

D U C T U S

Newsletter of the Lochac Royal College of Scrivenors & Illuminators

Volume 8 Issue 1

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Editorial

Hello once again, and welcome to a slightly earlier than usual issue of Ductus. As advancement to Kingdom is almost upon us, I decided to bring the June issue forward to keep everyone informed in a timely fashion. The next issue is scheduled for 15th September as per usual.

As some of you might have noticed, today also marks two years since I took up the position of Provost. I have found the job to be much more work than I could ever have anticipated, but also much more rewarding and fun than I expected. So why am I still here? In the interests of providing stability and consistency of administration as we move to Kingdom, I have been asked to extend my term, which I have agreed to. So unless someone comes up with a better offer, you've got me in the chair for a while longer.

There is still much work ahead of us...

By The Numbers

As at this writing, the backlog stands:

AA available: 27, assigned: 52

AA/OLM available: 0, assigned: 1

AA/ORL available: 0, assigned: 0

AA/Baron available: 1, assigned: 0

GA available: 1, assigned: 3

GA/RCA available: 0, assigned: 0

GA/RCY available: 0, assigned: 0

PA- KSCA available: 7, assigned: 9

PA- OL available: 25, assigned: 6

PA-OP available 32, assigned: 9

PA-VIS available: 11, assigned: 7

Total available: 104, assigned: 87

(down from 205 June 2000, up from 95 June 2001.)

Although generally doing well, we have slightly lost ground on the backlog. There has not been much movement of late, but I am confident this will change after Coronation.

Overdue Assignments

There are a few overdue assignments, which is both usual and unfortunate. However, I get a little tired of being the ogre and listing the usual culprits here, so instead I will be following these people up directly.

Instead I will take this opportunity to remind everyone that deadlines are noted with the other assignment details. The general rule is 6 months for an AA, and 12 months for an original. In ***exceptional circumstances***, an extension may be granted; please contact the Provost or your local warden to arrange this. Please note that exceptional circumstances means just that, not some equivalent of "the dog ate my homework".

As always, communication is the name of the game: it remains the scribe's responsibility to keep the Provost informed if they run into difficulties or need an extension. (If you don't, you really can't complain when your assignment is recalled.)

New Scribes

I would like to extend a welcome to:

Adeline de Montfort

Annabella Debonaire
Elinae of Whitby
Katherine Alicia of Sarum

Welcome, gentle ladies, we are pleased to have you as part of the College. May your association be an enjoyable and productive one.

Exemplars

For the new folks...before the Provost can assign a scroll, I need some basic information: your contact details, and an example of your work. This can be a colour photocopy (not scan) of work you've done prior, or you can do an exemplar specially. It doesn't need to be big or fancy, a couple of lines of text and some basic illumination is fine. This gets kept in your file so that future provosts have something to refer to.

I still need exemplars from:

Areon Lassair
Brian an Dorcha
Colin Saxon
Drake Morgan
Elspeth Caerwent
Helga Leosdottir
Huraiwa
Liduina de Kasteleen von Valkenburg
Masaria de Cortona
Morag Freyser
Nicolette du Fay
Sybille le Chat

Signed, Sealed, Delivered

At the meeting at Festival, several people commented that the current system of posting finished scrolls directly to the recipients, although very efficient, did not let others see the good work that scribes do and thus raise the profile of the College. After some discussion, it was agreed that a good solution would be to ship finished scrolls to the local wardens, so they could mount displays or have them distributed to the recipients at a local court.

This was agreed to on the proviso that the warden is responsible for getting the scrolls to the recipient and informing the warden in a timely fashion- and for the record, "timely fashion" does **not** mean six months or more. The Provost also reserves the right to send scrolls directly to the recipient if this system is not applicable (ie recipients without local wardens) or does not prove to be working in any area (and I'll be down on that warden like a ton of bricks!) Innilgard, Rowany and St Florian's have so far volunteered to trial this system.

What a Tangled Web...

On the subject of profile and display, my grand plans for the new scribe's website have so far not come to fruition, hampered by mundane pressures and the fact that I have the computer skills of the average goldfish. Also, much of the work I have already done will have to be updated after Coronation...I'm hoping to have at least stage 1 of the site live as soon as practical after that...

I'm planning the website to include features like the charter and an intro to the College, how to take care of scrolls, articles by and of interest to scribes, back issues of Ductus, a gallery of course and links to on-line resources. What else should go on the website? A roster of the College? Rankings? Organisational stuff from the handbook? The handbook itself? On-line lessons? Interactive features (please God no...)? Anything else? Please give me feedback...

While we're on this, how does everyone feel about an email list? I know the world needs another one like a hole in the head, but it might be a good way of keeping communication, discussion and general ideas flowing. If there is demand I'll look into setting one up, please let me know your thoughts on this.

Also on the web is the SCA translations site, <http://translate.thibault.org>, where you can get scroll texts translated into several languages including Latin, Medieval French and German, Arabic, Catalan, Greek and many more (note: I already have texts for KSCA, OL and OP in Latin, contact me rather than the translations website).

Also available is the SCA scribe's e-mail list, which is a discussion group that has scribes old and new, of all levels of ability from all over the world. To subscribe, send an e-mail to

Majordomo@castle.org, blank subject line, and the words "subscribe scribes" in the body of the message. A digest version is also available.

Local Scriptoria

Everyone seems to be quite happy with how the warden/local scriptoria system is working. (Wardens, can you please make sure to keep me informed of any new people to your groups, and their contact details.) Some wardens have expressed a desire to focus primarily on the awards and scrolls for recipients in their own groups; this is fine, although if no preference is expressed assignments will continue to be on a first in, first out basis for any group.

The Seventh Seal

Also discussed at the Festival meeting were the problems associated with sealing scrolls. Wax seals by their nature are fragile, and we have recently had a few instances where despite precautions, seals have arrived broken. Obviously, this is something that we'd all like to see avoided in future.

Some discussion was held on possible options: no-one was keen on the idea of leaving seals off scrolls altogether, and I agree; it was felt that a seal was authentic and "official", and therefore appropriate for award scrolls. Few liked the idea of replacing wax with a cinnabar stamp, or some kind of embossing. The general consensus was that wax seals were still the preferred option, although perhaps best attached in such a way as to minimise the risk of breakage, such as suspended on tapes, cords or "tongues" of vellum. The drawback with this idea is that the scroll will be a little more difficult/ expensive to frame. I wouldn't like to see wax seals disappear, but I would like some more feedback before I formulate a policy on this; please let me know what you think (might be a good topic for the mailing list...).

Drawing A Blank

Also discussed at Festival were the Royal Patent "Superblanks". These blanks will function in a similar way to the Award of Arms pre-printed blanks, with a few key differences. I have approached some of the best scribes in Lochac to design these scrolls, which will be printed on parchentine (imitation vellum) rather than paper, and completed only by experienced scribes to ensure high quality. The final product will be very close to an original work, only with a significant saving in time and work.

A few scribes have expressed discomfort at this idea, feeling that it somehow disparaged or displayed a lack of respect for the Royal Peerages. This is very definitely **not** the case. Like Award of Arms blanks, these are a practical measure to ensure that the College does not find itself trapped behind an ever increasing backlog.

However, I do understand that some scribes or Royalty may desire an original scroll for this award. This is fine, and the College of Scribes will be happy to accommodate this request, however an original work will obviously take longer to produce. If a specific request is not made, the Patent **blank will remain the default assignment option**, with a deadline of 6 months.

Blanks are currently being designed by Rowan, Nerissa, Branwen (I think) and myself, the first print run should be ready by Twelfth Night.

Still on the subject of blanks, we need new designs for AA blanks for the Kingdom of Lochac. I have new designs for an early gothic (Winchester Bible) and batarde (Mary of Burgundy), and I believe Leafwynn is designing a new celtic-style blank. Other designs that I would like are a mid gothic (ivy bar) and Italian renaissance (white vine), as these have proven very popular in the past. Please contact me if you would like to design an AA blank; specs and wording are on the last page.

Regalia

Also raised at the Festival meeting was a badge or device for the scribes of Lochac to wear. The current registered device for the West Kingdom College is sable, an ink flask Or (registered in 1988) although obviously after Coronation we'll no longer be able to use that. After some discussion we soon realised that it was going to be difficult to come up with a registerable device or badge that wasn't ridiculously complex.

It was suggested that we could look to period examples of pilgrim and guild badges for inspiration. This was a brilliant idea and immediately popular, freeing us from the strictures of SCA heraldry and allowing us the us to do something authentic, creative and unique.

Nerissa has kindly put some ideas on her website http://www.geocities.com/viscountess_geo/1projects.htm , please have a look, and let me know if you have any preferences or suggestions. Also look at www.billyandcharlie.com for more examples of period badges (I had more references but my computer ate them...)

What I was looking at was something versatile that could be sewn to garb, suspended from a ribbon or linked into a collar. I was envisaging around 5-8 cm long, probably with a motto lettered around the edge and a design of a scribe in the centre. Traditionally pilgrim tokens were cast in lead or pewter, although we can also get silver or gold plated very cheaply through Ron Chudi (who does the Festival tokens each year).

Obviously timing is an issue- going with the cheapest caster (Ron Chudi) is good, but may not be ready in time for Coronation. I'd like us to have badges/regalia for Coronation, although having said that I'd prefer to wait until we have something great that we're all happy with, rather than doing a rush job. What do others think?

While we're on the subject, what about a motto, something that sums up the approach or service of the College (and please don't suggest "the pen is mightier than the sword"!). A motto could be worked into a ribbon or other regalia as well, which would be cool. Please send suggestions to me.

I have bugger-all idea what to do for regalia for the Provost...

Kingdom Come

It's kind of been assumed that the College will have some kind of presentation at Coronation, presenting the charter to the Crown or something. While this is a good idea, I'm also mindful of the fact there is going to be a mind-numbing amount of court at this event, I'm sure my will to live will be tested! Would it be better to do a presentation at another event, like Festival perhaps?

If we do something at Coronation, I was thinking something quick and simple, such as the presentation of a "mission statement" rather than a full charter (which would take ages to calligraph). Anyone want to put their hands up for this? Again, we need to talk about this, I can't be expected to organise every detail to everyone's satisfaction (why is that mailing list suddenly looking like a great idea?)

Well, that's enough from me...I eagerly await your thoughts, suggestions and ideas; after all, this is not my College, it's **yours**, tell me what you want and we'll see if we can make it happen. See you at Coronation!

Your servant,
Giles, Provost
By my hand this 23rd day of May

Print Master- Award of Arms

General

Paper size: A3 (297mm x 420mm)

Border: 25mm (minimum) - 30mm (preferred) all around

Layout: Portrait or Landscape

Design elements:

- Text as below
- Decorative capital, outlined suitable for colouring
- Border or decorative elements as appropriate, outlined suitable for colouring. Please avoid large areas of black in the design.
- Prominently displayed shield, style as appropriate, minimum 75mm high. There should be no other heraldic elements (helmet, mantling etc).
- Space for Kingdom great seal (75mm diameter).
- Space for Crux Australis seal (50mm diameter).
- Space for Royalty and Crux signatures (20mm per recommended), plus space for relevant titles.

Design Notes:

- The design should be a good example of a particular period style, with options for flexibility in colouring and additions. The script and illumination design must be derived from contemporary sources. Supporting documentation is encouraged.
- Script should be a clear and legible period hand
- All work must be in opaque black ink on white paper, suitable for reproduction. All work should be of high standard.
- Ensure **all** lines are ruled, **all** spelling is correct, and all elements are correctly positioned and aligned.
- A completion guide should accompany the master. This should include references to source materials/ examples, guides for pen size and line heights, and guides for colouring the design.
- The Provost of the College reserves the right to determine suitability for reproduction.

Text:

To all and singular unto whom these presents shall have come¹, <King's first name²> by Right of Arms King of Lochac and <Queen's first name>, by Grace and Courtesy Queen of Lochac give greeting.

Know³ that in consideration of the service given to Our⁴ realm, We do of Our especial grace award and confer unto Our subject <recipient's full name⁵> certain ensigns armorial: <blazon of Arms⁶> with all rights, duties, privileges, insignia and precedence appertaining thereto, as fully and freely as any person hitherto has done the same, in accordance with the Laws of the Kingdom of Lochac. In⁷ witness We have affixed hereto Our hands and seal, this <date⁸> Anno Societatis <year⁹>. The¹⁰ College of Arms, finding no impediment to the arms here depicted, acknowledges their exclusive assignment unto <recipient's full name>.

¹ If appropriate, the first line or part thereof may be in a different script, capitalised, versals etc.

² The King's name may begin a new line or paragraph. Only the first name of the Sovereign or Consort are used.

³ May begin a new line or paragraph. Capital may be illuminated if appropriate.

⁴ All pronouns dealing with Royalty are capitalised.

⁵ Leave enough space for the recipient's full name: a whole line is recommended.

⁶ Leave enough space for blazon: two whole lines are recommended. The following word "with" should begin a new line.

⁷ May begin a new line or paragraph. Capital may be illuminated if appropriate.

⁸ Leave enough space for the date and month to be written out in full.

⁹ To be written in Roman numerals. The words "Anno Societatis" may be left out of the design for the completing scribe to fill in if desired.

¹⁰ May begin a new line or paragraph. Capital may be illuminated if appropriate.

