

Report from Region 9 Assembly
Reykjavik, Iceland – 1-3 November 2017

What is the Region 9 Assembly?

The Region 9 Assembly happens every year, hosted in a different country in our region (which covers Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Western Asia) It brings together delegates from countries around Region 9 to meet and discuss bylaw amendments, work on projects and committees, and help develop OA in the area.

This year it took place in Iceland, organised by their National Service Board – there were a small but very committed team of four volunteers who organised both the Assembly and Convention and did a fantastic job of looking after us all while we were there.

I'm really grateful I had the chance to attend as our Intergroup's delegate, it's fantastic to meet people from other countries and learn about their successes and challenges. It makes you realise what an advantage it is to be an English speaker in OA, as the process of translating information and literature into other languages can be a slow one.

There's also the opportunity for friendship and fellowship. Some of us went to an open air swimming pool or for walks, and one group went on a Northern Lights tour although they were unlucky not to get to see them.

Who was there?

There were 18 voting delegates attending, as well as the Region 9 Board members and the Region 9 Trustee. The voting delegates were from England, Scotland, Ireland, Iceland, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, Greece, South Africa, Israel, Poland, Switzerland and the Netherlands, and we also had visitors from England, Italy, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

What happened?

Motions

The main motion that was discussed was a revised version of the Policies and Procedures for Region 9. There were quite a few sections which were confusing and/or out of date, so rather than change it bit by bit, the decision was made to completely rewrite it and we voted to adopt the new version with a few minor amendments.

Elections

All the positions on the Board were up for election – Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and General Officer. The following members were elected:

Chair – Francene A (South and East IG)

Treasurer – Alexandra W (North West England IG)

Secretary – Ewa K (Poland NSB)

General Officer - David S (Israel NSB)

We also elected Pat from Heart of England IG as the Banker who supports the Treasurer in handling day to day transactions with the bank.

Committees

Every delegate and visitor was invited to join one of the Region 9 committees – Translations, Public Information and General, which then decided to focus on some 12th Step Within type activities.

The committees set their own projects for the year and then work together by email/Skype to complete them. There were a number of goals set, including continuing the translation of literature, making the new PI poster accessible in various languages, and reaching out to countries with small or struggling membership, or areas which have particular challenges such as rural areas, or areas with a high poverty rate.

Budget

We discussed and set the budget for the next financial year and also decided on an amount to keep as a prudent reserve. We then talked about what to do with the surplus funds that had accumulated over the last few years. This surplus was due to money being set aside for project and translations funds, but it had not been claimed by service bodies and so had gone unused. The decision was made to contribute this money to the World Service Office. This was because Region 9 gives the lowest amount per meeting to help fund the costs of the WSO, and in light of the vital work they do to keep OA going, we decided that would be the best use of the money.

Convention

After the Assembly finished on Friday afternoon, there was then a Convention that went on from Friday evening until Sunday lunchtime.

The theme for the Convention was around how to carry the message and grow our fellowship. OA in Iceland has been struggling over the last couple of years with meeting attendance falling and closure of groups so they saw the Convention as a way to help reinvigorate their membership, and at the same time give all those attending some ideas to take back to their service bodies.

We discussed how to carry the message via public information and professional outreach; how to attract newcomers and keep them coming back; the importance of sponsorship to keep our meetings healthy and growing and also talked about how to use the tools and also prayer/meditation to strengthen our own programme so that we have recovery to give away to others.

Next year's Assembly and Convention – London 2018.

As you probably know, Region 9 is coming to London in 2018! Our Intergroup is hosting the event from 26th-30th September at the Kairos Centre in Roehampton, South West London.

If you would like to join the organising committee or help out in some other way, please get in touch. Our committee chair is Juliet who you can contact via nadelegate@oagb.org.uk

Please do put the date in your diary as we will be holding a fantastic Convention that weekend and would love to see you all there!

How can I find out more about Region 9?

- Visit their website www.oaregion9.org
- Sign up for their weekly email bulletins via the website