

the society for creative anachronism

Kingdom of Northshield

Chronicler's Handbook



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Being a Chronicler in the Kingdom of Northshield

Introduction

The Governing Documents of the SCA (Corpora) gives a pretty sketchy outline of the duties of the local chronicler. The simplest explanation is that you are the editor and publisher of your local newsletter. You are the center for printed communications in your group. You are **responsible for collecting and distributing information** to your group in printed form. You should be available to assist with any form of printed material, though you are not required to do so.

The Society Chronicler's Policy defines a local or organizational newsletter as *"...a recognized publication of a recognized group or educational organization within the SCA, Inc. It cites that local group or educational organization as its publishing authority, keeps its funds in an official SCA, Inc. branch bank account, and has as its editor a chronicler who is warranted by the Kingdom Chronicler. No other publications are considered for this purpose. Local chroniclers who are not warranted by the kingdom Chronicler cannot use branch funds for the publication of the newsletter"*.

This is an important job. Without a newsletter, miscommunication can become a desperate problem, regardless of the size of your group.

The newsletter is a controlled environment in which information is released, decisions tabled and ideas expressed. Since you are the editor, you are responsible for ensuring that the contents are presented with the image of the Society in mind. Bias, prejudice and political intrigue have no place in your newsletter. You may print editorials, but must handle them in a responsible manner (see the section on editorials). Your information comes from the members of your local group. If you cannot get along with those individuals, or if you publish information which is harmful or insulting to them, your sources will disappear. You need the support and trust of your readers to be successful as a chronicler. If you publish and collect information responsibly, with the needs of your entire group in mind, you can make the newsletter a valuable resource. It can be used to increase membership, resolve communication problems, educate and help your fellow gentles gain respect within the Society.

A well-written and well-executed newsletter represents a willingness to communicate among yourselves, even if you are having problems. Maintaining that sort of communication is your responsibility. That is the gist of your job. Now let's look at how to go about it...

Requirements of the Local Chronicler

By Corpora, you are required to:

- Be at least a family member of the SCA, Inc.
- Carry the following disclaimer in your newsletter: *“This is the (name of publication), a publication of the (branch or other organization) of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (Name of publication) is available from (real name and address of publisher). It is not a corporate publication of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. and does not delineate SCA policies.”* You may add anything you wish before or after the disclaimer, but this form must be used for the disclaimer itself.
- New chroniclers (referred to as chroniclers-in-training) must send a letter of intent to the Kingdom Chronicler. This letter should include your name, both mundane and SCA, your address and telephone number (please don't forget your area code), your e-mail address, the name of your newsletter and the group for which it is published, and the frequency with which you publish. Likewise, if you are leaving the office, you need to contact the Kingdom Chronicler with your resignation. It is also a good idea to recommend your successor. You will find the Kingdom Chronicler's name and address in the Stallari listing in the *Northwatch*.
- A report of monetary transactions must be made to your exchequer on a regular basis. (See “Funding” under Important Legal Information for more information.)
- Your warrant is listed on a roster which is signed by their Majesties and the Kingdom Chronicler. It normally comes out shortly after the beginning of each reign. You may be warranted when you meet the above requirements and publish a number of issues. Different Kingdom Chroniclers and Stallaris may have different requirements. Be sure to check with the Kingdom Chronicler for current requirements. You are not warranted by your local seneschal or anyone else in your group and cannot be removed from office by them for any reason. Still, their opinion does count and your

higher officers will listen to them. You may be permanently removed from office only by the Kingdom or Society Chronicler. Their Majesties may remove you from office for the duration of their term, though this is extremely rare. You can be removed from office for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to make proper financial reports. (See “Funds”)
- Repeated failure to send a copy of the newsletter to the Kingdom Chronicler and any others he or she may designate.
- Use of subscription funds for unauthorized or personal purposes. (See “Funds”)
- Use of copyrighted material without permission. (See “Copyright”)
- Failure to abide by Society Publications Policy.
- Use of material which is in poor taste. (See “The Chronicler as Editor”)
- Infringement of Kingdom Law.
- Politicizing of the office. (See “Editorials”)

Different Classifications of Chroniclers

The definition of a local Chronicler is listed above. There are two other classifications of Chronicler in the Kingdom of Northshield:

At-Large Chroniclers — These Chroniclers produce newsletters for special interest groups, such as archery, dance or equestrian. There are also at-large chroniclers who produce newsletters for kingdom offices, such as the Heralds office and the MOAS office. Their funding is through an SCA account. These Chroniclers report directly to the Kingdom Chronicler or an appointed deputy.

Web Ministers — A Web Minister is the maintainer of World Wide Web pages for a local group in the SCA.

Now on to the visible part of your job, publishing a newsletter.

The Bare Necessities

The Corpora requirements for your newsletter are as follows:

- Disclaimer
- Name of Newsletter
- Date of Newsletter
- A listing with names (mundane as well as SCA), addresses or phone numbers (area codes, too) of your local officers. Be sure to remind people to use mundane names in mailing and calling.

That is all that is required. However, that alone would be a bare newsletter. After all, your job is to print information. Your newsletter content should reflect the needs and abilities of your group. No set guidelines for content is perfect for all groups. Use your judgement in regards to what else is needed in your newsletter.

This listing of newsletter content includes items traditionally found in Kingdom of Northshield Newsletters. It is meant as an example, not as a requirement.

Calendar of Events — Local as well as Kingdom. Do not make a copy of the calendar from the *Northwatch* and simply paste it into your newsletter. The *Northwatch* is a copyrighted newsletter. However, the information from the *Northwatch* can be retyped and pasted in. Some chroniclers also include anniversaries of historical events to make the calendar more interesting. You may wish to include birthdays of local folk as well. Many of these items are also available on the World Wide Web (see Appendix B, Sources for Chroniclers).

List of Local Meetings — The six basic questions in journalism are *who, what, when, where, why, and how*. Ask these questions when making a roster of meetings.

You may include guild meetings as well as business meetings, fighting practices and even household meetings if your local households wish.

You may wish to save space by including this information on your calendar. However, it could make your calendar two or more pages long. You can put this listing on another page for reference.

Officer Letters — Officers often use the newsletter to dispense information and advice to the people of the group. By learning what the other officer's office descriptions are and learning about *their* jobs, you will learn what to ask for in their letters. When collecting letters, remember that not everyone knows how to write for publication. If your local officers do not turn in letters consistently, it could be that they have difficulty expressing what they are doing. Offer assistance and keep after them. Explain how the PR can help to attract interest in those activities. If need be, take the information verbally (at a business meeting, for instance) and write the letter yourself. Use caution when using information from email list serves. Taken out of context, some of these messages may portray a different message than the original poster intended. If you do this, always be certain to double check the information with them and have them approve the final draft. This is to avoid misinterpretation.

Local Reports — Lord Tough Guy was made a knight at such and such event; Lady Hossenpfeffer had another baby; Lord Stick Jox has some rattan available, etc... You may wish to ask your chatelaine (if you have one) if he/she would like to write this.

Mailing Lists — Generally, you are asked to provide the group members with a local mailing and phone list. Some local groups actually publish an annual membership directory. It is suggested that you publish one once a year and update it regularly. Keep a copy of the updated list to hand out to new members. Be certain that you do not publish an address if the owner requests. Always get area codes. In today's fast paced, electronic world, you should also include members email addresses. Consider also those who have moved out of town and would still like to hear from their old group. In the computer age, it is exceptionally easy to keep an up-to-date data base of names and numbers and simply print the most recent listing. Always date your information and check it against your chatelaine and seneschal's. (Your seneschal will love you for taking care of this difficult task. The information you keep goes into the seneschal's domesday report.)

Other News — Known World news, BoD decisions, etc... Remember not to copy information from original publications without permission. Always cite your sources.

Articles — Historical essays, poems, stories. Remember that the stated objective of the SCA, Inc. is education. The articles included in your newsletter help to meet this goal. If you have difficulty obtaining articles, here are some suggestions:

Old Research Papers — Almost everyone in the SCA has studied history at one time or another (no pun intended). Ask the members of your group for old research papers.

Patterns, Recipes, Filk Songs — For more ideas on getting your group involved with your newsletter, see Appendix A. Many people wish to be published, but are too modest to offer their own work. Look around. Ask everyone. If you have the resources and wish to publish articles, but have naught but a group of swordjocks who aren't interested, collect "No Sh-" stories and publish them "as told by..." Correspond with other newsletters and obtain permission to reprint articles. Some prominent members of the Society write general articles to publish in any newsletter. Always remember to get a release signed for publication of articles and artwork. (See the section on copyright and the form in the back of this handbook.)

Editorials — No one requires you to allow editorials in your local newsletter. However, no responsible and effective newsletter refuses to print them. Still, they are tricky. Few people know how to write an editorial. Any editorial should be constructive and pertain to the group as a whole. Responsibly, you should not publish any editorial with malicious content aimed at one or a group of individuals, even if you (as the editor) agree with the content. Many times a gentle who feels disassociated or angry with a decision will write an editorial, thus leaving you the job of deciding whether or not to print it. See *Editing for Tone*.

Misc. — Book and event reviews, quotes, gossip (not recommended), wedding invita-

tions and so forth.

Forms — If your newsletter is large enough, it is a good idea to include an SCA membership form. This must be printed exactly as it is in the *Northwatch* and *Tournaments Illuminated*. Do not reduce or alter this form in any way. (This is the only exception to the copyright rule.)

The first four items listed are the backbone of your newsletter. If that is all you can afford to publish, that should be all that you publish. However, the more your group gets involved with the newsletter, the more support you will have for it.

That's it for the skeleton of your job. Now let's take a look at some important legal information.

Important Legal Information

Although the following information was researched from SCA and mundane resources, it is not necessarily SCA policy. Please always double-check any legal information.

Copyright Law

It is strongly suggested that you study U.S. and/or Canadian copyright law. It does pertain to not-for-profit publications. You can find guidelines in almost any style manual, in articles written for *Tournaments Illuminated* and in some of the sources listed in the Bibliography.

The SCA, Inc. also has a Deputy Society Chronicler for Copyright Information. This gentle is available to answer any question pertaining to copyright. (See Appendix A, Sources for Chroniclers.)

For one who has never dealt with copyright, the laws can be confusing and discouraging. To make it easier, follow these guidelines:

- Your file should contain a form for artists and authors to permit publication of a work. Use this form for all submissions except letters and regular columns. *Protect your contributors' rights.*
- If there are multiple contributors for a submission, you must have a permissions form from each one.
- Keep the permission form in a file with a copy of the issue(s) the work was used in. Provide information of prior publication in that issue of your newsletter.
- All articles and artwork belong to the creator, as do the rights to that work. Even when the permission form is signed, the creator can allow his or her work to be published elsewhere. You do not have the right to allow or disallow any other publication to use this material.
- Do not copy material from another publication for use in your newsletter. All previously published material is copyrighted, or assumed to be copyrighted, unless it is specifically deemed otherwise.
- There are books of copyright-free material, such as clip-art books. Many Dover books

allow limited use of artwork. In fact, there are many sources available for copyright-free electronic clip art available today. Always check material you wish to use to be sure it is not copyrighted, and check to see if there is a limit on the use you can make without additional permission.

- There are other sources of copyright-free material, such as ftp sites on the Internet and the Associated Ancient Press. Many authors give what is called “blanket” permission to use their material. *There is still no definition of the legal bindings pertaining to network copyright. With electronic publishing becoming more common, however, this should change soon.* To be safe, try to track down the author and get written and signed permission to publish the material.
- If you have any doubts, don't publish it.

Postal Regulations

If you are mailing your newsletter, you must conform to current postal regulations. These include:

- The folded side of pamphlets **must be on the bottom** of the addressing information.
- Pamphlet style newsletters should be tabbed on the open side. As of this writing, a single tab in the center is required on an 8.5 x 5.5 pamphlet with the fold at the bottom. If the fold is at the top, you must tab the bottom and BOTH sides. Postal regulations change constantly. If you are not certain your format conforms to postal regulations, check with your local postmaster. They are generally very willing to offer assistance and advice.
- First-class mail going to Canada must be in an envelope. In some cases, the weight of the envelope may add to the postage.
- A first-class letter stamp covers material less than one ounce. This would include a pamphlet containing five sheets of paper. Newsletters weighing more than one ounce require additional postage (in 2004, a digest-size newsletter with a maximum of 11 sheets of paper requires a 60 cent stamp).

Advertising

In 1986, the Corporate Office of the SCA, Inc. decided to disallow advertising in local newsletters. This was to eliminate mass confusion concerning forms and the expenditure of funds derived from local advertising.

The gist of this is that you may not include advertising or accept payment for advertisements. However, a patron of your newsletter (an individual or company which donates money for your publications costs) may be recognized by including a one or two line acknowledgment at the top or bottom of a page.

Example of sponsorship acknowledgement:

This page is sponsored by
Billy Bob's Armoring, Anytown, USA
www.billybobs.com

You can also include a simple line stating: "The <name of newsletter> gratefully acknowledges the support of <name of advertiser>."

The question has been raised concerning the advertisement of local services, such as seamstresses or armor makers.

A simple way to cover all advertising in your newsletter is to include the following in your disclaimer:

"The <name of newsletter> does not accept PAID advertising. The appearance of any advertising in the <name of newsletter> does not represent an approval or endorsement of the merchandise by any officer or body of the SCA or <name of group>."

Funds

All monetary transactions must be reported to your exchequer on a regular basis. All funds pertaining to the chronicler's office must go through the group funds and must be accounted for by the exchequer. You may be a signatory on the group account. This could make it easier to make purchases for the newsletter (printing, etc.). Still, you must provide the exchequer with receipts for purchases and have them approved by the exchequer. This rule applies to funds donated by the group in the form of subscriptions or other donations. *It is a very good idea to have a working relationship with your Exchequer.*

Of course, if you donate your services and materials (you copy the newsletter and mail it out at your own expense), then you have very little bookkeeping to do (except for tax purposes).

There has been a great deal of confusion about the Chronicler's Subscriptions Due Worksheet. Your exchequer should be able to help you with this. All you really need to do is provide your exchequer with the number of subscriptions you have (if your funding is based on subscriptions) AFTER your last issue before the report is due. Since your funds go through your group's account, the exchequer should have all other totals for your newsletter account. However, it is a good idea for you to keep track of your funds as well.

You may not hold the office of exchequer or seneschal. You may not be living with or closely related to either of those officers. If this is the case, you may apply to the Kingdom Chronicler for a variance in this rule.

Financial Considerations

Publishing a newsletter is a great deal of fun. Like many fun things, it costs money. The following section contains information to make the financial end of your job less difficult.

Funding a Newsletter

Unless your local group can take the full responsibility of funding their newsletter (an ideal and rare situation, but not unheard of), you are going to carry a good deal of the tab for the newsletter. Here are some suggestions to ease that burden.

Donations

Your publication is an important source of information in your group. Most gentles are willing to help with that in mind. Remind your fellow gentles that their donations are tax deductible. In very small groups (10-15) donations can fund a newsletter entirely. The larger you are, the more difficult it is to survive on donations alone.

Subscriptions

In a large group, you may find subscriptions are the best way to fund your newsletter. Many groups are reluctant to implement a subscription rate. One argument against subscriptions is that some people have difficulty coming up with money for the *Northwatch*, much less a local newsletter. You might suggest to those people who can that they sponsor an individual, or pay extra on their subscription in order to cover the payment for others.

In case you run into arguments against a subscription, here are some advantages you can bring up:

- Subscriptions help you and your exchequer keep track of your funds more closely.
- Subscriptions help your group keep track of growth.
- Subscriptions allow a steady flow of funds for the newsletter and cut down on the amount of begging on the part of the Chronicler, which generally makes the Chronicler a more pleasant person to be around.

Here is a list of what you need to consider when implementing a subscription:

Number of Newsletters: You must always send a copy of your newsletter to the Kingdom Chronicler, The Kingdom Seneschal, and Their Royal Majesties. It is a good idea to send a copy to Their Highnesses and your Regional Deputy Kingdom Seneschal. It is suggested that you also exchange newsletters with other Chroniclers and make extra copies to pass around to new members and to interested folk at demos. Remember these copies when figuring your costs.

Printing Costs: Figure the number of pages per issue (average). Multiply that by the number of issues printed per year. Multiply that number by the printing cost per page. This number is the average printing cost per year.

Mailing Costs: Figure the number of issues you mail out multiplied by the cost of postage.

Cutting Costs

Most fledgling newsletters have little money to work with. For those newsletters, it is suggested that you keep your content to the bare necessities. Information is important to any size group and is the main purpose of your newsletter. Therefore, reliable information is more important than the beauty and artistic content of your newsletter. Still there are many ways to control the cost of your newsletter and leave you space to add some extra items.

- Check with the members of your group to see if anyone has access to a copier or mimeograph machine. See if that person could and would be willing to run off copies.
- See if any group members would be willing to make copies at their own expense to give to their friends. Many households are willing to carry the cost for their members. Make sure you know who is getting the newsletter to avoid duplicate copies.
- Hand out newsletters at meetings rather than mailing them. Keep a list of those who collect copies at meetings.
- Publish only the bare necessities. Those can be fit onto one or two pages.
- Use a half-page rather than a full-page format. This economic move cuts your costs in half.

The Chronicler as Editor

The most common complaint your higher officers will hear when someone is upset with you is “But the chronicler is just supposed to correct grammar and spelling, right?”

This is not a correct assumption. You are to edit for grammar and spelling, but you are also to maintain the values of the Society through your publication. This means editing for tone, importance, and editorial content of material. These three elements can make or break newsletters and groups.

The newsletter is an important form of communication for your group. That makes it a tempting tool for politics and personal arguments. The following sections are designed to help you make editorial decisions regarding these elements.

Editing for Tone

In the SCA, people supposedly go out of their way to be nice to one another. However, as in any social setting, a situation may arise where differing views will have individuals and groups slamming one another. Here is a fictional example of this occurring in publication. Imagine that the officer who wrote this letter is under a great deal of stress:

Greetings from your <officer>, “My fellow officers have been giving me a lot of grief lately because I am not doing things the way they think I should. If you disagree with this, tell one of them. I think they are just over-reacting, as they do sometimes. I don’t have the thingamabobs done because Bob said he would help me and never showed up.”

The rest of the letter is inconsequential. The positive aspects of the newsletter were overshadowed by the tone set in that one letter. Intrigue is ugly in any form. It has no place in a publication that represents the Society. This example implies defamation of character of those gentles it refers to. The recommended way to handle such a situation is to discuss it with the author (and with no one else). Point out to him the offensive portions of the piece and ask him if he wishes to change it. Present a less offensive version of the same letter.

For example: “I have been told that some gentles

are dissatisfied with my level of performance. If you have a suggestion for how I can improve my office, please speak to me.” If he refuses to change the original wording, explain that you do not feel this is an appropriate representation of the courteous aspects of the SCA and that you do not wish to publish it. If there is still a problem at that point, call your Kingdom Chronicler and ask for help. You have the whole-hearted support of the Kingdom in matters such as this.

Editing for Content

A less sticky form of editing is content editing. This is the creation of a grammatically correct and readable article.

The first thing an editor learns is that most writers are sensitive about what they write. Some really don’t mind having their work red-inked to death, but most want the original article changed as little as possible. Remember this when editing for content.

Many Chroniclers are also writers in one form or another. Even if you do write better than your fellow gentles, that does not give you license to rewrite the poem your Baroness submitted. Most likely, she will not appreciate it.

Make changes only when the meaning of an article is obstructed by poor structure, poor wording, inaccuracy (always make certain the facts of an article or letter are correct); or make changes when unacceptable language is used or copyright is violated. Never change the author’s original meaning.

Be careful not to interject your own comments in a letter or article. If you absolutely cannot resist, offset your comments in brackets or outside of the piece with an “—ed.” following them. Do not let someone else take the credit (or blame) for something you wrote.

It is strongly recommended that you check with the writer before publishing a letter or an article which has been extensively edited or rewritten. If you cannot sit down with the author to do so, call him/her. Do not print something that might not be acceptable to the creator. It might be unacceptable if the author has not approved it.

Editorials

There may come a time when a gentle in your group wishes to write an editorial. There may also come a time when you have the desire to do so yourself.

Before discussing the elements of an editorial and acceptable topics for editorials, there is something that is important for every Chronicler to remember:

Stating “this is my opinion,” does not absolve any person from printing malicious, slanderous or libelous material. Items that specifically injure a person or group of people in or out of the SCA are not only unchivalrous and contrary to the goals and ideals of the SCA, they are illegal in the modern world. Do not print them.

While it is sad to have to write on such a subject in this manual, this sort of situation has arisen in the past. Please, act with courtesy in mind, and it will never happen again.

What is an editorial?

An editorial is an article which states the opinion of the writer in the form of a specialized essay or argument. Editorials in the SCA should follow a particular form of reason.

1. Presentation of a problem.
2. Reasons the problem exists.
3. Proposed solutions to the problem.

How to Decide Whether or Not To Publish an Editorial

First, check to see that the above elements are there. The first two elements generally are. The last, however, tends to be forgotten in the vigor of an unhappy writer. Next, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the problem significant to my group?
- Will the group benefit from the publication of this editorial?
- Is the language used in this editorial acceptable for this publication?
- Does this editorial conform to the ideals/goals of the SCA?
- Is the stated problem real?

If the answer to any of those questions is no, do not publish the editorial.

Examples of Acceptable Editorial Subjects:

Alcohol at events – pros and cons

Assisting at events – an attempt to get more help

Better period garb – why are so many gentles wearing tennis shoes?

Webministers

A Webminister is the maintainer of a page or pages on the World Wide Web, a part of the Internet.

The Webminister should bear in mind that his page has the potential for reaching several thousand people. Thus, the page should reflect the goals and images of the SCA.

The Webminister is required to carry the following disclaimer:

“This is the recognized Web Page for the <group name and status> of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. The maintainer of this page is <your name, with link to your e-mail address>. It is not a corporate publication of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. and does not delineate SCA policies. In cases of conflict with printed versions of material presented on this page or it’s links, the dispute will be decided in favor of the printed version.”

The Webminister should make every effort to ensure that his links to documents are up-to-date.

Webministers in Northshield are local officers, not deputies of the local chronicler. Their warrants are issued by the Kingdom Chronicler, and all reports are due as outlined in the local officer reporting schedule published in the *Northwatch* and on the Northshield web site.

A warranted Webminister will have an official link on the Kingdom of Northshield web page. All redirects from the northshield.org web site will have the appearance of being virtual domains of the official Northshield web site. All official links at northshield.org to the local group web site will be structured as <http://localgroup.northshield.org>. *This is not to be interpreted as an endorsement in any way for the service provider for northshield.org*, but simply an administrative and management tool to create a unified appearance to electronic communications in Northshield.

Webminister warrants are issued through the Kingdom Chronicler. To be considered for warrant in Northshield, the local webminister must follow guidelines set forth by Corpora and the Northshield Webminister Handbook.

Due to ever changing technologies, policies regarding web sites, email and electronic communications in general are in a constant state of change. Policy changes will be posted in the *Northwatch*, on the Northshield Chronicler’s e-list, as well as communicated directly to local webministers.

Conclusion

As all things change, so do policies and procedures. By the time this handbook is approved and printed, there will likely be more changes. Someday this handbook will be obsolete.

In order to stay abreast of things, you should attend meetings and read the *Northwatch* and any other correspondence your Kingdom Chronicler sends you. In order to improve things, you should also speak and write to these people.

Remember that communication is our business as Chroniclers. We must communicate with each other.

A Guide to Newsletter Design

The main purpose of a newsletter is communication. Whether you are attempting to communicate internally-with current members of your organization-or externally-with persons who are potential members or who are in a position to help you-the newsletter must both catch and keep the reader's attention.

Be Consistent

A newsletter is not a scrapbook. If you are receiving submissions from many different sources, edit them to make them more consistent. Every writer has their own style and preferred format. It is your job as chronicler to take this information from various sources and create one homogeneous publication from them. Try to use a well thought out layout for your information. Try to be consistent from issue to issue as to where the consistent information is placed. For example, if you print a calendar of events, your readers will find it easier if it is always on the same page each month.

Likewise, try to keep some consistency from one article to the next in each issue. Drastic changes in style can be disturbing to the reader. That is not to say that every page should look just like the next. In fact, subtle changes in key elements draw the readers attention to the article. This is most effectively done with headline treatments and carefully chosen art elements.

Format

When deciding to publish a newsletter, you need to determine a format that will identify your newsletter. Once established, try to be consistent. This is the physical appearance of your newsletter — size of the finished pages, size and style of type fonts, width of columns and depth of the pages and many other factors.

Don't hesitate to take advantage of the experience of others when you are designing the layout of your newsletter. Every magazine, newspaper and book can be a source of inspiration. Look at them closely, not the text, but glance at the way the pages "look and feel". Look at how the columns and sidebars are laid out, at how the heads and

subheads are handled. Sketch out your ideas for your newsletter. Don't settle for the first design you come up with. Find something unique and attractive and most important — readable.

Many computer programs come complete with templates for newsletters and magazines. These can be a great help when you are starting out. But don't be afraid to change these templates. They are designed to be idea generators. Take the basic concept and make it uniquely your own!

Size

Most paper in the United States is based on 8.5x11 inches. Variations on that size — 5.5x8.5, 11x17 — are the most economical. The most common ways of laying out and binding your newsletter will be:

- 17 x 11 doublesided, folded in half to 8.5 x 11, saddlestitched (stapled in the fold)
- 8.5x11 double sided, folded in half to 5.5x8.5, saddlestitched
- 8.5x11 single sheets, double or single sided, stapled on the left margin (either a single staple in the upper left corner, or stapled down the side.

Paper

There is no need to but special paper for your newsletter. It will only add to the cost of printing and possibly the postage. You can use standard white 20# bond. A slightly heavier colored stock could be used for the cover you decide that you don;t want a self-cover. A heavier cover has a better chance of surviving its trip through the postal system's sorting equipment. However, the added weight of the cover paper may add to your postage costs.

Also, be aware that all paper, like the wood it is made from, has a "grain". Folding with the grain will give a crisper fold than folding across the grain. Unfortunately, most 8.5x11 paper is grain long (the 11" dimension), which folds best in the 11" direction. Which ever direction your grain is, it is best to force a crisper fold using a wooden stick or pen barrel.

Layout and Newsletter Design

When planning the layout of your newsletter, keep your reader in mind. They use your newsletter as an information tool.

Make certain that the readability of your newsletter comes first. A fancy, artistic layout is of no benefit if nobody can follow it or it is difficult to read. If your newsletter is formatted on a standard 8.5x11 page, consider using a multiple column page (like the one you are reading now). Shorter lines of text are much less tiresome on your eyes than longer ones. Also, make sure that the main portion of your page is either justified or left justified. Reading more than a few phrases in right justified or centered copy is difficult, and your readers may stop reading.

Try to keep your layout as consistent as possible from month to month. Your readers may look for certain items first each month, like a calendar of events, or a particular officer letter. If you place these items in the same relative position each month, your readers will thank you.

The key to good newsletter design is balance. Balance official reports with some lighter content. Offset the heavy text of your newsletter with some simple illustrations or artwork. As you read commercial magazines and publications, be observant of what the professionals do to help guide the reader through the story and from page to page.

Typesetting

The recent explosion of the personal computer market has drastically changed the chronicler's job. In years past, the newsletter would be typed, pasted up into page layouts, and then taken to a printer to be reproduced. Modern PCs make this technology obsolete. You can do the entire job yourself, for a considerably lower cost.

Your choice of computer software to create your newsletter will depend on your budget. Many times, your computer may come with some basic software. You can create some very interesting pages with some basic word processor software. Or you can use a page layout program like Microsoft Publisher, Pagemaker, InDesign or QuarkXPress. Whichever software you choose to

use will give you many options on how your finished pages will look. Plus, there is an almost inexhaustable source for fonts and graphics available on the world wide web. Much of this software is in the public domain or very inexpensive shareware.

Fonts

While we are on the subject of fonts, please keep the section on consistency in mind. Just because you have a lot of fonts doesn't mean that you should use them all at once. A page with many fonts used on it is tiresome to read. This is one place where the KISS method applies. Simple, well thought out pages are much easier to read, and frankly, easier to create.

Serif fonts (the little "feet" on the letters) are usually easier to read for your body text. Most modern serif type styles are based on the Italian incised styles of the 15th and 16th centuries, as this is where the art of typography was born, and they created what they were familiar with. After many centuries of use, they still prove to be the best choice for most long documents.

This document is an example of the use of a serif font. You can add interest and emphasis to your page by adding style variants such as **bold** and *italics*. Avoid using bold faces frequently, because it will look like you are shouting! Likewise, ALL CAPS IS HARD TO READ FOR MORE THAN A FEW WORDS.

Many online sources have fonts that you can download into your computer. There are also inexpensive specialty font collections available from many sources. Some of these suppliers also have some clip art collections which are great for use by SCA chroniclers.

Choose your type fonts with care. Try printing the same page out using different fonts to get the feel for how they look on paper. Fonts always look different on paper than they did on your computer screen. Pick what works and try to stay with it. Once your readers realize that this is your style, they will appreciate your work even more.

A Few Font Do's and Don'ts

Many of these ornate fonts work great for headings, but become very tiring to read large blocks of text. Blackletter fonts are a good example of this. Blackletter fonts should NEVER be used in

all caps, as they become nearly illegible:

There are thousands of typefaces available to the graphic designer today. THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF TYPEFACES AVAILABLE TO THE GRAPHIC DESIGNER TODAY.

Script fonts should also be avoided for this same reason:

There are thousands of typefaces available to the graphic designer today. THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF TYPEFACES AVAILABLE TO THE GRAPHIC DESIGNER TODAY.

Add Some Variety to Your Pages

The playful addition of some novelty fonts can add just the right touch in certain situations.

american uncial – there are thousands of typefaces available to the graphic designer today.

Aunt Judy:

There are thousands of typefaces available to the graphic designer today.

Papyrus:

There are thousands of typefaces available to the graphic designer today.

Goudy Text:

There are thousands of typefaces available to the graphic designer today.

Vespian:

THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF TYPEFACES AVAILABLE TO THE GRAPHIC DESIGNER TODAY.

Caslon Antique:

There are thousands of typefaces available to the graphic designer today.

Lucida Calligraphy:

There are thousands of typefaces available to the graphic designer today.

Reproduction

Your choice of reproduction methods for your newsletter will depend on several factors. How

many do you need to print? How many pages are you printing? Small local groups often print their newsletters on the chronicler's inkjet or laser printer. This can be cost effective only in small quantities and puts a great deal of stress on the chronicler's equipment.

The most common reproduction method is the photocopier. Today's digital copiers produce amazing results. In fact, many printers are installing "production copiers" to supplement their more conventional printing presses. For shorter runs (20 to 1500), a production copier is an economical choice. Many of these modern digital copiers also have computer interfaces and function just like a network printer. Simply print to the copier and have it do your work for you. Commercial copy centers like Kinkos use this type of equipment, but they are also becoming common in many more traditional printing providers. Many of these suppliers can also economically print in full color. Check with your local sources to see what is available in your area.

Have Fun!

So you have this awesome responsibility to bring the official news to your group. That doesn't mean that you can't have fun while you do it.

Spread out your work and have a collate, staple and mailing party. Talk about local events during your gathering and you have an instant editorial brainstorming session.

Finding the subject for your content is often the biggest challenge to local chroniclers. Let your readers tell you what they want to see. Then all you have to do is edit and reproduce it.

Sources for Chroniclers

The Associated Ancient Press (TAAP) — An organization that collects articles and artwork from original creators, obtains publications permissions and redistributes material for use in SCA newsletters and related publications.

SCA, Inc. Deputy Society Chronicler for Copyright-

Internet Sources for Chroniclers

to be added shortly

Selected Bibliography

This is a sampling of reference materials and books you may want to check out.

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THE SOCIETY FOR CREATIVE ANACHRONISM, INC. - FINANCIAL REPORT

Branch: _____ Period: _____ to _____.

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE WORKSHEET

Use this form only if you sell multiple issues of your newsletter in advance (subscriptions). If not, the Balance of Subscriptions Due is zero.

Price of one subscription: _____ (Use additional sheets for
 # of Issues per Subscription: _____ other subscription rates)
 Price Per Issue: _____
 Tax Year: _____

Month/Year Subscription Expires	(A) # of Issues Remaining	(B) # of Subscriptions Expiring this Month/Year or Issue	(C) Price per Issue	(A) x (B) x (C) Balance of Subs Due
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BEYOND 2 YRS		Calculate Separately		
Pg 10 Net Newsletter Income C for this newsletter				Total :
				Total Other Sheets:
Pg 1 Line II.a (End)				Grand Total:

Use additional sheets if necessary

Kingdom of Northshield Publication Permission Form

I, _____, being known in the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc., (hereinafter referred to as 'SCA') as, _____ do hereby certify that I am the sole/joint author/creator of the drawing/poem/story/article/song/other entitled _____. As a joint author/creator of this work, I give the names of all others involved in the work's creation:

Please check either Option 1 or Option 2, depending upon your preference. If you select Option 1, please sign and date the form, and leave the other portions blank.

- Option 1: I hereby release all claim of ownership of the copyright of this work, and hereby transfer ownership of the copyright to the SCA for use by its members.
- Option 2: I hereby grant to _____, Kingdom Chronicler for the Kingdom of Northshield, the right to publish my work in the Northwatch. Proper credit to the author(s)/Creator(s) must be given when published.

I realize that I retain all other rights to the submitted work. In the event that I am not the sole author/creator of the submitted work, I shall assist the kingdom Chronicler in obtaining a properly completed copy of this release form from all of my co-authors/co-creators. I further realize that my work (with the exception of poetry and artwork) may, due to space availability or editorial concerns, may be edited or abridged by the Kingdom Chronicler, unless I specifically deny such editing below. I furthermore understand that any such editing or abridgment will be done with such care as to maintain the integrity of the content or context. If my work is published in an edited/abridged form, the Kingdom Chronicler will place the text "Abridged from original text by <name>." at the bottom of the work. In addition, I request/authorize the following: (check all that apply)

- This work may not be edited or abridged.
- I wish to have my work removed from the kingdom Chronicler's files and destroyed on: _____.
- I authorize the kingdom Chronicler to release my work for publication in other publications of the SCA, provided that a copy of this form be given to the Chronicler of the requesting publication. This authorization will expire on: _____.
- Please send me a copy of the publication in which my work has been used.
My address is as follows: _____

Signed this _____ day of _____, being _____ in the common reckoning of years.

Signature (legal name): _____