



the society for creative anachronism

Kingdom of Northshield Webminister's Handbook A.S. xxxix (2004) Edition

The Webminister is an important officer, playing many roles and serving many people. The Webminister's pages represent the SCA to people both inside and outside of our organization. In this capacity, we act as Chatelain(e)s and the pages we design should put our best foot forward. Webministers are also an information source for the populace of the Society. We strive to disseminate information as quickly, easily and efficiently as possible to the populace. In this respect, Webministers are a special type of chronicler, and most of the core rules for the chroniclers also apply to this office.

I. Definitions

- A. A webminister is a person responsible for maintaining the content of a page or pages on the World Wide Web. This title is intended to designate the person who exercises editorial control over the content of the page, not the person who maintains the underlying computer system on which the page resides. While these may be the same individual, the SCA is no more concerned with the regulation of the computer service itself than it is with the choice of printers for a paper newsletter.
- B. The office of webminister is closely related to, but not subordinate to the office of chronicler. It is hoped that local webministers and chroniclers will work closely together for the good of their groups. However, as the two jobs have rather different requirements and responsibilities, it is not appropriate that one should be subordinate to the other. Also, separating the jobs allows groups to have one without the other. Some groups which aren't required to have a chronicler may still wish to have a webminister. This is perfectly acceptable.
- C. The offices of chronicler and webminister are separate and equal offices, however there is no prohibition on the same person holding both offices if that meets with the approval of the local group.

II. Requirements

- A. Local webministers must be paid members of the SCA, Inc., and must have regular access to the Northwatch. This means that either they should have their own subscription, or that someone at the same address must be a subscriber. They are also expected to READ the webminister's column in the Northwatch regularly. From time to time updates to these policies will appear there. Local webminister's are expected to subscribe to the Northshield Chronicler's e-mail discussion list. Policy changes and discussions will be presented there occasionally as well.
- B. There are no formal requirements other than the membership requirement imposed by Corpora for the position of Local webminister. However there are several strongly recommended qualifications:
 - 1. The ability to create and maintain web pages.
 - 2. The ability to create and manipulate graphic images, or have a skilled graphics person available.
 - 3. Access to reasonably priced web page hosting. This could be a section of a group mem-

bers personal web page allotment that comes with most internet access, but is not recommended. A group's web page needs a permanent home, not one that changes every time the office does. Contact the Kingdom webminister to discuss hosting your groups website as part of the northshield.org domain.

III. Creation/Removal/Resignation

A. Authority

1. The final authority to create and remove local webministers rests with the Kingdom Chronicler. Local seneschals may make recommendations, which will usually be followed, however they do not have the authority to take unilateral action regarding the creation or removal of a local webminister.

B. Appointment of Local webministers

1. When a local group needs a new webminister, they should follow whatever selection process they are comfortable with locally. Once they have selected a volunteer who is acceptable to the local group, that person may request to be added to the roster of warranted webministers. The process for doing so consists of sending a Change of Officer Form to the Kingdom Chronicler indicating that they have been selected by their local group to be their webminister. This form should ideally be signed by the prospective webminister, the Local Seneschal and the outgoing webminister. Since the outgoing webminister is not always available, depending on their reasons for giving up the job, their signature may be omitted if necessary. This letter, accompanied by proof of the prospective webminister's membership and e-mail address, should be sent to the Kingdom Chronicler. Proof of membership may be a photocopy of your membership card, a recent Northwatch label in your name or a confirmation postcard from the Registry. E-mail is not acceptable for an initial warrant request, nor is a scan of your membership card.
2. Warrants are listed on a Warrant Roster which is signed by Their Majesties (or by a designated warranting authority) and the Kingdom Chronicler. Warrants are usually issued at each Coronation. You are officially warranted when you receive a confirmation e-mail from the Kingdom Chronicler. All current warrants will also be published in the Northwatch.

C. Resignation of Local Webministers

1. Local webministers may resign at any time. It is expected that they will give sufficient notice (30 – 90 days) and attempt to find a replacement before leaving the job (circumstances permitting).
2. Outgoing webministers are required to turn over all files (paper and electronic); financial records; login names and passwords and other supplies promptly and in good order.

D. Removal of Local Webministers

1. A local webminister may only be removed by the Kingdom Chronicler. Should a local group be unhappy with its webminister, they have the option of requesting of the webminister that they resign. The webminister is free to decline. Should they be unable to come to a mutually agreeable resolution of the situation, they may then request that the Kingdom Chronicler remove the local officer.
2. Acceptable reasons for removal of a local webminister include:
 - a. Non-performance of their duties.
 - b. Repeated inclusion of inappropriate material, as defined by the Corporate publications policy.
 - c. Repeated omission of required information, as defined by the Corporate publications policy.
4. This is not an exclusive list. Other valid reasons for removal may exist, depending on circumstances. However, removal is a last resort. The first resort should always be discussing the situation between the involved parties. All complaints in which that has not happened before bringing it to the attention of the Kingdom Chronicler will be rejected until that has happened.

5. No local webminister will be removed from office without first being warned that there is a problem and given an opportunity to either explain why the situation that appears to be a problem isn't really one, or fix the problem.
6. All removal requests must be made in writing.

IV. Responsibilities

A. Financial

1. If there are expenses associated with the existence of a web page maintained by a warranted webminister, they should be handled by the local Exchequer in accordance with the financial policies of the Kingdom of Northshield and the SCA, Inc.

B. Reporting

1. The local webminister's primary report is the local groups web page. In addition, they are required to report to the Kingdom Chronicler annually. These reports are due by January 31st. They should consist of the webminister's name (legal and SCA), their address and phone number, group name, e-mail address and their proof of membership. If a valid and current proof of membership is on file with the Kingdom Chronicler, you still have to file a report, but you do not have to include proof of membership.
2. Failure to report by February 15 will result in a notice being sent to the local webminister in question. If no response is forthcoming within 30 days the local webminister will be suspended, and their local Seneschal informed that they should select a replacement.
3. If a local webminister's membership expires before the annual reporting date, the local webminister must send a photocopy of their new membership card to the Kingdom Chronicler as well as their name (legal and SCA), address and phone number, group name and e-mail address immediately. This is in addition to their annual report.
4. An e-mailed scan of your membership card or other proof of membership IS NOT acceptable. If you have to send in proof of membership, it has to be sent via USPS or other acceptable carriers. In all other cases, e-mail is acceptable for reporting or warranting requests.

V. Web Page Contents

A. Disclaimer

An SCA web page maintained by a warranted webminister must include 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 its links, the dispute will be decided in favor of the printed version."

B. Links

The webminister should make every effort to insure that his links to documents are up to date. Links to other SCA-related web pages should differentiate clearly between those which connect to other recognized pages, and those which connect to other pages of interest. You are free to have as many of the latter as you like, so long as it is clear when someone follows a link off your page, onto something with which the SCA has not agreed to have its name associated.

1. Local web sites must include links to the Kingdom web site and the SCA, Inc. web site.
2. Official links to local group sites from the Northshield.org web site will have the following structure: <http://localgroup.northshield.org>. This is being done so that the links on the Northshield web pages can be kept as current as possible, regardless of where the local

group's web pages are hosted. It is the responsibility of the local webminister to notify the kingdom Chroncler and Webminister of any changes in the local group's URLs. This is not an endorsement of the ISP for northshield.org, but simply an administrative tool to ensure a consistent presentation to the public from Northshield's web site.

3. Display the follow disclaimer prominently above any links to merchants or vendors:

“The following links connect to sites over which neither the SCA or [group name] has any control. The [group name and status] does not accept PAID advertising. The appearance of links to merchants in this page does not represent an approval or endorsement of the merchandise or services by any officer or body of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc., or by the [group name and status here].”

C. Forbidden or inappropriate material

The web page shall not contain any material that is forbidden or inappropriate in printed newsletters, as listed in section I.B.14.a of the Corporate Publications policy. A copy of the Corporate Publications policy is available on the Kingdom Chroncler's web page.

D. Privacy

1. The web page should include contact of local officers. Local webministers must follow the corporate privacy policy approved at the April 2000 meeting of the Board of Directors. This policy states:

“Personal information will not be published on any SCA-recognized Internet site without first gaining permission from the individuals involved. Permission must be received in writing.”

2. While the Board of Directors has indicated that an e-mail exchange asking for permission and receiving an affirmative response back is considered “written” for the purpose of this policy, you are strongly encouraged to use the form in Appendix A instead of e-mail. It is recommend that you keep this “permission slip” on file until 3 to 6 months after the individuals information has been removed from the site.
3. Publishing on the web potentially has a much greater exposure than in a paper or electronic newsletter, and the privacy of those officers who are concerned about that fact should be respected.
4. Local Group address books should only be made available on the web if all persons whose information is listed have given their permission. Individual webministers are free to implement more restrictive policies in regards to privacy of personal information, but must meet the minimum standards laid out here.

E. Reprinting Material from Other Sources

1. It is imperative that we respect copyrights. Placing copyrighted material on your group's website without permission is a very serious matter. Reprinting material by someone with a litigious temperament could result in very serious legal charges, both against the offending local officer and the SCA itself. As such, if copyrighted material appears on your group's website without the appropriate permission from the author, you will get one warning. If it happens a second time, your warrant will be immediately suspended, and your group will be asked to select a replacement.

VI. Permission to publish photographs

The standard rule in journalism is that journalists gain access to private sites at the discretion of the person controlling the site. In SCA terms this would be the site owner, the seneschal, and the autocrat. The person controlling the site may set rules for access which may limit what may be photographed.

If the site is a public place, you do not need the permission of the site owner or anyone else to take pictures. As an invited participant you also do not permission to take pictures at a private event, although you should respect the wishes of others and use some common sense (for example, no

flash photography around the listfield or during court). However, before you publish any pictures, you may need to get the permission of anyone who can be identified in the picture before using their likeness on a web page or in another publication.

While permission is not strictly necessary from individuals engaged in an activity, it's a good idea to ask whenever practical (for example, a battle at Pennsic would not be practical). If you wish to take pictures of individuals, it is appropriate (and recommended) to ask and receive permission first.

In general, if in writing a caption for a photo, and you could identify the individual specifically, you need written permission from the subject before you use the picture, whether in a newsletter or on a website.

This is a very sensitive issue to many people, so when considering whether or not to post a picture on a website, ask yourself, "Is the photo tasteful, and complementary to the subject and the SCA?"

VII. Monetary Matters and Commercial Advertising

A. A significant distinction between a Webminister and a Chronicler is financial. Webministers do not collect subscriptions and frequently fund the web site as a personal expense. It is important to remember that Webministers do not spend or receive money in the name of the SCA or their local or regional groups.

B. If the web site is a personal expense (not reimbursed by the group):

1. Sites run by a warranted Webminister as part of his/her office must not generate any revenue from commercial advertising. No advertising banners, webrings, or other information may be automatically inserted onto a site by a third party, except those which are either required as a condition-of-service by a "free web site" or which are themselves maintained as part of a sanctioned SCA web site.
2. Great care must be used to ensure that links put forward by such automatic links will not cause a negative image for the organization, appear to associate the SCA in any way with a third party, or cause anyone to question our tax-exempt status. If your site requires such links, consult with your Kingdom of regional officer for assistance in determining whether the requirements are acceptable.
3. In the case of a web-server provided by an ISP (Internet Service Provider), you may give credit at the bottom of the opening page as shown below:

"Server space for this site provided by [ISP, Inc. with link to their main page]"

C. If the web site is a group expense:

1. Sites paid for out of SCA funds or contracted directly by an SCA group may not contain any advertising banners, webrings, or other information automatically generated by third parties that are not maintained as part of a sanctioned SCA site.

VIII. The Webminister as Editor

It is important to remember that your page represents the ideals and goals of the SCA and your local chapter or guild, not those of any one individual. Also, a good page is supposed to support the individuals who are viewing it. These people may be local members, SCA members from around the world, or non-members looking for more information about the Society. So, when designing a page, keep the ideals and tenets of the SCA in mind: truth, honor and chivalry.

A. **Tone:** The content of a web page is primarily of an informational nature and should represent that facts only. Sections that represent a group or activity should be in a positive light, avoiding the 3 D's (deception, derogatory comments, and distasteful content) at all costs. This should also be used as a rule of thumb for what links to put on your pages to other pages on the web.

B. **Content:** Make sure that your web pages are grammatically correct and readable. Avoid poor wording, incorrect spelling, and vague, inaccurate, or hard to understand sentences. A group's web pages should be clear, concise, and to the point. Another important factor to consider is

the color scheme. The colors used on a web page should be easy to read and print out.

- C. Editorials: An editorial is the opinion of the writer to perceived problems with proposed solutions. It can also simply be the musings of a person who wants to talk about his or her SCA experiences.
- D. Since a web page is the voice of the group and not a single person, editorials generally have no reason to be on group web pages, unless they are informative, accurate, and consistent with the tone that the groups web pages should portray. Also, since the web pages represent the SCA at all levels to the public, it is not good to air one's laundry for all to see. Personal opinions may be expressed on personal pages or through normal e-mail channels. If a prospective author has problems with these rules, refer the person to the Kingdom superior.

IX. Miscellaneous

- A. All Local webministers are expected to have a copy of the Society Publications policy in their files, and to have familiarized themselves with its requirements. Copies are available from the Kingdom Chronicler, or on-line at <http://www.northshield.org/chronicler>.
- B. As the world wide web grows in importance, there will be issues that will require updates to this document. Read your Kingdom newsletters and maintain regular contact with your regional and Kingdom superior(s) to keep abreast of policy changes and updates.

Permission to Publish Personal Information

I, _____, being known in the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc., as _____, do hereby affirm that I give the _____ permission to publish the following information about me on the Internet:

SCA Name: _____

Modern Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Web page: _____

Activities/Interests: _____

Awards: _____

Signed this _____ day of _____, being _____ Gregorian.

Sign legal name here: _____

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): _____