

# President's Message:

## *The Next 100 SGAA Conferences*

With this issue of *The Stained Glass Quarterly*, we celebrate the 101st Stained Glass Association of America Annual Summer Conference.

This year's summer conference, held in Kansas City, marks another milestone in this organization — the beginning of the second century of conferences for the members of this 107-year-old organization.

There were, obviously, six years when those conferences did not happen. In lieu of research concerning the specific reason they did not occur, I can only imagine the conditions which may preclude a Summer Conference from taking place. Things have happened, such as world wars, the Depression, and just tough economic times. Whatever the reason, reaching a milestone of this magnitude deserves acknowledgement and praise of the character, foresight, and planning of the past leaders of our organization.

Why are these Annual Summer Conferences so important to attend, and what can we expect in the next 100 years? With the advent of teleconferences and the plethora of communication innovations, aren't conferences such as we have now on the verge of extinction? As margins of profit diminish and the cost of time and travel escalates, is it practical to continue as we have the past one hundred years?

To answer the last question first, the answer is a definite **YES!** There is no substitute for face-to-face interaction and enthusiasm that is alive and well at our conferences. The first part of this equation is to attend, and the second is to attend with an attitude of receptiveness. Listening to your peers, attending the seminars, taking classes to increase your knowledge, seeing the displays, visiting the stained glass installations and museums, and visiting with old friends and making new ones — these



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are things that just cannot happen in a teleconference or on postings or blogs.

Visiting our national headquarters, seeing the property where the school is going to be built, being a part of the vision for the future — all of these are reasons why this Annual Summer Conference is important.

The Board has already received approval from the membership at last year's conference in Oklahoma City that the location of next year's conference will be in Syracuse, New York. Syracuse will also be a unique experience, providing outstanding educational opportunities, seminars, and information

that will be beneficial for each of us and the stained glass industry as a whole.

Summer conferences celebrate the traditions and the past; embrace, observe, and discuss the present; and strive to mold the future of the stained glass industry and our relevance as the accrediting body of this industry to the needs of our craft and those who practice it. It is critical to protect the stained glass industry as well as continually monitor issues that affect it.

I invite all of you — craftsperson, studio owner, wholesaler/supplier, architect, designer, interior designer, lover of stained glass — I repeat: *all of you* — to realize the impact you can have in this business. Attending a Summer Conference of the Stained Glass Association of America needs to be on your list of things you do, this year and every year. We welcome your attendance, your input, and your interest for this most unique and beautiful art form.

Thank you!

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