

THE GROUP FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PSYCHIATRY  
(American Psychiatric Association)

Minutes of the First Informal Gathering

The members present at this first meeting were: General William C. Menninger, Karl A. Menninger, Capt. Dan Blain, John Murray, M. R. Kaufmann, Marion Kenworthy, Capt. Robert Felix, Douglas Bond, H. W. Brosin, Norman Brill, Lawrence Smith, Roy Grinker, John Romano, Thomas Rennie, and W. Bloomberg.

26 MAY 1946

On Sunday afternoon, 5:30-7:30, the above A.P.A. members gathered together at the invitation of General William C. Menninger to discuss ways and means to promote action for the advancement of psychiatry in the current scene. For some years, many psychiatrists had conveyed sentiments of dissatisfaction and criticism of the A.P.A., and some men had previously expressed their belief that improvement was possible. Some of the men were inclined to feel that the heterogeneity and large mass of diverse elements under an unwieldy constitution which did not permit decisive action was too large a mass to energize, and expressed themselves in favor of forming a new militant body.

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After considerable discussion, there was general agreement that efforts to revive the A.P.A. were preferable to beginning a new organization. It was agreed that a small group, possibly limited to 150 members, would be the most effective because they would be most maneuverable and yet carry sufficient prestige to carry weight in the A.P.A. and on the public forum.

General Menninger was chosen President pro tem, and H. W. Brosin, Secretary pro tem.

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It was agreed to invite a larger group of men for a meeting 10:30 Monday, 27 May, 1946, for further study. Two temporary committees were formed for discussion of the two most crucial topics on Monday. Dr. Kaufmann was selected to invite colleagues for discussion of the possibility for work within the A.P.A., including the imminent question of election of three counsellors for which there were vacancies on Tuesday. Dr. Rennie and his colleagues were to discuss the idea of an American College of Psychiatry, together with the principal areas of major interest which would be covered by such a group.

In spite of some strong support for the idea of an independent organized formal group, the general opinion favored retention of membership within the A.P.A.