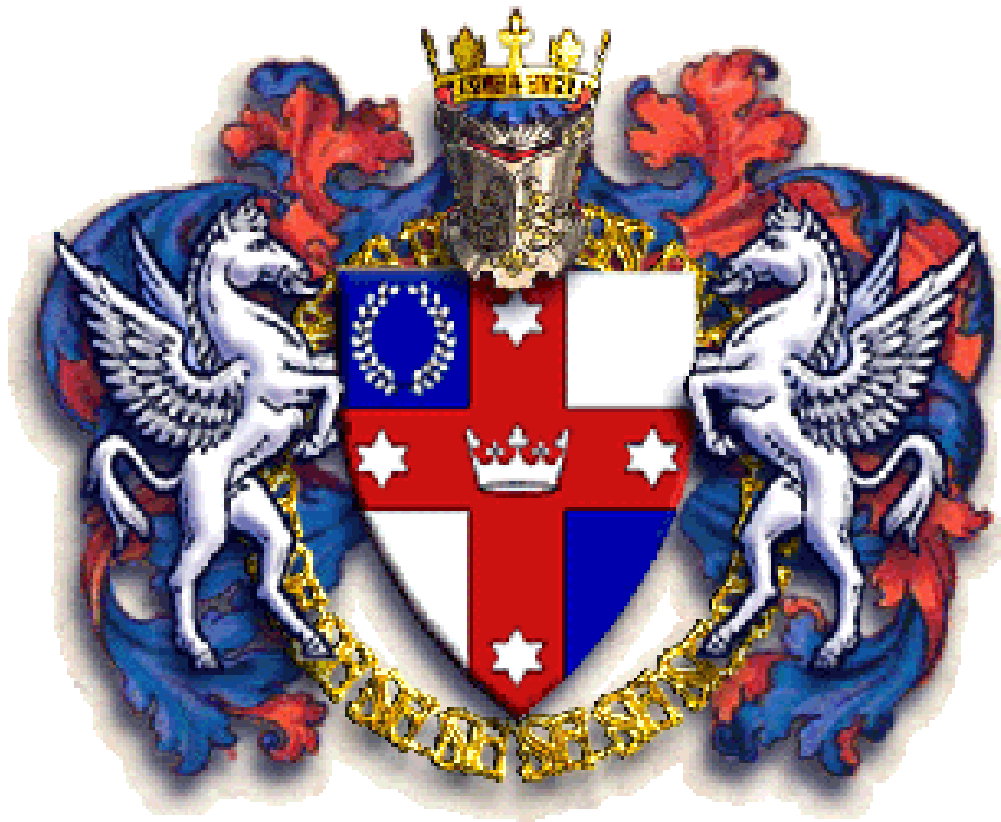


The Kingdom of Lochac

Handbook for Society Newcomers

Version 2 2018



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About this handbook:

This booklet is designed for the newcomer to the SCA, to help you settle in and start having fun faster, without feeling as though you are constantly having to ask questions. Because the SCA has been around for over 50 years, it has picked up many traditions and conventions which can be a bit confusing until you know what's going on.

In this handbook we have attempted to cover the main areas of life in the SCA, with particular reference to the Kingdom of Lochac (where you live – Australia, New Zealand and some parts of China).

More Information.

Of course, we can't cover the entire life of the SCA and all its traditions in one short handbook; so please ask anyone about anything you don't understand or want more information on. We're all happy to answer questions and show off our hobby! And don't be intimidated by people who have titles - they probably got them for helping newcomers...

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Glossary

The SCA uses quite a few words and phrases which can be confusing to the newcomer. Below are some definitions of commonly-used terms.

AoA	Award of Arms. Often the first award given to you by the King and Queen.
Apprentice	Student to a Laurel, being trained in one or more medieval arts. Usually wears a green belt, often with the Laurel's device on the tab. Not an official SCA rank but indicates major interest in Arts & Sciences. A rank in some Guilds.
A.S. (Anno Societatis)	Is Latin for "in the year of the Society", followed by a number, usually expressed in Roman numerals. (i.e. 2017 is A.S. LII). The SCA year starts on May 1st, because the Society was founded on May 1st, 1965.
Authorisation / Authorised Fighter	A fighter who has been recognised as competent to engage other combatants, through a period of training and examination by a marshal of the rules and safety techniques. These fighters are given an Authorisation Card which allows them to engage in the type/s of medieval combat for which they have authorised
Arts and Sciences / A&S	The teaching, learning, researching, and engaging in any manner of arts and craft/s that were undertaken during the middle ages.
Autocrat	Old SCA term for a Steward.
Award	In the SCA awards are given in recognition of service, skill in the arts and crafts, fighting prowess and so on. There are different levels of awards dependant on achievement level. Awards are given at the Kingdom level by Royalty; or at the Baronial level by Landed Baron's and Baronesses.
Baron and/or Baroness / B&B	There are two groups of Barons and Baronesses in the SCA. Landed: This means that they swear fealty to the King and Queen, and oversee an area of land (or Barony) in the absence of the Crown. They are the Crown's representatives for that Barony, selected by the populace and the Crown, who typically hold the position for 3-5 years. Addressed as 'Your Excellency' (Also known as B & B, or Baronage). Unlanded: A recognition by the Crown for good works in the Kingdom. They do not oversee any land and are not obligated to swear fealty to the Crown.
BoD / Aussie BoD	Board of Directors for the SCA Australia. The elected group who manages the SCA's legal and financial policies, procedures and corporate governance. The NZ equivalent is SCA NZ Inc. Committee
Boffer	. A foam version of a sword or other weapon used in the SCA, usually wielded by children

Chirurgion	SCA officer with first aid training
Chivalry / The Chiv	Another term for Knights. Chivalry is also a term to describe the behaviour of a person. In the SCA one of our aims is to be chivalrous.
College	SCA Group associated with a University.
College of Heralds	The SCA heraldic organisation, which registers SCA names and devices, for use within Society events
Collegium	An SCA Arts and Sciences class or series of classes.
Consort	The person whom a fighter is inspired by on the field. In a Crown Tournament the Consort is the male and/or female half of the pair, whom is being fought for on the field with the hopes of becoming the next Crown.
Constable	An officer who oversees the general safety of all those involved in the SCA game at events and gatherings.
Court	A gathering at an event where the Baron and Baroness or King and Queen present awards, make announcements, receive presentations, appoint officers, or transact other business. A formal occasion.
Count/Countess	Person who has reigned as King or Queen once. Addressed as “Your Excellency”
Crown	Royalty. Their Majesties of Lochac. King and Queen.
Crown Tourney	A heavy tournament held twice a year (in May and November), to determine the next King and Queen of Lochac.
Device	SCA coat-of-arms. The design must follow the rules of heraldry, must be unique within the SCA, and not clash with well-known real-world arms such as the Shell Logo or the British Royal Arms.
Duke/Duchess	Person who has reigned as King or Queen twice or more.
Eric	Old term for the list field. Came from the West Kingdom which used red bunting around the list field (Eric the Red). See Listfield
Event	An approved social event held by a group within the SCA. E.g. feast, tournament, pot luck,
Feast	An event which concentrates on medieval eating and drinking, typically with dancing and entertainment. There may also be a court. Food will usually be served in several courses throughout the evening
Feasting Gear	SCA table setting and cutlery in medieval style - typically plate, bowl, goblet/cup, eating knife (dagger), spoon, candle and candlestick, napkin, jug, tea towel and basket to carry it all in. You must bring your own feast gear to events.
Festival, Rowany Festival	Annual camping event held near Sydney each Easter, with 1,000 participants. Go to it if you can!
Filk	A song that is not period but has an SCA topic. Often a modern tune that has been reworded to tell a tale about a person or event that has happened in the SCA.

Garb	The pre-16 th century clothing that we wear. You need to make an attempt at such clothing to attend an event.
Gate, Gatekeeper	The door warden at a feast or other event 0 the place where you sign in, sign waivers and pay for events.
Gold (and silver)	Used instead of dollars and cents.
Guild	A special interest association group within the SCA. Often have their own hierarchy of obtainment and levels.
Heavy/ Heavy Fighter	Person who wears full armour and fights full contact with sword and shield, mace, pole-arm, axe or similar weapon in tournaments and/or war scenarios.
Herald	Person who makes announcements, calls a tournament, and oversees the procession of court. Heralds also help people design and submit their SCA name and Device.
High Table	Table at front of the event which seats Royalty, Landed Baron and their guests.
Hold	Stop! Most often used with fighters, but all know that when 'hold' is called, it means stop what you are doing instantly, stand (or drop to your knee), due to danger etc. Remain still until told to resume.
Household	A group of people with similar interests; or a mentor and his students (e.g. Knight and his squires). Households can come in any shape or size and are not restricted to locality. An unofficial group.
Huzzah	The Lochac form of a cheer. The Herald says 'Hip, hip' and the people respond 'Huzzah!'
Investiture	The Kingdom hold two investitures a year - court events where the outgoing Royalty crown the incoming pair. Investitures are held twice a year at Twelfth Night (January) and Midwinter (July). Baronial Investitures occur when the Crown invest and divest the incoming and outgoing Baron and Baroness of an area within Their Kingdom. This occurs as required,
King (and Queen)	Rulers of a Kingdom, such as Lochac.
Kingdom	The area ruled by the King and Queen. The Kingdom of Lochac Kingdom.
Knight	One of the five SCA Peerages; the highest SCA award for heavy fighting. Recognised by existing Knights for fighting prowess, peerage qualities and service to the Society. Knights usually wear a white belt and a chain around their neck and may take Squires. Addressed as "Sir" or "Dame"
Known World	The 20 Kingdoms of the SCA, spread across the world. Sometimes called the "Laurel Kingdoms", because each kingdom has a laurel wreath on its device.
Light Fighter	Person who wears light armour into war, and fights with a bow and arrow or javelin.
Laurel	One of the five SCA Peerages; the highest SCA award for arts and sciences. Recognised by existing Laurels for arts and sciences,

	peerage qualities and service to the Society. Laurels often wear a medallion or brooch depicting a laurel wreath. Addressed as “Master/Mistress/Dame”
Lists, List Field	The roped off area where tournament fighting takes place.
Lochac	SCA name for the Kingdom that comprises Australia and New Zealand. Pronounced “Lock – arc”.
Marshall	The person responsible for running a tournament and ensuring safety on the field.
Master of Defence / MoD’s	One of the five SCA Peerages; the highest SCA award for the fencing arts. Recognised by existing Masters for fighting with rapier, peerage qualities and service to the Society. Masters of Defence often wear white collar, or a medallion depicting three crossed rapiers. Addressed as “Master/Mistress/Dame”
Membership	Membership levy paid per year to be a member of the SCA. Membership also includes insurance/indemnity cover.
Mundane	Person or things belonging to the modern, non-SCA world.
Order of the Rose	Members are those who have reigned as Queen (or King) as Consorts to Crown Tournament winners. Members often wear a medallion or broach depicting a rose.
Pas d’Arms	Special type of tourney where a single challenger or a team takes on other fighters for a fixed combat set, with much pageantry, elaborate challenges, and heraldic display.
Peerage/Peer	Highly respected group of people who have been given the highest SCA awards for Arts & Sciences (Laurel), Service (Pelican). Heavy fighting (Chivalry), or Rapier fighting (Master of Defence). Also, Royal Peers - (Dukes, Duchesses, Count, Countesses, Viscount or Viscountess), who have been a King, Queen, Prince or Princess.
Pelican	One of the five SCA Peerages; the highest SCA award for service to the Society. Recognised by existing Pelicans for exceptional service to the Society and peerage qualities. Pelicans often wear a medallion or brooch depicting a medieval Pelican with its nest. Addressed as “Master/Mistress/Dame”
Period, “in period, out of period / OOP”	Dressing, replicating the time period that the SCA covers, through art, craft, methodology; to the best of your ability. Historically accurate.
Pointy hats	Any person wearing a Crown or Coronet. Slang term.
Prince (and Princess)	The winners of the Crown Tournament are crowned by the King and Queen as the Prince and Princess of Lochac. (. They will become the next King and Queen. Addressed as “Your Highness”
Principality	Part of a Kingdom ruled by a Prince and Princess, who swear an oath of loyalty to the King and Queen. May become a Kingdom in its own right someday or remain as a permanent Kingdom. Lochac was a Principality within the Kingdom of the West before it became a Kingdom in its own right.

Privy, privies	Medieval term for toilets
Protégé	A Pelican's particular student, being trained in general service to the Society. Not an official SCA rank but indicates strong interest in hard work. A protégé may wear a yellow belt that may include the Pelican's device on the tab.
Remove	Old SCA name for 'course' at a Feast (actually a Victorian term). Course is the correct medieval term.
Revel	SCA event which is not a tourney or a feast, such as a dance, or a games day.
Royal Peers	People who have been King/Queen (Count/Countess, Duke/Duchess) or Prince/Princess (Viscount/Viscountess). Being Royalty in the SCA is hard work. These people deserve their title and the respect that goes with it.
SCA	Society for Creative Anachronism
SCAdian	A person involved in the SCA (pronounced Skydian)
SCA Name	Name by which a participant is known in the SCA must be a plausible medieval name, but not a real historical (or fantasy) person. These names are registered with the College of Heralds, and used within the SCA
Seneschal	The SCA officer who coordinates a local SCA group – the secretary.
Society	The SCA
Squire	A Knight's particular student, being trained in heavy list fighting. Not an official SCA rank but indicates major interest in combat skills. Usually wears a red belt possibly with the Knight's device on the tab.
Steward / Event Steward	Person in charge of running an event. Large events may have several stewards, e.g. a separate Feast Steward.
Tourney, Tournament	An event which concentrates on heavy fighting, often for a prize. There may be food and other activities, such as games or a court.
Troll / Troll Gate	Old SCA term for Gatekeeper (slang, not commonly used in Lochac).
Unbelted fighter	An authorised fighter who is neither a Knight nor a squire.
Vigil / Sitting vigil	A time to take advice and think about the decision made to accept an Order of Peerage. Often occurs night prior to peerage ceremony.
Viscount/Viscountess	Person who has reigned as Prince or Princess, at least once. Addressed as "Your Excellency".
Waiver	A document or online form outlining your personal responsibilities while attending an SCA event. You sign a waiver to state your acceptance of responsibility.

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Part 1. Introduction

What is the SCA?

The SCA is a world-wide re-enactment hobby; played by likeminded people, that embodies chivalry and courtesy to step back in time and role-play the best parts of medieval times. Its purpose is the study and recreation of the Middle Ages, its arts, crafts, sciences, traditions, literature, martial activities, and so forth. The SCA "period" ends at approximately 1600 AD and concentrates on the High Middle Ages in Western Europe. There is no official early cut-off date, but generally we think of our period starting around 600 AD.

What does the initials SCA stand for? Society for Creative Anachronism.

What is an Anachronism? Something or someone that is not in its correct historical or chronological time, such as a thing or person that belongs to an earlier time.

In our context, it means that we are a group of like-minded people who play a make-believe game as though we were still in medieval times; even though we really aren't, with all the best bits, and minus the bad bits.

In the SCA we study things such as dance, calligraphy, martial arts, cooking, heraldry, metalwork, stained glass, costuming, literature, and many other. If they did it then, somebody in the SCA probably does it now. If you have a particular interest (or interests) please ask, as there will be someone whom you can be put in touch with regarding your interests in the SCA.

As you may guess, the thing that separates the SCA from a Medieval Studies class is the active participation in the learning process. To learn about period costume, you design and make the clothes. To learn SCA fighting, you make armour, weapons, and shields, put them on and go and learn how it feels to wear them when somebody is swinging a (rattan) sword at you. To learn brewing, you make (and sample!) your own wines, meads and beers.

You might hear an SCA person describe the SCA as recreating the Middle Ages "as they ought to have been". In some ways this is true - we have few plagues or peasants, no Inquisition, and we do have indoor plumbing. Rigid social stratification is softened - we are all assumed to be at least gently born, so no matter who you are, you can wear velvet to a feast and eat from silver dishes. But it is truer to say that we *attempt to recreate* the parts of the Middle Ages most acceptable to modern values, rather than remodelling them as they "should" have been.

Although we are not able to recreate the middle ages perfectly, we as a group try to emulate the parts of the middle ages that we idealise. Some of us try to do this in a general manner; while others try to participate as closely to the times as they can, with detailed research and high levels of authenticity. Remember, the game is about what you wish to make it! And most importantly, you will only get out of the game what you are willing to put into it. Everyone's game is their own to play.

"Courtesy and chivalry are the SCA's hallmark."

How it all began.

The Society for Creative Anachronism was founded in 1966 in Berkeley, California, when a group of science fiction and fantasy fans wanted a "theme" party. Following the party, the group got together to discuss the idea of a medieval recreation and re-enactment group, somewhat like the Medieval and British Civil War recreation societies which had existed for any number of years in Britain. The Californians started forming groups, eventually incorporated as a non-profit educational society, and away they went.

Word of the SCA spread via friends and science-fiction fandom. There were 6 events held in the first year, and 9 in the second. In the third year, a chapter was founded on the East Coast (the East Kingdom – distinguishing it from the West Kingdom); the Californians incorporated the SCA as a non-profit educational society, and away they went. Since 1966, the Society has grown to twenty kingdoms, which cover the U.S., Canada, Europe, Asia, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. There are over 30,000 paid members of the corporation, and the total number of participants is around 60,000 people.¹

The first Australian SCA group was the Barony of Outrémer, based in Sydney, which joined the wider SCA in 1981, having previously been an independent group called the Kingdom of Cumberland. In 1983, the Barony of Outrémer (renamed 'Barony of Rowany') and a small number of other Australian groups officially became part of the Kingdom of the West, as a Principality called Lochac.

Lochac continued to grow, expanding north into Queensland, south to the ACT, Victoria, and Tasmania, and west all the way to Perth. In 2002, we separated from the Kingdom of the West and became an independent kingdom, still called Lochac. In 2003, the existing SCA groups in New Zealand moved from the Kingdom of Caid to join us as part of Lochac. In 2017, proposed groups in China, the proposed Shire of Grand Cathay, came under Lochac's care.

How do I find my local SCA group?

There are SCA groups all over Australia and New Zealand. The SCA Lochac website has a list of all current groups, with links to their individual websites:

<http://lochac.sca.org/lochac/groups/groups.php>

Part 2. What do I wear?

You will see that events are advertised as "garbed events". Tourneys, feasts and camping events are some examples of garbed events. Garbed; or garb, is wearing medieval clothing.

For a garbed event, appropriate clothing usually means making an attempt at wearing garb that would have been worn in pre-1600. Emphasis is often given to Medieval times, but any historical period pre 1600CE is accepted; if you wish to dress up as an ancient Greek, Roman, Egyptian etc., you can!

¹ <http://socsen.sca.org/what-is-the-sca/>

To begin with, you may be able to put something suitable together out of what you have in your wardrobe, or make a simple, inexpensive outfit if you know how to sew. Don't worry too much about historical accuracy at this stage: an attempt at something period-looking is enough, and nobody will judge you for it. Nobody started in the Society wearing perfectly period Tudor!

If you don't have anything suitable, you may be able to borrow garb from your local Hospitaller (or Chatelaine, same thing) - a local person who helps newcomers (see the Officers section of this guide). Ask someone in your group if you are not sure. Each group has its own way of helping newcomers and have their own systems. If your group does not have garb lending, you will be able to ask for help to borrow or have someone help you put together a simple outfit for your first event.

To help you navigate: Some parts of people's costumes indicate rank or position and shouldn't be used by anyone else. For example, Royalty wear crowns or coronets as symbols of their rank. Anyone can wear a narrow fillet or metal headband, as this was common in some places in the Middle Ages, but it shouldn't have points, like a crown. Knights wear a plain white belt as the major symbol of their knighthood, so you should not wear one. Peers may wear an open-linked chain as symbol of their peerage, so you should avoid this too. Many squires wear red belts and apprentice's green belts, proteges yellow belts. There are no restricted colors for other clothes. But as always, if you're not sure, ask an SCA member.

Where Do You Get Clothes?

Most SCAdians make their own clothes or get another member to make something for them.

Don't worry if you can't sew. We'll teach you! Many people around the Kingdom have patterns for basic clothes.

If you see someone wearing something you like, go up and ask them about it. You can often get someone to make a simple tunic in return for help on one of their projects or some similar service.

Costuming is a highly flourishing branch of the SCA Arts & Sciences. Since the SCA covers a wide time range and all of Europe, plus visitors from elsewhere, there is a vast array of clothing styles to choose from, as simple or as fancy as you please. However, until you have had a chance to see what's available and settle on a style you like, you will need something to wear to your first few events which doesn't look too modern.

Fabric

If you are buying fabric, buy what you can afford to and stay natural if you can. Choose plain fabrics until you have looked at enough pictures to know what medieval patterns were like; they were different from many modern ones (any flower print, for example, will almost certainly look modern). Stick with cotton, linen, wool, or silk. Natural fabrics breathe better and are better to wear around open flames and fires.

Cotton drill and head-cloth are cheap and reasonable approximations to the more common linen of the Middle Ages. Avoid knit fabrics - they were not known in the Middle Ages and always look modern. Some polyesters look quite like silk, but most of them do not, especially in large amounts.

Colour

Choose a strong colour and avoid pastels, dayglo orange, lime-green, and shocking pink. Rich crimson, golden yellow, royal blue, or forest green always look good. You can dress up your clothes by wearing layers (e.g., a long green underdress with a shorter red overdress), or by trimming them with simple embroidery around the neck and sleeves.

Men's Garb

For men, a collarless tunic any length from ankle- to mid-thigh is suitable, with long or short sleeves (longer tunics tend to have longer sleeves). You can leave your legs bare or wear hose (opaque tights). If you prefer to wear pants, they should be dark in colour and baggy rather than tight (like sweat pants). Always wear your tunic over your pants, never tucked inside like a shirt.

Boots, sandals, or plain dark shoes are appropriate. A leather belt, a pouch to hang from it. For headgear, you can leave your head uncovered or wear something like a hood or straw hat.

Women's Garb

For women, dresses should be long; usually floor length -with ankle length being acceptable depending on the period. For garb from Medieval Europe, dresses usually have long sleeves as no lady showed her bare forearms in the Middle Ages - this would have been quite shocking! For earlier period garb (e.g. Greek or Roman), a chiton would be a good choice in the warmer months and allows more skin to show!

For a simple dress that would fit anywhere from 10th-14th century, a pattern with a scoop neck, no bust darts, and long flowing lines is a good for first garb. You can make the sleeves close-fitting, or have them loose and flowing at the wrists. Simple clothes generally were fairly tightly-fitted around the bust, loose around the hips, and very wide at the hem. Belts tended to be worn around the hips rather than around the waist, though in the styles of the 1400s belts had moved up to just under the bust.

For shoes, prefer plain flats with pointed toes or ballerina style (they can be found at K-Mart, BigW or Target). Most medieval shoes did not have heels (until you get to Elizabethan times). Flat boots in winter or leather sandals in summer (especially for early period) are also acceptable but avoid visible zippers.

For most of the Middle Ages, grown women covered their hair and a nice head-covering can not only be easy to make but also helps elevate even the simplest outfit! A white veil, held on with a band of braid, a simple circlet, or a padded roll is good basic head covering. If you're into hats, there is a wonderful variety of head coverings available, depending on time and place.

If you prefer to not cover your hair, you might like to try an approximate hairdo from your chosen period instead: in ancient Greece and Rome women's hair would be done up, and sometimes have ribbons, headbands or other accessories in them. Viking women on the other hand could have their hair covered in a simple linen cap or headscarf, let down or braided.

Children's Garb

For children, it was tradition to make the same outfit as the adults, just smaller.

And Underneath...

In the Middle Ages, both men and women wore hose (stockings) on their legs. In earlier times these were fine wool or linen bias-cut to provide some stretch, and late in period they were knitted. Long plain cotton socks, opaque tights, or leggings are all good equivalents.

As underwear, early in period men wore an under-tunic of fine, soft, unbleached linen, which by later times had become a shirt with long full sleeves. In earlier times, when hose were short (around knee-length), men typically wore nothing or a loincloth - a long rectangle of soft linen simply wrapped a couple of times around the hips, tucked over and down through the band at the back, passed under the crotch from rear to front, and the end tucked in at the top. Alternatively, they

wore very loose linen breeches like badly cut boxer shorts, held in place by a band around the top edge called a breechclout. As time progressed, the loincloth and breeches developed into a pair of low cut under-shorts with short legs and a drawstring fly. However, when hose became longer and nearly reached the top of the thighs, these under-shorts were often omitted. (The tops of the hose were laced to the bottom of an undervest, or paltock). Since outer tunics were getting very short at this stage, this led to an outcry against the immodesty of these modern young men, and eventually hose began to be made a little longer and joined along the crotch. As a slit was left in the front seam, something was required to cover it when tunics got even shorter and stopped just below the waist, leading to the codpiece.

Early in period, women wore a long (ankle or mid-calf length) singlet of fine, soft linen. This developed into a very full long-sleeved chemise (shirt), though the singlet style might still be worn under a close-fitting underdress. The top edge of the chemise was visible in many clothing styles, and was often decorated. Puffs of the sheer, full chemise sleeves were pulled out through slits in the outer gown sleeves, or between sleeve sections, in some styles (e.g., early 1500s German, Italian Renaissance). As skirts got fuller, increasing numbers of petticoats were added to push them out, and eventually padded bumrolls and elaborately hooped constructions were created to achieve the conical Tudor and drum-like outline of Elizabethan skirts.

There was no direct equivalent of a bra for women; clothes were tightly laced around the bust or designed with breastbands to provide support. Once you are used to having relatively tight clothing across your ribs, a breastband can be more comfortable than a modern bra (especially for generously endowed women), as there is no drag from narrow shoulder straps. Corsets started to be worn around the time the Tudor period began and continued on up to modern times in one form or another. A well-made corset is confining but not particularly uncomfortable, though most ladies with later personas say they are grateful to unlace theirs at the end of an event!

Part 3. What is there to do in the SCA?

Activities

The most visible Society activities are those events attracting large numbers of people or held in the public arena - tourneys, feasts, wars, and demonstrations. This is the way most people are introduced to the Society, but there are many other activities you can be involved in too. There are many less public activities, such as fighter practice, classes in various arts, and local meetings.

Tourneys

Tournaments or Tourneys are competitions between pairs or small groups of heavy fighters. They are usually held in a park, with the lists (fighting field) roped off with bunting or a fence. Spectators may play music and games, dance, embroider, eat, help the fighters, or just sit and watch the tourney. Lunch may be provided, pot-luck (bring a dish to share), or just bring your own. Each event will be different and will be advertised in advance.

Within the Kingdom of Lochac (Australia and New Zealand), two major Crown Tourneys are held each year – May Crown and November Crown. The various SCA groups bid for the privilege of holding these tourneys, which may attract hundreds of people. The winner of the tourney and his or

her consort will be crowned as the Crown Prince and Princess of Lochac, becoming the King and Queen in the next reign.

Feasts

Feasts are dinners or banquets, often with dancing and entertainment. They are usually held in a hall and vary from casual to very formal. The food is usually catered by a group of SCA people, but can also be pot-luck (bring a plate), with everyone bringing a medieval dish to share.

In general, people will sit at tables set with candles and feasting gear (goblets, bowls, daggers, etc.). A High Table will be set up at the head of the hall for the Baron and Baroness or visiting Royalty, and there will be a space for entertainment and dancing. The food is brought out in several courses, with dancing or Court in between. Medieval dances are taught at regular meetings and danced during the feast, and simple dances may also be taught before or during the feast. Bards, or anyone with a song or story, may entertain during the feast. There may be a Court to present awards and make announcements, with a Herald in attendance, particularly if Royalty is present. There may also be competitions for the dishes presented, costumes, song, poetry, or other arts.

Wars

These are combats between groups of fighters - both heavy armoured and light armoured infantry. Heavy armoured infantry wears substantial armour (as the name suggests) and carry swords, pole-arms, axes, maces, or other direct contact weapons. Light infantry wears less armour and fight with bow and arrows. Light infantry must not be hit directly.

Wars are held because one group has declared mock war on another, or just for the fun of it. A war may have several battles, each with different goals. There may be a battle to gain a bridge, capture a banner or a fort (or even a box of rocks) - or just eliminate the other side. Marshals look after rules and general safety for the fighters, and chirurgeons (medics) and water bearers help keep them healthy. Some wars are only for fighters, but others have their full complement of camp followers, who watch the combat, cook, talk, and keep the camp.

The largest war each year is held at the Rowany Festival at Easter (see Festival). Other Lochac calendar wars include: Border war in Bordescros in February, Great Northern War in the Northern Baronies in June, Spring War in Mordenvale over the October long weekend.

Festival, Faire

Rowany Festival and Canterbury Faire are week-long SCA events held annually, with many activities including heavy and rapier fighting, classes in many crafts, courts, markets, games and entertainments and children's activities. People camp on site or stay in bunk accommodation.

Rowany Festival is held in the Sydney area, usually at Easter, with about 1,000 participants.

Canterbury Faire is held in Christchurch in January/February, with about 200 participants.

Demonstrations

These are held to promote the Society's activities to the general public and to teach aspects of life in the Middle Ages. Demonstrations may be given at community events or organised for special occasions. Public demonstrations are often the first place for new people to discover the Society. Classes may be taught in dance, heraldry, or other aspects of life at universities, schools, or to

special interest groups. One of the major roles of the Society is to provide education, so this is an important task. Demonstrations usually happen on an ad hoc basis, rather than at any particular time of the year.

Competitions

Competitions are often held at events to encourage people to show what they've been working on. Arts & Sciences competitions are common - everything from brewing to bardic arts, costume and dance to armouring. Where possible these are judged by people who themselves excel in that particular art or science.

Collegia

A class (collegium) or a whole series of classes (collegia) on different topics, run by Society people who have skills in different areas. Collegia tend to be held when a group feels there is sufficient general interest in a particular topic to warrant having an advertised class on it, rather than the ordinary one-on-one teaching which goes on informally among the members of the group throughout the year, or when there is an influx of new members who will all want basic instruction in several different topics. Classes are often also held as part of a broader events.

Meetings

And behind the scenes, there are many other things to do to get ready for these events... War practise, armouring, fighter practice, brewing, administrative meeting, garb making, cooking...plus many more.

A lot happens apart from events and weekly gatherings. Many people will suggest their home, or local hall for a specific meeting for an event coming up.

See your local groups page on for details of regular meetings to you.

Part 4. Who's who in the SCA?

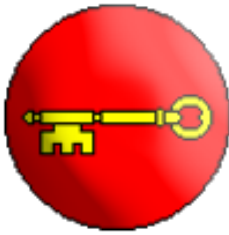
Officers

(Who's running this show?)

While Royalty make decisions about awards, grand projects, and the direction of the Kingdom, most of the daily organisation is done by the group's officers. These officers exist at all levels - local groups, and Kingdom. Canton and College officers report to their Seneschal and the appropriate Baronial officers. These in turn report to their Baron/ess and Seneschal and their Kingdom officers, who in turn report to their King and Queen and the Society Seneschal. The Society Seneschal reports to the Board of Directors. All of this ensures a reasonable degree of similarity in groups around the whole Known World, so no group flounders unhelped, or wanders too far from the general principles of the Society.

These officers are the equivalent of a club secretary, treasurer, etc. They have different names and there are many more officers than in an average social club, because the SCA has many more

functions than most clubs. Officers must be paid members of the SCA. All groups must have the following officers:



The **Seneschal** is like a president, organising the day-to-day running of the group, arranging meetings, finding people to run events, organising the calendar, and so on. The Seneschal is the main contact point for the group and should be good at delegating things to other people. The device (symbol) of a Seneschal is red with a gold key. Seneschals often wear a large gold key on a chain or ribbon around their necks.

Heralds have several jobs. Each group has a "book herald" who helps people design and register their devices ("coats of arms") and SCA names (see Heraldry). Heralds are also in charge of ceremony and organising courts. They act as MCs, making announcements at feasts or tourneys. Heralds can be book, court, or field heralds (or all three), depending on what they are good at. A group may have several practicing heralds as well as the one who holds the office. The device of a Herald is green with two crossed gold trumpets. Heralds on duty often wear tabards with this device and may carry a staff.



If the group has fighters, it must have a **Marshal**. The Marshal looks after safety on the field - weapon standards, armour inspection, and so on. Marshals also organise fighter practice and any run armour workshops. Before fighters can enter a tournament, they must be authorised as safe by a Marshal. A group may have several practicing marshals as well as the one who holds the office. The Lochac Marshal is called the Knight Marshal. The device of a Marshal is black with two crossed gold swords. Marshals on duty usually wear a tabard with the device and may carry a black-and-gold striped marshalling pole.



If the group practices arts and sciences or doesn't have a marshal, it needs an **Arts & Sciences Officer**. These encourage the research and practice of medieval crafts, including costuming, armouring, brewing, cooking, calligraphy, etc - all the activities and crafts that make up the medieval world. They might organise a library of books, run classes, match students with teachers, or run competitions. The device of the Arts is purple with a gold harp; the Sciences is gold and silver with a black calliper. The device of both together is blue with a white candle beneath a

white arch.

All groups need a **Reeve** - the treasurer for the group. Reeves do the usual things a treasurer does - keep track of finances and bank accounts, arrange floats for events, and ensure money from events etc. is properly receipted and reported. The device of a Reeve is blue with a red and white checked stripe and three gold circles on each side - a medieval tallying cloth and gold pieces.



In addition, groups (especially larger groups, such as Baronies) often have these officers:



The **Chirurgion** is the group's medic. Chirurgions must have a minimum of a St John's Ambulance certificate, and many are nurses or paramedics. They look after injuries at events, keep a well-stocked first aid kit, and try to encourage preventative medicine with sun screen and water bottles. The symbol of the Chirurgion is a red fleam (a type of surgeon's knife) on a white drop on a red background.

To keep people in touch, most groups have a **Webwright** who is responsible for the groups website. Each website is an online portal for newcomers to find out about the SCA. The website also lists the current officers, as well as publishes the meeting minutes and other legal and important document. Webwright's often also manage the other online presences' as well, such as Facebook.



The **Lists Keeper** organises fighters in the lists (the fighting field). Lists Keepers check that only properly authorised fighters enter tournaments, arrange the format of combat (e.g., single elimination, round robin), and keep track of who wins each bout and the overall winner of the tourney. Each fighter gives the list keeper a list shield, which is a small copy of his or her real shield. These list shields are put up on display, so everyone can see who is fighting whom. The device of the Lists is blue with a white scroll and quill.



The **Hospitaller** looks after newcomers, lending them clothing and feasting gear, sending them Society information (like this), introducing them to people with similar interests, arranging crash space (billets) for visitors from other groups, and so on. The device of the Hospitaller is green with a gold key.

Lochac also has a side group to welcome Newcomers. The Lochac **Company of St Meinrad** is a group of people who have are formally committed to welcome and provide hospitality for those who are new or struggling to connect within Lochac. The purpose of the Company is primarily to give the best possible start to newcomers in their new life as members of Lochac. The Lochac Chatelaine/Hospitaller is the patron of the Company. It is recognised by a single white pilgrim shell.



The **Constable** looks after general safety and security at events, takes care of lost property, is responsible for seeing that all attendees sign the indemnity forms required by the SCA Inc., and encourages people to get rid of glaring mundanities at events (keep your phone discrete!). A group may have several practicing constables as well as the one who holds the office. The device of the Constable is a gold mace on a blue background.



Guilds and Special Interest Groups

(How do you learn these skills?)

Within the Kingdom of Lochac there are many guilds and groups with particular interests. These may be organised at the local level or across the whole Kingdom. Some groups span the entire Society.

The organisation structures also vary. Some have very specific hierarchies relating to levels of skill, while others are loose collections.

Many of these Guilds can be found on Facebook; or have websites of their own to make contact.

Here is a list of some of the Lochac Guild links:

<http://lochac.sca.org/lochac/guilds/index.html>

Royalty and Other Titles

(Who's the guy with the pointy hat?)

The Society is basically constructed along Feudal lines, with many sorts of rank and several levels of Royalty. At the very top, there are the Kings and Queens, and next come Princes and Princesses. Then we have Dukes and Duchesses (people who have been King/Queen more than once), Counts and Countesses (King/Queen once), and Viscounts and Viscountesses (Prince/Princess once or more during our time as a Principality). All those who have been Royalty are collectively known as the Royal Peers. Baronies have a landed Baron and Baroness – the groups own local royalty. Kings and Queens wear crowns, and other royalty wear coronets. You can tell crowns or coronets from ordinary metal headbands because they have points or coronets from ordinary metal headbands because they have points on them. Only royalty are allowed coronets, though all in Lochac may wear plain or jewelled metal headbands or circlets.

As well as Royalty, there is the polling peerages – Knights, Masters of Defence, Laurels, and Pelicans. The peerages are all equal in status, and are the highest non-royal awards bestowed by the Society. Knights/Masters excel in list fighting, Laurels in the Arts & Sciences, and Pelicans in service to the Society. As well as excellence in their field, peers should be of good character, loyal to the Crown, and have other suitable qualities. Knights wear a white belt and a plain chain of large links, as a symbol of their fealty to the Crown. Masters-of Defence wear a white collar or a medallion with three rapiers. Laurels wear a medallion with a laurel wreath, symbol of victory and the Arts and Sciences, and Pelicans wear medallions with a pelican, symbol of self-sacrifice (the mother pelican was thought to stab her breast to feed her young on her own blood). Laurels, Pelicans and Masters

of Defence may also wear a chain suspending their medallion a symbol of fealty to the Crown. People can belong to more than one peerage, in different areas of excellence.

Courtesy to Royalty

Personages of rank should be treated with respect, though this does not mean you should make a great show of grovelling to them! For example, if your Baroness is talking to someone, don't interrupt, but wait to be noticed. This is obviously a common courtesy to people of any rank. If the Queen or King is walking past, make a small reverence (bow or courtesy) as She/He/They walks by.

How to bow or curtsey: sweep one foot round about 30cm behind the other in a neat circular movement, bend your back leg at the knee, and incline your head and shoulders slightly forward. A lord may place one hand in front of his waist and the other out to the side; a lady may place both hands slightly out to her sides, just holding out her skirts, or palm out if her skirts are too narrow to hold out conveniently. This method has the advantage of being neat and graceful, without sticking your behind out in the air (which is what happens if you just bend at the waist!). If you are non binary, chose the small reverence most comfortable for you. Everyone - don't sink to the floor or down on one knee - reserve this kind of reverence for when you are called into court before all the populace.

Royalty have an area around them known as the Royal Presence – an area you are invited into. How large this is and how strictly the rules are observed varies with the class of Royalty and what they are doing at the time. In general, the Royal Presence exists for about three metres in front of the Thrones (or direct line of sight), and also directly in front of Their Majesties or Their Royal Highnesses, whether seated or not. For example, if Their Majesties are sitting watching a tourney, the area immediately in front is the Presence - don't stand there without permission, try not to walk through it, and if you do so, reverence. If the thrones are set up for a court, but no-one is sitting on them, reverence slightly as you pass in front. If there is a High Table at a feast, reverence as you pass in front and don't stand blocking the view.

If a Court is actually being held, the Presence extends to the back of the hall. Clear the area 3-5 metres in front of the thrones and an aisle up the centre. Stand up when Royalty process in or out, and reverence as They pass. If you are called into the Royal Presence, reverence as you approach, then walk up and kneel on the cushions (that's what the cushions are there for). As you leave, reverence, back up several steps, then turn and go.

What to Call People

Titles are fun and add a great deal to the medieval atmosphere. Here are the proper forms of address for the various positions:

The award/position	Forms of address
Award of Arms	Lady Mary; greetings, my Lady
Knight	Sir Robert; pardon, Sir Knight
Order of the Laurel/Pelican/Master of Defence	Mistress Mary; greetings, good Mistress Master Robert, I give you good day
Baron, Baroness	Baroness Mary; pardon, Your Excellency
Viscount, Viscountess	Viscountess Mary; pardon, Your Excellency
Count, Countess	Count Robert; greetings, Your Excellency
Duke, Duchess	Duke Robert; pardon, Your Grace
Prince, Princess	Prince Robert; greetings, Your Royal Highness
King, Queen	King Robert; pardon, Your Majesty

Don't worry too much about getting the title exactly right; if they seem to be someone important, call them "Your Excellency" until you can ask someone who they are. If you give people more honour than they are due, they will tell you what they should be called. Remember, you can always call *anyone* "gentle", "milord" or "milady" without giving offence.

Households

As well as the various titles and groups in the SCA, you will often hear someone described as belonging to a Household. Households have no official status in the SCA, and no rules or regulations governing them. In general, they are an association of people with common backgrounds or interests - perhaps they all knew each other at school or University and joined the SCA at much the same time, or perhaps they are all trained by the same senior fighter, or perhaps they all camp in one of the Period Encampments at the Festival. A knight will often have a household consisting of their lady/lord/gentle and friends, squires and trainees. Similarly, a Laurel or Pelican may have a household of friends, apprentices, and students.

Belonging to a household typically gives members a good sense of identity, practical help, and allows them to share resources.

Generally, household members will give the invitation to join a household, though if you admire a particular household you can quietly sound them out regarding new members. Remember, there is no obligation to join any particular household if you are invited, and nothing to prevent you creating a household of your own.

Part 5. What do I need?

Essential Gear

In addition to clothes, you will find there are other types of gear you will want to acquire if you go to SCA events.

Once you know what you are looking for, Op Shops are great places to go looking for cheap gear, as are garage sales. You can pick up some great feasting kit, wool blankets, fabric offcuts and such at these places which will help get you started.

Eating

People are expected to bring their own table settings and cutlery to feasts. Some groups may have lender kits for first time event goers, but you will need to enquire first before the event with your event Steward; or, your group Hospitaller.

When you start acquiring your own gear, you will need a plate and/or bowl, and a knife and spoon. Forks were not common until the late 1500s early 1600s. You will also need a goblet, tankard, or beaker-style cup, and a perhaps a jug for your drinks. All these items should be wooden, metal (silver or pewter), or ceramic. However, you will probably wish to eventually acquire a table setting appropriate to your persona's time and place, so don't spend too much money on your first set of feasting gear.

Although cordials and water may be provided, you will usually need to bring your own soft drinks as well as any alcohol to most events - ale, wine, cider, and various cordials were all common medieval drinks. Hide mundane bottles in a drawstring bag or under a cloth or in your basket - no one can tell you're drinking Coke if it's in a tankard and the bottle is hidden! Always check that your event is held at a 'wet' site before you bring alcohol. A 'dry' site means no alcohol allowed on the premises/grounds.

You will also need a candle and candlestick (and matches or some of the new battery operated candles). Avoid coloured candles - they stain the tablecloths dreadfully and were very uncommon in the Middle Ages. Don't forget you'll need a corkscrew and/or bottle opener! You may also want a napkin, an extra bowl for scraps and bones, and a bag to hold your dirty gear in case you can't wash it up before you go home (bring a tea towel for washing up). A little dish for salt is a nice touch; salt is usually not provided. If you want to bring your own tablecloth, plain white cotton sheeting or unbleached calico are most appropriate - almost all medieval tablecloths were white.

To transport your gear, put it in a basket. A calico sack is another (and cheaper) option. Wooden chests look absolutely wonderful, but alas, they're a lot more work.

Seating

There will be chairs or benches at any feast you go to, but if you go to a tournament, you will need to take your own chair, cushion and rug. Canvas "directors" chairs are easy to find, not too modern or expensive, and fold up for carrying. Avoid plastic or aluminium chairs – fold up camping chairs look very modern and detract from the atmosphere we are trying to create. However, if this is all you have for your first event a rug or big piece of fabric can cover any mundane items.

Part 6. Preferred behaviour

The three ideals the Society strives to uphold are Honour, Chivalry and Courtesy. The basic courtesies for attending a Society event are to wear appropriate period costume and to be polite. This is pretty simple. However, because the Society has a feudal structure complete with its own Royalty, Peerage, and many traditions, you might want to know a bit more about it to avoid embarrassing mistakes...

Don't be shy about mentioning that you are new or hesitate to talk to people. It's not always obvious to established members that someone is new - people travel a lot in the SCA, so you might well be mistaken for a visitor from another group, whom we assume already knows what's going on. If you don't understand what's happening at any time or are not sure what you ought to be doing, ask someone. We all love explaining our hobby!

It's all in the name....

People choose a name for themselves by which they are known within the Society - a name which might have been used but was not a real person. Most people also have a persona - a person you choose to be within the Society who might have existed in a time and place in our time frames. You can make up a name for yourself or use your own name until you know what you want (but before you make up a permanent name, read the section on Heraldry and talk to the heralds).

You'll hear people referred to as "good gentle/noble", "lords" and "ladies", and a variety of other titles. Some of these are in general use - anyone can be called "gentle", "milord" or "milady". All the other titles that you will hear have been granted or awarded by the Crown and should not be used by just anyone. Please see the previous section on names and titles.

One's Belongings....

Many people have put a lot of effort into making gear to suit their persona - from armour to candle holders. If you want to have a hands-on look at it, make sure you ask first. Be particularly careful with knives and swords and try not to touch a blade with your fingers - sweat and finger oils corrode fine steel, so rest it on your sleeve for a closer look. If you borrow something, ask first and make sure you return it to its owner in good condition. If you borrow a bowl or goblet, clean it before you bring it back. Follow basic rules of courtesy and you'll be fine.

Where and how do I sit?

At a tournament, you can settle anywhere you like, provided you are not blocking the view of the List Keeper (the person scoring the tournament and arranging the bouts), or the Baron and Baroness or Royalty. You must also stay a reasonable distance back from the ropes around the lists; a marshal will ask you to move if you are too close.

At a feast, the top table in the hall is called the High Table and is set up for the use of Royalty and Their guests. If it is a Baronial event, the Baron and Baroness sit in the middle; if it is a Kingdom event, the King and Queen sit there. Apart from the High Table, you can sit wherever you like. Many people like to sit together in household groups. You will usually see people will put a table setting or a basket on the table or cloaks and gear on the chairs to claim a place, so if there's nothing on the table or bench, the place is free. If you are unsure where to sit and you see someone displaying St Meinrad's shell, you will always find a welcome.

What to Talk About

Talk about the food, the weather, the tournament, clothes, the entertainment, who is keeping company with whom, your gear, other people's gear, and so on. Try not to talk about modern politics, football, cars, or computers - things that clearly belong to the 21st century. This can be difficult to remember – you may need to remind yourself and your friends about this (politely!).

You should not talk if a herald is speaking - heralds are the Voice of Royalty, and it is discourteous to speak while Royalty (or the Baron/ess) are speaking. Similarly, if someone is entertaining, it is courteous to pay attention to them, and not talk through their song or story, unless it is clearly intended as background music

Court

If the populace is called to court, gather in a semi-circle in front of the presiding Royalty, leaving a clear area right in front of Them. Stand until you are given leave to be seated, and don't talk through the court. If three cheers are called for, the Herald will cry "Hip, hip" and the populace replies with "Huzzah!" (not "Hurrah") in Lochac. If the King and Queen are at the court, bow your head in respect as They pass by (see Royalty).

Helping Out

Offering to help is a great way to get to know people. There are usually many things to be done at an event - setting out the list field at a tourney, arranging tables and chairs at feasts, or hanging banners. Ask the Steward (person in charge of the event) if you can help. But don't be put off if there isn't anything for you to do right away or the Steward seems a bit abrupt - he or she is probably thinking of too many things at once! Try offering again a bit later.

You can also offer to help in the kitchen, but unless you are given a task, you should stay out of the cooks' way; they are also very busy.

Everyone usually helps with clean-up at the end of an event. Tablecloths need to be shaken out and bundled up for washing, the tables and chairs put away, the floor swept, garbage collected, and the banners taken down (people will look after their own personal banners themselves, however). If you see something that needs doing, feel free to help. This is a good way to make friends.

Campsites

If you are at a camping event, remember that other people's campsites are their home; don't take a shortcut through the middle of someone's camp unless you know them or have asked permission, and always ask before you enter someone's tent or pavilion. Most people with fancy pavilions love showing them off and will happily give you a guided tour.

Do not leave all your money in one place in your campsite. SCA people are in general quite trustworthy, but at a big event where not everyone is known to each other, there is nothing to stop an unscrupulous outside person from putting on black jeans and a pirate shirt and cleaning out several campsites unobserved.

Be sensible with fires, keep buckets of water next to the pit, do not leave unattended, do not build big fires near tents. Remember also that the SCA prides itself on leaving sites cleaner than we found them; pick up rubbish, even if it isn't yours.

Gossip

The SCA can be a very close-knit society, and like all groups it is not immune to bad politics and gossip. It may be fun to talk about other people behind their backs, but it's not very polite or kind. Don't repeat what people tell you, and don't automatically assume that other people are motivated by malice; often people have simply misunderstood what others meant or what their intentions were.

If you have a problem with someone, try to talk it over with him or her. This is a very hard thing to do, but if you can get up your courage to talk to the other person calmly about the problem, you will probably find you can settle your differences in an amazingly reasonable manner. There is a formal complaint procedure if your problem persists - ask your group Seneschal or refer to <http://seneschal.lochac.sca.org/files/2017/12/DisputeResolutionHandbook.pdf>²

Honesty

Nearly all SCA people are honest. In fact, the SCA is one of the few environments where people routinely leave their gear lying around without fear of having it stolen. It's one of the nice things about the SCA, and something we hope will always be true.

However, this does not mean you should be careless or put too much temptation in people's way - never leave money lying around, for example, nor valuable small objects. Theft apart, it can be annoying and embarrassing all round to have to retrieve your jewellery from someone's toddler who is too young to know not to walk off with pretty things! And as mentioned above, we sometimes get dishonest strangers at large events. Nice feasting daggers have been known to grow legs and walk away, for example.

If you find you are missing gear, check with the Constable and the Steward of the event. A surprising amount of stuff is forgotten at events and finds its way to the constables.

Part 7: Arts & Sciences

Our "Arts & Sciences" are the crafts, skills, and technologies from the time period and cultures that the SCA covers. Participants research, study, and practice these skills and then share their results with others. You will see them in use and on display at our events - the recipes used for a feast, the armour worn in combat, the scrolls presented in Court, and the costumes (garb) we wear, just to name a few.

² Dispute Resolution Handbook:
<http://seneschal.lochac.sca.org/files/2017/12/DisputeResolutionHandbook.pdf>

Whether you build, forge, weld, or anything else, there's a craft in the Society for you!

Crafting is one of the most common activities in the Society! Our artisans study and create works from nearly every type of craft from the Middle Ages. Collectively, we call the study of the various production, research, and performing crafts, "arts and sciences." At many Society events, you will be able to watch artisans recreating these crafts and often take classes and workshops where you can learn to do them yourself. Some of our events are entirely dedicated to demonstrating and learning medieval crafts!

Construction Crafts

Construction crafts play a big role in our activities. Many of the pieces of armour that you see our combatants wearing were handcrafted by those same combatants or other artisans in the Society and the handiwork of the construction crafts adorn nearly every facet of Society life.

Sciences and Other Arts

Many Society members explore a varied list of sciences as they recreate the Middle Ages. These sciences include botany, astronomy, stillroom crafts, cartography, siege engineering and physics, mathematics, languages, and many more. Some of the most fascinating classes and workshops found at Society events are on topics as varied as charting the heavens with an astrolabe to creating your own tallow candles.

The fine arts and more are also well represented in the SCA. Many Society members take up painting and drawing as their chosen pursuit and produce beautiful works of art from Renaissance-style portraits to triptychs portraying medieval life. Members study stained glass and glassblowing, sculpture, wirework, and more as they recreate every aspect of the Middle Ages.

There are literally hundreds of arts and sciences you could take up in the SCA. Even more than watching others perform these crafts, the highest importance is placed on sharing the knowledge behind them with others who want to learn. If you see someone doing or working on something that interests you, just ask!

Part 8: Fighting

Archery

Archery is one of the most important skills used throughout history from hunting, to sport and especially in war.

In Lochac, no authorization is required, so everyone (including children) can participate in target archery as long as they follow the rules of the line and the instructions of the line marshal. In addition to traditional targets, target archery activities are often designed to mimic situations that would have been faced by medieval archers. These may include targets set out at various distances or novelty shoots including stuffed toys or balloons.

To participate in archery, archers require a bow, a set of arrows, finger and arm protection and a quiver, that all meet the minimum requirements and an emphasis on traditional looking weapons. Most groups will have loaner gear that can be borrowed until personal gear is acquired.

Minors under 12 years of age can participate but they must have a parent or legal guardian on the archery line within arm's reach at all times.

Some tournaments may also include combat archery on the line using targets and combat safe bows and compliant arrows.

Rapier

SCA Rapier combat brings to life the various styles fencing found in Europe during the Renaissance period. In Lochac, rapier combatants use blunted steel or fiberglass swords and daggers along with a variety of off-hand defensive items such as bucklers or capes to block or parry attacks. All attacks are played “to the touch”. Like armoured combat, rapier based on a system of honour and chivalry with the combatants themselves acknowledging a hit as injury or death based on the location of the strike.

Before entering the tournament or war field, combatants must be trained by experienced fighters and authorised by marshals, showing they are competent, safe and have a working knowledge of the rules. They are also required to wear compliant armour. In some cases, these can be borrowed until fighters obtain their own, In all cases they must be inspected by a marshal before taking the field.

For those who wish to further test their skill, there is the Royal Guild of Defence who offers prizes based on reconstructing details found in the various fencing and wrestling manuals of the period.

Armoured Combat

One of the most well-known and widely-enjoyed activities in the SCA is armoured combat. Our warriors participate in tournaments for individuals and teams, tactical melees involving dozens of combatants, and even large-scale wars with thousands of participants! Unlike reenactments of battles from history, our combat activities are unchoreographed and the outcome is entirely based on the skill and training of the combatants involved.

I really love armored combat because I want to feel the sting of battle, the threat of my enemy, and the sweet taste of victory. -- Sir Tanaka Raiko

Combat in the Society is based on a system of honor and chivalry. Because the combat is full speed and unchoreographed, the combatants themselves determine if the attacks they receive were successful based on the angle, location, and force of the strike. Safety officers, known as marshals, are always on hand to ensure that the combat is performed safely and to ensure that all equipment used meets established safety standards.

Weapons and Armour

The weapons used in our armoured combat activities are largely made out of rattan, a grass that looks and feels very much like bamboo but has a solid core. Rattan is a safe alternative to wood for our recreated weapons because if a weapon breaks, it shears along the grass instead of splintering. We also have other types of weapons such as axes and maces that use rubber and foam to create a safe replica of the weapon that looks like the original but is much safer to use.

Our armour is designed to provide covered to important joints and organs so that our combat activities can be both thrilling and safe. Both the Society and the individual kingdoms have a set of minimum standards for this armour, but as a general rule, armoured combatants must have sufficient protection for their head and neck, their joints (wrists, elbows, shoulders, and knees), their

hands, and their kidneys and groin. Armour can be customized to reflect the period of combat the individual prefers to study, from full suits of armour made of plate metal to shirts of chainmail links to scales and belts of hardened leather. We also use shields made from wood or metal that help to protect us.

Cut and Thrust

"Cut and Thrust" can be described as a hybrid of armored and rapier combat that involves more stringent protection standards including more rigid armor than rapier combat but still uses unsharpened steel blades instead of the rattan of armored combat. Only combatants who have been authorized for at least 12 months can partake in Cut and Thrust.

Equestrian

SCA Equestrian activities are modelled on those used during the medieval period to prepare both horse and rider for the battlefield. They are generally games of skill including general riding, mounted games and/or mounted archery. They display a partnership between horse and rider and provide an opportunity for participants to display not only their skills but their historic gear and finery. There are many different areas that you can participate in with relation to equestrian, and you don't have to be a rider to be involved.

Marshalls and Lists

Marshals (safety officers), are responsible for ensuring that combat is performed safely and that equipment meets established safety standards. Whilst marshals oversee a fight, they are not referees with combatants themselves determining if the hit they receive would have caused injury or death.

List officers run the tournament as defined by the event Steward and the Crown/Baronage. They are responsible for organising the fighting order in tournaments, keeping track of who is fighting whom and recording the results.

Consorts and Favours

A consort is the individual who inspires a combatant to excellence on the field. A combatant and consort do not need to be a couple, they can simply be good friends or even siblings or family or someone that inspired the combatant on the day.

Combatants are not required to have a consort, unless it is a requirement of the particular tournament.

Consorts may give combatants a favour or token to wear on the field. Favours may be a subtle or as ostentatious as you like. Some examples include belt loops, sleeves or heraldic display. Just remember to check it's allowed on the field i.e. no knives, breakables etc.

8: Heraldry

Heraldry is how we describe in words and pictures the designs used on shields, flags and other personal belongings, that show who we are by representation. We call this a device, and a device is unique to the person, group, household etc, who registered it.

We also choose for ourselves unique names of which to be known by, to receive awards as, and to identify our identity in the SCA.

Devices

The designs you see on banners, flags, favours, chair backs, jugs, garb and so forth at events, all belong to people in the SCA. Each device is registered to one person and can only be used by them. In the modern world we would see these as family crests.

Anyone may register a device. Your local Herald is a great first port of call in getting help on how to design and submit your individual device design and paperwork.

A great website to get you started and to source ideas is <http://herald.lochac.sca.org/>

Names

A name is a part of your developing persona. Like your device it identifies you within the SCA. Now, there is no rush to develop a name and story. This will come with talking to others, and researching medieval times and places. The one big rule to remember is that you cannot use a name that was used in medieval history or medieval literature. Ask your local Herald for assistance.

Until you are ready use your mundane (real) name to begin with, that is totally acceptable until you are ready. Once you register your name it will be written on official documents and scrolls. Once registered, your name is protected and no one else may use it.

9: Awards

One of the ways we recreate and reimagine medieval society is with a system of titles, some of which are linked to awards, and some of which are connected to our ceremonial leadership. As a newcomer to the Society, you don't have a title yet, but we do use the courtesy address terms "gentle", 'milord' and 'milady' in the same way 'sir/madam' are sometimes used in the modern world, and you will hear people address you that way.

How do people get awards?

Awards are given out by the ceremonial leaders of a group - the Baron and Baroness at the Baronial level, or the King and Queen at a Kingdom level. They decide who should receive awards based on recommendations from the populace, so if you've seen someone doing great things and want them to be recognised let the local Baron and Baroness; or the King and Queen, know what good things their populace have been doing.

Awards Without a Title

There are many more awards given out within Lochac, to acknowledge service, skill, courtesy, and many other things. You can read more about kingdom awards in Lochac here:

- <http://herald.lochac.sca.org/documents/lochac-awards/>
- <http://history.lochac.sca.org/kingdom-awards>
- <https://lochac.sca.org/canon/award.php?show=index&init=Lochac>

Each Barony also has its own set of awards. To see these, check out your local groups webpage or ask the group Herald.

10. *Afterword*

We're going to close by quoting an article that is one of the best pieces of advice we've seen for a newcomer to the SCA. It was written in the Kingdom of Athelmarc by Lady Syele Pfeifferin.

This is a Marathon Not a Sprint: A Love Letter to the SCA Newbie

As you attend your first events and marvel at all the wonders this society provides you-keep a few thoughts close to your heart.

Firstly, you don't have to rush, there's time to relax and I encourage you to relax often. There's no need to choose a name today, and it doesn't matter what you wear so long as you are happy. Most importantly you don't need to define who you want to be, use this time to explore who you can be. Take years if you want and try everything, let no person tell you who you are!

This society is a wondrous entity with something for everyone. Don't worry if your "thing" isn't obvious in the beginning – that's ok.

Secondly, try something new and scary! There is more to the SCA than can be imagined at first glance. At your fingertips there are fighting, the arts, and the sciences. While you're learning, takes notes, you'll never know when someone will want that knowledge. Don't be afraid to speak up, no matter how new you are, YOUR voice matters. Like everywhere in life, there will be people you love and some you can't stand. Wherever individuals fall on that scale and no matter what title they hold, treat all your fellow SCAdians with respect and expect nothing less than the same.

Thirdly, be cautious with your words and actions. As life has taught us, words hold weight and actions cannot be undone. We all make mistakes; to be human is to err, but remember: when mistakes inevitably happen, be honest, own up, and never be afraid to reach out. Your fellow SCAdians have all been new to the society at one time in their lives, from Kings and Queens to merchants and teachers and all of us in between. We know it can get overwhelming and we are all here for you, rooting for you. All of us from every part of the Known World want you here, we want you to enjoy yourself and to grow within the society for that purpose. Your local Chatelaine is an ocean of knowledge, a fantastic guide through your first days, and any questions you have that they can't answer, they definitely know a member who can.

Lastly, speaking for all of us, if ever you need, we are here.