

## Linda Vista Men's, A History

On Friday May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1982 the first meeting of the Linda Vista Men's meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous met in the fellowship hall of the Linda Vista Presbyterian Church on Ulric Street in Linda Vista. The following founding members were in attendance;

Art F.	Barry G.	Bob P.
Brian	Clyde M.	Dan M.
Duane B.	Eugene B.	Frank F.
Frank H.	Harry P	Harry T.
Henry H.	Ken G.	Mike R.
Mike T.	Ole J.	Ralph F.
Richard Z.	Robert H.	Ron G.
Scott B.		

These men had all been regular members of La Mesa Men's. One of these men, Bob P. was suffering serious health issues and the smoking at La Mesa Men's was having significant adverse effects on his deteriorating condition. Coincidentally, Bob P. had just moved to Linda Vista. Another member, Ron G. grew concerned about Bob's health, contacted the church officials, polled the original members listed above and started the Linda Vista Men's meeting.

The format of the meeting was simple; there were several tables, enough donuts for everyone brought by a volunteer, enough chairs for the original members and one chair referred to as the "hot seat". The meeting was a non-smoking meeting in deference to Bob P. "How It Works" was read from the Big Book and on the first Friday of the month the short form of the traditions were also read from the Big Book. The leader would pick a member to begin the sharing. There was no subject as we have in many meetings today. One simply shared on how his life of sobriety was going today. This tradition eliminated the tendency to share one's "humble opinion" about a particular subject thereby maintaining a level of honesty in sharing that continues today. Two sobriety milestones were celebrated; 90 days and yearly anniversaries. The San Diego 90 day token, originally designed and constructed by Bill B. for his wife on her 90 day celebration, was presented and a cake was given by a friend or sponsor on the yearly anniversary. The meeting was closed with either the serenity prayer or the Lord's Prayer and no one held hands in those days.

Another tradition started by Bob P. in the mid '40s was the sobriety calendar. Bob maintained a desk calendar with everyone's sobriety date entered on the appropriate day. On that day Bob would call the member and congratulate him on another year of sobriety. One of those calendars from 1982 is included in Appendix A.

The meeting perked along for a while but as Bob P.'s health continued to decline he began to have trouble attending the meeting and his attendance became sporadic. As a result, many of the original members ceased coming to the meeting and returned to La Mesa Men's. The meeting shrank to a core of 4 to 5 men, one table and a half a dozen donuts brought by Frank H. The "hot seat" disappeared but the tradition of sharing on how sobriety was today continued which maintained Bob's original idea of "getting up there and telling the truth".

Eventually the meeting began to expand. Another table was added, more donuts were brought. Over the 28 years that the meeting has been in existence it has expanded

and contracted as new members have joined the group, existing members have moved away, passed on or, sadly, got drunk and disappeared. What kept the meeting going in the early years and what keeps it going today was the adherence to the tradition of sharing honestly about one's sober life today and the regular attendance of a core of dedicated members. Five of the original members who are still active at Linda Vista Men's today and their sobriety years are as follows;

Frank H	1961
Henry H.	1978
Michael T.	1974
Robert H.	1966
Ron G.	1978