



Arlie Sulka an expert on Tiffany glass and Mark L. Walberg from the PBS TV show, Antiques Roadshow film a special about Flagler College's collection of Tiffany glass on Saturday, June 8, 2013, at Flagler College. Photo by Perry Knotts. Special to the Record.

## 'Antiques Roadshow' attracted to flavor of era Flagler era

Crew shoots segment here

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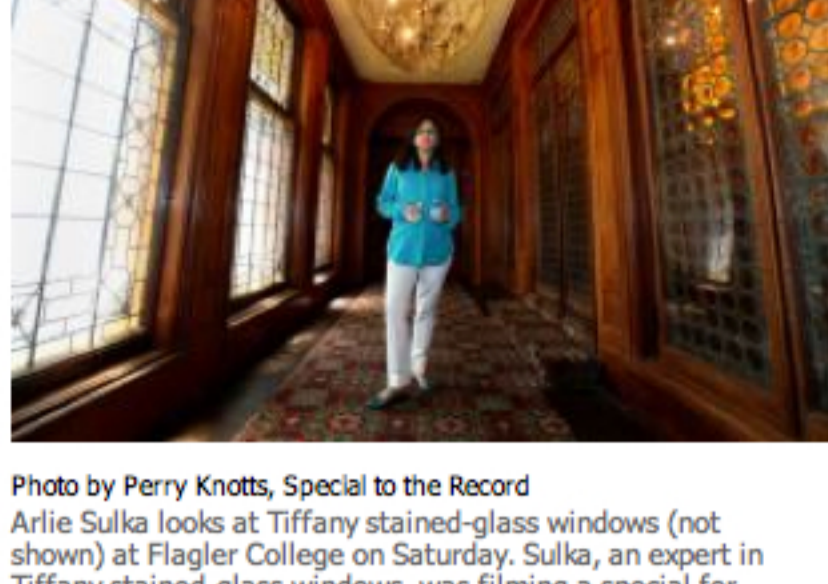


Photo by Perry Knotts, Special to the Record

Arlie Sulka looks at Tiffany stained-glass windows (not shown) at Flagler College on Saturday. Sulka, an expert in Tiffany stained-glass windows, was filming a special for 'Antiques Roadshow' at the college.

By [MARCIA LANE](#)

[marcia.lane@staugustine.com](mailto:marcia.lane@staugustine.com)

Arlie Sulka would be the kind of houseguest everyone wants — especially if you had a house full of things.

On Saturday, she was browsing through some of the “things” at Flagler College as a sort of preamble to a segment for PBS’ “Antiques Roadshow.”

Later, she and host Mark L. Walberg would sit down and talk in the dining room of what was once the Hotel Ponce de Leon. The backdrop included the Tiffany stained glass windows. Sulka, who owns Lillian Nassau LLC in New York, is a specialist on Louis Comfort Tiffany and the glass works he created.

But first she was getting an inside tour with college officials and Flagler history professor Tom Graham, an expert on Henry M. Flagler. Flagler built the hotel and made St. Augustine the tourist

destination at the turn of the 19th century.

As Graham and Sulka walked and talked, they cleared up some of the myths, sort of solved a mystery and maybe discovered another one.

Graham could confirm the east alcove of the dining room was where Flagler always sat and that the reason the lower windows don’t have the yellow bulls eye stained glass that’s in upper windows was so guests could look out onto orange trees planted on the lawn below.

In response to Sulka’s question about what happened to the trees, Graham explained they slowly died out suffering from the freezes and other ills that played havoc with North Florida’s citrus.

When they toured the Flagler Room, which contains pieces from the hotel’s heyday, a large urn/vase highlighting shades of brown caught her attention. She pointed out the magnolia in the design and almost instantly placed it as a piece by Emile Galle, a French glass artist heavily involved in the French Art Nouveau movement.

With help, Sulka turned the piece over to find Galle’s signature.

“It’s really, really fantastic,” she said, snapping a photo on her iPhone. “It could have been an exhibition piece.”

The chandeliers in the room also drew comments, but Sulka explained Tiffany did not create such items although such imports were sold through the Tiffany company. The “blue books” put out by the firm might list if he was selling such chandeliers at the time the hotel was built, she said.

James Raskin, a Flagler graduate hired recently as assistant director of historic tours, has been giving tours of the college for a couple of years but was learning things as Sulka talked. “One person who knows everything. Years of work done for you in a day.”

Back out in the main lobby, Holly Hill, the college’s assistant director of college relations, showed her a couple of round windows with clear glass, leading around rosettes and bits of glass known as “chunk jewels.” Could they be Tiffany? Hill asked.

“Possibly. I’m not saying definitely,” Sulka said, after looking at them from the inside and outside and inspecting photos taken at the scene. “It doesn’t look like Tiffany leading, but the chunk jewels do.”

Then it was back to the main dining hall and another look at the stained glass where Sulka spotted some variations in the half moon stained glass windows she hadn’t seen before. “I really like those a lot,” she said.

“It pays to look. Look at things and come back. Then you see even more,” Sulka said.

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### MORE ABOUT FLAGLER

You can learn more about Henry M. Flagler and the Oldest City by going online for a lecture given by Tom Graham as part of Flagler College’s community lecture series. “Life and Leisure in Flagler St. Augustine — Dr. Tom Graham” is available for viewing by going to [www.flagler.edu/our-community/events/community-lecture-series/index.html](http://www.flagler.edu/our-community/events/community-lecture-series/index.html)

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### BECOMING AN EXPERT

Arlie Sulka became a Tiffany expert thanks to Lillian Nassau.

An art history major, Sulka knew she wanted to get into the art world but didn’t know what she wanted to do. She moved to New York City and worked in a small auction house. Later she met Nassau.

“She was 80 years old then and she told me ‘Why don’t you come work for me?’ ... I never left,” said Sulka, noting it was Nassau who helped bring about a revival of interest in Louis Comfort Tiffany and the Tiffany Glassworks. “I sort of fell into it.”

She worked first for Lillian Nassau and later her son after he took over. Several years ago she bought the business. Although Sulka has gained her own expert reputation, she kept Lillian Nassau’s name. “She was really the grandmother of it all.”

“I do a lot of things but our mainstay is Tiffany,” Sulka said. She’s started carrying some mid-century modern furniture that turns out to go great with the Tiffany lamps and proved popular with clients. It’s nothing new she said, Nassau was doing that back in the 1950s. “I just revived the idea.”

Her company has put out several books on Tiffany and arranged exhibitions. For more, go to [www.lilliannassau.com](http://www.lilliannassau.com)

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### FILMING IN ST. AUGUSTINE

PBS’s highest rated series — “Antiques Roadshow” — was in St. Augustine Saturday to capture a bit of the flavor of the area.

The popular PBS show that gives people a chance to find out if their family heirloom is wonderful or just junk is in Jacksonville recording several shows for next year.

Holly Hill, assistant director of college relations at Flagler College, said she’d been told some 10,000 people applied to get on the program. It’s an indication of the popularity of the show produced by WGBH out of Boston.

Three segments on the area will be included in the show and two of them feature St. Augustine. One is at the former Hotel Ponce de Leon, now Flagler College. The other is at Pat Croce’s St. Augustine Pirate & Treasure Museum.

It was a book that captured the crew’s interest at the Pirate Museum.

“They have a 17th century book on buccaneers in their collection,” explained segments producer Sarah Elliott. “It has wonderful graphics and copper plates.”

Elliott said the crew films over June, July and August, this year going to eight cities for the Roadshow. Also being produced are 24 field segments. When this show will be shown depends on PBS schedulers. It won’t happen before January 2014.

Host Mark L. Walberg said the Jacksonville segment features the Norman Studios and the “rich history of silent films” in the area. Rattling off that history, Markham said he was a little surprised by how much of what he’d learned had stuck.

Richard Norman was something of a pioneer in producing films that featured blacks in regular stories rather than as villains and slaves. He also would go from town to town, getting prominent local townspeople to take part in basically the same movie and then premiering the movie in the town before going on to the next.

“We’re hoping to recover some of reels from his films,” Markham said.

While he meets lots of collectors, Markham said what he collects from the show are “memories ... and the people I meet, and it’s a priceless collection.”