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Chapter 1: Guild Membership and Responsibilities

This chapter details the reasons behind the formation of the Waterbearer's Guild. It also describes how to become a waterbearer within the Guild, including the basic responsibilities, some voluntary, of all Guild members. Finally, this chapter discusses the basic equipment and procedures waterbearers within the Guild may find useful.

About the Waterbearer's Guild

Why the Guild Exists

The Waterbearer's Guild exists to promote safety in water-bearing, to provide standards for waterbearing in the Middle Kingdom, and to serve as a structure for waterbearers. The Guild is an extension of, and subordinate to, the Chirurgeonate.

Members of the Guild provide non-partisan support and a first line of defense against heat-related illnesses at events. While waterbearing at all activities (such as courts and dancing) is encouraged, the Guild recognizes that its primary function is to provide support for all martial activities, and in particular, battlefield support to armored and rapier combatants.

The Waterbearer's Guild is a volunteer organization. No member will be required to function at any event if they do not wish to do so. However, anyone functioning as a representative of the Middle Kingdom Waterbearer's Guild (wearing the baldric or badge of the guild) at an event will follow the guidelines set forth in this book.

The existence of the Guild does not prevent others from providing water or refreshment for any group. The Guild exists to provide non-partisan support to all people, and to provide organization and training for those who wish to serve in this capacity.

Becoming a Waterbearer in the Guild

Becoming a waterbearer is as easy as volunteering with the Waterbearer-in-Charge at an event. Becoming a Guild member is equally as easy: simply wear the badge of the Guild while participating in waterbearing activities.

Membership in the SCA is not required to be a member of the Guild. Serving as a waterbearer is a prime opportunity for newcomers to explore the SCA, and requiring membership would be counterproductive to including those people newly interested.

Participation Requirements

There are many activities that comprise waterbearing, from bottle filling on the sidelines to carrying water to fighters on the field of combat. Many roles do not require working on the field, such as providing water on the sidelines to “dead” fighters and spectators. Refilling bottles is a critical activity that does not have a waiver or age requirement. This is a key opportunity for minors to serve.

The major activity of waterbearing, however, takes place on or near the battlefield and, as such, has specific requirements. If you wish to serve as a waterbearer *on the field* at any event, SCA rules require that:

- ❖ You must have a completed combat waiver, either via a current *blue* membership card or signed via an on-site combat waiver.
- ❖ You must be at least 18 years of age.

Age and waiver requirements *do not* preclude participation by someone who does not have a blue membership card, chooses not to sign a waiver, or who does not meet the age requirement from participating. Indeed, everyone is quite

welcome to participate as a Guild member *off* the field of combat.

Waterbearers on the field need to be able to get on and off the field quickly. This means you need to be realistic about your ability to carry two or more gallons of water. This doesn't mean you shouldn't offer help if you can't move very quickly or can't carry heavy objects. It means you will probably be asked to help in other equally vital ways, such as refilling bottles, mixing sports drinks, or helping at resur-rection points.

Suspension from Waterbearing

Any person who represents themselves as a member of the Waterbearer's Guild (usually by wearing the baldric or badge of the Guild) is subject to the rules and guidelines in this handbook. Anyone who fails to follow these guidelines, particularly those involved in non-partisan support and entry onto the field, will not be permitted to represent themselves as a member of the Guild.

In addition, waterbearers may be removed from the field by the WIC, CIC, or MIC if they display unsafe or discourteous behavior. These incidents are reported to the Kingdom Waterbearer.

Being removed from the field as a waterbearer on the does not apply to anyone providing water or other refreshment to a select group of people and not representing themselves as a member of the Guild. These individuals must still observe the rules of the list and all other SCA laws. Providing partisan support, however, is not discouraged.

Voluntary Reporting

Members of the guild are strongly encouraged to submit an annual report to the Kingdom Waterbearer with a brief summary of the events at which they have assisted, any questions or concerns they might have, and their current contact information. The primary purpose of this report is to maintain contact with those Guild members actively waterbearing so information can be sent to them directly, and to maintain a roster of waterbearers available as a resource for autocrats and marshals.

Safety Courses The Middle Kingdom Waterbearer's Guild encourages waterbearers to attend a List Safety Course prior to waterbearing on the field. Safety courses are offered at any number of large SCA events, including Pennsic, but can be given on an individual basis.

Responsibilities within the Guild

Duties The primary duty of waterbearers is to provide a non-partisan supply of water or fluids to fighters, equestrians, marshals, and spectators at SCA events. This means offering assistance to *anyone* who needs it. Don't overlook non-combatants such as heralds, list table staff, and other event support staff.

As a waterbearer you serve as a first line of defense against heat-related problems at events. You should be familiar with the signs of heat-related illnesses (see "Spotting Heat-Related Problems" on page 15). If a problem is suspected, you are expected to call it to the attention of a chirurgeon for further first-aid assistance.

Unless you are also a warranted chirurgeon, you are not to administer first aid. Waterbearers may be asked to assist a chirurgeon, and the Guild encourages them to do so. Please be prepared to provide support to the extent that you are able.

All waterbearers always follow the direction of the WIC, CIC and the MIC at any event. Marshals are ultimately responsible for the safety of anyone on the battle or list field. As a waterbearer, you enter the field *only* when marshals give permission. Large events may use flag symbols to indicate that it is safe for waterbearers to enter the field. (For example, see "Waterbearing at Pennsic" on page 17.)

Do's and Don'ts As a waterbearer, you should:

- ❖ Try to show up an hour before any scheduled martial activity is to begin to help fill and place water bottles;
- ❖ Stay after the fighting has ended to help gather, store, and dispose of equipment used as necessary;

- ❖ Offer water to everyone who attends the event, including armored and rapier combatants, archers, equestrians, marshals, and spectators;
- ❖ Keep circulating the spectator areas and the battlefield while offering water so that when people are ready to drink, the water will be available;
- ❖ Take care of yourself by drinking water, wearing sunscreen, and wearing sturdy shoes; and
- ❖ Avoid being pushy about drinking water or taking offense when people turn you down.

While all the above points are important, the last deserves explanation. Do not be offended if someone does not drink. They may have their own supply or they may have just had a drink from a different waterbearer. Fighters may wish to get their helmet off and catch their breath before drinking. Don't be pushy when offering water. When people are ready to drink, they will.

Supplies and Equipment

Every waterbearer should be familiar with the basic supplies and equipment used at an event. Some are provided by the waterbearers themselves (personal items they need to do their jobs) and some are part of an event's necessary equipment.

Personal Clothing & Sun Protection

Waterbearers should wear clothes that are comfortable and easy to move in. Consider that you will likely end up with water or sports drink all over your clothes. Sturdy, closed-toe shoes are strongly recommended, as are a lightweight hat or veil and sunscreen to protect the skin.

Water and Other Fluids

It should go without saying that the primary resource needed for waterbearing is water. This means having an accessible source of potable water. Be sure to check your event site to see how far the water source is from the fighting field. Also test the water to make sure it is clear and drinkable. Do not offer ice-cold drinks to hot fighters or spectators. Icy water can cause stomach cramps and vomiting.

Be sure to tell people what is in the bottle they are about to drink. Some people have allergies or other health conditions that prevent them from drinking electrolyte-balancing sports drinks. If a sports drink such as Gatorade is used, be sure to dilute it at least two-to-one with water. This means that the strongest solution should be half-strength.

Bottles and Tubing

Plastic, gallon-sized milk or water jugs make the best water bottles. Squirt bottles, small plastic soda bottles, and 2-liter bottles can also be used, but have a smaller capacity and are more difficult to carry. If milk, juice, or punch jugs are to be used, be sure to wash them first with a diluted bleach solution, then rinse well.

Tubing is recommended, as it makes it easier for fighters to drink on the field. The best tubing to use is clear and made from vinyl. It cuts cleanly and is flexible enough to bend through the jug handles, and through helmet bars. Threading tubing down the handles of gallon-sized jugs makes it easier for people wearing helmets to drink and keeps the tubes from falling out of the jugs.

Retain bottles and tubing for future use, but make sure they are cleaned and sanitized with a mild bleach solution before reusing them.

Clearly mark tubing and bottles used for sports drinks and do not use them later for water. Many people cannot drink sports drinks due to allergies or blood sugar conditions.

Spray Bottles and Wet Cloths

Water spray bottles and wet cloths can be useful for cooling down overheated fighters. Often fighters will ask to be sprayed in the face to wash away sweat. Do not spray anyone without asking them first.

Refilling Equipment

If water access is far from the field it may be necessary to have larger containers or hoses on hand to refill jugs. Garden

hose is sometimes necessary to transport water from its source to the field.

Filters

If the water on site is rusty, dirty, or otherwise less than palatable, it may be necessary to use a filter. Filters can be purchased at any hardware store and easily attached to a garden hose. This is a small expense and greatly increases the amount of water that actually gets consumed.

Chapter 2: Guild Organization

This chapter details the synergistic relationship the Chirurgeonate and the Waterbearer's Guild share. It describes the position requirements and responsibilities of the Kingdom Waterbearer and the Waterbearer-in-Charge of an event. The ranks and insignia of the guild are also described.

Kingdom Waterbearers and Those in Charge

Because the Waterbearer's Guild is an extension of the Chirurgeonate, all waterbearers are subordinate to the Chirurgeon-in-Charge of any event. All waterbearing activities are conducted in cooperation with the Chirurgeonate, and unless they delegate that responsibility, the Chirurgeon-in-Charge is also the Waterbearer-in-Charge at an event.

Kingdom Waterbearer

The position of the Kingdom Waterbearer is equivalent to that of a regional deputy of the Kingdom Chirurgeon. With approval of the Kingdom Curia, the Kingdom Chirurgeon appoints the Kingdom Waterbearer. Like all other Kingdom deputies, the Kingdom Waterbearer is subject to all of the laws and policies of the Middle Kingdom, the SCA, Inc. as well as the Society and Kingdom Chirurgeonates.

If you are the Kingdom Waterbearer you have several responsibilities to take care of upon assumption of your office:

- ❖ You should ensure you are a warranted chirurgeon whenever possible.
- ❖ You should notify the Society Chirurgeon and their Waterbearing Deputy.

- ❖ You need to maintain records of Guild members, including contact information.

A few of your responsibilities as Kingdom Waterbearer may be delegated to an appropriate deputy (e.g., should you be unable to attend a Kingdom event), but this delegation must be discussed and approved by the Kingdom Chirurgeon first. Your duties include that you:

- ❖ coordinate the activities of waterbearers at the kingdom level.
- ❖ attend and coordinate waterbearing activities at major kingdom events, including Pennsic War, Spring and Fall Crown Tournaments, any Tournaments of Chivalry, and other events as directed by the Kingdom Chirurgeon.
- ❖ establish and maintain policies for the Guild.
- ❖ appoint deputies as necessary.

In the course of performing your duties, you gain several benefits as befits your position:

- ❖ You establish honorary ranks and recognition within the guild with the approval of the Kingdom Chirurgeon.
- ❖ You wear a modified baldric for identification.

Waterbearer- In-Charge

The Chirurgeon-in-Charge of an event usually appoints a Waterbearer-In-Charge. Should the CIC not appoint a WIC, the waterbearers present may select someone to be the WIC. The WIC at any event assists the CIC as their subordinate. In addition, the duties of the WIC include:

- ❖ meeting with the CIC to determine special event problems (e.g., hornets nests, poisonous plants, difficult terrain) that may affect waterbearing.
- ❖ meeting with the MIC to determine what types of holds will be used during the marshall activities, the exact nature of the combat planned for the day, and any other information necessary to ensure appropriate functioning of the waterbearers.
- ❖ coordinating the waterbearers at the event.

- ❖ enforcing the non-partisan support of all event attendees and reports any violations to the Kingdom Waterbearer.

As befits the position, the WIC may wear a modified baldric for identification.

Ranks and Insignia within the Guild

The word “guild” often confuses people. In the case of waterbearing, this term merely refers to the collective group of waterbearers serving the Society and wearing the baldric of waterbearing. Unlike traditional guilds, you do not have to apprentice to a master in order to participate as a member of the Guild.

Master Waterbearers

Within the Guild, there is no hierarchy of rank, save the Master Waterbearer. A Master Waterbearer may use a gold border on their baldric. A waterbearer may be given the honorary rank of Master Waterbearer by the Kingdom Chirurgeon or the Kingdom Waterbearer for demonstrated ability, service, and dedication to the Guild. This recognition does not carry authority. That is, a Master Waterbearer does not outrank the WIC at an event.

The Guild Badge

The blazon of the device of the Waterbearing Guild is:

Argent, a goutte de larme within another voided, a bordure azure.

In common English, this roughly translates as a blue water drop inside a white water drop, inside a blue water drop on a white field with a blue circle around it. In picture form, the guild badge looks like this:



The device of the Guild should be used as a badge on a blue tabard or baldric. It can also be displayed on a banner or flag marking the Waterbearer’s Point at an event.

Chapter 3: Heat-Related Problems

This chapter describes the signs of heat-related problems with which all members of the Waterbearer's Guild should be familiar. It is not intended as a first-aid manual.

Spotting Heat-Related Problems

Because waterbearers have a lot of direct contact with the people on the field, they should help to look for anyone that might be having heat-related problems. To do that, you need to be familiar with the signs of these problems.

- Heat Cramps** Least severe. Heat cramps are muscular pains and spasms due largely to loss of salt from the body in sweating or due to inadequate intake of salt. Heat cramps can occur alone or in combination with heat exhaustion and are often an early sign of impending heat exhaustion.
- Heat Exhaustion** More severe than heat cramps. Heat exhaustion is a response to heat often characterized by fatigue, weakness, and collapse due to inadequate water intake. People suffering from heat exhaustion often have cool, moist, pale, or flushed skin; a headache; nausea; dizziness; and weakness or exhaustion.
- Heat Stroke** *Heat stroke is an immediate and life threatening situation. Get help immediately from emergency personnel.* Characteristic heat stroke symptoms include red, hot, and dry skin or extremely pale skin with splotches of red (especially if the person is normally fair skinned).

Dealing with Heat-Related Problems

Don't overreact to a potential heat problem. If a fighter or spectator appears especially flushed, but assures you that this is normal, believe them. Discretely keep an eye on them if you are not sure. If you see someone that you are genuinely concerned about, there a couple of things you can do:

- ❖ Suggest that they take a break and explain why.
- ❖ Ask others in their group to keep an eye on them, especially if they say this is normal for them.
- ❖ If they have signs of heat stroke or exhaustion, stay with them and call for a marshal. The marshal can then call for a chirurgeon.
- ❖ Stay in the area until you are no longer needed.

Remember that as a waterbearer you *should not* be treating anyone unless you are working under the direction of a chirurgeon. If a person is conscious, they can refuse treatment and you must not violate that refusal. Only a marshal can remove a fighter from the field.

Waterbearers can suggest that fighters take a break, continue to offer them water, and call for a marshal or chirurgeon if necessary, but that fighter may well stay on the field and continue fighting.

Try not to get upset and definitely don't take it personally if a fighter refuses your services or your recommendations. The only way to serve effectively is for all waterbearers to make sound recommendations over a period of time.

Chapter 4: Waterbearing at Pennsic

Specific procedures for Pennsic are created at the discretion of the Waterbearer-in-Charge for that year's event, and therefore may change year to year. This section covers some basics.

Some Initial Thoughts

When You Arrive You can find information on waterbearing either at Surgeon's Point or at Waterbearer's Point (on the field). When you arrive, please sign in at one of these places. Information on waterbearing classes will be available there.

If you intend to waterbear on the field, please bring a copy of your blue membership card and your driver's license or other photographic proof of age. If you do not have a blue membership card, you will be asked to sign a combat waiver.

Classes Classes are offered each year at Pennsic to go over waterbearing basics, battlefield safety, and more advanced waterbearing and surgeon concepts. Please attend if you have not done so before or have never been a waterbearer at Pennsic.

Working On and Off the Field

Wearing the Guild Badge Non-partisan or Kingdom waterbearers are strongly encouraged to wear the guild badge. If possible, please make and bring your own baldric or favor. If you are wearing this badge, you are assumed to be a non-partisan waterbearer under the authority of the WIC, and ultimately the CIC.

Anyone representing themselves as a Kingdom waterbearer must give water to any and all who ask for it, regardless of whether or not you know them, what household, local group, or kingdom they are from. It may not always be possible for you to waterbear on the side of the battle you are rooting for. Please volunteer anyway!

Set-up and Clean-up

Set up for a battle begins at least two hours before the first battle of the day and an hour before each additional battle that day. It takes a while to fill up and distribute all of those bottles. Please come as early as you can to Waterbearer's Point. After the last battle of the day, bottles and straws need to be collected from the field. If more people stay, it goes more quickly.

Signal Flags During Field Battles

The Field Marshal at Pennsic uses a flag system to signal when waterbearers may enter the field. Unless the Pennsic Field Marshal or the Waterbearer-in-Charge otherwise directs you, you may enter the field *only* when the flags are raised. When the flags go down, get off the field quickly. Do not stay for the view. If there is a discrepancy between the instructions you have been given by the waterbearer-in-charge and someone else, follow the instructions of the waterbearer-in-charge and let that person know as soon as possible. Good communication is the key to success at any event, especially Pennsic.

The flag that signals waterbearers can enter the field is BLUE. If a RED flag is being held overhead by the Field Marshal, the battle is about to start. Any waterbearer who hasn't already cleared the field should do so with haste. The Field Marshal will also use the blue flag to signal waterbearers need to leave the field by pointing it toward the sidelines. Verbal commands will accompany both signals. Again, unless the BLUE flag is raised, you do not belong on the field.

Marshals on the field may occasionally call for water even when the blue flag is not flying. In that case, you may hand over water bottles to the requesting person, but you may not enter the field, no matter how earnestly the marshal or fighter may entreat you to do so.

Waterbearing in the Woods

Although the policy for waterbearing in the woods may change year to year, one thing remains constant: the woods is a challenging field, and you should seriously consider your ability to help in that capacity. Things to consider are the uneven terrain, high grass, and insects. The woods battle is physically exhausting. Proper clothing is a must. This means heavy pants, sturdy shoes (sneakers or boots are recommended), and bright colors.

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

To help you understand the guidelines set forth in this handbook, a series of specific terms have been used throughout. You should familiarize yourself with these terms to understand the contents of this manual.

Armored combatants—Heavy weapons fighters or fighters armed with rattan weapons

Chirurgeon-in-Charge (CIC)—The person responsible for all Chirurgeonate activities at a particular event.

Event—Per Society rules, any gathering which has been publicly announced at a meeting or in a newsletter. This includes fighter practices.

Fighters—Armoured combatants and rapier combatants.

Marshal-in-Charge (MIC)—The person responsible for all martial activities at a particular event.

Non-partisan support—Support to the general populace, without regard to station, geographical residence, or household membership.

On the field—Per the Middle Kingdom Rules of the List, entering an area of combat, whether it be an understood area, or specifically marked by list ropes or other barriers. This includes resurrection points and times during which fighting has temporarily ceased due to a hold by the marshallate.

Partisan support—Support for a specific group of people (e.g., a household or shire) to the exclusion of other members of the general populace.

Rapier Combatants—Fencers.

Waterbearer-in-Charge (WIC)—The person responsible for coordinating all waterbearing activities at an event.

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Dedication

This booklet was published during the Reign of Tarrach and Fina, and is distributed in honor of Them. It is also dedicated to all waterbearers in the Middle Kingdom, past, present, and future.