



# THE HERALDIC CRAFTSMAN



## THE SOCIETY OF HERALDIC ARTS

SEPTEMBER 2012

No. 80





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## MEMBERSHIP OF THE SOCIETY OF HERALDIC ARTS

Since its inception almost twenty-five years ago, the Society has grown until today it includes many of the most respected heraldic craftspeople, authorities and those interested in the creation of arms in a wide range of media from all around the world.

### Associate Membership

Associate Membership is open to those who are interested in heraldic arts and who wish to support the objectives of the Society but are not professional heraldic artists or craftsmen themselves.

### Craft Membership

Candidates for Craft Membership are artists or craftsmen whose work comprises a substantial element of heraldry and is of a sufficiently high standard to meet the requirements of the Society's Advisory Council. Successful applicants for Craft Membership are entitled to endorse their work with the words Member of the Society of Heraldic Arts, and may also use the highly prized post-nominals S.H.A.

Prospective members for either category may choose to submit an application on line from the web site: [www.heraldic-arts.com](http://www.heraldic-arts.com) or pulled down as a pdf, completed and sent to the Hon Membership Secretary, David Hopkinson, SHA, Hon FHS whose address is on the next page.

### *The Heraldic Craftsman*

Welcome to issue 80 of *The Heraldic Craftsman*. In this issue we continue to dwell on craft and client-focused matters, not least the just framing of work. The article in the last issue by the noted conservationist Ruth Bubb excited much interest from craft members and the editor has no doubt that the contributions from Elizabeth Karney and Pamela Tribe in this and succeeding issues will merit the same response. Gratitude, too, to Kevin Karney for his splendid artwork. Members will also find our salute to Pete Taylor and we hope much else besides, not least a glimpse at the heraldic treasure held by the UK Chamber of Shipping. The next issue is due out at Christmas time to mark the beginning of our 25th Anniversary. If you want to receive yours, please ensure you have paid your 2012-2013 dues and made out your standing order (UK and Ireland) for 2013.

*Cover: The arms of the General Council of British Shipping, predecessor to the current UK Chamber of Shipping. Executed on hardwood sometime in the late 1970s – early 1980s. This beautiful representation stands some 2 ½ feet tall and brings the grant (1979) alive. The Chamber's records do not relate who the skilled artist was.*

#### Blazon:

*The shield: Sable in chief two ships' wheels and in base within water barry wavy Argent and Azure an Ancient Ship of three masts in full sail Or.*

*The crest: Out of a mercantile crown Or on a dexter Cubit Arm proper the hand grasping two Staves Or saltirewise to the sinister of a Beacon sable enflamed proper and a trident Azure.*

*The torse and mantle: Sable doubled Or.*

*Supporters: Dexter a Sea Lion and sinister a Sea Dog sejant regardant Azure each finned and gorged with a mercantile crown Or and armed and langued Gules.*



## The Society of Heraldic Arts

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## Chairman's Message

My first message to you as Chairman concerns exciting new opportunities for our Society. Our recently revised Constitution allows for the creation of a Faculty of Fellows. This includes provision for the election of Honorary Fellows – awarded in recognition of outstanding service to the Society. The Council is delighted to announce that Pete Taylor and Ralph Brocklebank have been nominated as Honorary Fellows and have agreed to accept the honour. It's now up to you, the Craft and Associate members, to turn out in large numbers at next year's AGM in order to confirm the election of two valued and respected friends.

As we approach our 25th anniversary year it seems appropriate that we should elect a Faculty of Fellows. Initially it will be the Craft Members who nominate colleagues for election to the Faculty and the Hon. Membership Secretary who will administer the process. Thereafter, four Fellows will be appointed to serve as an appointments board to consider applications for Craft Membership and nominations for Fellowship.

Once the Faculty is established, the Society's Craft Members will be eligible for election and should be nominated by two Fellows in writing to the Hon. Membership Secretary. The Constitution does not preclude the nomination of non-members, providing they can demonstrate 'outstanding work in the field of heraldic art and/or craftsmanship' and are considered to be 'pre-eminent in their field.' If elected they would be expected to undertake the responsibilities of a Craft Member and to pay the appropriate subscription. Numerically, the Faculty should not exceed one quarter of the number of Craft Members.

It is important that Craft Members act immediately – you have just 28 days in which to nominate colleagues for Fellowship (see David Hopkinson's Invitation to Nominate on page 9). Although by no means a prerequisite of nomination, it is equally important that there are at least four Fellows who are willing to serve on the Appointments Board – not an onerous office as business is conducted by post and email. *Clare Street*





# Meeting the Test of Time

*Ruth Bubb's article in the last issue of The Heraldic Craftsman elicited responses from artists whose work had suffered from inadequate or inappropriate framing. What advice, they asked, could they give their clients and framers? The answer comes from Elizabeth Karney, the highly regarded framer of three-dimensional objects, below is the first of three articles to share with clients and framers. This issue concentrates on fixing vellum to support boards. In our next issue she will discuss the enemies which bring about deterioration and in the issue after an imagination-inspiring introduction to elegant mounts designed to complement heraldic work.*

As heraldic artists will be so well aware, the two main considerations when framing any work of art are: to make it look splendid and protect its longevity. Clients – and framers – may need to understand that with such unique work, *the most important thing to bear in mind at all times is that everything one does must be reversible, offering it up at any future date untouched and un-affected by its framing.*

## General technical considerations

In mounting vellum, board used in this kind of work must always be of archival museum quality, made from cotton rag. Such boards may be 'buffered' or 'un-buffered'. Buffering is the process of adding acid-neutralising materials such as calcium carbonate or magnesium carbonate to the board pulp to protect against acidic deterioration. When mounting artworks on paper, buffered boards are extremely desirable. However, buffering makes the board somewhat alkaline – which is not good for the protein fibres found in wool, leather or vellum. Thus any board in contact with vellum must be unbuffered.

None of the board used in archival mounting should be made from wood pulp except for the backboard, provided that a barrier-board is inserted to distance it from the vellum.

If, as in an achievement, the work arrives at the framer rolled, it needs to be unrolled gently over several days. Never force it. Hold it flat between good-quality boards, building up the weight as the skin relaxes. A (short-term) humid atmosphere can assist this process. Accept that having-been-rolled is part of the work's character and do not attempt to flatten it within an inch of its life. Tolerate cockling and wrinkles. This should also be the case with documents which have been folded. Let them tell their history.

The best glass to use has ultraviolet-filtering and a low reflectance coating. Avoid the old fashioned diffused-reflection glass with an etched surface.

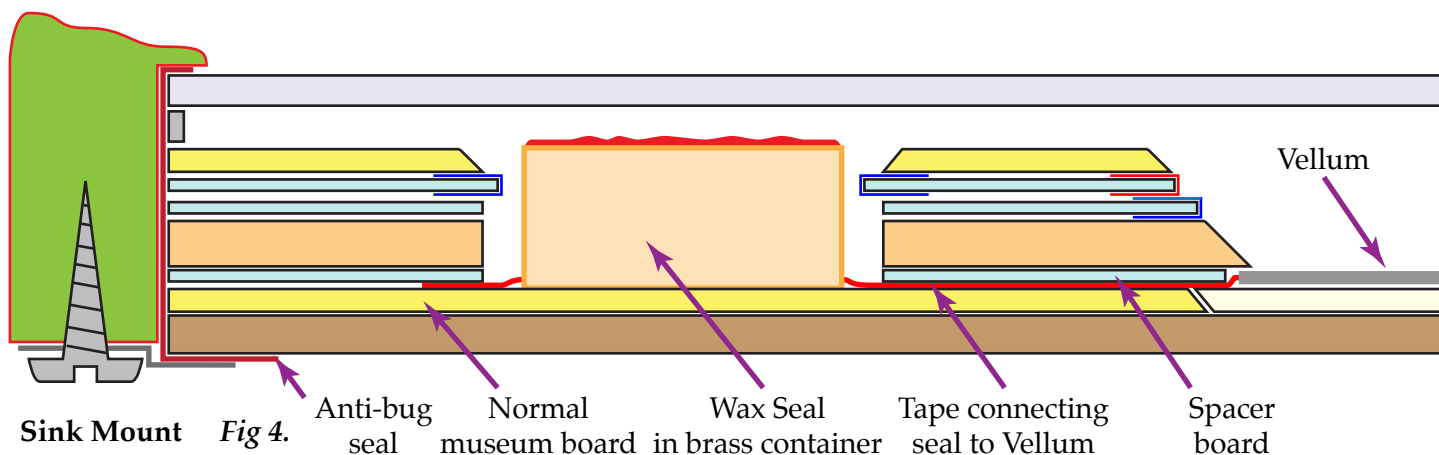


## Methods of holding and supporting parchment

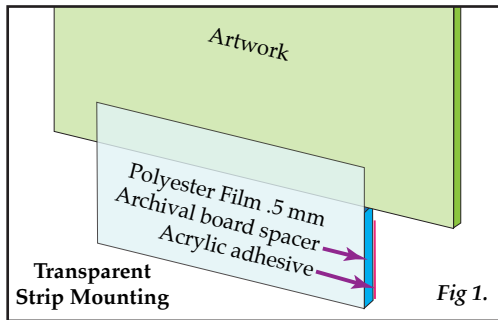
Consider how the artwork is to be attached to the support-board behind it. Even scraped, skin contains oil, which repels the water based starch paste used to attach traditional hinges, so framers should consider reversible techniques:

- Edge strips to be made from folded paper, which encapsulates the artwork edges and is taped to the support-board.
- Polyester (Mylar or Melinex) strips are generally useful for holding things down. They can be threaded through the support-board and taped on the back, or taped down out of sight behind the mount. This is a useful way to hold down tapes, tassels and ribbons or to flatten a curling corner.

**Transparent mounting strips** – *fig 1*. Stiff polyester film which slots over the edges of the artwork. There are various types. They may be used as spaced supports or grouped as continuous strips.

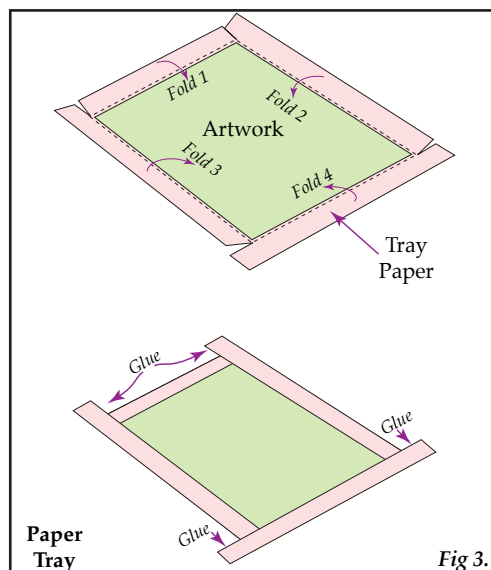
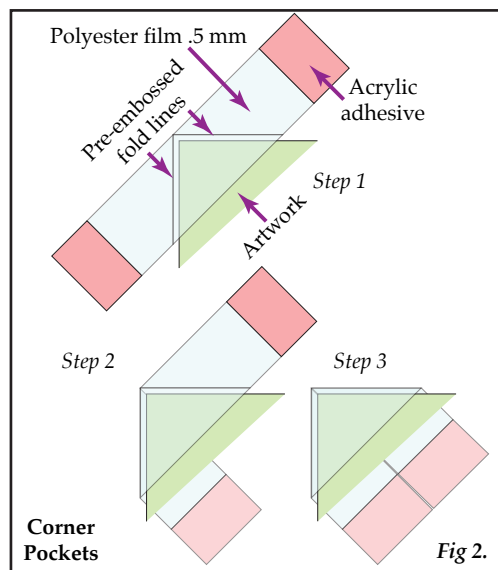






**Corner pockets**-fig 2. These are similar to traditional photo corners, made from stable materials for conservation mounting. Not suitable for large artwork, which would put too much weight on the lower pockets, or for flimsy items which could sag.

**Paper tray**-fig. 3. This is cut from archival paper which is the same weight, or heavier, than the artwork which it supports. Once the artwork edges have been encapsulated, the overlapping paper is taped to the support-board. *All the supporting systems mentioned above should be hidden by the mount.*



**Sink mount**-fig. 4. This is a good way to hold in place artwork which is thicker than paper. The artwork lies on the support-board and is surrounded by 'spacer' board, which has an aperture cut out of it which is

exactly the same size (with room to 'breathe') as the outer edges of the artwork and is the same thickness. The artwork lies snugly in this trough. The mount is placed on top and is taped or glued to the spacer board. The edges of the mount aperture are smaller than the artwork so the mount holds everything in place. This method has been employed in the cross-section illustrated below.

## Seals

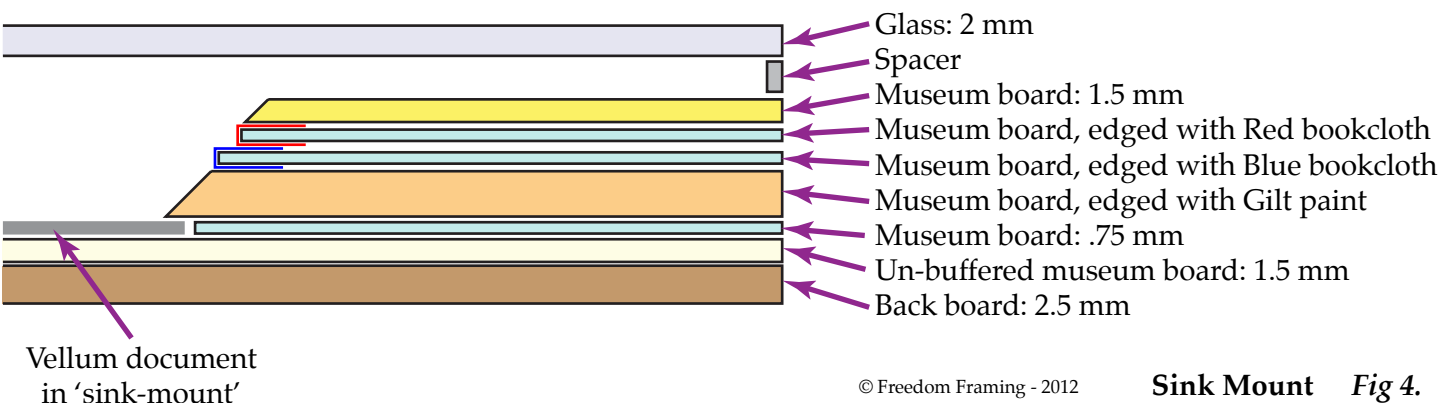
It is pleasing to show that seals are connected to the artwork, rather than having them pop out of mount apertures as unrelated disks. In the method illustrated, the folded lower edge of the vellum had to be held down by a mount edge to prevent it from curling, so the seals, with their tapes, were revealed in a second, but obviously connected, aperture.

The upper mount was particularly deep (see cross-section) which gave the seals extra head-space. The glass, therefore, required a spacer of only 3mm to raise it from the top of the seals.

Seals and seal pans are obviously of different depths. Since the considerations are stylistic as well as technical, these will be discussed in a subsequent article.

*Elizabeth Karney trained as a museum Textile Conservator and studied French framing techniques. After working in Manchester and Birmingham City Art Galleries, she taught creating framing in the Netherlands and Scotland where her imaginative and skillfully constructed mounts (designed to collaborate with the artwork and to reflect its 'personality') has won for her a wide following.*

Elizabeth Karney can be contacted at Freedom Framing, Freedom Cottage, Llandogo, Monmouth NP25 4TP [Elizabeth@Karney.com](mailto:Elizabeth@Karney.com)





# Framing for Eternity

Pamela Tribe

*Amongst the skilled and imaginative colleagues who work with Elizabeth Karney to produce high quality three-dimensional framing is Pamela Tribe, who here describes her work in framing a new achievement.*

Opening the imposing red box stamped with royal cyphers and being shown for the first time a beautifully written and illuminated coat-of-arms on creamy vellum takes one's breath away. Being asked to frame it concentrates and focuses the mind in an extraordinary way. The exquisite artistry, with its mediaeval romanticism, on animal skin - uneven, undulating – evokes an equally respectful response.

Looking at it closely, it seemed to me that it was essential to preserve the glorious impact and integrity of that first impression, and I wanted to make the mounting and framing a balanced complement to the work, not overpowering nor subtracting from the delicacy and vibrant colours. I wanted it to become a whole, with the various mounts and the frame buttressing and supporting the piece, so that at first, the viewer only saw the beautiful heavy script and gilded painting.

In framing any art-work, I have found it important not to separate the components when the first choices are being made. Therefore experimental mounts and frames of different colours and proportions are all shuffled and perused, altered and tested, with spaces and depths considered carefully, before any measurements are taken. The spaces between mounts, and between mounts and frame all add to the experience of looking into, not at, the art-work. Everything which we were about to do had to enhance, if possible, an object which should last for hundreds of years.

So for this assignment I eventually chose a rich, heavy frame with water-gilded surface and ebonised sides, a frame sporting the same shade of gold as the gilding on the vellum. The mounts were to be constructed from cotton-fibre museum board. The under-mounts were edged with book cloth - a wonderful, cooperative, subtle paper-backed textile. After consideration of the predominant colours on the shield and mantling, we chose in this case royal red and royal blue, and

a pale top mount, tinted with pure pigment, which complimented the organic nature of the vellum.

Then attention turned to how the pendant wax seals were to be fixed and displayed. Unlike some horror stories in which the framer actually cut the beautiful grosgrain ribbon between seal and vellum, I felt it was essential to link the two as intended. Colleagues and I then undertook many experiments with circular “windows” and ways to overcome the difference in depth of the vellum and the seals. In the end it was decided to set the seals

in a separate rectangular “window”, displaying their unity by showing the ribbons. This was edged with only one mount of blue book cloth, to link it with the artwork in the main aperture in a secondary way.

That approach was mocked up and it worked well. Depth was another issue and we needed to allow for extra material to protrude at the back. This, too, was modelled and the final version was carefully disguised.

There was a wonderful moment when the glass was placed in position and the whole piece suddenly came together, looking extremely sophisticated. Stainless steel wires were screwed into position, the final gum was taped, and we hugged each other with joy and relief. It was finished, and even we, critical to the end, felt delighted with the result.







# Hark! The Herald Angels sing

Or at least get very, very wet! To make up for the BBC's bitty visuals and awful commentary which so marred the otherwise spectacular Royal Jubilee Flotilla, Mr Thomas Woodcock, Garter King of Arms, rides (or rather sails) to our rescue. Herewith is the astounding (for no other descriptive adjective will suffice) sight of all the heralds of the Commonwealth and their courts afloat together probably for the first time in history, the insignia of each officer decking out *MV Connaught* all over. And a splendid sight it is! *The Heraldic Craftsman* thanks Garter, Mrs Jennifer Long, of Garter's Office, her intrepid photographer husband, Steven. How many insignia can you name off the top of your head?



And just who are the black-suited heavies in the middle you ask? Men in Black? Herald Protection Officers? No, although they could be. Rather it is the Corps of Canadian Heralds in *sable bombazine resplendent with badges of office* including Fraser Herald and Principal Artist, CATHY BURSEY-SABOURIN, SHA . Cathy, in conjunction with the Chief Herald of Canada, Claire Boudreau, created the Chief Herald's splendid new tabard. Cathy's own chain as Fraser Herald is pictured right.



In the lower picture note that as the heavens erupted the English heralds donned their wet weather kit, courtesy of Windsor Herald's foresight.







# The Heraldic Collection of the UK Chamber of Shipping

*Come around the corner into Carthusian Street in the City of London and there, amidst the shops and offices, incongruously flies proudly the red duster, not on the stern of some wayward tanker, but over the offices of the UK Chamber of Shipping. But not for much longer. The south bank of the Thames beckons and so, on the eve of their move, The Heraldic Craftsman was invited to inspect their breath taking collection of Twentieth Century heraldry before it disappears from the City.*

Heraldry has always played a huge role in the history of shipping, for identification and branding. And as British shipping took over the world, its leaders became men of international importance. Men who found their professional home at the UK Chamber of Shipping; men who chose as their presidents the most eminent of their number, names familiar even today such as Inchcape, Ellerman, and Swire (Cathay Pacific).

And to mark their time in office, it became the custom from the late nineteenth century to erect thick bronze or copper plaques about 8"x12" to adorn the walls of the Chamber, upon which were painted or incised and enamelled their personal achievements in the artistic styles of their age.

The Chamber now has a collection of some 82 which marched down their entrance way conveying and reinforcing messages of institutional solidity, rectitude, probity and, frankly, power. And to that we can add resilience, as some of the plaques bear the scars of the 1992 bombing of the Chamber by the Provisional IRA which destroyed others. Be that as it may, it is still a fine collection well bolstered by the representations of the arms granted to the Chamber itself and its antecedents.

Yet, for some reason the tradition stopped in the late 1990s, but as British shipping and attendant services are now again a major player on the world's commercial stage, some even say the major player, thanks to favourable tonnage tax, for example, it is hoped that those called to its high office in the future will meet their responsibility to keep the tradition alive in this new century.



After all, it is the Chamber's responsibility to its members to manage its assets well and its heraldic collection is certainly an asset. In the Chamber's case, it is up to future presidents alone to decide whether or not to grow this investment by re-introducing the tradition so that Chamber's collection will not simply moulder as 'dusty history stuff' but will again be an in-your-face inspiration for today's shippers and those providing ancillary services.

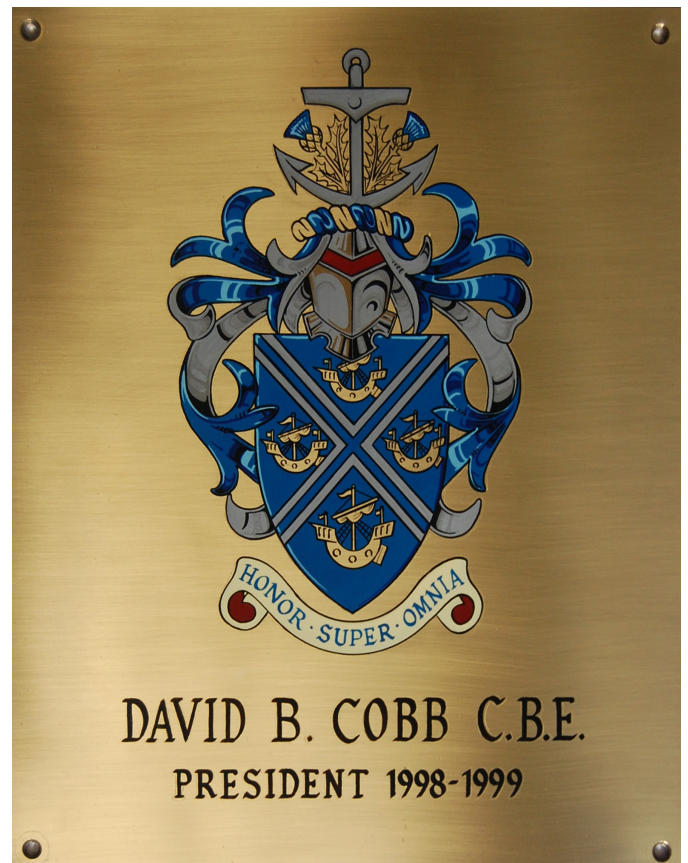
Happily, the decision has been taken to mount the existing collection in the Chamber's new offices so that no matter what the future holds, its past will continue to sing of steadfastness, ability and commercial agility through the ages, a fitting tribute to the trade which made Britain great and even in this age of austerity still does.

*Our sincere thanks to the Chamber's senior officers Angus Frew and Mark Brownrigg, OBE who recognise the value of the Chamber's heritage, and their representative on earth Mrs Terry Cooper, who literally stopped the packers in their tracks to allow her to take these photographs. To her be all honour and glory! And vide also the article by Vernon Rolls in The Heraldic Craftsman No 65, Sept. 2008.*





# The Heraldic Collection of the UK Chamber of Shipping







# Ernest 'Pete' Taylor

## Gordon Taylor

Pete was born in Eastbourne in 1920 and after leaving school at the age of 14 served articles as a draughtsman/designer with a shopfitting and building firm. During his articles he attended Eastbourne Art School. In 1939 his career was

interrupted when he volunteered to join the RAF. He served in the RAF until 1945 and in his last year was posted to an airfield near Edinburgh where he met a young WAAF driver called Nan. Pete and Nan were married in 1948; a marriage that lasted 63 years. After being demobbed Pete returned to Eastbourne before finding a job in Edinburgh with the newly created NHS. Pete and Nan moved to London in 1951 and

Pete remained in the NHS, where he became a Chartered Architect designing hospitals, until his retirement in 1983.

Pete and Nan have two sons and when their sons left for university in the mid 1970s Nan and Pete looked for a hobby they could both enjoy. They saw an advert for a Heraldry night school class and decided this would combine Pete's interest in art and drawing with Nan's interest in history. Soon they joined the Heraldry Society and the Middlesex Heraldry Society. Eventually Pete became a member of the Heraldry Society Council. When the Heraldry ran into financial difficulty Pete and Nan kept the offices in Museum Street open three-days a week for some years until other friends and members retired and were able to help out. Pete was made a Fellow of the Society and subsequently a Vice President. Pete also edited the Heraldry Gazette from 1988 until he retired as editor in 2000 when he turned 80. During this period Pete also lectured and ran courses in Heraldic Art and helped the Chester

Herald (now Clemenceux, King of Arms) with research. Pete is a member of the Middlesex, Scottish and Canadian Heraldry Societies and the White Lion Society.

Pete was also a member of the Society of Heraldic



Artists and in 2003 assumed editorship of *The Heraldic Craftsman*. Despite failing eyesight, Pete remained editor of this magazine until the end of 2011 when, shortly after Nan died, he suffered a bout of ill health from which he has still not fully recovered.

Pete says that heraldry has given him, and Nan, great pleasure over the last 40-odd years and that through it they made a great many friends in this country and around the world. They

maintained these friendships by attending many International Congresses which they enjoyed enormously.

*Another tribute to Pete has been received from a Member who wishes to remain anonymous.*

'I am pleased that the Society is honouring Pete. If you have room you might want to add this reflection of him. I first met Nan and Pete in Museum Street when things in general were difficult and I wondered whether I should nurture my nascent interest in heraldry or not. But Nan and Pete were like rays of sunshine amidst a lot of gloomy muttering. To them, all that was important was the actual subject itself in which Pete had built up quite an expertise. He conveyed his enthusiasm and learning with great good humour. A late lamented herald said of Pete that he 'infected his audiences'. I wish him well in his retirement as do, I know, many others.'





# Society Matters

Dear Members, Our AGM in May was, I believe, a significant milestone in the history of our Society. Our former chairman Andrew Jamieson having resigned, the AGM elected me your new Chair. Thank you for your vote. Along with the other members of your Executive, to whom my continued thanks, we take our responsibility most seriously and will endeavour to see you do not regret your vote. It is my intention to insure that during my three years as Chairman we will see a new chapter in the history of our Society.

My first concern is nurturing and growing our membership. In this issue we are paying a tribute to the amazing Pete Taylor and his wife Nan. For another stalwart and pillar of our society - John Ferguson - the May AGM was only the second he had missed in over two decades. I phoned him on the eve of the AGM and received words of encouragement. He went on to say that he would be with us in spirit and if we felt a draught in the room it would be him!

At the AGM we voted to increase our fees, but when our Hon Treasurer assured us of the soundness of our position, the Executive reversed that decision, so apologies to the AGM, but the result is one which we think you will welcome. The outcome of the discussion about the Faculty of Fellows you will have seen on page 1 of this issue.

For matters both in and outside our new constitution, I hope all members of all ages will feel free to contact me or our Hon Secretary, Kevin Arkinstall with suggestions, queries, confirmation of what you reckon we are getting right and criticisms, too. We are here to serve you and keep the art of heraldry in all its forms vibrant, colourful and rich for the pleasure and enjoyment of all. Thank you.

Clare Street, *Chairman*

## Invitation to nominate an artist or craftsman to establish the SHA Faculty of Fellows

I invite Craft Members to submit nominations for Fellowship by letter or email. Members should first check with candidates that they are willing to stand. Each candidate must be nominated by at least two Craft Members and nominations received by me by post or URL (*vide* page 1) within 28 days of the posting of this journal.

Only Craft Members who have paid all outstanding subscriptions and fees are eligible for nomination, to nominate, or to vote should an election be necessary (see below).

Candidates for admission as Fellows should be Craft Members or heraldic artists or craftsmen who are not members but are pre-eminent in their field. In the case of non-members, examples of work and details of qualifications may be required and candidates must confirm their intention to become Craft Members if elected as Fellows.

Should the number of nominations exceed one quarter of the number of Craft Members, voting forms will be sent to Craft Members with *The Heraldic Craftsman* No. 81 and the result announced in the following journal after all candidates have been advised.

David Hopkinson, SHA, *Hon Membership Secretary*

## AGM Minutes

Enclosed please find the minutes of our last AGM. Members who wish to query any matters raised in them or to find out more should contact me. Our next AGM will be in the spring at a time and place to be announced in a forthcoming issue of *The Heraldic Craftsman*.

Kevin Arkinstall, SHA, *Hon Secretary*

## Web matters

As promised, we are looking at our main shop window, viz the web site and have decided to start from the bottom up, which is to say, we urge you to look at refreshing your own page on the Society's site.

So simply email me some seven-eight high-quality visuals and fresh text and I will spruce up your page as soon as I can. Be sure to include international contact details and a link, if applicable, to your own site. We are also installing a counting mechanism which will share with you when we have enough data.

David Robert Wooten, *Webmaster*

*Continued on page 12*



# What are you doing today?



KATY LUMSDEN, *Chief Herald Painter, Office of the Chief Herald of Ireland*

On the opposite page you can see what I was doing over a couple of days in June! It shows you my ordered mind!

You asked for a photo of me with some of our work. Herewith a 2009 reception following the confirming of arms to the City of Limerick by the Chief Herald. Limerick's arms have been used for centuries but inexplicably have never been officially recorded in our Office. [www.limerickcity.ie](http://www.limerickcity.ie) has the full story and bearing in mind the name of the city in question.

*The old arms of Limerick City  
were never recorded, a pity;  
The Lord Mayor said 'Let's go!'  
And without more ado  
We created a doc. they thought pretty!*

IOANNIS P. VLAZAKIS, MA - SHA

Today I am recovering from a busy summer. I travelled to Cyprus, then to the island of Crete and finally to Prague. All these places were of great heraldic interest and invited me to do my own research: the medieval – crusade tradition of Cyprus, the Venetian history of Crete and the vivid heraldry of the Czech Republic. Right now, I am trying to make the transition from researching to drawing! I am working on the finishing touches of a very special wedding

gift. The recipients are Sandor & Herta Margarete Habsburg – Lothringen, whose wedding I had the honor to attend.



The painting depicts the Imperial Austrian coat of arms. It is an elaborate one, especially when it comes to its crown. I wanted to design the actual imperial Habsburg crown as it is in the royal treasury in Vienna. I used wide foils of handmade 23,5K gold leafs and I tried to be as accurate as possible. The original crown is made of pure gold, it is partially enameled and it is studded with lots of jewels including diamonds, rubies, spinel, sapphires, pearls and many more. I had to give special emphasis to that. My new website has now been launched.

If anyone wants to give me his comment, or any fellow member wants to get acquainted he/she is more than welcome. Please see my new website: [www.artofheraldry.gr](http://www.artofheraldry.gr)—[info@artofheraldry.gr](mailto:info@artofheraldry.gr)





12 Tuesday Phone MJM to arrange appointment with Chief Herald Does he need vellum?

Draft artwork from Herald Painter - review, confer with Herald, mark up comments re alterations

★ Contact Dr P. to tell him that the Faculty's patent of arms has been signed and sealed - I can deliver it, or would they like to collect?

Reply to enquiry re family history research

Reply to e-mail re copies from Register of Arms

contact Eoghan in IT re adding recent grants to Courts

Phone Mr C re query about arms on the Four Courts

Enquiry re Molloy heraldry

Send info on fees to Mr M

Reply to message about royal lineages

Reply to William Beaver, SHA

Discuss Coastguard ensign with Herald

PHONE COWLEY'S re VELLUM

Wednesday 13

For crèche

Nappies  
Wipes  
Formula



Enquiry re arms of Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital

refer to Harriet at Royal College of Physicians of Ireland

MEET CB & DB (UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK) re FUNDING APPLICATIONS FOR DIGITISATION PILOT PROJECT

Go through draft funding application - mark up and track changes

Compile notes from meeting of GO digitisation steering group - circulate and ask for comments

Make final manuscript selection for digit pilot - check for surrogates and cross-ref with conservation report

Arrange meeting with conservator re conservation treatment report - amalgamate info into funding app. doc.

2.30

Meeting room



Talk to Chief Herald re O'Sullivan Beare pedigree

2012

June

2012

June





## Society Matters *continued*

### Financial matters

We are in good financial heart as a Society and we plan to stay that way. To that end, I have to say to a small number of you that this is the last edition of *The Heraldic Craftsman* you will receive. Why? Because your membership for this year (April 2012-April 2013) has not been received and/or you have not set up a standing order for next year (UK and Ireland) or sent us a cheque for your subscription for 2013-14 (overseas).

For our growing number of overseas members, I have now negotiated an arrangement with our bank to receive and cash your cheques in whatever legal denomination you wish to send them. Simply convert £17.50 (associate) or £25 (craft) into your currency and send me your cheque so that your membership remains in good standing.

So the rules are simple:

- If you wish to remain a member of the Society and live in the UK or Ireland: pay your current sub and take out a standing order for the future at the appropriate rate.
  - If you live overseas, simply send me a cheque for your current and next year's sub (if you have not already)
- And all will be well.

David Krause, FCA *Hon Treasurer*

## Bogus Bristol (Bradford is next)

How lightly some institutions treat their heritage! Here is an example. Bristol University opted for these pseudo-arms some ten years ago and apparently not even the University's helpful current communicators know why, but the exercise was apparently done on a shoestring, 'Nuff said.

But before we get too grumpy, the University of Bristol is waking up to the importance of their arms and is in the process of developing guidelines for their use in documents and on occasions of importance, so that they 'are still very much a part of life here.' This is much to be applauded.

But one wonders why they were replaced in the first instance. Was it, in part the age-old problem that people feel they must slavishly repeat the original emblazon? The long departed perpetrators of the look alike arms probably felt their arms were 'old fashioned' and 'fusty'. One wonders if they knew that with a solid brief, a good heraldic artist could invest their arms with a bright, contemporary feel or could emphasise aspects of the achievement?

Yet one of heraldry's foremost distinguished authorities says the fault is not wholly with trendy-seeking communications departments. 'It is also the responsibility of those interested in heraldry, who suspect that unwelcome change might be afoot in their institutions, to enlighten the appropriate authority that their institution's arms or aspects of them are perfectly capable of being rendered resiliently, perfectly robust enough to be portrayed with as much weight as any contemporary symbol and worth a whole lot more. For after all, few logos have the added merit of heritage.'



*Current Bristol logo*

As for Bristol, a wine bar conversation with a senior person in the University elicited the following frank confession in response to the question: 'Why did you do this?' 'Beats me.' comes the answer. 'I guess we thought we were keeping up with the times.' 'Yes, but you've not given yourselves a logo. You have given yourselves what looks like arms with elements from the original put through a blender. The result is, well, incoherent.' 'Oh, you don't have to tell me,' the illustrious person said. 'I think more people now recognise UWE's arms [University of West of England] than our logo and I understand the alumni hate it. Make mine a double.'

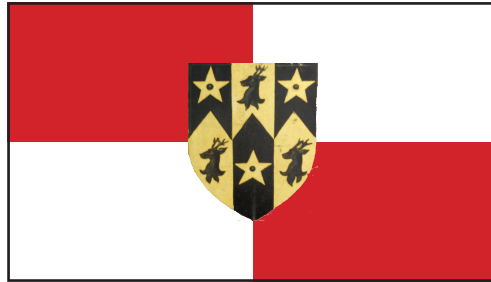


*Bristol University 1909*



# Old Bread and Jam

## A short history of the Ropners and British Shipping.



The flag proudly flown by Ropner ships. The red and white allude to the *stadtfarben* of Magdeburg. This flag adorned the funnels of Ropner's long, elegant tramp steamers which plied the waters of the world.

It was known by generations of seafarers as *old bread* (argent) quartered *with (and) jam* (gules). Where the couped stags heads came from is not known, however, Ropner's father was a Prussian Officer and presumably had arms, nfi.

*When the UK Chamber of Shipping sets up its new headquarters in Southwark, pride of place will be given to its collection of presidential heraldry and prominent amongst the plaques will be those of the Ropner family.*

In 1838, Emil Hugo Oscar Robert Ropner was born in Magdeburg but with both parents dying of cholera he soon found himself, literally, at sea, finally tossing up at West Hartlepool. Like Benjamin Franklin, he married a baker's daughter and in 1859 became a clerk to a colliery fitter and coal exporter. Again, like another entrepreneur, Dick Whittington, Ropner, now *Robert Ropner*, took full advantage of the prosperity of the age and the advances which steam brought to transportation of goods.

By 1868 he had his first custom-built ship, a steamer with sails, and by the 1880s was running the largest fleet of cargo tramp steamers in the world. Not content with that, he began building his own at Stockton-On-Tees. In fact his yard had the third highest output of ships in Britain and over the course of the thirty-six years the yard operated, Ropners built some 72 tramps most with an innovative weight distribution system (the trunk deck ship) which gave a tonnage figure low for the ship's carrying capacity thereby reducing tonnage tax dramatically. That design was soon followed by long-bridge ships which also increased carrying capacity without increasing net registered tonnage onto which were fitted latitudinal fuelling bunkers which obviated the need for expensive mid-voyage refuelling.

Always allied to the Northeast, Robert Ropner became an MP, was knighted in 1902 and received his baronetcy in 1904 the period in which he was most prominent in the affairs of the Chamber of which he had been a member since its inception in 1878.

As the shields of Sir William and David Ropner attest, many from the Ropner family unstintingly served the firm and British shipping during the upheavals of war and depression albeit losses in ships and fortune were heavy. After the Second War Ropners diversified within the cargo industry and continued to pioneer innovative ships until in the 1980s the decision was made to follow other industrial stars and the family diversified out of shipping.

Yet in the Chamber's new headquarters in Southwark the heavy bronze plaques of the Ropners through the ages will continue to attest to a remarkable rag-to-riches story of one man and his successors who made such a steady contribution to Britain's seafaring reputation.

*Thanks to UK Chamber of Shipping's Terry Cooper for alerting The Heraldic Craftsman to the Ropner story and to Guy Ropner for his assistance. If you want the pleasure of reading a really good commercial history with lots of drama on the high seas, look no further than Ian Dear's The Ropner Story, Hutchinson Benham, 1986 ISBN 0 09 163810 0.*

