intergroup or other A.A. entity. It is important that access be available to all A.A. members. It is also vitally important to ensure that the collections are adequately secured. Occasionally, it may be necessary that items be removed from the repository so that archival work may be performed at another location. The Archivist will maintain a list of the items that are temporarily removed. The list will include the date the item/s are removed, the person taking the item/s and contact information of the person.