

# President's Message:

## *The Value of SGAA Membership*

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If someone were to ask you why you are (or are not) a member of the Stained Glass Association of America, what would you say?

Having been a member of the SGAA since 1990, my husband (Fred Shea) and I have reflected on this question several times, and the answer always points back to the reason we joined the SGAA in the first place and the reason that our studio is still a member.

Throughout the 1980s, we read *The Stained Glass Quarterly*. Both of us were moved to become members of the SGAA after reading the *President's Message* in the Fall 1988 issue, where Walter Judson said:

**“The Stained Glass Association of America sets the standards and goals for the industry in North America. Newly developing studios and artists throughout this and other countries look to us for leadership. We shall give leadership insofar as we, as individual members, are willing to devote time and talent to the organization.”**

In 1988, we were one of the *many* newly developing studios who looked to the Stained Glass Association of America and its members for leadership, industry standards, and goals for our company to aspire to follow and achieve. Our application for Accredited Membership was approved in 1990, and we have been an Accredited Member since that time. (This level is now called the Accredited Professional Member.)

As a developing stained glass restoration studio:

- we wanted to tap into the vast knowledge of the SGAA and its members.
- we wanted to enhance our reputation and increase our credibility through accreditation and certification.
- we wanted to make personal connections with others in our craft.
- we were happy to be a part of a trade association that effectively brought its practitioners together to create a cooperative, constructive, and persuasive voice. The SGAA was especially constructive and persuasive in the early 1990s when faced with a government ban on lead. (If not for its action, what would exist of the craft today?) This trade association rose to the occasion to preserve and protect the craft when it was formed in 1903 and has done so many more times over the 111 years of its existence.

Although many have challenged the value of membership and of being an Accredited Professional Member of the Stained Glass Association of America, for Fred and me it is — and always has been — very clear. We have been and still are reaping the benefits of what our predecessors have created, grown, and maintained. As our success is so firmly linked with our membership in the SGAA, we now endeavor to follow in the footsteps of the leaders in our craft and make every effort to further strengthen the value of being a member of *the* trade association of the stained glass industry.

We tell our clients that we are an Accredited Professional Member of the SGAA and explain that the SGAA is *the* trade association and has been since 1903. We explain to them how the SGAA sets standards and goals and performs the due diligence of providing Accreditation and Certification to those qualified and deserving of this acknowledgement. As an Accredited Professional Member, we proudly display the seal of the *only* accrediting body for stained glass professionals in this country. As a result, our clients' confidence in us, our studio, and the SGAA is firmly established.

During my second term as President of the SGAA, the Executive Board will continue the momentum of the past year to increase the value of membership and the value of Accreditation in this organization, by prioritizing new goals and accomplishing them.

Susan Shea



# The President's Page Honoring the Past

"Every man owes a part of his time and money to the business or industry in which he is engaged. No man has a moral right to withhold his support from an organization that is striving to improve conditions within his sphere." – Theodore Roosevelt

1903-1906	Joseph E. Flanagan
1907-1908	Karl Steward
1909	E. W. Smith
1910	W. G. Speier
1911-1912	H. H. Jacoby
1913	Karl Steward
1914-1915	Charles Donaldson
1916	Frederick Lamb
1917-1918	Henry Hunt
1919	A. H. Rossbach
1920	A. J. Schuler
1921	D. H. Swinton
1922	W. E. Ford
1923	A. W. Klemme
1924-1925	George Mueller
1926	Henry Hunt
1927-1928	Fred Oppliger
1929-1930	Nicola D'Ascenzo
1931-1937	Charles Connick
1938-1941	Wilbur H. Burnham
1942-1943	Henry Lee Willet
1944-1945	Harold W. Cummings
1946-1947	Harold Rambusch
1948-1949	Orin Skinner
1950-1951	Rupert Schmitt
1952-1953	George Hunt
1954-1955	Karl B. Lamb
1956-1957	Wilbur H. Burnham, Jr.
1958-1959	John D. Weaver, Sr.
1960-1961	George D. Spiers
1962-1963	John A. Riordan
1964-1965	E. Crosby Willet
1966-1967	Otto C. Winterich
1968-1969	Stephen Bridges
1970-1971	Harold L. Hollman
1972-1973	A. W. Klemme, Jr.
1974-1975	James Helf
1976-1977	Patrick White
1978-1979	Helen Hickman
1980-1981	John Kebrle
1982-1983	Bill Laws
1984-1985	Gerhard Hiemer
1986-1987	Elizabeth Perry
1988-1989	Walter Judson
1990	Florence Welborn
1991-1992	Paul Pickel
1993-1994	Truett George
1995-1996	Gary Helf
1997-1998	Kirk Weaver
1999-2000	James Whitney
2001-2002	Dennis Harmon
2003-2004	Karen Hendrix
2005-2006	Andrew Young
2007-2008	B. Gunar Gruenke
2009-2010	Jack Whitworth
2011-2012	Jerome R. Durr
2013-	Susan Shea

**Rupert Schmitt** (1950-1951) was very concerned about the "trend of our craft toward commercialism..." and for "paying more attention to higher standards of workmanship and improved ethics in the craft." Bernard O. Gruenke, who was Rupert Schmitt's partner, purchased the renowned national art studio (now Conrad Schmitt Studios) from the Schmitt estate, after Rupert's death in 1951.

**George Hunt** (1952-1953) sponsored a joint committee for the American Stained Glass Craft, including the SGAA and the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America, who were also suffering from unfair tariffs on overseas products. George Hunt, with his brother, Jim, built Hunt Studios into one of Pittsburgh's premier studios during the boom time for church building.

**Karl B. Lamb** (1954-1955) was concerned with the "Trade not Aid" program (being fostered by many leading government officials), that was threatening to lower the tariff even more. Lamb said "...our fine craft will be ruined, and ruined soon, by foreign competition unless we have some tariff protection." Karl B. Lamb was studio owner of J&R Lamb Studios from 1890 to 1969.

**Wilbur H. Burnham, Jr.** (1956-1957) was concerned that studios and craftsmen were allowing small differences of opinion to keep them from joining the SGAA and assisting in the battle against the unfair tariffs. The Wilbur H. Burnham Studios' records were donated to the Smithsonian Archives of American Art.

**John D. Weaver, Sr.** (1958-1959), who had been the first Chairman of the Ethics Committee (Winter, 1940), said, "The Ethics of Policies of our Association are governed by the strength or weakness of the individual members and if we individually can realize that what is beneficial to our craft will also benefit members, we will have taken our first step in putting good Ethics into Practice." John D. Weaver, Sr., was founder of Pittsburgh Stained Glass Studios.

**George D. Spiers** (1960-1961) focused on creating a legal definition for stained glass that would satisfy the Bureau of Customs but still reflect the true art of the trade. He worked for Richard Spiers and Sons (his father's studio), which became Payne-Spiers when they partnered with George Leslie Payne in 1935.

**John A. Riordan** (1962-1963) According to an article written by Virginia Raguin, "The 1930s... marked the beginning of John A. Riordan's career." After graduating high school, he studied architecture at the University of Cincinnati and subsequently earned a business degree at Xavier University. Before returning to Cincinnati, he worked briefly with Charles J. Connick. Upon John's father's death, John A. Riordan assumed control of the family business, G. C. Riordan & Co.

**E. Crosby Willet** (1964-1965) urged every studio to regularly contact newspapers about installations that were being dedicated, in response to the national newspapers that were reporting the stained glass craft "dead in America," and incorrectly crediting French studios with important work that was actually created by American craftsmen. Crosby became the third-generation President of Willet Studios in 1965.

