

New developments in mounting and displaying stained glass

Since the 1980s all stained glass panels have been mounted in rectangular aluminium frames finished with inert polyester powder coated paint before going on display. Thin pieces of aluminium are used to fill the empty spaces between irregularly-shaped stained glass panels and the frame. These bespoke handmade metal frames, developed by Stained Glass Conservation and manufactured by IWF Ltd, were designed to protect and support the stained glass during handling, installation, display, storage and transport.

The designers for the Medieval & Renaissance Galleries wanted to reveal the original architectural context of some of the irregularly-shaped stained glass panels by displaying them in shaped lightboxes that followed their contours. Stained Glass Conservation joined forces with IWF Ltd to develop a new shaped aluminium frame that met conservation requirements and enabled the designers to create these exciting new displays for visitors.



1. Some of the Medieval & Renaissance stained glass panels as they were displayed in Gallery 28 prior to 2004. The irregularly-shaped Holy Blood armorial panels are highlighted.



2. Stained glass panel depicting the Arms of Philip the Handsome and Joanna of Castile (C.1448-1498). This image shows the irregularly-shaped panel mounted in its old rectangular frame.



3 & 4. Stained glass frames being fabricated in the IWF Ltd workshop in Northumberland. The conservator takes a rubbing of the stained glass panel then uses this to produce a construction drawing for the fabricator. Each shaped frame takes approximately 20 hours to fabricate.



5 & 6. The stained glass conservator mounting one of the Holy Blood armorial panels in its new shaped frame.



7. The Holy Blood armorial panels on display in the Medieval & Renaissance Galleries.