



Karen Shaw, 36 Lislaynan, Ballycarry, Carrickfergus, Co Antrim BT38 9GZ, Northern Ireland
parch@parchment-worldwide.com

www.parchment-worldwide.com

Thank you for investing in this course, which is aimed at helping you to help yourself in becoming more proficient at this wonderful art form of Parchment Craft. I have tried to keep the cost of this to a minimum by sending it to you electronically, therefore eliminating the cost of printing and initial postage. You will need to print off certain pages, or indeed you can print it all off, as is your preference.

The files as you now know, are in Adobe format, and should open automatically when clicked.

To confirm the process of the course:

In this e-manual you will find that if you follow the instructions by working on the practice pieces, that you should naturally progress and thus improve your work. So at the end of each section, you will find that there are pieces of work for you to complete and send to me by post (submissions). This will be marked and returned to you with comments on what you have done well, and perhaps some which will help you to improve further. **Please remember that any comments I make are not personal**, and certainly not intended in any way to denigrate your work, but simply as a way forward to help you improve your skills. It will also give you a collection in a personal art portfolio which you can refer to in the future or as a refresher, if you have forgotten one or two methods of working.

I have designed this course with budgets in mind; by receiving this electronically, you have already invested in the course, and in sending your submission pieces for marking to obtain your PCA® Authorised Worldwide Parchment Diploma, then there will be extra cost involved; there will be submissions for each of four of the parts, once your overall mark is calculated, you will be awarded your diploma as per:

50% - 60% Emerald

60% - 70% Sapphire

70% - 80% Ruby

80% - 90% Diamond

90% - 100% Opal (Australia's precious stone)

If you wish to progress to obtain the PCA® Authorised Worldwide Parchment Advanced Diploma, then there is further course material which is much more detailed. You need to obtain an average course score of 80% in this first course before applying. This Advanced course has five further submissions (sent in one batch). To be an Instructor you must obtain 80% in both the Diploma and the Advanced Diploma to gain the Instructor's Diploma. However, you may still complete the advanced course, and obtain an Advanced Certificate without becoming an instructor.

In both this first course and the Advanced/Instructor course you may re-submit any pieces which are not satisfactory or on which you wish to improve your marks.

Before you do anything else, I strongly suggest you have a look through the course manual and read it from start to finish. If you have any questions, make a list and send them to me to answer.

Starting the course and submission of work

Start at the beginning, and work your way through all the examples in each section, which will help you in preparing for the submission pieces. Each time you send in a submission, ensure it is safe and secure; best to place it in a plastic sleeve and post in a hard-backed envelope. Please do not put them in a bard backed folder because if I am not at home when they are delivered it can cause delays. They will be returned to you in the same way you sent them. Each piece submitted will need to be accompanied with the submission paper and fee (amount on submission paper in the annex) to cover return postage, marking and administration. This can be paid by using Paypal, or bank transfer in sterling, or euros (bank details can be provided).

If you find you don't have a PCA® tool you need to complete a piece of work, please ask, I can provide it for you, and as a correspondent student, you will benefit from a 10% student reduction on **any** purchase from my website, with no minimum purchase rule. www.parchment-worldwide.com. You will have had the discount code on the covering welcome e-letter.

The course manual is self-explanatory as you progress through, but if you have any worries, or questions you need to air, part of the support is free email access, so if you don't understand something, or are unsure, please do ask. Please feel free to scan your practice work and email it to me for feedback. Remember: there is no such thing as a stupid question, if you don't know the answer, so don't be backwards at coming forwards. parch@parchment-worldwide.com

Presentation of your submissions

Please think about making an effort in presenting your work for submission. Don't forget you are also creating a portfolio of your beautiful work and the presentation should reflect this. To explain what I mean: mount your work on cards, perhaps using a corner punch, but don't fix them in place with tape or glue as I do need to see that back of your work to make a fair assessment. Once mounted, insert each piece in a good quality plastic sheet not only to protect it in transit but to be able to file it yourself when you have completed each section. The size of your work is not important so you can enlarge any of the images to your working comfort. No larger than A4 please, but think more along A5 sizes.

About me

When I held my first piece of parchment paper and gradually learned that with care and a little skill, it could transform from a plain piece of parchment paper, into what I considered then to be a work or art, I was literally hooked. When I look back at those early pieces I realise how my then, very limited skills, have changed enormously. I hope by following this course that you will have the same experience.

I am, for the most part, self-taught, so it is possible for anyone with the same enthusiasm and willingness to try, to enjoy it and get satisfying results by the same methods. I have been "parching" since 2002 when I used the craft as occupational therapy after breast cancer surgery. I had my first pattern published by Parchment Craft magazine way back in January 2005 and that was before I really knew what I was doing. Nevertheless, it was widely accepted as one people loved to do and some mentioned it was the first pattern they ever tried! It took me four years to pick up the courage to have another one published which I did in January 2009 edition and another in April 2009, and I submit 2-3 patterns a year now, all which are well received.

I learned by watching DVD's, watching the rare appearances of specialists on craft programmes on the television and from the many books and magazines I have bought over the years. Then after four years of playing with the craft, I joined the Parchment Craft Guild and decided that I might just have learned enough to start their exams. To date, I have achieved to Graduate status, with merit passes.

I was lucky to attend a week's workshop in the UK in October 2007 and met and made friends with many people including Linda Williams, who is a great mentor and close friend; then I had the pleasure to work with the talented Dorothy Holness for two days in November 2008. I have also had great encouragement from two regular e-pals, Anne Saunders and Sue Pritchard, whom I met through the Parchment Craft Magazine forum. We have since met up and had some wonderful parching sessions together. Lindy and Richard Hoad, the owners of PCA have encouraged me all the way in this venture, and it is thanks to them in the main, with their endorsement, that I am able to offer you this distance learning course.

You will discover as you work through it, that it isn't just all me, there is one section where I have been helped by Dorothy Holness, and I truly thank her for her permission to use her priceless work.

A little bit of history for you:

Papyrus (a dried leaf) was the first flexible substance that was used to write on, that preceded by cave walls (not good to transport!), stone/tiles, then wood and bamboo. It is clearly written in history that it was the Egyptians who discovered its use way back some three thousand years ago. Then in the region around Turkey about 1500 years ago, parchment was discovered, but then it was made from stretched and dried skin of sheep and goats.

Research shows that the art form was developed by the religious orders in Spain and then taken to South America by them, where it thrived. We are lucky that it was then spread to France, Holland and the rest of Europe and the world. Records and examples remaining show that it initially consisted only of white work, embossing, perforating and cutting, with the introduction of gold added to special work. Colouring, grid work and all the other processes of using multi tools are a recent addition. This course will include all processes.

Course contents:

- 1. Materials**
- 2. Tracing & Embossing**
- 3. Perforating, Snipping & Grid work**
- 4. COLOURING:**
 - ❖ **Oil based pencils**
 - ❖ **Watercolour pencils**
 - ❖ **Crayon (dorsing)**
 - ❖ **Inks**
 - ❖ **Acrylic Paints**
- 5. Putting it altogether**

So that is enough of an introduction, because I bet you are itching to get started, so read on! *Karen*

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