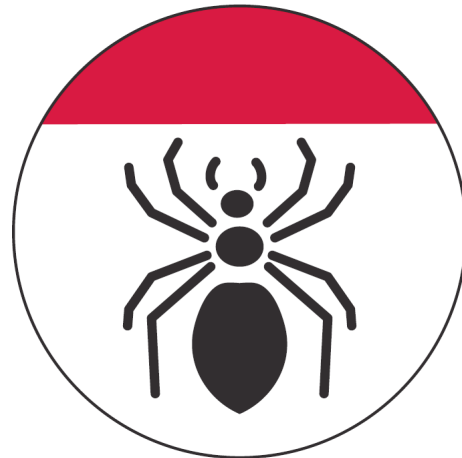


the society for creative anachronism

Kingdom of Northshield

Web Minister's
Handbook



a.s. xli (2006) edition

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information about this publication

Published by the Kingdom of Northshield, a branch of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc.

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Introduction

The web minister is an important officer, playing many roles and serving many people. The web site represents 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. Web ministers 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, web ministers are a special type of chronicler, and most of the core rules for chroniclers also apply to this office.

DEFINITIONS

A web minister is a person responsible for maintaining the content of a web site. This title refers to the person who exercises editorial control over the content of the web site, not the person who maintains the underlying computer system on which it resides. While these may be the same individual, the SCA is no more concerned with the regulation of the computer service than it is with the choice of printers for a paper newsletter.

The office of web minister is closely related to, but not a deputy of the local chronicler. It is hoped that local web ministers 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. Separating the jobs also allows groups to have one without the other. A group which isn't required to have a chronicler may choose to have a web minister.

The offices of chronicler and web minister 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.

Local Web Ministers

REQUIREMENTS

Local web ministers 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 web minister's column in the *Northwatch* regularly. From time to time updates to these policies will appear there.

Local web ministers are expected to subscribe to the Northshield Chronicler's e-mail discussion list. Policy changes and discussions will be presented there occasionally as well.

There are no formal requirements other than the membership requirement imposed by Corpora for the position of Local web minister. However it is strongly recommended that web ministers have the following qualifications:

1. The ability to create and maintain a web site.
2. The ability to create and manipulate graphic images, or have a skilled graphics person available.
3. Access to web hosting for the group's web site, preferably through a service paid for by the group. (See "Web Hosting")

SELECTION AND WARRANTING

The final authority to appoint and remove local web ministers rests with the Kingdom Chronicler. The recommendation for a new web minister should come from the local group, following their internal officer selection and replacement practices. Once that person has been selected, they should notify the Kingdom Chronicler for final approval. The local officers, including the seneschal and the outgoing officer, cannot appoint or remove a local web minister without the approval of the Kingdom Chronicler.

To become warranted, new web ministers must do two things: First, fill out the on-line Change of Officer form. Second, download and print the paper Change of Officer form, have it signed by your group's officers, and send it to the Kingdom Chronicler. These forms can be found on the Northshield web site:

<http://www.northshield.org/>

You should include a letter of introduction, and mention any previous officer or web site experience.

The Kingdom Chronicler will let you know of your acceptance or explain if there's a problem.

Your warrant will be listed on a roster which is signed by Their Majesties and the Kingdom Chronicler. The warrant roster normally is signed at or shortly after the start of each reign, and is effective until the end of that reign.

These requirements may change, so check with the Kingdom Chronicler and Kingdom Web Minister for current requirements.

RESIGNATION

Local web ministers may resign at any time. It is expected that they will follow their local group practices or policies regarding officer replacement, or at a minimum give sufficient notice (30 – 90 days) and attempt to find a replacement before leaving the job (circumstances permitting).

Outgoing web ministers are required to turn over all files (paper and electronic); financial records; login names and passwords; and other supplies promptly and in good order.

REMOVAL

A local web minister may only be removed by the Kingdom Chronicler. Should a situation arise which seems to indicate removal of the officer is necessary, the group should make all attempts to handle it initially, preferably following the procedures suggested in Appendix A of the governing documents of the SCA, Inc., entitled Suggested Channels for Complaint and Appeal. Should these procedures not work, the local group should then forward the matter in writing to the Kingdom Chronicler for resolution, which may include removal from office. It should be remembered that removal from office is a last resort, and all other attempts to correct the situation shall be attempted first.

Examples of acceptable reasons for removal of a local web minister are shown below. This is not an exclusive list, and other reasons may exist:

- 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.

Responsibilities

FINANCIAL

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

REPORTING

Local web ministers are required to report to the Kingdom Web Minister quarterly. The dates these reports are due can be found on the Northshield web site, are announced in the *Northwatch*.

Reports should include the web minister's name (legal and SCA), address, phone number, group name, e-mail address and membership number.

Failure to report on time will result in a notice being sent to the local web minister in question. If no response is forthcoming within 30 days the local web minister may be suspended, and their local Seneschal informed that they should select a replacement.

MISCELLANEOUS

All web ministers are expected to have a copy of the Society Chronicler's Policies, and to have familiarized themselves with its requirements. Copies are available from the Kingdom Chronicler, the Kingdom Web Minister, and on the Northshield and SCA web sites.

As the web grows in importance, there will be issues that require changes in policy. Read your Kingdom newsletters and maintain regular contact with your Kingdom superiors to keep abreast of policy changes and updates.

Web Site Contents

DISCLAIMER

An SCA web site maintained by a warranted web minister 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 e-mail link>. 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.

OFFICER ROSTER

The group's web site should include contact information for the local officers. However, you must also respect their privacy, and avoid posting addresses or phone numbers which they do not wish to make publicly available. This is covered further in the section "Legal Information."

LINKS

Local web sites must include links to the Kingdom web site and the SCA, Inc. web site:

<http://www.northshield.org>

<http://www.sca.org>

It is the responsibility of the local web minister to notify the Kingdom Chronicler and Kingdom Web Minister of any changes in the local group's URLs.

Group web sites may include links to other SCA-related web sites, but should differentiate clearly between those which connect to other recognized SCA sites, 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.

The following disclaimer must be displayed prominently above any links to non-SCA web sites:

The following links connect to sites over which neither the SCA nor <group name> has any control. The <group name> 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>.

Web ministers should make every effort to ensure that links on their web sites are up to date.

INAPPROPRIATE MATERIAL

A group's web site must not contain any material that is forbidden or inappropriate in newsletters or web sites, as detailed in the Corporate Publications policy and the Kingdom Chronicler's Handbook. These documents are available on the Kingdom Chronicler's page on the Northshield web site:

<http://www.northshield.org>

THE WEB MINISTER 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.

TONE

The content of a web site 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.

CONTENT

Make sure the contents of your web site are grammatically correct and readable. Avoid poor wording, incorrect spelling, and vague, inaccurate, or hard to understand sentences. A group's web site should be clear, concise, and to the point. Another important factor to consider is the color scheme. The colors used on a web site should be easy to read and print out.

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.

Since a web site is the voice of the group and not a single person, editorials generally have no reason to be on group web sites, unless they are informative, accurate, and consistent with the tone that the group's web site should portray. Also, since the web site represents 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 web sites or through normal e-mail channels. If a prospective author has problems with these rules, refer the person to the Kingdom superior.

Legal Information

PRIVACY

Local web ministers must follow the corporate privacy policy as set forth in the Society Chronicler's Policies. This policy states, in part:

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 - email is acceptable.

Personal information includes real names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses.

You don't need permission to post an officer's SCA name and office-specific email address (e.g. "seneschal@castelrouge.ca"). You would only need permission to include the officer's real name, personal email address, or other personal information.

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 the back of this handbook instead of e-mail. It is recommended that you keep this "permission slip" on file until 3 to 6 months after the individual's information has been removed from the site.

Publishing on the web potentially has a much greater exposure than in a paper or electronic newsletter, and the privacy of those officers should be respected.

Local group address books should only be made available on the web if all persons whose information is listed have given their permission. Individual web ministers are free to implement more restrictive policies in regards to privacy of personal information, but must meet the minimum standards laid out here.

COPYRIGHT LAW

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.

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

It is strongly suggested that you study US and Canadian copyright law. It does pertain to not-for-profit organizations. 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.

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

- Do not copy material from other web sites, mailing lists, or publications. **All published material is assumed to be copyrighted, unless specifically stated otherwise.**
- Do not trace, modify, or "Photoshop" someone else's photo or artwork. This is referred to as a "derived work," and can't be used without the original artist's permission.
- Do not assume that a medieval work of art is public domain. The current owner may have legal rights over reproductions.
- There are clip-art and font collections available for use on web sites. These are often copyright-free, but you should always read any legal information or licence agreements

accompanying it, in case there are restrictions on its use.

- If you use artwork, photos, or written material which were submitted for inclusion on your web site, you should have the authors/artists sign a permission-to-publish form. Attach a printed copy of the submitted material, and keep it in your office files.
- 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.
- If you have any doubts, don't publish it.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs are subject to the same copyright laws as written or artistic material. You cannot use a photo unless you have the permission of the owner (usually the photographer).

Photographs can also raise concerns about privacy. 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 limiting 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 need 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 list field or during court.

However, before you publish or post any pictures, you may need to get the permission of anyone who can be identified in the picture.

In 2005, the SCA's legal committee concluded that permission is *not* needed to publish a picture of someone taken in public place, such as at an event. This does not apply in circumstances where they may have some expectation of privacy, such as in a tent or private encampment.

You should avoid using photos or captions which may harm someone's public image, regardless of where or how it was taken. If it could expose them to public humiliation or scorn, you should not post it.

When in doubt, ask the people in the photo if it's okay to post it. If they say yes, ask them to sign a permission form with an attached copy of the photo, and keep it in your records.

Web pages containing photos must contain a notice clearly stating how people depicted in the photos can contact the web minister to request their removal. The web minister must comply with all such requests; or, alternatively, alter the photos to render the person unrecognizable, if the photo's copyright holder has given permission for such alterations.

Web Hosting

A group's web site can be hosted in the web space allotment included with a member's personal internet access account, but this is not recommended. A group's web site should have a permanent home, not move every time there's a new web minister.

A better option is for the group to pay for a web hosting service. There are many such services, offering a wide range of pricing and features.

If the group can't afford to pay for web hosting, there are a number of services which provide free web hosting. These usually insert advertising banners, web rings, or other content; such insertions are allowable if they are a condition of the service. However, great care must be used to ensure that any such third-party insertions will not cause a negative image for the group, 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 Web Minister for assistance in determining whether the requirements are acceptable.

If web hosting services are donated 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's
name and link>”

If you have trouble finding a suitable web hosting service for your group, contact the Kingdom Web Minister for advice.

It is strongly suggested that more than one person have the administrative passwords for the group's web site. This ensures that the web site can continue to be maintained if the web minister becomes unavailable for any reason. (This is another reason to avoid using someone's personal web space.)

Finances and Ads

A significant distinction between a web minister and a chronicler is financial. Web ministers do not collect subscriptions and may fund the web site as a personal expense. It is important to remember that web ministers do not spend or receive money in the name of the SCA or their local or regional groups without approval from the group's financial committee.

Sites run by a warranted web minister as part of their office must not contain any advertising banners, webrings, or information inserted by a third party, unless required as a condition of service by a “free” web server being used to host the site, or unless the inserted material is maintained as part of another sanctioned SCA web site.

Appendices

SCA RESOURCES FOR WEB MINISTERS

The Kingdom Chronicler's and Kingdom Web Minister's pages on the Northshield web site contain many of the forms you will find helpful. There are also "Resource" sections with links for fonts, artwork for devices and officer badges, etc. to help you dress up your web site.

<http://www.northshield.org/>

The Northshield Chroniclers e-mail list is a forum for all chroniclers and web ministers in Northshield. Information on joining can be found on the Northshield Kingdom Chronicler's web page.

The SCA Web Ministers e-mail list is a forum for all web ministers in the SCA. Information on joining can be found in the Resources section of the SCA web site.

<http://www.sca.org/>

The Society Chronicler's Copyright Deputy is meant to be a resource to chroniclers at all levels. Questions about copyright law can be sent to copyright@sca.org

WEB DESIGN RESOURCES

Here are links to a few web sites about the design and creation of web sites, including some free online tutorials to help you get started.

World Wide Web Consortium: The W3C creates and develops web standards and guidelines. Their site includes the official HTML specification, HTML and CSS validators to test your web site for coding errors, articles and tutorials.

<http://www.w3.org/>

The Bare Bones Guide to HTML: A concise reference which lists all the HTML 4 tags.

<http://webach.com/barebones/>

HTML Code Tutorial: A tutorial on HTML.

<http://www.htmlcodetutorial.com/>

W3 Schools: Free tutorials on HTML, CSS, XML, JavaScript, PHP, MySQL, and other web technologies. Also has some articles about web hosting options.

<http://www.w3schools.com/>

HTML Goodies: Another site with free tutorials on HTML, CSS, JavaScript, PHP, etc.

<http://www.htmlgoodies.com/>

Web Pages That Suck: Covers the aesthetics of web design, with articles & discussions about what makes a good web site and critiques of badly designed web sites.

<http://www.webpagesthatsuck.com/>

Permission to Publish Personal Information

I, _____ (legal name), do hereby affirm

that I give _____ (name of branch) permission to

publish the following information about me on the Internet:

SCA Name: _____

Modern Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Personal web site: _____

Activities/Interests: _____

Awards: _____

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

Signature (legal name): _____

Web 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 2, please fill in the relevant information and check any additional options that apply.

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 _____ (name of web minister),
Web Minister for the _____ (name of branch),
the right to publish my work on that group's web site. 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 Web Minister in obtaining a properly completed copy of this release form from all of my co-authors/co-creators. I further realize that, due to space availability or editorial concerns, my work (with the exception of poetry and artwork) may be edited or abridged by the Web Minister, 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 Web Minister 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 web site and all copies destroyed on: _____.

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

Signature (legal name): _____