

A Stellar Home Decorating Idea

Mounted Tin Stars May Be the Latest Way to Show your Americana Pride

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The fireworks, picnics, and unfortunate cold weather of the Fourth of July are behind us now. However, among the patriotic décor adorning residences this year, there has been a seemingly new trend: large, tin stars mounted on homes and barns.

What the meaning is behind these tin stars? Do they have some kind of military affiliation? Are they symbolic



A gold star mounted on a garage.

of something else? Or are they just the latest decorating trend?

A number of people stated their belief that the stars represent a home where a son or daughter was either actively serving in the armed forces or had been killed in the line of duty. In fact, a star-embroidered flag was a common way of denoting a military household during both world wars.

During World War I, a lady by the name of Grace Darling Seibold became one of many mothers to lose a son to the war. Seibold knew that holding onto her grief was no way to work through it, and so she dedicated her time to helping injured servicemen and veterans.

Through her service, Seibold partnered with other grieving mothers, all of whom found support in their common misfortunes. They went on to form Gold Star Mothers—a non-profit, non-denominational, non-political organization with chapters around the country for moms who have lost a son or daughter in active military service. A flag containing a gold star was hung outside to identify the residence of a Gold Star Mom.

Today, the organization remains active, with chapters around the country providing common support and certified gold star regalia. Asked about whether they have any affli-

ation with contemporary tin stars on homes, Ruth Stonesifer of GSM reported:

“While looking at these types of stars on peoples houses, they remind us of our own Gold Stars on our service flags. However, these types of metal stars are just decorative in nature. Mostly Americana in décor and not an official representation of the Dept of Defense Gold Stars...”

Similar organizations exist such as Blue Star Mothers for moms of active-duty soldiers, and Gold Star Siblings.

Another tradition has its roots among the settlers of Pennsylvania Dutch Country, and is the Amish barn star. The Amish frequently adorned their barns with elaborately painted aster-laden murals. These may have had symbolic meaning related to good luck and other superstitions, or they simply may have been purely artistic.

However, today it seems most of the stars adorning homes, garages, and barns are for decoration. Stars come in a variety of colors, and a star with the American flag painted on is also a common design.

Being a nation at war, and with patriotism running high among most, nailing a star to your home is another way to demonstrate your loyalty to the United States and our brave servicemen and women.

There are a variety of star sizes and colors available at many retailers that carry outside décor. Maybe you’ve lost a loved one or close friend who was in the armed forces. Perhaps you just want to show your outdoor decorating savvy and sense of Americana. Whatever the reason, placing a star on your home’s exterior can be a fun and symbolic way to add some interesting flare.



This East Aurora residence is adorned with both a blue and gold star