

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

The Stained Glass Association of America Has Much to Offer

by Katei Gross, SGAA Executive Administrator

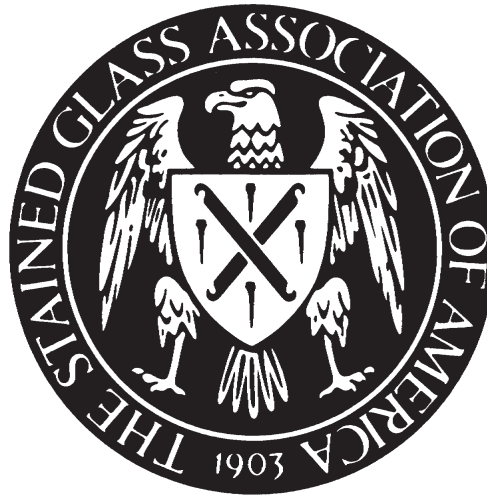
When I was a little girl, I loved to watch *Bonanza*. One or all of the brothers were always in trouble... just as I and my siblings were. One scene has always stayed with me: Hoss was the one in trouble this episode but was bravely trying to go it on his own. Ben, that wonderful TV father figure, picks up a single piece of kindling and easily snaps it in two, but when he picks up a handful of sticks he cannot break them. "This is like family," he said. "Together, we can't be broken."

After 16 years with the SGAA, I feel like family with so many of the members. Right now, I am getting a lot of calls from many nervous members of the SGAA family. Art is the first item knocked from a budget, and many studios are worried. The Headquarters is watching its pennies, but, unlike the constant message of doom and gloom you hear from the news, we are hearing good things on the stained glass grapevine. Studios are being conservative, but work is still coming in. The stained glass family is still strong.

After 105 years, the Stained Glass Association of America has survived the Great Depression, a recession, two World Wars and countless struggles and hardships. It is by the strength of the membership family that the glass arts and its accrediting association have survived. By reaching out to each other and by supporting our suppliers and manufacturers, we will continue and survive this current financial crisis.

The Association is going forward with its plans to build a permanent home. We refuse to be turned from such an important project. The membership is determined to create a central location to house its office, a research center for the many archives we have collected to preserve the history of our art, to create a

library to store the many books and collections that have been donated, and — most of all — to create a place of learning and education.



That's all fine and well, but I just want The Stained Glass Quarterly.

The *Stained Glass Quarterly* is included as a part of membership in the Stained Glass Association of America, and it is an important part. But it is not created in a vacuum.

Information from all over the world comes into the SGAA Headquarters through our many members. We may be the Stained Glass Association of America, but we are part of the world community of art and, as such, must report on events in the U.S. and around the world. Membership helps to create those lines of communication.

Input from the membership helps to keep *The Stained Glass Quarterly* vibrant; without the membership of the Stained Glass Association of America, this magazine would probably not exist at all. It certainly would not exist in its current form. It is thanks to the membership that the SGAA is able to create pub-

lications like *The Stained Glass Quarterly*.

Ok, so you've got a magazine; what else does the SGAA have to offer?

Doing restoration work? The SGAA has developed standards by recommending procedures that many can agree upon to create consistency in restoration projects, which will enhance the reputation of stained glass and reflect credit upon the craft. These guidelines have been put into an inexpensive booklet that you can provide to building committees and architects to educate them on what can be a very complicated subject. It's not just your word that you offer them: there is authority in your membership.

Concerned about the safety of your employees? We have worked with OSHA to create the *Lead Safety DVD* and the *Safety Guidelines*. You can also rent air-testing equipment through the SGAA, greatly reducing your costs to test your studio.

Want to learn or teach employees new techniques? The SGAA Stained Glass School is reprinting the chapters from the current *SGAA Reference & Technical Manual* on many stained glass techniques. The School is also working hard to write updated chapters and include some of the new techniques being used in studios for the third edition of this important reference book.

But does the Association do anything that creates a long-term, industry-wide effect?

It was not that long ago that the SGAA went before Congress to battle the lead issue. At one time, Congress considered the forced removal of all lead from existing windows. Not only did the SGAA stop this action, but our

actions prompted the Consumer Product Safety Commission to adopt guidelines that address stained glass directly, creating an exemption for decorative glazing materials.

As a result of this, the Government Watch program was put into effect by the SGAA Headquarters. I have a congressional website that I search each month, looking for any legislation or committee work that could potentially affect the glass arts. I also have several studios in key states and manufacturers that inform me if they read of any legislation that could affect us.

Associations are always expecting members to volunteer. I don't have time for that.

Hundreds of members do volunteer – through email, on the phone, in letters or at Conferences — they work together to advance our art form. Just a few hours a month is all it takes to accomplish a lot when you work with a strong committee of volunteers.

Not all members volunteer their time, though. Some have devoted time to the Association in the past; others may perhaps become more involved in a particular Association project in the future. For those who do not currently volunteer time, their financial support of the Association through their annual dues helps advance the craft by making possible all of the SGAA's programs.

But what good is membership to me and the problems in my studio?

Join the SGAA Forum. Our members are willing to share their knowledge and years of experience with you. Or call the Headquarters; we have years of reference materials, and, if we don't know, I bet we know a member who does!

Come to the Conferences! It is a tax-deductible investment you will never regret. I guarantee you will learn and you will laugh. Our members love

art; they love a good joke and time spent with good friends, too. You will only benefit yourself, your studio, and your employees by networking with some of the greatest artists and greatest people you will ever meet.

How about educating the architects and committees that really need a better understanding of our art?

One of the greatest educational tools the Stained Glass Association of America has ever created is the *Sourcebook*. This book is designed to do exactly that — educate those not in the art. It contains articles on what stained glass is, how to specify for stained glass, and how to work with a studio.

The *Sourcebook* is available for free as a download from the website, in CD or in paperback format. This year, the SGAA mailed more than 10,000 copies of the CD, and more than 40,000 copies have been downloaded from the Internet. It is an invaluable asset to the membership.

The future is not a place of fear — it is a place of challenge. Our 105 years prove the strength of our membership and its purpose.

If you are not a member, it is time to become a part of the SGAA's future, filled with strength and hope.

You are not alone. You will have the strength and authority that only membership in the Stained Glass Association of America can provide. Visit the website at www.stainedglass.org. The various levels of Affiliation and Membership are explained in detail, and the forms are easily downloaded.

Or call me at the Headquarters: 800.438-9581. Anyone who knows me knows that I am always happy to talk SGAA. Join! The SGAA family is still going — still united — still strong.



DISCOVER THE



The Stained Glass Association of America is a professional trade association dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the architectural glass arts. Discover for yourself the importance of the Association and all the benefits it provides you and the industry.

Affiliation includes:

- four issues of *The Stained Glass Quarterly*
- four issues of the *Kaleidoscope*
- listing in the *Sourcebook* directory
- the privilege of using the SGAA Swash logo

For more information, visit www.stainedglass.org.

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