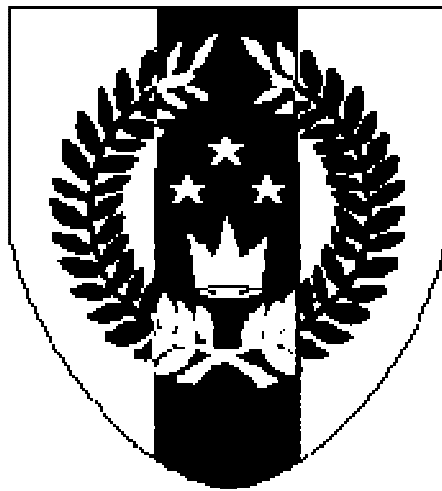


Meridies Chatelaines' Handbook

*For local Chatelaines and Hospitallers in the
Kingdom of Meridies, SCA Inc.*



2005

Edited by Bianca Allegri da Vicenza, Kingdom Chatelaine of Meridies

Greetings unto the Chatelaines and Hospitallers of Meridies,

I am so glad that you volunteered for this office. It is vital to the future of your group, the Kingdom of Meridies, and the Society for Creative Anachronism to draw in and welcome new people. You will find over time that you will take a special interest in those newcomers who joined the SCA under your watch. Like our children, it is a pleasure to watch them grow.

In service to the future of Meridies,

Maestra Bianca Allegri da Vicenza
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This is the Meridian Chatelaines' Handbook, a publication of the Chatelaine's office of the Kingdom of Meridies, Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. Additional copies are available from the Kingdom Chatelaine of Meridies. This is not a corporate publication of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc., and does not delineate SCA policy.

Material in this handbook is intended for use by Chatelaines of local groups within the Kingdom of Meridies in the performance of their jobs, by their deputies, and by Seneschals for groups that have no Chatelaine.

This handbook is not intended for newcomers. Information for newcomers about the Society for Creative Anachronism can be found at www.sca.org/newcomers.html, in the appendices, and at other sources mentioned in the section on Information Sources for Newcomers.

Articles in this handbook were authored by Bianca Allegri da Vicenza, unless otherwise noted, with credit to other published sources of information including:

- Meridian Chatelaines Handbook 1998 by THL (now Sir) Kyppyn Kirkcaldy
- The East Kingdom Handbook for Local Chatelaines by Maitresse Irene Noir
- On Being a Chatelain(e) in the Middle Kingdom by Dame Alys Katharine July AS 34
- Material Found at www.sca.org and the Known World Handbook, corporate publications of the Society for Creative Anachronism.
- The Kingdom Law of Meridies, September 2002
- Organizational Handbook of the Society for Creative Anachronism, April 2001, revised July 2004
- Seneschal's Handbook, by Ellis O'Boirne/Lee Fogue, Society Seneschal, dated October 2000
- Society Seneschal's Policy - Media Relations and External Publicity - Issued February 2005

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WHAT IS A CHATELAINE?

Definition and Scope

The Chatelaine is the SCA officer in charge of recruiting, greeting, and helping newcomers. Because the Society for Creative Anachronism is a large and unique organization, with its own culture and customs, it can be daunting to newcomers. As a minimum, the Chatelaine is responsible for assisting newcomers to learn about the SCA, so that they will feel comfortable enough to join and become active, contributing members. The local Chatelaine is a deputy to the local Seneschal, and reports to the Kingdom Chatelaine of Meridies.

The Chatelaine is also customarily responsible for recruiting new members to the SCA, providing loaner garb for newcomers, and coordinating public demonstrations. These duties may be delegated to deputies or assigned to another officer by the group Seneschal. These additional duties are addressed in this handbook as a part of the Chatelaine's office.

Every organization requires a steady stream of new members to bring in new ideas and enthusiasm, and to replace lost members who move away or are no longer able to participate. This simple fact makes the task of the Chatelaine very important to the health and future survival of the local group and the Society for Creative Anachronism as a whole.

In 2004, the Society for Creative Anachronism established a corporate office for Media Relations. This office, with its Kingdom-level counterpart, is responsible for the image and presentation of the SCA, Inc. in the public media (television, radio, newspapers, magazines). Communication with media outlets and response to any negative publicity regarding the SCA is the responsibility of the Media Relations office, working with the Kingdom Seneschal. The Media Relations office is also responsible for developing press materials, procedures, and guidelines to be used by local chatelaines and their groups when working with the local media on recruiting and demos. Only materials developed or approved by the Media Relations office are to be used when communicating with the public media.

Alternate Titles

The title of Chatelaine comes from the medieval term for the domestic administrator for a large estate or castle. This person was the "keeper of the keys" and was the host or hostess for visitors. Other titles for the Chatelaine are used around the SCA, all deriving from this same medieval office: Hospitaller, Castellan, Chatelain (a male version of Chatelaine), or Gold Key Officer.

When speaking to members of the general public who are unfamiliar with medieval or SCA terms, the Chatelaine position may be presented as the Recruiting Officer, Hospitality, or Welcome Wagon.

Qualifications

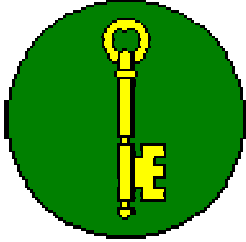
In Meridies, the Chatelaine position is a lesser office of state. This means that groups are not required to have a Chatelaine, and group Chatelaines are not required to be paid members of the Society for Creative Anachronism. However, given the importance of recruiting and retaining new members, it is highly recommended that every SCA group have a Chatelaine. In groups that have no Chatelaine, the responsibilities of the Chatelaine belong to the group Seneschal.

To be an effective Chatelaine, the office holder must be familiar with the laws, customs, and culture of the SCA and the Kingdom of Meridies. Since the Chatelaine will be promoting membership in the SCA, it only makes sense that the Chatelaine should, preferably, be a paid

member. The Chatelaine must also be comfortable with, and willing to, greet and speak to strangers about the SCA, or be willing to delegate this task to a more outgoing deputy.

The Chatelaine must be willing to make reports to the Kingdom Chatelaine on a timely basis. These are required quarterly, on the schedule shown at www.meridies.org/chatelaine.html

Because many inquiries from newcomers these days come via the internet, the Chatelaine must have internet access and an email account that he or she checks on a regular basis. The local Chatelaine must have a listed (available to be published to the public) phone number to which inquiries can be directed. The Chatelaine must be available and willing to respond in a timely manner to requests for information about the SCA in the local area.



Badge of Office

Deriving from the term Chatelaine, as “keeper of the keys” of the estate, the badge of the Chatelaine is a gold key upright on a green field. Local Chatelaines are encouraged to wear this badge and to use it on banners or signs at events where Chatelaine and Gold Key services are provided.

Deputies

The Chatelaine, with the approval of the local Seneschal, may appoint deputies to assist in these tasks. Deputies sometimes used by local chatelaines of larger groups include:

Gold Key Officer - responsible for collecting, loaning out, and maintaining a stock of loaner items for newcomers. This stock is usually just garb, but may also include feastgear and loaner armor, at the prerogative of the local group. Loaner armor is often maintained by the local Knight Marshal; as a function of that office rather than the Chatelaine’s office.

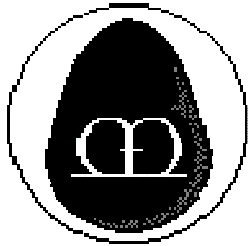
Demo Coordinator – responsible for coordinating and in most cases running local demonstrations for the general public. This may include educational demos at schools and clubs, and recruiting demos specifically designed to attract new members and raise awareness of the SCA in the local community.

Recruiting Coordinator - responsible for identifying contacts at local newspapers, radio, TV, and publicity events such as local renaissance fairs; writing and issuing publicity notices to these outlets about selected SCA activities for recruiting purposes; and strategic planning of group recruiting efforts. This task is sometimes delegated to a well-connected webminister or chronicler. This officer works closely with the Kingdom Media Relations Officer, to ensure the effectiveness of media communications, and compliance with SCA corporate policies and guidelines on media communications.

The Guiding Hand

There exists within the Kingdom of Meridies an Order to which the Crown may elect those persons who have served the Kingdom well and faithfully by giving encouragement and assistance to newcomers and any who have need. (Meridies Kingdom Law, Sept. 2002, section II-221) It is called the Order of the Guiding Hand, Meridies. Members of this Order are entitled to place the initials C.G.H.M. after their names.

The badge of this order is “argent on an egg sable the Lombardic upper case letter M, argent”.



While this award reflects the characteristics of the ideal chatelaine, it is not restricted to those who have served as chatelaines. All chatelaines of Meridies are encouraged to aspire to the ideals of this order, and to submit recommendations to the Crown for those persons that they have observed practicing the ideals of this Order.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHATELAINE

Responsibilities of the Kingdom Chatelaine

The responsibilities of the Kingdom Chatelaine of Meridies are delineated in the Kingdom Law of Meridies, Sept. 2002, section IV-204. The responsibilities of the local Chatelaine derive from these Kingdom responsibilities. In case of any conflict, Kingdom Law takes precedence over this document.

These responsibilities, quoted from The Kingdom Law of Meridies, September 2002 are:

As a Lesser Officer of State, deputy to and warranted by the Kingdom Seneschal(e), the Chatelaine shall be responsible for the following:

- (A) Acting as a liaison to newcomers in the Kingdom and the Society and providing such services and information as necessary to acclimate newcomers to Kingdom and Society culture.
- (B) Overseeing the publication of Newcomer's Handbooks and publicity* pamphlets designed to introduce the Society to newcomers and to the public at large, subject to final approval by the Kingdom Seneschal.
- (C) Maintaining files on all activities, productions and personnel of the Chatelaine's Office.
- (D) The Chatelaine may make recommendations to the Crown for the Order of the Guiding Hand.
- (E) The Chatelaine shall maintain a roster of local Chatelaines or Hospitallers (not to exceed one per branch) to carry out duties similar to those of the Chatelaine, and as defined by the policy of the Chatelaine's Office.
- (F) The Chatelaine shall report to the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal(e) four times per year giving the state of the office. These written reports shall be due two (2) weeks prior to Coronation and on July 1 and January 15.

Responsibilities of the Local Chatelaine

Newcomer Orientation

Deriving from item (A) of the requirements for the Kingdom Chatelaine, local Chatelaines are responsible for welcoming newcomers who phone, email, or show up at local SCA functions, and providing information and services to acclimate them to Kingdom and Society culture. Relocating SCA members are also assisted by the Chatelaine, who can help familiarize them with local SCA customs, names and places, and jargon. It is expected that all members of the local group will cooperate with and provide assistance to the local Chatelaine in these efforts.

Newcomer orientation may be achieved through classes, one-on-one instruction, written newcomers materials published by the Society, the Kingdom or the local group, or mentor relationships. These may be provided in any combination or frequency found to be effective at the local level. Further information on newcomer orientation as a part of an overall recruiting

* *In response to the release of a Society Media Policy, a revision to Meridies Kingdom Law is in work. Along with adding a new kingdom officer for Media Relations, the responsibilities of the Kingdom Chatelaine will also be revised accordingly. This handbook will be updated when the revision is complete.*

effort is found in the sections under Guidelines for Chatelaine Tasks: Recruiting for the SCA and Newcomer Orientation and Training.

Recruiting

Deriving from item (B) of the requirements for the Kingdom Chatelaine, local Chatelaines are responsible for the task of recruiting new members to the SCA, as needed, by means other than member word-of-mouth. This task specifically includes developing newcomers' handbooks or training materials, and local publicity pamphlets designed to present the Society to newcomers and to the public at large. When available and suitable for the task, publicity materials or templates provided by the SCA office for Media Relations should be used. Printed materials and postings developed for hand distribution to the public must be approved by the local Seneschal and by the Kingdom Chatelaine. These materials must comply with the guidelines set by the SCA Society Seneschal's Policy: Media Relations and External Publicity and this document.

The local Chatelaine, with the approval of the local Seneschal, is responsible for establishing and implementing recruiting activities for their group.

In 2004, the Board of Directors of the SCA, Inc. established the office of Deputy Society Seneschal for Media Relations. This officer is responsible for the public image of the SCA, Inc., which includes interfacing with national media outlets and official SCA response to any negative media publicity impacting the SCA. As a function of this office, the Society Officer for Media Relations is developing an SCA Press Kit, to be available on the www.sca.org web site during the Spring of 2005. All kingdom and local chatelaines are to comply with the directives on this web site and in the SCA media policy for interfacing with the media during recruiting or demonstration activities. This site will also contain templates and guidelines to be used when developing local press releases about the SCA. All press releases, media notices and planned media appearances by individuals representing the SCA must be pre-approved by the Meridies Deputy Seneschal for Media Relations. At his or her discretion, this kingdom officer may assume responsibility for the publicity for a specific SCA event or project.

Guidelines for designing a recruiting program for a local SCA group, and recommended avenues for free or inexpensive local publicity, are shown in the section: Guidelines for Chatelaine Tasks - Recruiting for the SCA.

Maintaining Records

While not a requirement at the local level, it is recommended that local chatelaines collect contact information on newcomers who have expressed an interest in the SCA and maintain records on recruiting programs, demonstrations, gold key inventory, and publicity materials.

Lists of newcomers that have contacted the local group may be used for occasional follow-up calls or emails, and to invite those who have not become regular members to future recruiting events.

Records on recruiting programs, demonstrations, and other local Chatelaine activities are very helpful when attempting to re-create a successful activity or avoid the pitfalls of a less-than-successful one. Local chatelaines are encouraged to share such "lessons learned" with the Kingdom Chatelaine in their reports.

Gold Key inventories are the property of the local group, and therefore are the property of the SCA, Inc. As such, they should be recorded and maintained as group property, with records given annually to the group Reeve (treasurer).

All publicity or recruiting handouts, and copies of published news articles, should be maintained in a file by the group Chatelaine or Seneschal, with a copy provided to the Kingdom Chatelaine and Media Relations officer.

Reporting Requirements

Immediate Reporting Requirements

The SCA Society Seneschal's Policy: Media Relations and External Publicity requires that Local branches report within 7 days a media interaction to their Kingdom Media Officer and Kingdom Seneschal whenever one or more of the following is true:

- 1) Outside Media Venue requests material for a story.
- 2) Outside Media Venue arrives unannounced at an SCA event or activity.
- 3) Outside Media Venue contacts the SCA regarding an ongoing news item.
- 4) A story—positive or negative—regarding the SCA appears in an outside media publication.

This reporting may be handled by the local seneschal or the local chatelaine, at the local seneschal's discretion. A courtesy copy should be provided to the Kingdom Chatelaine.

Quarterly Reporting Requirements

Local chatelaines are expected to provide quarterly reports to the Kingdom Chatelaine on a schedule to support the Kingdom Chatelaine's requirement in item IV-204(F) of Kingdom Law to report to the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal on the state of the office. Reporting requirements for deadlines and content are stated on the Kingdom Chatelaine's web page at the Kingdom of Meridies web site, <http://www.meridies.org/chatelaine/chreportregs.html>

Information required in Chatelaine reports is as follows:

- 1) Name of local branch
- 2) Your SCA name, modern name, address, phone number, and e-mail address
- 3) Are you a chatelaine or a seneschal?
- 4) List classes taught in your group during the last quarter
- 5) List demos done by your group, dates, topics taught and group to whom it was presented
- 6) List newcomer meetings or specific newcomer activities. Estimate how many newcomers have been at your meetings this quarter.
- 7) MOST IMPORTANT: Send copies of any and all articles on the SCA in any (local, regional or national) newspaper, magazine or other publication from the last six months or so. If you have been on TV in the last year, I'd love a videotape.
- 8) Send copies of any new or revised promotional materials currently being used by your group (press releases, handouts, etc.)
- 9) Note any issues or concerns that have arisen in performing your office.

If you have had no newcomer activities or demos in the last quarter, please say so and send your quarterly report anyway.

Chatelaine reports are to be sent via email to the Kingdom Chatelaine at chatelaine@meridies.org. A copy of all chatelaine reports is to be sent to the local group Seneschal at the time of reporting.

Change of Chatelaine Officers

The appointment of a local group chatelaine is left to the local group seneschal, subject to approval by the Kingdom Chatelaine. While the local chatelaine often recommends and trains their successor, the decision to appoint this person to the position is the responsibility of the group seneschal. The current local chatelaine should send an email to the Kingdom Chatelaine introducing the replacement, stating the new contact information and the effective date of the change.

A local group chatelaine may be disapproved or removed from office by the Kingdom Seneschal, in consultation with the Kingdom Chatelaine and the local group seneschal. This may be done for any reason that these officers deem to be appropriate. Issues that may lead to removal of a local chatelaine from office include, but are not limited to, financial malfeasance, misrepresentation of the SCA to the public, attempts to draw newcomers to any group or household other than the official SCA chapter represented by the local chatelaine, or persistent actions that drive away rather than attract and retain newcomers.

GUIDELINES FOR CHATELAINE TASKS

Recruiting for the SCA

By Nikki Lowrey (Bianca Allegri da Vicenza), Kingdom Chatelaine of Meridies; with input from Tamara Griggs (Contessa Tamara di Firenze), Society Deputy Seneschal for Media Relations; Leslie Dulin (Mistress Lijsbeth tijsz van Brugge), former Kingdom Chatelaine of Meridies; and local chatelaines of Meridies. Published in Tournaments Illuminated, Issue #153, Winter, 2005 AS XXXIX, Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc.

Abstract

Every volunteer organization is at some point faced with the need to recruit new members. The SCA is no exception. Even in groups with long time members, a dose of fresh blood is needed now and then.

SCA chapters have long relied on word-of-mouth to bring in new people. However, when the supply of interested friends and relatives runs thin, a bona-fide recruiting effort may be in order. This article outlines a general approach to recruiting for the SCA, then lists some avenues for cheap or free publicity that have worked in the past.

The Recruiting Process

Recruiting people to join a volunteer organization such as the SCA involves several steps. These are the same steps that campus groups like fraternities follow in their Rush programs. Even professional marketers use these. Failure to attend to any one of these steps will result in a loss of potential new members.

- 1) CONTACT – The newcomer learns that we exist, and what we do.
- 2) INVITATION – The newcomer is provided with a welcoming opportunity to attend a meeting or event.
- 3) ACCEPTANCE – The newcomer is provided with information and experiences specific to their interests until they develop a comfort level and desire to belong.
- 4) BUY-IN (or sale) - The newcomer decides that they like the SCA enough to join. The usual evidence of this is that they send in a membership application, make or purchase a costume or suit of armor, or begin to select a persona and heraldic device, all tangible evidence of commitment. Only at this point can we consider the recruiting process successful.

In many groups, the Chatelaine or Hospitaller is focused on the latter steps: welcoming the newcomer and teaching him or her about the SCA. While these steps are vital, they fail to reach out to potential new members who do not already have contact with the SCA. Each SCA group, and especially their Chatelaine, should develop a strategy for recruiting based on all four of these steps that is tailored to their own community and resources.

1) CONTACT

Many SCA groups rely solely on word-of-mouth to find new members. There is nothing wrong with this method. It can be very effective. A shire with outgoing, flamboyant members can grow through word-of-mouth for some time. But it has limitations – only those people who

personally meet existing members, in circumstances where the topic arises, will find out about the SCA.

To reach potential new members beyond the personal circles of existing members, a group must “advertise”. This does not mean making TV commercials or paying for newspaper ads. There are many free ways to advertise, including obtaining free publicity via the local media. A list of these methods is shown at the end of this article.

2) INVITATION

Once a newcomer learns about the SCA, they must be invited to show up at a meeting. All flyers need to include a contact phone number of an SCA member who will return calls promptly and invite the newcomer to attend an upcoming activity. If possible, these should also include a web site and email address as well, since some people feel more comfortable reading about the SCA on the net or emailing before calling. Callers should be directed to the web site or mailed a flyer giving more information about the SCA and an upcoming activity, including fees, waiver requirements, and what to wear. This is especially important for minors who require parental consent to attend even a weeknight event. (Dad: “Where are you going tonight?” Minor: “To an SCA meeting”. Dad: “What’s that?”)

When the chatelaine is speaking with a newcomer on the phone, he or she should try to identify the person’s interest in the SCA. Is it the fighting, the history, the costumes, the dance? This will clue the chatelaine toward what activity would be best as a first exposure for the newcomer. The invitation can then be tailored accordingly.

Staged recruiting activities such as local renaissance fairs, club fairs or demos should include a sign-up sheet for more information. Promptly after the event, the chatelaine should send a letter or email and then make a phone call inviting the newcomer to an upcoming activity.

A recruiting drive should always be followed in 2-4 weeks by an activity to which newcomers can be invited and welcomed. Ideally this would be a nearby group event or mini-event where the newcomer can experience a broad sample of SCA activities. The most effective sequence is to invite a newcomer to a shire meeting, and then to a weekend event.

3) ACCEPTANCE

Much information has been published around the SCA about this step, which is considered the traditional job of the chatelaine. The SCA, with its unique clothing, culture and terminology, can be very intimidating to the newcomer. Each newcomer must be made to feel comfortable and informed about SCA life.

Notice and Greet Newcomers

Every newcomer must be personally greeted the first time they show up at an SCA activity. This requires the chatelaine to either know everyone in the group, or have a prepared line to inquire whether some is new. (“Hi, I’m Fizzywig, the shire chatelaine. I don’t recognize you. Is this your first SCA meeting?”) This sort of inquiry also avoids the embarrassment of assuming someone is a newbie, when in fact she is Mistress Pointyhat just moved in from Kingdom Faraway. The newcomer should then be introduced to others at the meeting, and presented with a flyer about the group, including the shire, kingdom and SCA web sites. If the group chatelaine is not comfortable approaching strangers, an extroverted assistant should be recruited for this task.

Groups must periodically be reminded that welcoming newcomers is everybody's business. The chatelaine cannot be at all activities, and even the friendliest chatelaine cannot compensate for a chilly reception from everyone else.

Encourage Involvement

During the initial contact with the new member, the chatelaine should try to find out what aspect of the SCA attracted the newcomer. This knowledge gives the chatelaine the opportunity to introduce the newcomer to a local member with the same interests who can help them get started. This interest becomes the "hook" that will encourage them to return.

Some groups have found it useful to establish a sponsor or mentor arrangement to adopt new members with similar interests. The sponsor can then encourage and coach the new member in their common area of interest and about the SCA in general.

Some groups have also found it useful to create a "newcomers' household" with whom they are invited to hang out at meetings and events. This can be very successful but must be handled carefully. It cannot be allowed to be isolated from the rest of the group (a "newcomers' ghetto") or the household may decide to leave the shire or SCA as a group. The chatelaine and other shire members should remain involved with the household to guide them and correct misperceptions that may arise.

Teach about the SCA

The SCA is a complicated society that has developed its own vocabulary, structure and politics. The traditional job of the chatelaine is to explain the SCA to newcomers and help them learn enough to feel comfortable participating in its activities. This can be done through formal newcomers' classes and meetings, or one-on-one as the newcomer attends meetings. If newcomers trickle in one at a time, one-on-one will be the only option.

More detailed information on the topic of newcomer training is contained in the section [Newcomer Orientation and Training](#).

Get them into Costume

Medieval and Renaissance costume is the uniform of the SCA. Uniforms create a feeling of team membership, of belonging. Newcomers should be encouraged to don a simple costume at the earliest reasonable opportunity. Once in garb they will look like they belong, a short step toward feeling that they belong. Accuracy is not important here. Any attempt will do and should be praised.

Get them to an Event

Events are the heart of the SCA. While local meetings, classes, and fighter practices can be very entertaining, they will not yield the experience of immersion found at an SCA event. Local activities should be presented to newcomers as rehearsals, training for the real thing – the weekend event. Newcomers should be encouraged to attend a weekend event (all weekend if possible) as soon as possible, so that they can truly sample SCA life. If possible, arrange a ride for the newcomer so he has a knowledgeable guide. Many long friendships have developed out of carpooling to events.

A little pre-event coaching is advisable. The newcomer should be aware of what to expect, and equipped with garb, feastgear, and overnight supplies if needed. If the newcomer requires Gold Key loaner garb, call ahead to be sure that suitable garb will be available. The

SCA Known World Handbook and Introduction to the SCA pamphlet have good summaries on preparing for one's first event.

Ask them to Help

Nothing makes a newcomer feel like an insider quite like being asked to help out with a task. Shire members should look for opportunities where newcomers may pitch in and contribute. Then the newcomer should be personally asked to help. This tells the newcomer that she is a valued member of the group. However, this requires common sense. A new person that the shire is not familiar with should not be left alone with shire funds, as when tending troll solo. A newcomer should not be confined to the kitchen throughout their first event or prevented from experiencing a variety of activities there. The request for help must be presented as an invitation to help out, and not as coercion. Be sure to thank them for their help afterwards.

About First Impressions

First impressions are very important when a newcomer attends an SCA meeting for the first time. The Chatelaine and the group as a whole must be vigilant to be sure that the initial visit is a positive one. Until the newcomer feels comfortable in the SCA and is fully aware of the diversity found in it, individual negative experiences can drive them away. Poor first impressions are often caused by one individual, who is not aware that their behavior is causing problems. This must be handled sensitively, perhaps with the help of the group Seneschal. The following negative experiences have been known to drive newcomers away and need to be avoided:

- Being ignored, or greeted once, then ignored. A perceived cold shoulder will leave anyone with the feeling that they are not welcome.
- Criticism of early attempts at costuming. Even a simple tabard over modern clothes should be considered acceptable for a first time attendee. Fantasy clothing, prom dresses, and other blatantly non-period attempts should not be criticized. On the contrary, someone who shows up to their first SCA meeting in any kind of garb is a hot prospect, and should be encouraged. It takes time to learn about period attire. An introductory class on costume, not directed at an individual, is a non-threatening way to redirect costuming errors.
- Domination of conversation by one person. Many groups have at least one person who is a bit socially inept: talking too much or too loud, violating personal space, going on about computers or other non-SCA related topics, or even just smelling bad. If this person has been known to drive away newcomers in the past, the Chatelaine may need to solicit help from other group members to run interference to diplomatically prevent the socially inept from being a first contact.
- Being hit on too soon or too strongly. The SCA is a great way to meet people, including potential dating partners. Many married couples first met in the SCA. However, current members should be discouraged from coming on to newcomers at their first meeting. While a few may find this flattering, others will find it off-putting or even offensive if the overture is unwelcome. Wait until the newcomer is settled in.
- SCA War Stories. Although humorous and entertaining to long time SCA members, SCA war stories (including those unrelated to combat) can be baffling and overwhelming to newcomers. They are often filled with mysterious SCA vocabulary and in-jokes. They can be

isolating for newcomers, who feel clueless and left out of the punch line, unless presented in small doses.

4) BUY-IN

The ultimate goal of the Chatelaine is to get newcomers to join the SCA and become involved. The newcomer must enjoy the SCA enough to spend money on it and make a commitment. Sending in a membership application, obtaining a costume or suit of armor, developing a persona name or heraldic device, or volunteering for a local office, are all steps that show commitment and should be encouraged.

Membership

All newcomers should be presented with an SCA membership application when they first arrive, or soon after. The form should be presented with a verbal message that it is for “later, if you decide you enjoy the SCA and want to join”. The benefits of paid membership should be explained then.

Membership in the SCA should always be encouraged as it fosters commitment and helps pay the overhead expenses of corporate operations. Messages such as “you don’t have to join to play” should never be included in printed literature and are discouraged in general as they imply that paid memberships are not important to the SCA. They are. Newcomers who express concern that they can’t afford to pay for a membership should be informed that they can continue to play as a non-member, but must pay more to attend events and cannot hold certain offices or receive awards conferring rank.

Obtaining Garb and Armor

Shortly after getting involved, newcomers should be encouraged to obtain their own garb, armor and other supplies. It is helpful to provide them with sources for pre-made armor and clothing, patterns, or classes and handouts for making their own. Obtaining SCA costumes and supplies requires an outlay of time and money, which requires a level of commitment to continuing to play.

Selecting a Name and Device

Newcomers should not be rushed into choosing a name or designing a device. Selecting a persona is a big decision and requires thought and time. However, they should be encouraged to do so when they feel the time is right. This can be encouraged by example, as others in the shire use their SCA names, talk about their personas, and show off their devices. The local herald should be introduced to the newcomer as a resource for selecting a name and device.

Volunteering for a Local Office

Newcomers should be asked to volunteer to help with local tasks as soon as they arrive. Once it appears that they enjoy the SCA, they should be asked if they would be willing to assist with a minor office. Local officers are always in need of deputies. Deputy positions are a good training ground for future officers, and can be as small or large as the head officer and the deputy are willing to make them. Being asked to volunteer for an office, even if the newcomer declines, makes the newcomer feel included and needed.

CONCLUSION

All volunteer organizations must recruit new members at some point, and the SCA is no exception. Beyond word-of-mouth, there is a process for contacting and recruiting new members. While a few highly motivated newcomers may find the SCA by accident and jump in without encouragement, a true recruiting program requires planning and effort to be successful. A recruiting program can be implemented at little or no expense, as there are many avenues available to not-for-profit organizations for free publicity.

Here is a list of methods for free or very inexpensive publicity that have been used successfully by SCA groups:

- Passive advertising - Hold meetings, dance practices, fighter practices, etc., in costume and in public places such as public parks and libraries. Put up signs, banners and pavilions to make the activity more visible. The noise produced by clashing swords at fighter practices is especially effective at drawing passers-by. While this method takes little extra effort, it is hit and miss and not likely to contact many potential new members.

- Create a web site - It is surprising how many recent new SCA members were surfing the net and just happened upon an SCA web site, found the group interesting and decided to show up! Ideally, the web page will describe recurring meetings and upcoming events, and provide information directed to newcomers including how to contact the group chatelaine. (Note: aside from the opportunity to contact web surfers, a web site is a very useful source to reference on short flyers for further information and to assist relocating members.) **IMPORTANT: Keep your web site information current!**

- Post color flyers (black and white ones get lost in the crowd these days) about your group at libraries, bookstores, and gaming shops - Most SCA members seem to frequent such places. (The large bookstore chains such as Barnes & Noble and Books-A-Million do not allow such flyers. Private bookstores, especially used book stores and science fiction bookstores usually do permit flyers and are frequent haunts of SCA members.) Color flyers that include photos of knights-in-armor, colorful pavilions, and other SCA icons are easily produced these days with a home computer and ink jet printer.

- Post upcoming activities in the local newspaper "Community Calendar" section. Dance practices, fighter practices, and weeknight classes or workshops are good candidates for this. These postings are free. (Hint- state the activity first using the words "middle ages" or "renaissance", then mention that it is sponsored by the Society for Creative Anachronism. It is an unfortunate fact that our title gives the reader no clue as to what we are about.) Always provide a phone number and, if permitted, an email address for further info.

- Many communities now have emailed arts newsletters, telling free subscribers about upcoming plays, exhibits, concerts, and other activities of interest. Get on these and send them information about SCA activities. Many theatrical people also enjoy the SCA. Contact a local theater group to ask whether they can put you in touch with such newsletters in your community.

- List your group at your local public library and arts council, if you have one. They usually keep listings of community organizations, and may even put them on a web site. Be sure to include your web page address and a phone number, as well as information about what the SCA is.

- Produce inexpensive promotional materials to hand out when the opportunity arises. These may include shire business cards, tri-fold informational flyers, 1/3 page card-stock flyers,

or bookmarks made from card-stock (useful to distribute at libraries and school demos). Always include a phone number and web address.

- Seek opportunities to show off the SCA: school demos, art fairs, local renaissance fairs, university club fairs, etc. Use the opportunity to hand out promotional materials and invite the public to an upcoming meeting or event. (Be sure to get permission from the sponsor before handing out literature.) Recommend to the sponsoring organization that they send out press releases or, if they don't plan to do so, offer to send press releases yourself.

- If your group has the interest and energy, stage a recruiting function designed to attract media attention and entice newcomers to show up. This could be a local SCA-sponsored free renaissance fair, a collegium held at a local campus, or other staged event. For example, the Barony of Madrone in Seattle used to stage an annual re-enactment of the Battle of Hastings on the campus of the University of Washington to attract students to join their College of St. Bunstable. Students were invited to don a tabard for one side and participate in the mock battle. See the next point for information on garnering good and effective media coverage.

- The www.sca.org website will soon (and may already by this printing) have a "Media Center" where you may download both complete press releases for your use and information on how to gain proactive coverage by local and regional media. Feel free to contact the Kingdom Officer for Media Relations (under the Kingdom Seneschal) for assistance on working with the local media. Use these releases and plans to get coverage from local newspapers, TV and radio stations regarding upcoming activities that are newsworthy. The SCA is a very colorful and photogenic activity and easily attracts the media. School demonstrations, in-town events, dance practices, and even staged tournaments at a fighter practice make good opportunities for a news article.

- Identify the local TV community interest program (usually an early morning show) and send a press release, plus a brief letter offering to come to their studio to do a 5 minute interview or demo. This is most effective when scheduled right before a major activity such as a renaissance fair or nearby event. Period hats or helmets to put on the TV hosts during the show are a welcome humorous touch.

- Contact the local public radio station and ask to do a 60 second public service announcement to publicize an upcoming or regularly occurring event. As a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization the SCA qualifies for this free service. You will need to bring your own script. The station may be able to supply copyright-free background music or you can bring your own.

Recommended Printed Information for Chatelaines to Have On-Hand

Chatelaines, in the service of their office, should have some type of printed literature on hand at any SCA activity that they attend. This is especially important for regular group meetings, recruiting events or demos, fighter practices, or any activity where newcomers may appear. Many groups find it useful to distribute inexpensive business cards to shire members that they may pass on to friends, co-workers, or anyone else they meet that expresses an interest in the SCA.

Information distributed to the public about the SCA ideally should be targeted to the interest level of the recipient, taking into consideration the costs of publication and what the local group can afford. Larger, double-sided flyers, or those printed in color or on glossy paper may be reserved for newcomers that come to a group meeting, media representatives that may make

use of the additional information in a future story about the SCA, owners of a facility that the group is hoping to use, or contacts that have expressed more than a passing interest in joining the group.

All printed information must accurately and favorably represent not only the local group, but the SCA in general. All materials to be distributed to the public must be neat, and free of typing or grammatical errors to present a polished image to the public. All photos or drawings must be free of copyright issues. Typewritten text is preferable to hand calligraphy for easier reading, though clearly legible old-style type fonts may be used. Printing should be clear and dark. In accordance with the SCA Media Policy, do not use the word “mundane” in these materials (use “modern-era”) and avoid the following topics:

- 1) Religion
- 2) Lewd materials or references to lewd conduct
- 3) Alcohol making, preparation, studies, distribution, sale, etc.
- 4) Households

The following are some literature styles that various SCA groups have found useful for specific purposes:

Business Cards

Business cards are a cost effective item to distribute to all members of the local group who want to carry them. These are best used to pass on to friends and co-workers, or along with additional information to professional contacts such as teachers, site owners, and media representatives. They should be written generically so that any member may carry them and they will not become quickly outdated. Most printing companies will require an initial set-up fee and a per-piece price based on quantity.

All cards should include the following information:

- The full name “The Society for Creative Anachronism”
- A short summary of the purpose of the SCA (as the name doesn’t give a clue)
- The name of the local group
- The location of the local group, by city or county, and state
- The web sites for SCA.org, kingdom, and local group
- A mailing address if available
- Inclusion of a phone number and/or email address is optional, as these may vary over time. Some groups leave this off, and tell members to write their own name, phone number, and email on the back of the cards they distribute.

The Society for Creative Anachronism
Re-creating the Middle Ages and Renaissance

The Shire of An Dun Theine

PO Box 272, Madison, AL 35758

Huntsville, Alabama chapter

www.sca.org

www.meridies.org

for meeting times & other info, contact the Chatelaine
at: www.anduntheine.org

Bookmarks

Bookmarks are another inexpensive form for the distribution of brief information about the SCA. They should include the same information as a business card, plus an attractive drawing of a knight or other appropriate image at the top. These can be easily made at home: print several bookmarks on a page of color card stock paper, then cut them to size with a rotary or machete style paper cutter. This is a useful item for handing out en masse at demos, libraries, or recruiting fairs.

Tri-fold Brochures

Flyers printed on both sides of standard 8 ½ x 11” paper are the least expensive way to convey a lot of information. A folded brochure style, such as the tri-fold, conveys a more professional image than a full-page flyer. It is also easier to pack and carry without becoming mangled. This form can also accommodate several drawings or photos and can be printed in black-and-white or color.

Brochures should be produced for their target audience and may be modified for each use as desired. A brochure or fact sheet about the SCA should be provided to any reporter who is covering an SCA activity. This will help to ensure that they spell the names correctly, and accurately state the purpose of the Society. This type of brochure should include a more complete summary of the mission of the SCA, a paragraph about its history, and information about the local chapter and its history in the community. The brochure should also prominently note that the SCA is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit educational organization.

Brochures are also useful to provide more complete information to interested newcomers about local chapter activities, meeting times and places, and introductory information. If your group recruits teens, a brochure just for parents (and perhaps teachers) about the SCA, to include waiver requirements, is useful.

Another target audience for a brochure is the owners and managers of facilities or equipment that the SCA would like to rent or have donated. This brochure could include information about SCA events, and the types of activities that the SCA hosts at events. A note should also be included about the not-for-profit status of the SCA, and that tax ID and proof of insurance will be provided on request.

Small Flyers

Many other formats for literature can be used when a business card or bookmark is not enough, but a full brochure is too much. Single-sided flyers are ideal for posting around campuses and on community bulletin boards. One-third-page (3 2/3 x 8 ½”) handouts made from light card stock may be ideal for placing in libraries or handing out at club fairs. The Chatelaine should feel free to develop whatever size and format seems appropriate and affordable for the particular need.

A Note about Referring to SCA Membership in Flyers

Some group web sites and SCA flyers have included comments to the effect that "you do not have to be a member to participate". While this is true, inclusion of such a note in a first-contact article like a web site or promotional flyer is *discouraged*. It may be interpreted to imply that we do not consider membership in the SCA to be important or even recommended.

Unless a flyer states that a fee or membership is required, it is assumed by the average reader that there is no restriction to attend. There is no need to include this fact in handouts. Instead, web pages and brochures intended for newcomers may state: "Benefits of membership

in the SCA, Inc. include a subscription to the Kingdom (regional) newsletter Popular Chivalry, admission discounts at events, and more." The note may then be followed by information on the current membership fees and where to obtain membership forms.

Further details about participation with or without paid membership can be discussed with the newcomer when they ask about application forms and fees. Most newcomers are quite willing to pay the SCA membership fee and should be encouraged to do so.

Newcomer Orientation and Training

The SCA is different from most organizations or clubs in that it has developed over time an intricate society with its own vocabulary, structure and politics. The most central task of the chatelaine is to explain the SCA to newcomers and help them learn enough to feel comfortable participating in its activities.

There are many approaches to the teaching of newcomers. Newcomers also vary as to how much training they need to feel comfortable enough to get involved and fend for themselves. Some people are extroverted and confident self-starters who need little more than a point in the right direction. Others need a bit more help. A good chatelaine will quickly learn to identify those that need this help.

It is quite possible to overload a newcomer with information. The history of the SCA, its titles, culture, customs, activities, and idiosyncrasies, is quite a lot of information to take in at one sitting. Such a data dump can send a newcomer screaming. Have mercy, and allow the newcomer to take in and digest such details at a comfortable pace. In this regard, the local chatelaine may have to look after the newcomer and diplomatically intervene if another well-intentioned member is overwhelming the newcomer with such information. A bored or glazed-eye look is a good indicator.

Training

Newcomer training can be done through formal newcomers' classes and meetings, or one-on-one as the newcomer attends meetings. If newcomers trickle in one at a time, one-on-one will be the only option. How to deliver this information is up to the local chatelaine and his or her local group.

Essential information that must be provided to all newcomers includes:

- The name, purpose, and major activities of the SCA - easily delivered in a brochure or on an introductory web page.
- What activities and meetings are planned in the local group, when and where they meet, and how to get involved, including the main contact for each activity.
- What attire is expected of the newcomer at specific activities, and how to obtain such attire (gold key garb, instructions on making a T-tunic, help them make a costume, recommended merchants, etc.).
- Requirements for waivers, authorizations, and approved equipment for certain activities for safety and insurance reasons, including age restrictions.
- What to expect at, and what to bring to, their first event.

Beyond the above "essential" information, additional details about the SCA can be conveyed as needed, and requested, by the newcomer. Some of the most requested information by newcomers includes:

- Definitions for SCA unique words and titles, especially those of local officers (See Appendix D for a glossary of terms and acronyms used in Meridies.)

- Protocol and Precedence in the SCA, including what to do if called into court
- How to make basic garb, especially T-tunics, and what accessories are appropriate
- Basic Heraldry
- How SCA combat works

Chatelaines and newcomers in Meridies are very fortunate these days in that such information is readily available to them. There are many web sites, including www.SCA.org/newcomers.html, where such information can be found. The Royal University of Meridies (see www.RoyalU.org) also offers classes on these and many other introductory topics. The courses required for the basic RUM Scholar's Degree, shown at www.RoyalU.org/scholar.htm, are excellent classes for newcomers. They are usually taught at the annual RUM collegium in mid-July and sometimes taught at other events during the year. Outlines and class handouts can also be requested from the RUM Vice-Chancellor for Academic Research (Librarian) at academicresearch@RoyalU.org.

Social Activities for Newcomers

In addition to formal training about the SCA, it is important that each newcomer experience opportunities to interact socially with members of the local SCA chapter. When a group goes out for pizza after a business meeting, newcomers should be invited to come along. Members should not assume the newcomer will understand that they are invited. On the contrary, many newcomers are quite self-conscious about barging in where they may not be welcome or assuming anything until they clearly understand how the group functions.

The Chatelaine should work with the local group to offer a variety of opportunities for casual socializing with newcomers. Several ideas for activities for newcomers are shown in Appendix D.

Gold Key Loaner Garb

The Purpose of Loaner Garb

One of the basic requirements to attend an official SCA event is to wear passably period clothing. To this end, most groups maintain a stock of loaner clothing referred to in the SCA as "Gold Key" garb. The stated purpose of Gold Key garb is to help the newcomer "to blend in and feel comfortable in the group" (from the [Known World Handbook](#) – definitions). However, the effect of Gold Key goes far beyond this, and should be kept in mind when a group decides what to stock for loan and how to administer the program.

Commercial advertisers learned years ago the power of clothing. By putting company logos and names on t-shirts, caps, and other items, not only could they obtain free walking advertising, they found that people who were willing to don such clothing were also more likely to profess loyalty to the product and become repeat buyers.

When a newcomer wears loaner clothing at an SCA event, they are literally "trying on" the SCA. With comfortable and attractive Gold Key garb, the host group can help to assure that their experience will be a good fit.

What to Stock as Loaner Garb

The donning of medieval garb helps all of us to make the mental transition to being in the Current Middle Ages. Likewise, the donning of loaner garb by a newcomer helps that person make the mental transition not only to being in the current middle ages, but also to being a part of the SCA. It creates a sense of belonging. If this sense of comfort and belonging is strong

enough, the wearer will want to repeat the experience, and will keep coming back, which is our first objective with newcomers.

With this in mind, the keeper of the Gold Key should ask the following questions:

- 1) Will the wearer of this garb feel good in it? Will they feel proud to be a part of the SCA?
- 2) Do we have garb to fit anyone who might want to become a member? (Children? Tall, short or very large adults?)
- 3) Is it reasonable to expect a newcomer to want to wear this item?

Unfortunately, items donated to Gold Key are often “costuming failures”. This may be due to poor fabric choice, poor fit, or other major flaws. Each item must be evaluated for its suitability as loaner garb. If it is uncomfortable due to poor fit or fabric, is shabby looking, or is glaringly unsuitable for SCA use, it should be reworked or discarded. Much unusable clothing can find a second life as fabric for tabards or children’s garb, or cut up for trim.

Very narrow or very fitted clothing has little utility as Gold Key garb. A wide range of tunics and tabards, with a stock of rope belts, is unisex and will fit almost anyone. Even the largest or most hesitant newcomer can don a tabard over their modern clothes and be “passably period” for the day – to a forgiving populace. A stock of simple hats and hoods can help to dress up the plainest tunic or tabard, but this is optional. Other accessories such as boots, gloves, pouches, and ruffs are nice but may be skipped as they are unnecessary and may be difficult to clean between uses. For cold weather events, a few cloaks or blanket-wraps in Gold Key stock will be appreciated.

Some items of clothing, even if they are beautiful and well made, will have limited usefulness as Gold Key stock because most newcomers will not feel comfortable wearing them. These include tights (especially men’s tights), corsets or corseted dresses, or anything heavily laced or difficult to get in and out of. Some period clothing styles take getting used to, and even the most experienced SCA members may not be willing to wear them. Such items, when donated to Gold Key, should be sold or traded in favor of simpler garb.

Finally, all Gold Key garb must be sturdy and washable. For health reasons, loaner garb must be washed after every loan (including hats – never give a newcomer lice!). To this end, all Gold Key items should have finished seams to resist fraying, and be colorfast and machine washable. Dry-clean-only items are expensive to maintain and thus should be sold or traded in favor of machine washable garb.

Administering the Gold Key Stock

Loaner garb is the property of the local group, and thus of the SCA, Inc. The keeper of the Gold Key has a responsibility to keep track of the Gold Key stock and properly maintain it. Once one has a stock of Gold Key that they are proud of, how do they keep that stock from “walking away”? Here are some suggestions:

- 1) Label all items. A label inside the garment that says “Property of Shire XYZ, SCA, Inc.” with a return address or phone number is ideal. A gold key or other emblem on the garment, inside or outside, might help to remind the borrower that the item was loaned, but will not help them to return the item if they leave the site and forget the name of the group.
- 2) Use a sign-out system, with numbered, inventoried items. By providing their name, an SCA contact person who knows them (if available) and a phone number, it will be possible for the Gold Key officer to request return of the item should the borrower

- forget. It will also make it clear to the borrower that the item is a loan and not a gift. Experience has shown that it is not necessary to charge a rental fee or hold an ID, which may put off the newcomer. A nominal cleaning fee, if needed, is generally acceptable and understood.
- 3) Provide a well-defined return location at an event where garb is loaned. Point this out to each newcomer as he or she borrows the garb. Newcomers are often confused as to where to return their borrowed garb once troll or the Gold Key loaner station is shut down. A wooden box or a straw laundry basket, labeled “return Gold Key here”, works well.
 - 4) Stencil a prominent device on all loaner garb. Some groups have found it useful to stencil, paint or sew a prominent symbol or heraldic device on the front of all loaner items so that they are easily identifiable as loaner items. While this may not improve the chances that a loaned item will be returned, it has the advantage of making it clear to in-the-know group members that the user or wearer is a newcomer and should be treated with extra care. The device also prevents the loaner item from being confused with the personal property of SCA participants.

Running Demonstrations

“Demos are the number one way of introducing and finding new recruits for the SCA. What type of demo to focus upon becomes a vital question. Topping the list of causes of Chatelaine burn-out is doing too many demos. Yes, doing an elementary school demo is fun and rewarding but the likelihood of recruiting new members is low. On the other hand a demo at a college or Renaissance Fair is ripe with new recruits. Helping your local Chatelaines find a balance of demos is a key duty of your office.”

[from GUIDELINES FOR KINGDOM CHATELAINES/HOSPITALERS/GOLD KEY by Modius von Mergentheim (Erik Langhans), Deputy Society Seneschal, Chatelaine Coordinator, September 2000, Appendix I of the Seneschal’s Handbook, by Ellis O’Boirne/Lee Forgue, Society Seneschal, dated October 2000, as posted on the Society for Creative Anachronism web site at <http://www.sca.org/docs/seneschals-hb.pdf>]

IMPORTANT: *Always remember that when you present a demo of any kind, you are representing the SCA to the modern public, a group assumed to be unfamiliar with the terms, customs, or culture of the past or current middle ages. Requirements and recommendations for persons and activities that present the SCA to the modern public are found in the SCA Society Seneschal’s Policy: Media Relations and External Publicity.*

The Society for Creative Anachronism is incorporated as a 501(c)3 not-for-profit educational organization. It is often assumed that SCA groups are required to perform demonstrations for the general public in order to comply with this charter. This is not so. The SCA articles of incorporation define the internal activities of the Society; researching and re-creating aspects of life in the Middle Ages and Renaissance; as educational in themselves, advancing the understanding of life in pre-1700’s Europe.

Although public demonstrations are not mandated by the SCA charter, they are strongly recommended for these reasons:

- 1) Demos are a good opportunity for publicity and recruiting.
- 2) Demos are a public service consistent with our educational charter.

- 3) Demos help to convey a positive image of our Society to the local community. This can be very helpful when interfacing with the Media or when attempting to gain access to new meeting and event locations.
- 4) Demos may be useful to generate goodwill with local media, city leaders, and others in the community whose support may be helpful at a later date.

Types of Demos

There are several types of demos that an SCA group can host or participate in. The type of demo will determine the level of effort and number of people needed to support the event.

- 1) Student Educational Demos - These demos are held at a school, Boy Scout or Girl Scout meeting, library, or other venue where the target audience is children. These are usually requested by a teacher or troop leader and provided by the SCA as a community service. They are to be of an educational nature but must be entertaining as well to maintain the interest of the audience. They can range from one hour in a classroom setting, to all day in a large hall or field. These must be tailored to the age of the students. It is important to remember that the expected focus of these demos is the historical middle ages, not life in the SCA. Those participating in educational demos must be prepared to present the period as living history, and to answer questions about that history, not about the SCA.
- 2) Community Events and For-Profit Fairs - Community art fairs, regional renaissance fairs, and science fiction conventions will often invite the SCA to provide color and entertainment. The main reason to support such fairs is for publicity and recruiting. One can assume that visitors attending renaissance fairs are already interested in the Middle Ages and are an excellent source of new members for the SCA. Many participants in science fiction conventions already feel comfortable wearing costumes and enjoy the sort of creative diversity that the SCA has to offer. Education is far less important than color and entertainment at these events. With permission from the sponsor, public fairs can also be good opportunities for fund-raising activities.
- 3) Parades - Community parades provide little interface with the public except to visually show off the SCA. These, however, can be useful to raise the profile and image of the SCA in the community, especially if locally televised. Be sure to carry a banner with the full SCA name.
- 4) Recruiting Demos - These can range from an information table at a college club fair to a free mini-fair planned, promoted, and executed entirely by the SCA host chapter. The primary goal is to attract attention and provide a sampling of activities and information in order to draw in new members. Such events can also serve to attract the Media in order to promote awareness of the SCA in the community.

The Demo Coordinator

Every group that plans to do demos needs a demo coordinator. This person can be the group Chatelaine, a deputy to the Chatelaine, or an officer that reports to the Seneschal and coordinates with the Chatelaine. The primary task of the Demo Coordinator is to field requests for demos from the public, select those demos that the group is willing to commit to, schedule, and plan the demos. The demo coordinator does not need to actually run every demo, but must be sure that each demo has a leader (the demo-crat or master of ceremonies), and that the group follows through on each demo that is committed to, in accordance with the expectations of the host.

Steps in Planning Demos

Before any Chatelaine or Demo Coordinator commits the group to a demo, he or she must have an agreement with the group that it will support the demo. It is very helpful for a new Chatelaine or Demo Coordinator to have a meeting with the shire officers to determine what effort the group is willing to commit to demos in general, and what personnel and talent are available for demos. For example, if only one armored fighter is available on weekdays, the group cannot commit to a fighting demo during school hours without bringing in help from a neighboring group. Also, scheduling a big demo in the same month as a major SCA event that the group is hosting is likely to seriously stress the group.

It is the responsibility of the Demo Coordinator to confirm that the necessary SCA personnel are available before committing the group to any particular demo. It is much worse to put on a poor demo than to turn down the opportunity for a demo.

- Answer the following questions before committing to any demo:

- 1) What is the purpose of the demo? Public service, education, publicity, or recruiting?
- 2) Who is the target audience? What age range, level of education and familiarity with the subject? How many will be in the audience?
- 3) When and where is the demo to be held? How much time is to be filled?
- 4) What are the hosts' expectations for the demo? Do they want to see a particular time period or topic presented? Do they expect a combat demonstration?
- 5) What are the facilities for the demo? Are they consistent with the expectations? For example, if they want a combat demo, is there space to do this safely?

- Get group and worker commitment: Once these questions are answered, and some tentative dates and times are discussed, the demo opportunity must be presented to the SCA group to determine if it can be supported. Once the group agrees that the demo is a worthwhile effort, the demo coordinator must obtain a commitment from individual SCA members who will support the demo in the required roles at the planned time and date and place. *It is essential to ask people individually to support the demo and to get their commitment on a sign-up list.* There are few demos that can be done effectively by one person, and the demo coordinator certainly does not want to do all of them himself!

- Finalize a date, time, and location: Once a commitment has been obtained from the group and from those members of the group who will work the demo, the coordinator can then contact the host and agree on a final date, time, and place. This is also a good time to ask the host whether there will be any media present or if they are submitting a press release. If the host says no, or they hadn't thought about it, the demo coordinator should offer to invite the media or submit a press release (if appropriate) for them. Most demos can be a good opportunity for media coverage.

- Put the demo on the group calendar, and invite neighboring groups if desired.

- If media coverage is desired, put together the schedule for press notices to go out, and compose these notices as directed by the Kingdom Media Relations officer. Put reminders on your calendar to issue the notices as scheduled. Arrange for someone to take photos if the plan is to issue a press release after the event is over.

- Establish a rough schedule of activities to occur at the event. This schedule should include time for introduction of the SCA and the demo topic(s), some time after each distinct activity for questions, and a realistic duration for each activity based on the expected number of participants. For example, it will be very hard to fill an hour scheduled for combat if only two fighters are available. Also, many audience members will become bored after 20 minutes of a particular activity.

- Determine what facilities and equipment will be needed to support each planned activity, then communicate with the host to see that these can be provided. For example, if the demo is for a large crowd in an auditorium or out-of-doors, a public address system will be required. The general public is not accustomed to listening to heralds and will be bored and irritated if they cannot hear the speakers. Music for dancing will also need to be amplified. Site rules on weapons, open flames (as for a glass bead-making demonstration), parking and unloading, and other details must be determined.

- Identify who will bring what, and what people will wear. Make a list.

- If the demo is to be large or long, ask individuals to lead specific activities. The dance-master could lead a dancing demo or maypole, the fencing marshal could lead a fencing demo, etc. If possible, arrange a few brief entertainments to fill dead time during transitions between activities, armoring-up, repair of an armor failure, or other pauses in activity. Suggestions include: a period song or story, juggling, an explanation of the armor, put some armor on a teacher or volunteer, magic tricks, puppets, etc.

- A rough script should be developed for the master-of-ceremonies or spokesperson for the SCA. The person speaking for the SCA should be someone who speaks well in public and is capable of presenting a positive image of the SCA to the target audience. That person should be knowledgeable enough about the SCA and the topic being presented to answer questions at the level of the target audience.

- *All* plans for demos must consider, and make the necessary accommodations for, the safety of the participants and the audience. Large demos require more marshals for combat activities and may require roped-off areas to control the audience. All demos that show potentially hazardous activities (combat, archery, glass bead making, forging) must include some statement of caution to the audience during the activity such as “Do not do this at home. This activity requires proper training and safety equipment...”

- Ask the host whether the SCA can hand out literature about the group or pass around a sign-up list. If so, have materials printed and made ready

- For recruiting demos, plan to set up an information table and bring along photo books, examples of SCA publications, a sign-up list for “further information”, and plenty of printed literature. Bring a nice tablecloth, pavilion (if outdoors), and colorful banners. If the demo is only at a table, a suit of armor on a stand or person, or a helm on the table, will help to attract attention. A portable DVD player displaying photos or video of SCA activities is nice as well.

- During the days right before the demo, call the volunteers and remind them of the time and place of the demo, their commitments, and the items they have agreed to bring. Also call the demo host and reconfirm the plans.

- On the day of the demo, arrive early, and bring with you the list of volunteers with their phone numbers, a cell phone to call late arrivals, your script and schedule, and flyers and brochures as needed. Do your best to keep things running on time. The modern public does not understand “SCA time”, and will become quickly annoyed or bored with too much dead time or disorganization. Keep the demo running smoothly and it will go well.

- After the demo is over, send a thank-you note to the host, and follow up with newcomers who signed the interest sheet.

Activities for Demos

There are as many topics for demonstrations as there are activities in the SCA. The activities that your group can offer should be drawn from the activities that it specializes in, and the members who are available. Some of the most requested activities include:

- **Armored Combat:** Almost every demo host will request this. If you have two available fighters and a workable site, this should be provided. It should be noted that the general public will consider every fighter in armor to be a “Knight”. SCA titles may be used for introductions, but any fighter should be prepared to answer to “Sir” or “Knight”. The fighters should be reminded that this is a demo, not a tournament - so flashy moves and theatrics are encouraged; the winner of each bout is not important. All deaths should be accompanied by an appropriate fall to the ground. Salutes and challenges are nice touches. Long pauses and psyching each other out are just dead time to an audience and should be avoided. It can be fun for the audience if one fighter plans to play the opponent or “Goliath” to encourage the audience to cheer for one side. Different weapon styles and melee scenarios can be used to fill additional time.

- **Rapier Combat** - The same guidelines as for armored combat demos apply to rapier demos. Unfortunately, rapier combat does not produce the loud crashes and bangs of armor, nor the broad movements, so rapier fighters must work more to add excitement to their demo. Swashbuckling touches such as soft parry with cloaks, jumping up on benches or tables, and talk during combat (“aha!”, “take that!”, “avast ye!”...) are terrific if they can be safely performed by the participants. Challenges in flowery Shakespearean language can add interest as well.

- **Dance Demonstrations** - These should be rehearsed in advance until they can be done consistently. A mix of court and peasant dances is best. Do NOT use the long version of a dance. Simple audience participation dances such as the tangle bransle or a maypole are very good for large outdoor demonstrations or schools. Each child under age 7 will need an adult to help them follow the steps. Two SCA helpers will be needed to assist the dance leader to draw in volunteers from the audience to join the dance.

- **“Through the Ages” Fashion Show** - If enough SCA members are present, the master of ceremonies can conduct a fashion show. Available members line up in order from early to late period, and then strut one-by-one past the audience as the speaker introduces and briefly describes each outfit. While a knowledgeable SCA costumer may be able to “wing it” with such descriptions, this works best if each person writes a summary of their outfit on an index card for the announcer to work from. Interesting tidbits of information should be included, such as “the nobility demonstrated their wealth by the quality and quantity of the fabric they wore”, or “one outfit could cost a year’s wages, so most peasants had only one or two”.

- **Craft Demonstrations** - At demos where the audience can mill around, or where students shift in groups from one location to another, tabletop craft demonstrations can be done. These should be set up to be completed in 15 minutes or less and allow time for questions. A work in progress and a completed article should be shown if possible. Chain mail making is always a popular demonstration. Other possibilities include calligraphy and illumination, embroidery, weaving, spinning, dishing armor, carving, playing period instruments, felting wool, etc. The list is endless. Crafts selected for demonstration must consider the age of the audience and site restrictions (open flames, sharp tools or weapons, alcohol, dusty outdoor site, etc.)

Demo No-Nos

Any demonstration to the public must favorably represent not only the local group, but the Society as well. Negative publicity resulting from a misrepresentation or a misconception could impact surrounding groups or more. SCA members must be sensitive to the audience, the community, and current news issues. It is also wise to consider the expectations of the audience; in a society of instant gratification and fast-moving television programs, people are not accustomed to the slow pace or the quiet of true medieval times.

The SCA appeals to a diverse group of people, and is very tolerant of diversity. However, some extremes of this diversity may cause difficulties when, in a demo situation, audience members wrongly assume that the extreme is representative of the Society as a whole. Therefore, while some may object to this, the demo leader and the group seneschal must enforce limits as to what can be displayed at demos. In general terms, anything that could be expected to offend the public, significantly misrepresent the SCA, or drive away newcomers must be avoided.

The following things have been known to offend or cause difficulties for the SCA when seen at demos, and must be avoided:

- Blatantly fantasy or “barbarian” costume, including chain mail bikinis, fur bikinis, loincloths or any outfit that could be described as “scantily clad”.
- Bawdy songs or crude language or behavior, especially when minors are present.
- Overtly religious symbolism, especially of non-mainstream religions. This includes pentagrams and pagan symbolism, overtly clerical garb, tarot cards and fortune telling.
- Slave auctions or servant auctions, even for fundraising.
- Drinking of alcohol, though displays on period brewing or mead-making may be appropriate for some adult venues.
- Brandishing of live steel, or any weapons (even boffers) left unattended, or failure to attend to combat safety rules. Keep in mind that weapons of any kind are banned in most schools and government buildings. Also consider what harm might come to the local group and the SCA if a child were accidentally hurt at a demo through careless handling of a weapon.
- Sloppy attention to period versus non-period items. While this may not draw media attention or lawsuits, the casual mixing of styrofoam cups, soda cans, and tennis shoes with arts displays and costumes will lower the overall impression of the SCA as historical re-creation. It is best to plan places to hide necessary modern items and keep them out of sight.
- Demonstrators should be reminded, if needed, to focus on the fact that it is a demo, not an SCA event. Discussions of private matters, SCA horror stories or gossip, and war stories should not be held when an audience is nearby, and are best left to other days. SCA war

stories, while they can be entertaining, are best avoided at demos, as they are often full of jargon, can easily stray into in-jokes, and run the risk of either boring or scaring off some newcomers.

- Avoid SCA jargon, especially terms that might be misconstrued. Non-members are “modern”, not “mundane”. New people are “newcomers”, not “newbies”. Etc.

Issues When Dealing with Families and Minors

The Society for Creative Anachronism welcomes families with children to participate in its activities. As an organization that has been in existence for 40 years, some members have grown up in the SCA, and many members who joined when they were single have married and had children. To accommodate these members, Meridies has Ministers of Children, a school for Pages, youth combat, and other programs to entertain and educate children.

Many parents would not be able to participate in the SCA without such programs for their children. When recruiting, welcoming, and training families with children, or teens participating alone, chatelaines need to consider the needs of these minors and their parents.

Some items to keep in mind are:

- Minor Waivers - All minors (anyone under 18) must have a “Minor Waiver” signed by a parent or legal guardian at the troll booth. This is an SCA legal requirement, and children without a waiver must be turned away. It is the duty of the group Chatelaine to inform families in advance of this requirement so that they are not surprised by it.

- Children Attending an Event with Another Adult - Children are permitted to attend to attend SCA events with another responsible adult who is not the parent or legal guardian. However, the child must have with them the minor waiver signed by a parent, a letter or form signed by the parent that assigns responsibility for the child to the accompanying adult for the day, and a “Consent for Medical Treatment” form for the child, signed and NOTARIZED by the parent, in case of a need for emergency medical care. If these forms have not been prepared in advance, the child will not be permitted on site. Failure to bring this will require that the child, the accompanying adult, and any others with them, turn around and go home. This is an unhappy situation for everyone; an experience-killer for a newcomer. The Chatelaine must be sure to inform new families of this requirement, and be sure that the need for advance paperwork for minors is mentioned in flyers or ads for events that invite them.

- Teens Attending Events - Teens under 18 are minors in the eyes of the law. As such they are not permitted to attend an official SCA event without an accompanying adult and the proper minors’ paperwork. When speaking with high school students and young college students who are interested in the SCA, the Chatelaine must ask their age and inform them of this legal requirement if they are under age 18. The Constable and others in the host group must be vigilant that unaccompanied youth under age 21 are not consuming alcohol at SCA functions.

- Activities for Children - The Chatelaine should be prepared to explain to parents the sorts of activities that are available to children in the SCA. The Chatelaine should also encourage their group to provide and support activities for children so that participation in the SCA will be appealing to their families. Support services that are helpful to families participating in the SCA include scheduled functions where parents can leave their children while they participate in key event activities, indoor or sheltered areas where day-tripping

families with young children can take them to escape the weather or to nap, safe play areas at event sites, some foods palatable to children at feasts, and warnings at event sites of potential hazard areas for children to avoid (open water, animals, weapons ranges, poison ivy, etc.). At weekend-long events, identification of a “family camping” or “quiet” area away from late-night bardics and parties will help parents to get their children to sleep.

- Activities for Teens - Many SCA activities provided for children are not appealing or appropriate for teens. They will be bored or offended by entertainments that are too easy or too immature for them. Chatelaines can assist teens by urging the group to offer activities for them, or adult activities in which teens may participate. Such activities may include youth combat, outdoor and indoor games, quests, age-appropriate arts and sciences classes, dancing, and target archery. Older youth also appreciate being treated as mature and capable, and may find it rewarding to be asked to help assist in SCA activities. Tasks where teens may assist include serving at feast, helping in the kitchen, being a water bearer (off the field), decorating the hall, singing or playing music with a group, assisting with a class or in gosling activities, and serving as a Page or runner to a Baron, an autocrat or a Peer.

- Parental Reassurance - Parents of children attending SCA meetings and events must feel comfortable that the SCA is a safe and wholesome environment for their children. This is true even for the parents of teens or college students that may attend local meetings or events without them. The Chatelaine should provide literature to the parents about the activities in which their child will participate, and invite them to observe an SCA meeting or a nearby event. The SCA ideal to re-create a society where chivalry, honor, and respect are central values should be presented to parents as an admirable role model for children in our modern society.

APPENDIX A

Information Sources for Newcomers

There is a considerable amount of published information available for newcomers about the SCA. Local Chatelaines should have some information on hand to provide to newcomers, and be able to direct newcomers to useful and accurate sources of information about the SCA.

Information That Chatelaines Should Have on Hand

Local Chatelaines should keep on hand various items of information, aside from publicity and recruiting materials, to show or provide to newcomers as needed. These items should be available at local meetings where newcomers may attend, and at recruiting demos. These include:

- Copies of the SCA membership form, available at: <http://www.sca.org/members/welcome.html>
- A copy of the most recent issue of Popular Chivalry, to show newcomers what they will receive with their membership, and to explain upcoming events.
- Copies of the local group newsletter
- Back issues of Tournaments Illuminated and The Compleat Anachronist, to show new members the types of publications available from the SCA by subscription

Recommended Information Sources for Newcomers

The Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. offers several published and on-line information sources for newcomers. These are the definitive sources for SCA information for newcomers. They include:

- The Society web site: www.sca.org, especially the newcomers' page at <http://www.sca.org/newcomers.html>
- The web site of the Kingdom of Meridies: www.meridies.org. Newcomers should be encouraged to surf the site to get a feel for the activities and operations around the kingdom. Many of these pages have very useful links for in-depth information on specific topics.
- The Known World Handbook, *A compendium of information, traditions and crafts practiced in these Current Middle Ages in the SCA*. This 200+ page soft-cover book is a wealth of information for anyone getting involved in the SCA. Available from the SCA stock clerk at: <https://secure.sca.org/cgi-bin/stockclerk/other.html>
- A New Members' Guide - A "how-to" pamphlet book on the who, what, and where of getting involved in the SCA, especially for new members. Available for \$2.50, also from the SCA stock clerk. A copy of this guide is provided by the SCA to every new member with their first membership card.
- Forward into the Past, An Introductory Guide to the SCA – A former publication of the SCA for newcomers, now out of print and superseded by A New Members' Guide. It is still very useful though some information is outdated. It is posted on the web at: <http://www.ansteorra.org/regnum/hospitaler/articles/fip.htm>

APPENDIX B

Corporate Statement Introducing the Society for Creative Anachronism

The following is an excerpt from the Organizational Handbook of the Society for Creative Anachronism, April 2001, revised July 2004, page 7. It is included here in its entirety as a useful official summary of the purpose and activities of the SCA. All chatelaines and SCA members expected to communicate to newcomers and the public what the SCA is about should be familiar with the contents of this statement:

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIETY FOR CREATIVE ANACHRONISM

The Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (SCA, Society) is a nonprofit educational organization devoted to study of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Most of its activities take place in the context of a social structure adapted from the forms of the European Middle Ages, which allows participants to take a first-hand look at various aspects of the life, culture and technology of the times under study.

As a living history group, the Society provides an environment in which members can recreate various aspects of the culture and technology of the period, as well as doing more traditional historical research. We sponsor events such as tournaments and feasts where members dress in clothing styles worn in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, and participate in activities based on the civil and martial skills of the period. These activities recreate aspects of the life and culture of the landed nobility in Europe prior to 1600 CE. The dress, pastimes, and above all the chivalric ideals of the period serve to unify our events and activities.

For Society members, most of the world, and all of the centuries prior to the 17th, can serve as a source for personal research. However, the further you go from the core of Medieval and Renaissance Europe, the less the environment we offer will resemble what someone of your time and country would find natural or homelike. For example, you can be an Asian or African guest at a European court, but you cannot expect others to share your special interests - like any long-term visitor in a foreign land, you are the one who will have to adapt to the customs you find around you. Since members have free choice of what areas they will explore, it follows that Society branches cannot decide to specialize in a specific time and place, since that would make it hard for members there to pursue their own interests in other times and places.

The Society has active branches in the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, Asia, and Africa. This "Known World" is divided into Kingdoms. Each Kingdom has a King and Queen selected by tournament combat, in which each entrant seeks the Crown both for him or herself and for a chosen consort. Some of the Kingdoms include Principalities ruled by Princes and Princesses also chosen by combat. These regional organizations are responsible for the smaller branches based in individual towns, cities or counties.

The SCA was incorporated in the United States in 1968, but counts its years from the first tournament – actually a medieval-theme party with no thought of starting an ongoing club – held on May 1st, 1966. The corporation maintains a central membership registry, publishes a quarterly magazine, *Tournaments Illuminated*, and provides mailing lists for the monthly regional newsletters published by the Kingdoms for all subscribing members. It also sets overall

standards for safety and organizational structure, within which each Kingdom works as an independent unit.

The documents in this book set forth the workings of the SCA, Inc. and of the Society. Except as otherwise noted, the rules of the modern corporation (the By-Laws and the Corporate Policies of the SCA, Inc.) apply only to the US and other areas not separately incorporated, while the document named Corpora governs all the Kingdoms of the Society, wherever they exist.

Welcome to the Current Middle Ages!

APPENDIX C

Notes on Public Relations and the Use of Jargon

The following paragraphs are excerpts from the Seneschal's Handbook, by Ellis O'Boirne/Lee Forgue, Society Seneschal, dated October 2000, pages 47-52, as posted on the Society for Creative Anachronism web site at <http://www.sca.org/docs/seneschals-hb.pdf>. The reader is referred to the Media Kit, to be published at www.sca.org during 2005, for updates to the instructions below.

The local or Kingdom Seneschal or their designated (trained) representative is the authorized contact person for the media in their area. If a media representative contacts any other person, that person should refer the media representative to the Seneschal or the designated representative. The Hospitaller/Chatelaine is a good choice for designated representative.

If a reporter wishes to speak to a variety of people, the official SCA representative should escort the reporter on these rounds. If an interview is scheduled, plan in advance as much as possible. (Use the points listed in the section 'Talking to the Real World' to prepare what you will say.) Don't concentrate on only one aspect of SCA culture, such as fighting, to the exclusion of all else. Try to give a flavor of all the things we do. Rehearse how you will address 'controversial' questions.

Help the reporter prepare for the interview by providing them with informational materials, such as 'Forward Into the Past', an issue or two of Tournaments Illuminated, a selection of previous articles which have highlighted the positive aspects of the SCA, and/or a local flyer or brochure. (Kingdom and local newsletters should be screened before being given to the media - some event announcements that are published in newsletters are not necessarily for media consumption.) Make sure any materials include accurate, usable local contact information--at the least, the Seneschal's and/or Hospitaller/Chatelaine's real-world name and telephone number. Include the Registry's contact information as well.

When conducting the interview, avoid jargon or statements that could be misinterpreted. For example, use the phrase 'simulated swordplay' instead of telling reporters our fighters beat each other with sticks. The word 'medieval' is often misconstrued - uninformed people hear the word 'evil' in it. Use caution and good sense, and consider your listener(s) carefully. See 'Talking to the Real World' for more suggestions on this.

If an article is to be published, or a video- or audiotape is to be aired, ask the author/producer to be allowed to review the final product before publication/airing. (This may not be permitted, but do ask.) In any case, ask for the date when the publication will appear or the tape will be broadcast. Ask the author/producer to provide you with at least one complimentary copy of the publication or tape. The Kingdom Seneschal, [Chatelaine, and Media Relations officer] should be provided copies of any published material. [A copy may be requested by one of these officers to pass on to the Corporation.]

Make sure publicity gets reviewed and approved at the level of the SCA likely to be affected by it. Local Seneschals may talk to local media, but you or your deputies should at least discuss

material proposed for regional distribution. In practice, of course, anyone at any time may find himself trapped into a quotable comment--so make sure people understand the issues involved!

Published photos need permission from the photographer! Pictures are the intellectual property of the photographers. It doesn't matter how good the initial publicity is, if it is followed up by a copyright lawsuit!

[On occasion, negative publicity can occur. This may take the form of a newspaper article or television news spot that portrays the SCA erroneously (as a cult, a religious group, etc.) or unfavorably (as a "bunch of weirdos", for example). In rare cases the negative publicity will involve a true story of an incident that happened at an SCA gathering or an illegal act committed by an individual who is associated with the SCA. In ALL cases, negative publicity should be brought to the attention of the group Seneschal, who will consult with the Kingdom Seneschal and the Kingdom Media Relations officer. All responses to negative publicity are the responsibility of these kingdom officers.]

The Chatelaine's office is not to respond to negative allegations. Should the Chatelaine be contacted by the media in any manner (phone call, interviewer on a TV spot, etc.) regarding negative incidents, the best response is "I am not familiar with the details of that event. May I pass on your phone number to our group president so that he/she can provide the information that you are seeking?" The group president will then have the opportunity to confer with the kingdom officers to develop an appropriate response. - Bianca]

Talking to the Real World

Points to Emphasize with Interviewers:

1. A suggested introduction to who we are for a reporter: 'The Society for Creative Anachronism is a not-for-profit educational organization dedicated to the study of pre-17th Century European history and culture. Our aim is to learn by doing--that is, by recreating various aspects of life in that historical period. To that end, members practice a re-created form of the tournament combat of the Middle Ages as well as other arts, such as calligraphy, dancing, music, wood-, leather-, and metal-working, and many more. At 'events', members display the results of their research by wearing clothing appropriate to the historical period, preparing and eating feasts created from period recipes, participating in and watching tournaments, dancing, playing music, and so on. By actually 'living' the historical period in which we are interested, we learn a lot about it.'
2. Emphasize the importance of the arts in SCA activities--though fighting is the most eye-catching and obvious thing we do, there is far more to the Society than fighting.
3. Stress the importance of chivalry, honor, and courtesy in our activities. We are re-creating a period in which the upper classes held these values in high esteem.
4. When you discuss SCA combat, stress our high safety standards, training and authorization, and so on. This is a sport, but not a reckless sport.
5. Discuss the hierarchical nature of our organization. Inform the interviewer that all titles and awards in our group are earned through merit.
6. Emphasize that the Society is a family-oriented organization, with members in all age ranges.
7. State that the organization is now over 30 years old, with over 20,000 members worldwide.

Organizational Terminology:

Our organizational terminology--kingdoms and principalities, ruled by royalty and administered by officers with high-sounding titles--gives us a lot of pleasure. The names themselves lighten the drudgery of the work involved, and help us evoke the feeling of life in our chosen period. Unfortunately, the names and titles we use often just look weird to people outside the SCA. And not even pleasantly weird, either--they suggest less savory groups fond of strange names and titles. To avoid getting classed with such groups, always convert our titles into their modern equivalents when giving information to outside agencies or requesting aid from them.

1. Branches: Kingdoms and principalities translate to regions and divisions. Use names like the ones given here:

- Aethelmearc--Northern Appalachian Region
- Ansteorra--Texas-Oklahoma Region
- An Tir--Northwestern Region
- Avacal-- Western Canada Division
- Summits, Southern Oregon Division
- Artemisia, Northwest Rockies Region
- Atenveldt--Southwest Region
- Atlantia--Mid-Atlantic Region
- Caid--Southern California Region
- Calontir--Lower Midwest Region
- Drachenwald--European Region
- Gleann Abhann--South-Central Region
- Nordmark--Swedish Division
- East--Northeastern Region
- Ealdormere--Ontario Region
- Meridies--Southeastern Region
- Gleann Abhann--Mississippi Valley Division
- Middle--Central Region
- Northshield--Upper Midwest Division
- Outlands--Eastern Rockies Region
- Trimaris--Florida Region
- West--Western Region
- Cynagua--Central Valley Division
- Lochac--Australian Division
- Mists--Coastal Division
- Oertha--Alaskan Division

Baronies, shires, etc. are all chapters--use the appropriate city or county names, such as 'the Springfield chapter' or figure out something else that makes sense.

2. Officers: Royalty--avoid mentioning if possible, or use "Regional [or Division] Chairman" Kingdom Seneschal--Regional Vice President Chancellor of the Exchequer--Regional Treasurer Earl Marshal--Regional Athletic Coordinator Principal Herald--Regional Heraldry Coordinator Chirurgeon--Regional First Aid Coordinator M/Arts & Sciences--Regional Research Coordinator Chronicler--Editor; Regional Publications Director (depending on context) Branch officers--chapter president, treasurer, etc.

Events: In publicity notices, it's generally acceptable to mention tournaments, feasts, and revels without finding other names for them, because the words are in common use and have few negative connotations. If you refer to a war, always explain the term as soon as it appears. However, when negotiating for sites or other real-world services, use "regional gathering" or "convention" instead of "war", and consider using "dinner" or "banquet" instead of "feast" and "meeting" or "dance" instead of "revel"--it's always best to avoid distracting someone when you're trying to do business with him.

Jargon Translation: Don't refer to fighters as 'stick jocks' or to tournament combat as 'beating each other with baseball bats'. Try phrases like 're-creation broadsword competition' or 'simulated swordplay'.

Avoid the SCA jargon term 'mundane'. Instead, refer to 'the general public' or 'non-members' when you mean 'mundane' (noun) or say 'modern' when you mean 'mundane' (adjective).

Introduce the full title of the organization--'Society for Creative Anachronism'-- before using the shorthand 'SCA'.

Recognize the words we use which have meaning within the group, but not to anyone else, and avoid them. Examples: troll=gate or registration, garb=clothing or costumes, autocrat=event coordinator. When you discuss court, peerages, tournaments, or any other important aspect of SCA culture, briefly explain the terms you are using. Remember, though, that a bystander at a demo probably doesn't want to hear a one-hour dissertation on how one earns a Pelican. Have mercy.

APPENDIX D

Useful information, articles, and lists to share with newcomers

New Member Activities

Most of these activities were published by THL Kyppyn Kirkcaldy in the Meridian Chatelaine's Handbook, 1998.

The following activities may be useful to break the ice with newcomers, help them to feel welcomed, or simply provide an entertaining approach to learning about the SCA.

- Have the Chatelaine introduce newcomers to the group during the Chatelaine's report at business meetings. (Always applaud the newcomers.)
- Have a regular class schedule for the group that includes newcomer classes such as: Garb 101, Protocol & Precedence, SCA Combat for Non-Fighters, etc.
- Host an *old timers* meeting in which funny stories and SCA myths and legends can be retold. Keep it light.
- A potluck can go a long way to assimilate new people into the group. Have it in conjunction with an armor workshop or a garb night.
- Organize a trip to an art gallery, museum, or movie on an SCA topic. Go for coffee or pizza afterward and discuss what was awesome, fun, or particularly period (or not).
- Get together for a medieval cooking day or feast recipe rehearsal, where everyone can get involved.
- Provide crayons and copyright free pictures for kids to color. Provide medieval themed toys (period or not!)
- Give out door prizes at newcomers meetings, such as a copy of The Known World Handbook, a pouch, or an item of feastgear.
- Show period themed movies at a member's house, and comment on the accuracy, or lack of it, during the movie. Brainstorm event ideas based on the movie. (Classics such as Monty Python and the Holy Grail, The Vikings, or The Court Jester are ideal for this.)
- Host a "bardic night" - sing classic SCA songs and tell classic SCA stories. Sit around a bonfire, light a fireplace, or create a "pretend" fire that everyone can sit around.
- Schedule a "fancy garb night" or "in-persona night" where newcomers can see and touch nice garb, and learn about fellow members' personas. A persona night can be staged as an "inquisition" where members are quizzed about their persona to see how well they have researched it.
- Hold a "game night" where members and guests can play chess or other games, and teach simple period games like Nine Men's Morris.
- Stage a mock court, have people play "King and Queen" and give out silly awards. Use the activity to teach newcomers court protocol. This is especially fun with children - let the children play the King, Queen, Herald, King's Champion (with a plastic sword-of-state), etc. Practice an Oath of Fealty ceremony and discuss its meaning.

“Freaking the Mundanes”

by Maestra Bianca Allegri da Vicenza

An old SCA term for being seen in public wearing garb is “freaking the mundanes”. “Mundane” is a commonly used, though somewhat discouraged, term for people who are not involved in the SCA. “Freak”, while too strong a word, is the expression used for the reaction that is often evoked when people see others dressed in costume around the modern world.

It might be a good idea to mention the topic to newcomers before they go out in their first costume. Anyone who spends much time with the SCA will find such moments inevitable: filling up at a gas station (even with pay-at-pump, one still has to get out to operate the pump), grabbing fast food on the way to an event, running out at lunch time for a bite, or being sent on an errand to pick up additional supplies for an event.

There is really no need to avoid such situations. People don't bite those they see in garb. By my personal experience, the likely reaction will be:

- Staring (95% of the time), covertly or openly. That's all.
- Pointing (usually by children) accompanied by hushing parents as though we are handicapped or possibly a bit dangerous.
- The question “Are you in a play?”
- Some question of pure curiosity, such as, “So what's the deal?”

On rare occasion someone will recognize the costume as the SCA, or at least a Renaissance Fair outfit. At any rate, those bold enough to ask about the costume deserve at least an honest, but brief answer about the SCA. If they are really intrigued and want to know more, it can become an excellent recruiting opportunity. It is useful at these times for any SCA member to be carrying a business card or flyer for their local chapter.

Glossary of SCA Terms and Acronyms Used in Meridies

Edited by Maestra Bianca Allegri da Vicenza from various sources

For those terms that are listed in the Organizational Handbook of the SCA, the definition quoted therein has been used.

Note: Some SCA jargon varies from kingdom to kingdom, especially “medievalized” terms for modern items without period equivalents, and terms referring to children and children’s activities.

Anachronism - Anything out of its proper place in time

Apprentice - One who is formally associated with a Master/Mistress of the Laurel as a student. Apprentices are known by a green belt.

Armory - Heraldic devices and Coats of Arms

Arms - What your heraldic design becomes once you receive an Award of Arms.

A.S. - Anno Societatis; The dating system used in the S.C.A. A.S. years are reckoned from May 1st, 1966, the accepted birth date of the SCA.

Associate - A term referring to any of the students of a Peer; an apprentice, protégé, or squire.

Autocrat - The person in charge of an event.

Baldric - A belt worn from one shoulder to the opposite hip, usually to display a rank or position.

Bardic Circle - An informal gathering for singing or storytelling

Baron or Baroness, Court - An honorary title conferred upon someone by the Crown, not affiliated with any territorial lands. Does not confer precedence beyond an Award of Arms.

Baron or Baroness, Landed - One who has been appointed as the representative of the Crown for a Barony. Referred to as “Your Excellency”.

Below-the-Salt Feast - A simple dinner offered at events when the feast hall is too small to accommodate all attendees at high feast. This dinner is usually served in a separate area to be consumed somewhere outside of the main feast hall.

BOD, the / Board, the - The Board of Directors of the SCA, Inc.

Boffer - A foam weapon for play combat between unarmored opponents.

Bransle - pronounced “brawl” - A simple style of country dance normally performed in a circle or line.

Chivalry, the - The Knights

Circlet - An ornamental band worn about the head. In Meridies, metal circlets denote rank. See *sumptuary laws*.

Clear! - A warning call that someone is about to draw a steel weapon. Those in earshot should watch where they move to prevent an accident.

Collegium - An SCA event consisting mainly of classes.

Consort - The chosen one who inspired the Sovereign King or Queen in the Crown Tournament. The Consort rules with the Sovereign for that reign.

Coronation - An event in which the Crown Prince & Princess begin Their reign as King and Queen.

Coronet, The - The ruling Prince and Princess of a Principality.

Coronet List - The tournament, and corresponding event, at which the next rulers for a principality are decided.

Corpora - The policies governing historical re-creation within the Society, and those policies applicable to the entire Society.

Count or Countess - Persons who have once reigned over a kingdom. The title is assumed at the end of the first complete reign. Referred to as Your Excellency. *Note on alternative titles: Some Counts and Countesses, in keeping with the culture and time period of their persona, may choose to use a historically equivalent title. See <http://www.sca.org/heraldry/titles.html>*

Crash Space - Informal lodging provided by members hosting an event, usually at a member's home and usually free. May also be called billets (a military term) or bed & breakfast.

Crown, The - The Ruling King and Queen

Crown List - The tournament, and corresponding event, at which the next rulers for a Kingdom are decided.

Current Middle Ages, The - The Medieval and Renaissance society as it is re-created within the Society for Creative Anachronism, including its territorial designations, titles, culture, and political structure.

Dame - Optional title for a female Knight, Pelican, or Laurel

Day Trip - Attendance at an event for the day only; not staying overnight on the site.

Device, Heraldic - A graphic symbol that is uniquely registered to an individual or group by the SCA College of Arms. Used as a representation or "signature" of that person or group. This device becomes a coat of arms upon the granting of an award of arms to the owner. A simplified device may also be registered as a badge.

Discreetly Wet - An alcoholic beverage policy; Indicates that the site has given permission for alcoholic beverages to be on site, provided that they are kept out of sight, and all original containers are concealed and disposed of off-site. Modern laws on legal drinking age apply. No public drunkenness.

Duct Tape - A common silver/grey tape found at hardware stores that is used to wrap rattan swords in the SCA. Because it is ubiquitous at events, there are many jokes about duct tape in the SCA.

Dry Site - An alcoholic beverage policy; Dry sites permit NO alcohol consumption.

Duke or Duchess - Persons who have reigned over a kingdom two or more times. The title is assumed at the end of the second complete reign. Referred to as Your Grace. *See note on alternative titles under **Count or Countess**.*

Eric - An SCA-unique word for the posts and ropes surrounding the list field. Legend has it that when the SCA was young, a red cloth was used to mark the boundaries of the field. This red cloth was affectionately known as Eric the Red. The name Eric stuck and has far out-lived the cloth and the joke.

Event - An official SCA gathering, sponsored by an official SCA chapter, generally held on a weekend, and open to all SCA members and non-members. All attendees must pay the site fee, wear some attempt at period garb, and behave with honor and courtesy.

Farspeaker - An alternate term for a modern telephone.

Favor - A token item, usually constructed of cloth, given in friendship or love by one individual to another.

Fealty - A relationship between individuals marked by an exchange of oaths of service and protection. Knights, landed barons/baronesses, and kingdom officers are expected to swear fealty to the Crown. The populace is also invited to swear fealty.

Feastrat - The person in charge of food served at an event; the head cook. This word is SCA jargon, not a historic term.

Feastgear - Eating dishes and utensils for one diner. Most SCA feasts assume that guest will bring their own tableware suitable to the event. This includes a plate, bowl, drinking vessel, and utensils in pottery, metal, wood, or glass. Guests may also bring tablecloths, candles and any other items that might enhance the setting.

Garb - An alternate term for period clothing, as opposed to “costume”.

Gentle - Any person, as in “gentleperson”.

Guild - A group of individuals who meet to study or practice a period art or science.

Goslings - An alternate name for young children used in Meridies.

Heavy Weapons - Combat performed in armor and simulated (rattan) weapons on foot, as opposed to "Light Weapons" which include fencing and archery. Heavy weapons combat is done in armor that meets SCA safety regulations, according to SCA rules, which were developed to safely re-create the combat of the medieval knight. This term is now discouraged in favor of “armored combat”.

Hold! - A warning call. Anyone within earshot is to freeze in position until the potential danger is understood and nullified. Usually used on the field of combat, but may be used in any situation where it is warranted, as when someone is about to trip over a small child or step in a hole. Parents are encouraged to teach their children to obey this order.

Honorable Lord/Lady - Title for persons who hold a Grant of Arms.

Household - A social arrangement of friends, or of a Peer and their associates, who attend events together and share common activities. Households have no official status in the SCA. Individuals may be members of several households, one, or none.

Huzzah! - A cheer of approval used in some kingdoms.

Investiture - A Coronation (for Royalty) or a ceremony creating a new Territorial Baron/Baroness.

King - The male ruler of a Kingdom. Referred to as Your Majesty.

Knight of the SCA - The highest rank of honor bestowed upon an individual in recognition of mastery in the arts of armored combat and war, demonstration of noble and courtly behaviors, and service to the kingdom to an extent above and beyond that normally expected of members of the Society. A Peer. Abbreviated as KSCA.

Knighthood, Order of the - The collective of individuals who have been granted knighthood.

Known World, The - The entirety of the kingdoms and regions in the modern world where the SCA is present.

Laurel, Order of - The highest rank of honor bestowed upon an individual in recognition of excellence and mastery in the arts and sciences, instruction in their field, and service to the kingdom to an extent above and beyond that normally expected of members of the Society; the collective of individuals who have been granted this rank. A Peer.

List - The fighting competition at a Tournament.

Live Weapon - Any weapon of steel or with a sharpened edge that is capable of bodily harm. Some events host “live weapons” activities that consist of throwing knives, axes, or other bladed weapons at a target.

Lord or Lady - Titles for persons who hold Arms by Award or Grant.

Lordship/Ladyship, Your - Form of address sometimes used for persons who hold a Grant of Arms.

Master - Title for a male member of the Order of the Laurel or Pelican, or a Master-at-Arms.

Master/Mistress-at-Arms - A member of the Order of Chivalry who does not swear fealty to the Crown.

Master of (jobname)/ Mistress of (jobname) - Alternates for 'Minister of (jobname)'. As with the standard designation for the office, these are not personal titles, and should in no case be abbreviated or prefixed to the officer's personal name. Does not indicate rank or precedence.

Milord/Milady/My lord/My lady - These are general forms of address rather than titles. They are properly used informally for any person with or without rank, or any time the speaker does not know another form that would be more appropriate for the listener.

Mistress - Title for a female member of the Order of the Laurel or Pelican.

MKA - "Mundanely known as"; one's real name

Mundane - Modern; everyday; not of the SCA. Some people will interpret this term as derogatory, implying "boring", therefore the term "modern" is preferred when in public settings.

On-Board/Off-Board - Paying to partake of the food served at an event (On) or not (Off).

Oyez! - Cry used by heralds in some Kingdoms, to gain the attention of the populace for an announcement. (pronounced Oh-yay); Hear ye!

Page - A child between the ages of 6 and 12; a member of the Pages' School; a minor child of any age in a service relationship with a Peer.

Pavan - A style of court dance, usually performed in a slow and stately manner.

Pavilion - A period-style tent. A day-pavilion is a wall-less tent for day use only.

Peer of the Realm (Peer) - Any member of the Orders of Chivalry, the Laurel, or the Pelican. These orders carry a Patent of Arms.

Peer, Royal - A person who has, at least once, successfully concluded a reign as a King or Queen, or as a Prince or Princess of a Principality.

Pelican, Order of - The highest rank of honor bestowed upon an individual in recognition of exceptional and sustained service to the kingdom above and beyond that normally expected of members of the Society; the collective of individuals who have been granted this rank. A Peer.

Period - Historically accurate; within the time period of the Society (pre-1600)

Persona - A character assumed by an SCA member, as someone who "could have existed" in a specific time and place in the SCA period. Use of an actual historical person as a persona is not permitted.

Polling Order - A collective of those members of a common Order who have been granted the right and obligation to recommend to the Crown others deserving of membership in the Order. Polling Orders are charged to meet on a regular basis to discuss and vote upon individuals for recommendation to the Order.

Popular Chivalry - Newsletter for the Kingdom of Meridies, containing flyers for upcoming events and other information. Comes with sustaining membership in the SCA.

Porta-castle - A rented portable toilet often seen at events. Also called a privy, biffie (from BFI- a major supplier), porta-john, etc.

Precedence, Order of - The order of rank of members in the Society, based on the highest title that has been conferred on them that carries precedence. When titles are equal in precedence, order of precedence is based on the date of the award. Titles that carry precedence are recognized throughout the Society regardless of their kingdom of origin. The order of precedence is as follows: King/Queen. Royal Prince/Princess, Principality Prince/Princess, Tanist/Tanista, Duke/Duchess, Count/Countess, Viscount/Viscountess, Peer (Knight, Laurel, Pelican are all equal), Grant of Arms, Award of Arms.

Presence, The - The ten-foot area around a member of the Royalty, or their Royal Throne, within which no person may enter without rendering proper courtesy.

Prince or Princess, Crown (or Royal) - Heir to the King or Queen. Referred to as Your

Highness.

Prince or Princess - Ruler of a Principality and reporting to a King and Queen. Referred to as Your Highness.

Protégé - One who is formally associated with a Master/Mistress of the Pelican as a student. Identified by a yellow belt.

Pursuivant - A title used to show the skill level of a herald. A full "Pursuivant" is the highest rank a person may retain permanently in the College of Heraldry.

Queen - The female ruler of a Kingdom. Referred to as Your Majesty.

Rattan - The stem of a climbing palm, used in the SCA for making Heavy Weapons because its weight and handling properties resemble steel while its overall resilience and other properties permit it to be used with relative safety.

Regalia - Items belonging to the Crown and therefore to the SCA, such as the thrones, crowns, robes of state, and kneeling pillows. Does not include items that are the personal property of those individuals who currently reign.

Regnum - A list of Society branches and/or officers.

Retinue - The persons selected by and charged with attending to the needs of the Crown during their reign.

Reverance - A bow or curtsy of respect.

Royal Progress - The list of events that the Crowns plan to attend.

Royal University of Meridies (RUM) - A volunteer college created within the Kingdom of Meridies to aid in the education of the populace on all aspects of the Middle Ages through Local and Kingdom Collegiums. SCA participants may take classes individually, or pursue a curriculum to obtain a RUM degree. See <http://www.royalu.org>

SCA, Inc. or SCA - The Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc., a California 501(c)3 not-for-profit educational corporation, federally incorporated.

Sir - Title used for a Knight (male or female).

Site - The place where an event is to be held.

Society, The - The entirety of the Society for Creative Anachronism, a worldwide group of affiliated organizations.

Sovereign - The King or Queen who won the Crown Tournament to achieve the title.

Squire - One who is formally associated with a Knight as a student. Identified by a red belt.

Sumptuary Laws - Laws that restrict specific items or colors of apparel or regalia to those who have achieved a specified rank or position in society. The Sumptuary Laws for the Kingdom of Meridies are specified in Kingdom Law, pages 29-30, which can be found as a link at <http://www.meridies.org/seneschal.html>.

Tanist or Tanista - Royal heirs to a Principality.

THL - Abbreviation for "The Honorable Lord/Lady".

Tournaments Illuminated - The quarterly magazine published by the Society for Creative Anachronism.

Travelers' Fare - A very simple meal or snack offered on Friday evening at an event as a courtesy to appease the hunger of late-arriving guests.

Troll - A person working at the event registration table.

Troll Booth - The place to register for admission to an event.

Viscount or Viscountess - Persons who have reigned over a principality. The title is assumed at the end of the first complete reign. Referred to as Your Excellency

War - A gathering at which the main event is one or more fighting competitions for large groups of participants.

Branch Designations

Kingdom - Area ruled by a King and Queen (a principal SCA region)

Principality - Area within a kingdom ruled by Prince and Princess

Barony - Area administered by a Territorial Baron and/or Baroness, the ceremonial representative(s) of the Crown

Province - Equivalent of barony without ceremonial representative (rarely used)

Shire - Local branch reporting directly to a kingdom or principality

Canton - Local branch reporting through a barony

Riding - Local branch reporting through a province (rarely used)

College - Institutional branch based at a school, research facility, etc.

Stronghold - Institutional branch based at a military installation

Port - Institutional branch based at a military installation in situations where groups of members will be detached for long periods, as with ships at sea

Officer Titles

Chatelaine - A lesser office of state, and deputy to the Seneschal, charged with recruiting and orientation of new members to the Society.

Chronicler - The editor of the group newsletter.

Chirurgeon - Responsible for voluntary first aid at SCA events, including assisting participants in tournament combat and notifying attendees of health and safety concerns.

Constable - Alternate title for Sheriff.

Exchequer - Responsible for maintaining the financial records and checkbook of the group, supervising the finances of the group, and assembling financial reports and submitting them to the kingdom exchequer in a timely fashion.

Herald - Responsible for supervising field heraldry and court heraldry at events sponsored by the group, and for College of Arms activities for the group, including the timely processing of submissions for names and armory.

Hospitaller - Another term for Chatelaine

Knight Marshal - Responsible for overseeing the conduct of all martial arts activities in the group, including tournament lists, wars, combat archery, and fencing, as well as such related activities as scouting and target archery, and training in these skills.

Laurel Sovereign of Arms (Laurel) - The principal heraldic officer of the Society and the head of the SCA College of Arms.

Marshal - A trained and warranted person responsible for ensuring the safety of participants and non-participants during marshal activities. Not a referee. Reports to the Knight Marshal.

Minister of Arts and Sciences - Responsible for supporting study into art forms, technologies, and those aspects of culture relating to their use, both in period and in Society activities.

Minister of Children - A lesser office of state charged with overseeing the activities of children and fostering their education within the Society.

Reeve - Another term for Exchequer

Seneschal - Chief administrative officer of the group and legal representative; president

Sheriff - Responsible for administration and record-keeping of waivers and event registration. Also responsible for administration of security and lost-and-found at events.

Webminister - SCA officer responsible for creating and/or maintaining internet web pages.