

# Leven C. Leatherbury, EdD.

## A Brief History

compiled by

Gerald P. Scheib, Historian and Past President 1991-1993

from

A History of CAEA by Dr. James D. Smith, Past President 1975-1977

and

Articles from the Painted Monkey

Dr. Leven C. Leatherbury received a BFA degree from the Maryland Institute of Art in Baltimore and his MA and EdD degrees from Teachers College, Columbia University. His experience includes teaching art at the elementary, secondary and college levels, as well as supervision. For 26 years he served as Curriculum Specialist for Art Education in the San Diego City Schools. Prior to San Diego, he taught and was on the supervisory staff in the Baltimore, MD Schools.

When CAEA was organized in 1965, Leven served as CAEA's first president. Since then, he has been active in the development of the first state Framework for Art education, in the adoption of State Instructional Materials in art, and in numerous conferences. In addition, he is a past vice-president of NAEA and a past national director of NAEA's Supervision / Administration Division. In 1982, Leven was named "Art Educator of the Year" by NAEA.

In 1984 Leven was editor of Arts and Activities Magazine and was an independent consultant for art education. During the term of President Don Buhman, Leven served as CAEA's Commercial Liaison Representative. He continued to serve CAEA as a Conference Administrator until 1992.

### The Tagas Ranch Bunch and CAEA

Beginning in the autumn of 1964 a series of meetings were held at Tagus Ranch to get the California Art Education Association activated and moving. Tagas Ranch was located not very far from the foothills of the great Sierras, in the central valley of California's Tulare County. The ranch was not exactly the sort of "Marlboro country" setting suitable for a picturesque postcard. It was an austere place with few amenities. None the less, it served two particular purposes. Geographically, it was located at an appropriate midpoint between the population centers of Northern and Southern California. This was all the more significant because of the consideration to meet the travel needs of participants who would come from opposite corners of the vast state. It is important to know that prior to these meetings, there were two pre-exhausting state art education groups. The Pacific Art Association, Northern Area and the

Pacific Art Association, Southern Area. Both associations were affiliates of the National Art Education Association. Psychologically, Tagas Ranch was neutral ground for representatives from both groups. The second purpose of the site; of equal importance to the first; was that its "rustic" atmosphere helped to create an engaging environment for innovative thinking.

Among the prominent participants in the initial meetings were Freda Bobrink, Mansel Willett, Jean Palmer Rinaldi, George Dahl, Ralph Farmer, James Souden, Norman Schmidt, Leven Leatherbury, (who would become the charter president of CAEA in 1965) and Stanley Cohen (who succeeded Leatherbury as president two years later). One may justly honor Leven Leatherbury and these progressive individuals as "pioneers" , for they were determined to open new paths for the exploration and expansion of the cause of art teaching throughout the state.