

## History of La Mesa Men's

As dictated by Bob M.:

On 01/07/47 at his first meeting Bob met Hugh McCoy (Hugh took a three year cake on 08/24/47). There were two gentlemen one a dentist and another one a supermarket owner who were responsible for starting LM. The group was a spinoff from the 6<sup>th</sup> and Penn Men's group (in 1947 LM may have been four years old).

All the 12 step calls were generated by the Central Office and the group took calls and brought in many of the newcomers through these calls.

- The group was the first group to take meetings into honor camps and established the first group at the Barrett camp.
- The hot seat as it was known was when you were called up to share you sat in the seat and let go – there was no such thing as cross-talking at that time.
- New guys were always cornered after the meeting and made sure that they were given the message individually. Either in the parking lot or at the meeting after the meeting.
- The group was very active; Jack Morrissey started the Sunday “retreat” for LM. Actually it was more of a step study that eventually ended up in Murphy the shoe maker's house.
- LM has always been a hardcore AA meeting
- The Navajo Rd. group spun off in the sixties.
- Bob M. went to the meeting from 1947 to the sixties and left the meeting because of the influx of folks with other addictions helped the group to stray from its primary purpose.
- The meeting first met in a brick building. It started at 8pm and ended at 9pm. The group boiled rather than percolated the coffee and used regular cups, “God only knows when the Styrofoam cups showed up”.
- Some of the early members where: Hugh McCoy, Charlie Lloyd, Bob Pearson and Jim Burwell (one of the first 100 folks in the Big Book. His wife Rosa was the first woman SD Delegate to New York). Jack Nolan who came from Akron was the group's secretary for 13 years. Ernie the cop (retired motorcycle cop) was old probably 50 or 60. Bob M was 30 years old and fit in quite well to the group. Phil Hannibal showed up in 58/59, he worked for the government down on 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. He was a very active member with lots of 12 steps calls under his belt.
- The group disassociated itself (what year?) from the SD Central Office and financially only supported GSO. Eventually they regrouped with SD Central.
- In 1963 there were 15-20 regulars at the meeting. The guys originally came to the meeting made up the nucleus of the group and made a constant effort to keep the newcomers interested in the group.

Don Lake instigated the East County Men's (AKA Smoking Meeting). These were a group of folks that wanted to smoke and got resentful when they couldn't smoke at the meeting.

There was a place off of 5<sup>th</sup> & Laurel called Higia or Hygia (sp?) where you could always be assured to find a gaggle of newcomers to take to the meeting.

Frank Green (who may have started the Clairemont Men's group) absconded with a lot of money from an insurance company. Bob P. who was his sponsor told him to make financial amends which he did and his boss said he was the first person to do that and wanted to know why. Frank told him that he was member of Alcoholics Anonymous and it was his duty by working the steps to do so.

The group was very active outside of the room by having annual picnics, poker games and lot's of other social events. Most folks were impressed by the honesty they heard and experienced in the group. It always gave men some direction and purpose on Friday nights. People looked forward to the camaraderie and were always willing to help with the group finances. They would even go as far as putting newcomers in hotels and would always go beyond great efforts to assure the newcomers would come back.

At this time there were other meetings such as 6<sup>th</sup> & Penn, the Old Town Group and the Central Group. When new meetings started up all the members of the established groups would make a commitment to show up at the first meeting for support

### **The Spin-Offs (not necessarily in this order)**

1. The Rolando Group 1949/59 (possibly the first)
2. Navajo Rd. Group (in the 60's AKA the Catholic Group)
3. Linda Vista Men's (about 1980)
4. North Park Men's (04/04/86)
5. La Jolla Men's
6. East County Group (AKA The Smokers Group)
7. National City Group

La Mesa Men's (LM) History Meeting 02/25/10

In attendance: Bob M. (oral history), Butch M. (representing?), Henry H. (representing LVM), Joe C. (Area Archivist), Phil (representing LM), Steve C. (representing NPM), Tom (representing LM), Tony (representing LVM).

Spinoffs of LM's: Linda Vista Men's; North Park Men's; La Jolla Men's; East County Men's (AKA the Smokers Group); Navajo Rd. Group (AKA The Catholic Group) National City Men's.