



Henrietta Buckler Seiberling

1888 - 1979

Summit County

Henrietta Buckler Seiberling played a key role in the formation of Alcoholics Anonymous.

It all began in the early 1900s, when distressed over family and financial problems, Seiberling began attending weekly Oxford Group meetings in Akron. The Oxford Group was a religious revival group that stressed prayer and charitable work as ways of life. She helped to organize the Oxford Group's "alcoholic squad" in Akron and led many of these meetings from 1935 to 1939.

Through the Oxford Group, Seiberling met two men who were struggling with alcoholism. They met at her home at the gate lodge at Stan Hywet Hall and talked about the experiences of alcoholics. They concluded that alcoholics should never take another drink, and that they should live a spiritual-quality life and share their experiences with other people. These two principles have become the cornerstone of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Seiberling, along with her colleagues, developed principles that would become the foundation for the AA organization. Meetings at the Oxford Group sessions with alcoholics proved so popular that they began to hold their own meetings at King School in Akron, the first site of official AA meetings. By 1938, AA had spread to several other cities. Eventually it evolved into an organization that has helped millions of people worldwide to fight alcoholism.

This organization (AA) may not have existed at all if it wasn't for Henrietta Buckler Seiberling's efforts. Mrs. Seiberling's work with AA demonstrates the value of compassion, caring, and humility, and should be an inspiration to all of us. Mrs. Henrietta Seiberling did not receive any *awards* for this work during her lifetime. Her *reward* was knowing that she made a difference in the lives of millions of people worldwide.