

June 1991



Goosebumps, Guests and the Gate House

When I was newly sober, I didn't know anything about Founders' Day here in Akron, Ohio. I had heard about it vaguely, but did not connect it in any way with my personal recovery and sobriety. All I knew when I started attending AA meetings was that the people there seemed to have a solution to my drinking problem, and they kept telling me to come back. I didn't understand why at the time, but I sure did keep coming back.

When I reflect on those early days in AA, I am in awe at how little I was able to comprehend beyond "don't drink today — this minute, or this hour." God was truly doing for me what I couldn't do for myself.

Living here in Akron, I had always just taken it for granted that this was where AA got its miraculous start. It was not a big deal that Dr. Bob lived right down the street from where I used to drink and party. It was not a big deal that the first AA meeting between Dr. Bob and Bill W. was right

over at the Stan Hywet Gate House. So what! The Mayflower Hotel? I went right by that old hotel every time I went downtown. We had our high school prom there. It was like a museum full of marble and balconies.

Today, however, I get goosebumps thinking about the Stan Hywet Gate House — that first meeting of two drunks doing something, anything, to keep from taking that first drink, sharing each other's experience, strength, and hope. The Mayflower Hotel is still standing. I can cry just thinking about Dr. Bob's house. As a matter of fact, I usually do when I am there. I can feel something in the atmosphere at Dr. Bob's. Right in the kitchen, over a cup of coffee, or sitting on the porch, I can feel love. I would feel the same, I am sure, inside of Bill W.'s old home, too.

When I first started attending Founders' Day, I was blown away by the distances people were traveling. My mind was opened to something

bigger than anything I had ever experienced.

If you are new and live in Akron, Ohio, be prepared to be loved just because you know where The Gate House is, or how to get to King School or to Dr. Bob's old home. If you have a vehicle, pile some folks in there

and show them some of the special places here. Share in our guests' goosebumps.

By staying sober, I am able to experience again and again the awe and gratitude first shared by Bill W. and Dr. Bob.

Cindy B., Akron, Ohio

"...Who Has Thoroughly Followed Our Path"

