

A BRIEF HISTORY

of the SGAA Stained Glass School

expanded from the SGAA Stained Glass School Reference & Technical Manual, Second Edition

The SGAA founded a stained glass school in North Adams, Massachusetts, in 1977 to serve as the training center for The Stained Glass Association of America. Association members saw a rapidly growing need for development in professional studio methods of stained glass design and assembly.

Approval was given the plan at the SGAA's 1977 Summer Conference in Dallas, and the Executive Committee named H.W. "Bill" Cummings as Institute Director. In 1980, the Stained Glass School applied for and was granted a non-profit status by the United States Government Internal Revenue Service and Department of the Treasury, and was thereby exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. This designation of the school still exists and allows donors to deduct contributions to the school as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to the school or for the school's use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of the Code.

A nine-member board of directors was appointed by the Stained Glass Association of America to direct the Institute. SGAA treasurer and past president Otto Winterich served as chairman. Richard Millard, Kenneth E. Urschel, Helen Carew Hickman, John Kebrle, Paul Dufour, Albinas Elskus, William Laws, and John Nussbaum assisted him.

During its first three years of operation, 400 students attended classes in North Adams. Inflationary increases in travel costs, difficulties in travel and

housing accommodations, and inclement winter weather, began to take their toll on enrollment. At the same time, there was a

strong appeal to the school to provide classes closer to the homes of potential students.

Members of the SGAA's Educational Committee, who served as trustees of the school with then-chairman William Malone, responded to those appeals. Regional classes began in January of 1981. It marked a major shift in emphasis for the school organized in 1977 to serve as the training center for The Stained Glass Association of America.

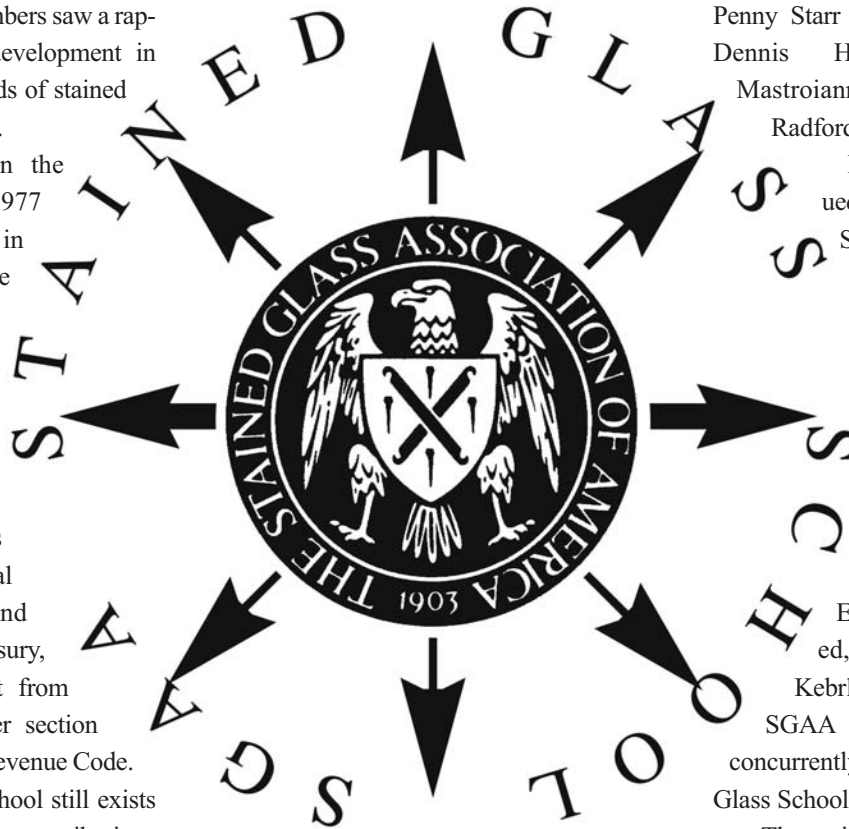
By establishing a program of courses offered in more than one location, it was hoped that revenue could be raised to help diminish the escalating operating expenses

at North Adams. A few such classes had in fact already been tried, successfully, with the energetic cooperation of Elizabeth Perry (WA), Don Sharp (TX), Penny Starr (CA), Rick Hoover (MO), Dennis Harmon (TN), Chetty Mastroianni (TN), and Thurmon Radford (VA).

Financial problems continued to plague the Stained Glass School. During the 1981 SGAA Annual Summer Conference, the Stained Glass School in North Adams was closed by action of the SGAA Board of Directors. Upon the election to the Board of Directors during the 1981 Summer Conference, Elizabeth Perry was appointed, by then-President John Kebrle, to be Chairman of the SGAA Education Committee and concurrently Director of the Stained Glass School.

The regional classes continued under the direction of Perry in 1983 and 1984. During that time, she also initiated "Members Only" workshops at Mackinac Island, MI; Boulder, CO; Dallas, TX; and Minneapolis, MN. Following Elizabeth Perry's direction, Florence Welborn was appointed Chairman of Education and Director of the Stained Glass School at the 1983 Summer Conference in Palo Alto, CA. She brought with her a plan to expand the educational base of the SGAA Stained Glass School's Programs. The plan was threefold:

1. To establish the procedures for teacher accreditation by the initiation of criteria and establish standards and testing procedures, in order to assure competent and qualified teaching in the area of stained glass and related subjects



2. The re-establishment of a regional training program utilizing participating certified instructors who have qualified through the SGAA Teacher Accreditation Program
3. To create a comprehensive, encyclopedic manual on stained glass. The proposed design of the manual would serve as a permanent reference on stained glass for the professional as well as a text for those wishing teacher accreditation

The second goal was realized by the appointment of Kay Botkin as Regional Craft Training Director in 1985 to launch the program, although this program was later discontinued due to a lack of available accredited teachers. The third goal produced the first edition of the *Reference and Technical Manual*, under the guidance of Florence Welborn and her brother, William Davisson.

From 1989 until her death in 1991, Dorothy Maddy served as Director. During her tenure, the focus was on updating and printing the Second Edition of the *SGAA Reference and Technical Manual* for stained glass.

Barbara Krueger followed Maddy as the Director of the school. Work was undertaken to broaden educational programs by sponsoring speakers and workshops at the annual SGAA conferences. Krueger finished the work begun by Maddy on the *SGAA Reference and Technical Manual, Second Edition*.

In 1994, Walter "Spike" Grosvenor became the Director of the Stained Glass School. During his tenure, the *SGAA Reference and Technical Manual, Third Edition* was begun. Though this revised and updated edition has yet to be printed, the SGAA and the Stained Glass School continue to make select chapters from the second edition available in reprint editions.

Today, the SGAA Stained Glass School operates under the directorship of

Jerome Durr and is once again expanding the scope of its mission. Since the publication of the *SGAA Reference & Technical Manual, Second Edition*, the Stained Glass School has been primarily a scholarship-granting body. However, plans are currently being made to once again establish a physical SGAA Stained Glass School to act as a training facility for professional artists and craftsmen.

The SGAA Stained Glass School has learned a great deal in the three decades since its founding, but it still remains committed to excellence in education. There is still a need for expanded opportunities for professional craft development, and this is exactly what the SGAA Stained Glass School hopes to provide by re-establishing its physical school in Raytown, Missouri.

The original facility in North Adams, Massachusetts, experienced great initial success; however, it was plagued by high travel costs, travel difficulties, a lack of adequate housing and inclement weather. Regional workshops also experienced some success, but proved to be difficult and expensive to maintain, although the School provides and will continue to provide pre-Conference workshops and classes before every SGAA Annual Summer Conference.

A permanent teaching facility will allow the School to once again meet the goal of providing affordable craft training; the lessons and experiences of the first physical school will be leveraged in the new project to make the facility even better than it was before and to make it more viable in the long term.

Transportation issues have been addressed by selecting a central location, easily accessible from anywhere in the United States or abroad. The Raytown, Missouri, facility is located near several airports, including the Kansas City International Airport, which is a hub for Southwest Airlines and Midwest Airlines and was ranked highest by J.D. Power and Associates in 2007 among airports in the

10-30 million passenger category; this will make airline travel easy and affordable to a central United States location.

The Raytown area offers ample hotel and motel accommodations in all price ranges. Raytown is located in the Kansas City metropolitan area and benefits from its proximity to the communities that make up greater Kansas City. The Kansas City Chiefs and the Kansas City Royals sports teams both have stadiums on a common campus that is located approximately three miles from the site of the future school building. These stadiums bring in hundreds of thousands of spectators every year, and there are many hotels, motels, restaurants, and other facilities to serve these guests that will also be able to serve students at the new SGAA Stained Glass School.

Weather can certainly be an issue at any location; however, snows capable of closing roads and impeding travel are very rare in the Kansas City area, and weather-related travel delays, when they do happen, are generally events that last for hours, not days.

The Kansas City area is big enough to offer visitors such attractions as Westport, the Plaza, the Power & Light District, the Nelson-Atkins Museum, Powell Gardens, Kansas Speedway and Village West, the Sprint Center and much more, but small enough to avoid the high costs of a location like Chicago.

The SGAA Stained Glass School is dedicated to making affordable, professional craft training in a state-of-the-art permanent facility a reality. The project is already underway and will continue to develop in the coming months, leading up to the Kansas City Annual Summer Conference in 2010. The SGAA Stained Glass School welcomes those who would like to be a part of this historic undertaking to get involved today; for more information, contact the Stained Glass Association of America headquarters at 800.438-9581.

