

The Scribe's Tale...

Part One

Why Scribe?

This is a damn good question actually. Given the seemingly thankless tasks they do for the Society. However not all is as it seems and the diligent scribe in the Kingdom can achieve great recognition across the populace.

For me it was a combination of sheer enjoyment at the process of calligraphy and scroll creation and I suppose a willingness to assist others enjoy this game in which we all indulge (the Current Middle Ages).

In my humble opinion some of the most splendid Arts & Science work in the SCA can be found in the field of Calligraphy and Illumination. This is not to dissuade those not yet Masters of this field rather to encourage them, 'the only difference t'wixt thee and me is time...'

First, a few clarifications.

Calligraphy is the art/skill of forming letters and such makes up the bit you read on the scroll. I state it as an art/skill as I feel that anyone can become an acceptable calligrapher with good instruction and practice, i.e. it is actually a skill for which a talent is helpful but not required. An art, on the other hand, I feel, needs an innate talent to build from, to wit, music and painting.

Illumination is also an art/skill in that although some forms require great ability in painting (miniatures) others such as acanthus leaf and celtic knot-work borders do not. So do not feel you cannot be a scribe without a degree in Fine Art that is so much hokum.

A scribe is someone who helps with the scribal arts, pure and simply. It could be someone who only does calligraphy, someone who draws borders, paints in previously outlined images, even words the text in a period style for another to complete.

Presently the SCA in the UK and Ireland have moved from separate shires into the realms of being the Crown Principality of Insulae Draconis, more or less, a Principality-in-waiting. This is a most wonderful opportunity to get involved with the scribal arts as new awards will be created and the scribes will have a lot of say in how such awards can be presented. Regardless of this, the look of appreciation in the recipient's eyes can make the whole endeavour worthwhile. The local nature of Crown Principality will also allow more scribes to see their work presented in court without travelled the breadth of Europe. Remember Kingdom coronations cycle through the three areas; Insulae Draconis, Central (Europe and Africa) and Scandinavia, Viceroy won't be cycled outside of the British Isles.

So go on give it a try you never know you might just like it ☺