

A Personal HISTORY OF JACKSONVILLE AL-ANON MEETINGS

I started going to meetings in 1980. My husband, Tom, went to AA and I went with my mother-in-law, Bea, went to Al-Anon for 20 years before I went to Al-Anon. Before attending meetings there were only a few meetings so she went to many AA meetings so can't give me dates as to when her Al-Anon meetings began. She spent her time with Bobbie, and they had lunch together with Tom at the old May Cohens' café in San Marco on Mondays and Thursdays in the evenings. The crowd was about much larger. Smoking was permitted in meetings then and we got as far away from the city as possible.

My spouse and I drove to many locations held in schools, hospitals and church buildings but these were our regular meetings: Tuesday nights at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Atlantic Boulevard. That was 30-40 people and we broke up into 3 groups for a while after the meetings were opened up. On Wednesday nights we went to an open house at the old Jacksonville General Hospital and there were about 20 members there. After the meetings with fellows over coffee. Thursday and Monday nights we went to the city. Friday nights we were at Eureka Apartments over on the Westside at their club house. We met in the back room. It was a group of about 10 people. Later on Friday night we met at St. Mark's Episcopal Church building where about three of us started a meeting with a little Mack's mother, and myself. On Saturday nights we met at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in the room and later in the Grace House which was opened up about five years ago. This was a combined Al-Anon meeting.

Monday night we met at Jack I. and Flossie's house next to St. Mark's for several years. We studied to study the steps. We enjoyed the crackling fireplace and graciousness of Jack and Flossie. Sometimes as many as six couples studied together. After a few years, around 1985 we moved to Mandarin Road Church building for separate AA and Al-Anon meetings. On Tuesday nights at this Presbyterian Church we enjoyed eating meetings at which a pot-luck was served by a couple telling their stories: one the AA and the other telling the Al-Anon story. I remember fondly hearing from Bett and ~~Alan~~^{Bill} A. and Trudy and Steve H.

Monday night meetings were started at the Mandarin Christian Church in February 1986. It recently celebrated its 20th year of existence. This group meeting moved to Mandarin Christian Church to today's location of Mandarin Christian Church on San Jose Boulevard. There were problems with cleaning up cigarette butts and putting chairs back in the preferred location. **the congregation's need for the space for their own activities..** Now many meetings are held there.