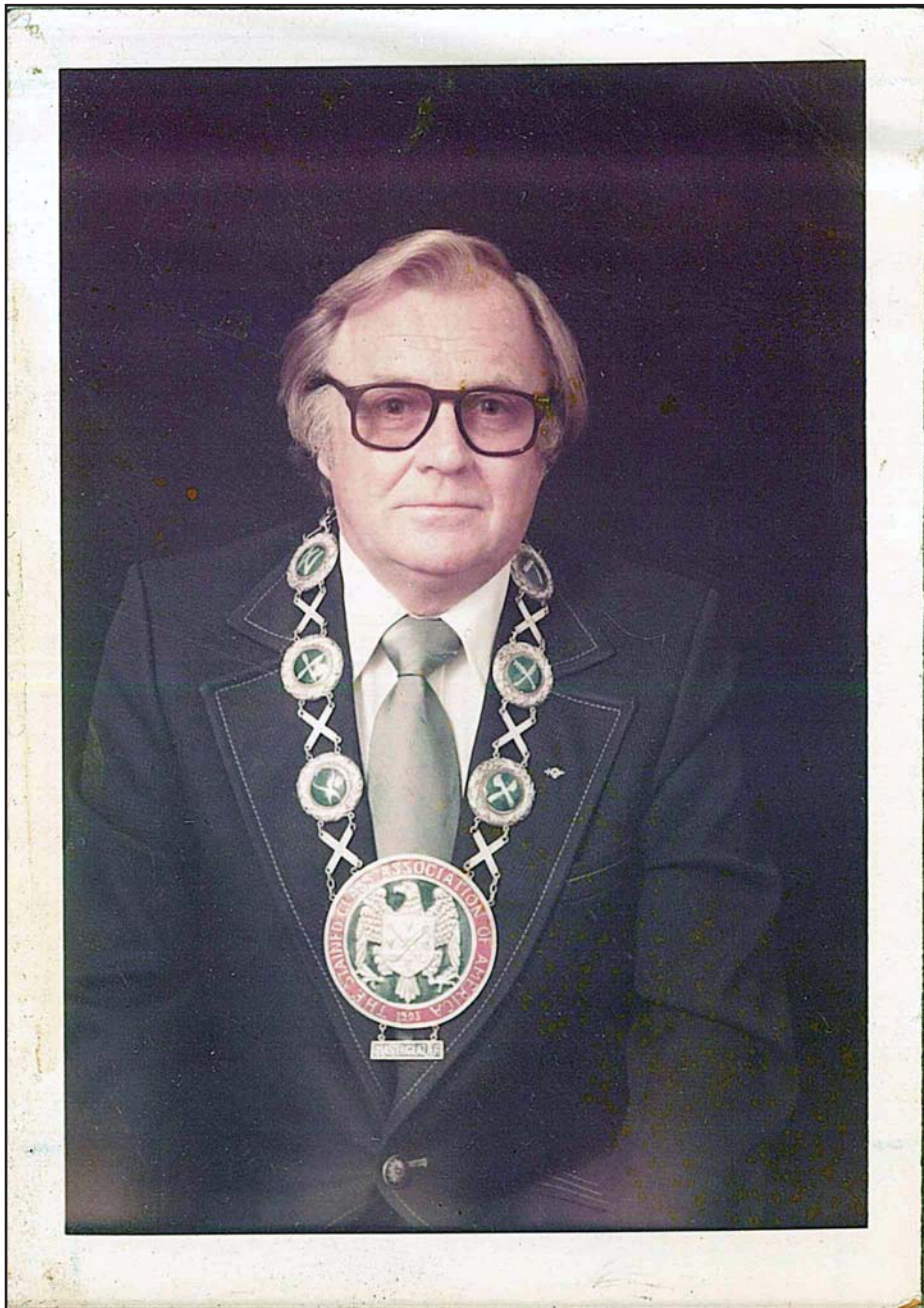


JAMES H. HELF

April 20, 1921 – November 16, 2012



James H. Helf

James H. Helf, CEO of Franklin Art Glass Studios, Inc., and former president of the Stained Glass Association of America, died on November 16, 2012. He was born April 20th, 1921 in Columbus, Ohio, to the late H. Elmore Helf, the founder of Franklin Art Glass Studios, and Katherine Helf.

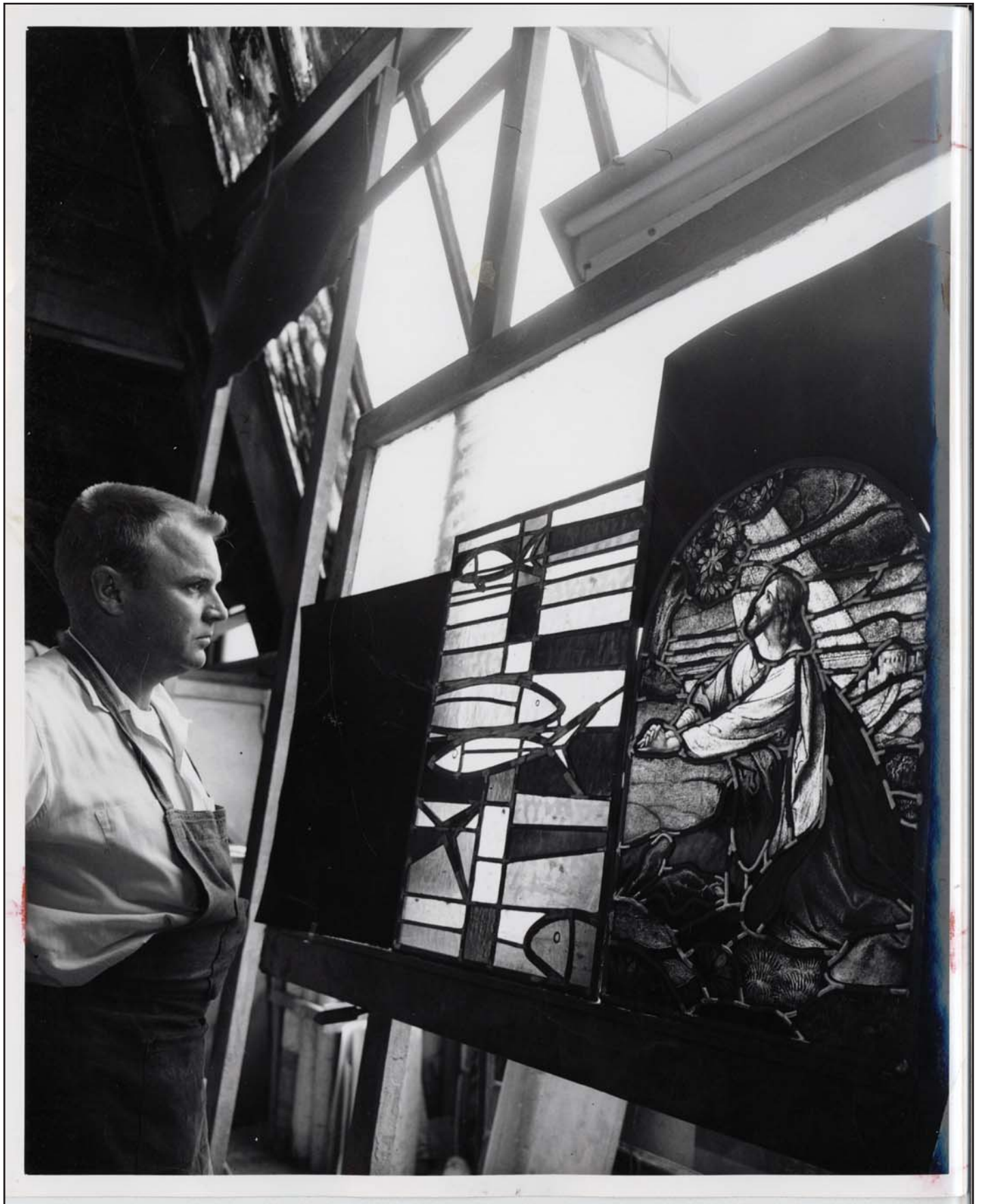
Jim, as most knew him, was a respected figure in the stained glass industry, where, for many of his 91 years, he worked hard to advance not only his family business but the entire industry as well.

Jim began his career with Franklin Art Glass early in life, helping at the studio as a child and throughout his teenage years. He graduated from Bexley High School in 1939 and attended The Ohio State University for two years before his induction into service in 1942. While serving his country as a Tech Sergeant mechanic/engineer on a

B-17 bomber, his plane was shot down over Germany in 1944, where he became a German prisoner of war for two years.

It wasn't until he returned home from the war in 1946, however, that Jim started his full-time career with Franklin and became the third generation in his family to enter the business and the second to work under the banner of Franklin Art Glass Studios.

Jim's work at Franklin involved many commissions, among them more than 45,000 lampshades completed for Wendy's Old Fashioned Hamburgers throughout the 1960s and '70s. Additional work during his time at the studio can be seen in more than 35 states as



James Helf at work in Franklin Art Glass Studios, late 1950s.



well as locations abroad. Jim enjoyed membership in the SGAA for more than 50 years, where he served as president from 1974 to 1976 and was awarded fellow in July 1980. He hosted two SGAA Summer Conferences, one in 1974 that was memorable for the pig roast he hosted at his home in Buckeye Lake, Ohio, and the Centennial Conference in 2003 that included his reception at Franklin, featuring German sausages, beer, and cream puffs.

In the early 1990s Jim started to ease off his full-time hours. Never officially retiring, he stayed active and informed on Franklin's goings-on, often stopping in to check on what commissions were in house. For *Thistledown* magazine, Jim said, "To be a good stained glass designer or craftsman, you must like to work with your hands, be creative, and enjoy your work. You must be able to look at what you've



done and take pride in it." Jim lived by those words both in work and in life.

Franklin Art Glass Studios, Inc. is still owned by the Helf family. Jim's son, Gary, and granddaughter, Andrea, continue to produce stained glass for commissions nationwide.

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James Helf (left) and his father, H. Elmore, selecting glass at Franklin Art Glass Studios, Inc.