

Letters for recommendation

By Mistress Gwenhwyfar dinas Emrys
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Essentials – Who, What, When, Where, Why?

Know your audience. Reference <http://www.pbm.com/~lindah/jessa/east.html> for information on Tygers Cubs, Burdened Tygers, Terpsichores, Troubadours, Queens order of courtesy, AoA's.

Silver Crescent – service. Service is defined as either long service within an area of the Kingdom from which the entire Kingdom benefits, or by continuing service in ways which directly benefit a large portion of the Kingdom.

Maunche – Arts. given for arts and sciences, either for excellence in one specific area or for surpassing competence in several.

Tygers Combattant – Rattan. given for prowess at SCA combat, either for excellence in one weapons form or for surpassing competence in several.

Sagittarius – Archery - given to those who show superior prowess at target archery, and who have distinguished themselves in archery in one of the following areas; teaching and demonstrating the art of archery, making archery equipment or by helping to arrange archery at events and/or sites.

Golden Rapier - given for excellence in the art of fence, for superior prowess in the lists, teaching, and promoting and expanding the knowledge of the art

The Chivalry of the SCA consists of the Order of Knighthood and the Order of Mastery of Arms. Members are chosen by the Crown after consulting with the Chivalry for qualities of courtesy, grace and skill at arms.

Order of the Laurel are chosen by the Crown after consultation with the Order for great skill in the Arts or Sciences, for their willingness to teach others, and for using their abilities to benefit their kingdom.

Order of the Pelican have given of themselves to their kingdom, usually for many years and without thought of reward

Lets talk about letters.

AOA or other non polled awards

*To the Glorious Prince of the East – [name] and his beautiful inspiration, Princess of the East [name] does [yours truly] send greetings.
I would like to bring to your attention the work of Mowser the tame from the shire of Cats Perch. She works very hard at [job] and has help out with [specific incidents, events or subject] to the greater of your kingdom. She has been in the SCA for [time]. I think Mowser the tame should be considered for an AOA.*

A letter of recommendation for an award of high merit should contain some pertinent information on the candidate. Remember that these letters are not going solely to the Prince and Princess/King and Queen of the East, but to the polling order themselves. If you are taking the time to write the letter, get your facts straight! (**Take note that teaching is NOT mentioned in the write up for the Maunche. While it is discussed, and desired, it is NOT a requirement**) For the silver crescent put a list of all the things that the candidate has done, not just “lots of things” Be Specific!! For the OTC, you need to know what the person you are writing in does, what they are authorized in, where they may have been seen, details about marshalling, or tourneys they have entered. If they have done any work to further fighting in the area. Be careful here, some of this may fall under silver crescent and not OTC.

*Greeting Your Highnesses, from your most humble servant [yours truly]!
I wish to bring to your attention the excellent work of one of your subjects, Tux the defender. Tux the defender started out his SCA life but a mere 7 years ago. Armed with a strong sword arm, a fierce-some stance, and the penchant to learn, Tux joined the Shires fighting unit. Not content to stay within the confines of our small shire, Tux ventured forth to learn more about fighting, and bring that knowledge home with him. He has traveled to [insert wars, war practices, fighter practices) and has both learned and accomplished a reputation of a great fighter. He has brought this knowledge home to us, and has taught several of our own fighters all that he could. He has shown his prowess on the field at (insert wars he fought in and championships he's been a part of) and has been the champion of [insert various championships here]
While his skill with the sword and shield is impressive, its not his only weapons form. He is also authorized in [weapons forms], and is [marshall, armor scrounger, practice site provider, etc)
For all these reasons do I [yours truly!] bring to your attention, Tux the Defender.*

When writing in a letter for the peerages, they look for so much more than that of the high merits. For the Pelican – we look for years of outstanding service. Outstanding service can be described as many things – service on a curia, events, demo's working behind the scenes, actively making a difference over a period of time, regional level or kingdom level work etc.etc.

*Lady Sadie has been a hardworking member of the Barony of Cats Perch for almost 10 years. She has worked tirelessly for the Tyger for 8 years, producing scrolls for the members of the Shire and the Kingdom. She has taught calligraphy and illumination continuously since then in the region and beyond. Lady Sadie has also been involved in the army, as a rattan fighter, and an archer. She has been a combat archer and an archery marshal for over 8 years, running tournaments, holding classes and teaching the masses. She has shot war points on the battlefield of Pennsic and the Great Northeastern War, and inspired many citizens of our fair barony to pick up the bow. She has also taken to the field as a rattan fighter at Great Northeastern War, and Pennsic, to name but a few. She teaches female fighters within the East Kingdom and has participated in the iron rose tournaments at Pennsic.
But not only has Lady Sadie contributed to the laurel arts and the combat arts, but also to service. Lady Sadie has autocratted two shire war camps, kingdom 12th nights, countless other shire events (including the most recent XXX event in Cats Perch, and the local bardic competition in February) co-autocratted several other shire events, (like XY and Z) organized tournaments at*

events (including heavy tournaments and archery tournaments) and is currently organizing the annual catatonic archery shoot for invalids in the neighboring shire of Grecia, for this fall. Lady Sadie has also held many offices at the Shire level. She has been the chronicler for one term and the minister of A&S for two terms. She was the Shires bard for three years running (no one beat her cat calls) and she has served as chatelaine for two terms. She has helped organize children's activities in the shire, and has hosted countless "work days" in her home to help your citizens start, progress or complete their own projects. She is a member of the cooks guild (fish is her specialty.) Lady Sadie is apprenticed to Mister Mistopholes, and she has been a member of the silver cats paw since 1999. Lady Sadies activity since then has only increased.

For these reasons, I do recommend her to the order of the Pelican

Something to AVOID doing in writing up a letter of recommendation is "padding the resume". Unlike a job interview where there is one interviewer or a group of three or four, the polling orders are HUGE. Not only that, but a resume is sort of expected to pad your accomplishments. The SCA wants all the facts. Don't write, "*He has autocratted several RP's*" if in fact he has only autocratted two. Don't write, "*He teaches extensively*" if he has only taught one class at a local shire event attended by two people. Don't write "*he has been the champion of all of our rattan tourneys*" – when there was only one. We also are very careful about WHEN the action was done. Don't say the person is active on curia if they haven't been active on curia for 6 years. The orders get together on line and discuss in length everything that is in a write up. They compare notes, listen to other recommendations, and will pick apart a write up. If you embellish they will find out!

Lastly – before you write someone up for the peerages – check to see if they are in service to a peer. A protégé, squire or apprentice has someone who should be supporting them and guiding them towards a goal. If that peer thinks the person is not ready for the award then do not write them up. There are many reasons for this – if the person has been recently polled another polling may be detrimental to them. Perhaps the peer thinks their charge needs a larger body of work, or they need to be seen more by people in other regions. Perhaps the charge needs more research, or to learn documentation or perhaps the candidate needs to serve kingdom at a higher level than the canton or shire they belong to. Perhaps the person needs to mature more before being handed the weight of a peerage. Only the peer knows!