

Greetings and salutations,

The following documents include information, ideas, and policies generated in an effort to promote the best of the SCA in a professional and consistent manner throughout the Society.

Please refer to these documents as well as the Middle Kingdom Media Policy and the SCA Media Policy when working with a modern media outlet (print, television, newspaper).

- “What is the SCA?” - provides basic information that can be provided to a the media outlet either by an officer in person or in print for reference.
- The press release is a template that can be revised as needed by a local group, region, event staff, etc. to provide information about an upcoming event
- “Commercial Film and Photography Rules” is a SCA policy letter that should be distributed to any media outlet that may be filming or taking photographs at an event, meeting, practice, demo, etc. Modern permissions also apply.

Please contact the Middle Kingdom Media Liaison for additional information or with any questions.

In service to the Kingdom,

THL Kateline Eliot
Media Liaison

What is the SCA?

The Society for Creative Anachronism, or SCA, is an international organization dedicated to researching and recreating the arts, skills, and traditions of pre-17th-century Europe.

Members of the SCA study and take part in a variety of activities, including combat, archery, equestrian activities, costuming, cooking, metalwork, woodworking, music, dance, calligraphy, fiber arts, and much more. If it was done in the Middle Ages or Renaissance, odds are you'll find someone in the SCA interested in recreating it.

What makes the SCA different from a Humanities 101 class is the **active** participation in the learning process. To learn about the clothing of the period, you research it, then sew and wear it yourself. To learn about combat, you put on armor (which you may have built yourself) and learn how to defeat your opponent. To learn brewing, you make (and sample!) your own wines, meads and beers.

You will frequently hear SCA participants describe the SCA as recreating the Middle Ages “as they ought to have been.” In some ways this is true – we choose to use indoor plumbing, heated halls, and sewing machines. In the dead of winter we have more to eat than King’s venison, salt pork and dried tubers. However, a better description is that we *selectively* recreate the culture, choosing elements of the culture that interest and attract us.

How did the SCA begin?

The SCA started in 1966, when a few friends who were history buffs and science fiction/fantasy fans hosted a big outdoor party in Berkeley, California. The invitation stated that a Tournament would be held on the first of May, summoning “all knights to defend in single combat the title of ‘fairest’ for their ladies.”

Everyone enjoyed the first tournament so much that they agreed a second should be run, but in a larger setting. In order to reserve one of the public parks for the gathering, the organizers needed to list a name for their group on the application. Since recreating the Middle Ages in 20th-century Berkeley was an anachronism (something “out of time”), and because the goal was creativity, they came up with “The Society for Creative Anachronism”. It was a spur-of-the-moment invention; they had no idea that the name would stay with their group into the future.

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 nineteen kingdoms, which cover the U.S., Canada, Europe, Asia, South Africa, and Australia. There are over 30,000 paid members of the corporation, and the total number of participants is around 60,000 people.

How is the SCA organized?

The SCA “Knowne World” is divided into Kingdoms, each ruled by a King and Queen who gain the throne by winning a Crown Tournament, held semi-annually. There are also a Prince and Princess (the heirs to the throne), and a council of Great Officers who handle the day-to-day business of running the kingdom.

Within a kingdom (which may cover many states and thousands of square miles) there are subdivisions called Principalities, and local chapters called Baronies, Shires, and Cantons. Each group has its own slate of officers to run it. It is the members of the local chapters who actually plan and run the events, practices, and other activities for SCA participants.

Households and Guilds exist as unofficial groups within the SCA, and determine their own internal structure. Some households have a feudal basis, consisting of a Knight and his lady, and their squires and men-at-arms. Other households are founded by participants who are all interested in focusing their recreation on the same era in history. And some households are simply groups of friends who like to socialize and travel to events together. Guilds are founded by groups of artisans who come together to share their knowledge. They can set their own rules about how guild members demonstrate skill to gain rank within the guild.

Fighting in the SCA, or Why are those people hitting each other?

Armored combat in the SCA resembles medieval foot tournaments. Combatants can face each other in single combat in tournaments, or can take part in large melee battles that can have dozens or even hundreds of combatants on each side.

Since we prefer that no one gets hurt, SCA combatants wear real armor and use rattan swords. Rattan, which looks like bamboo but has a solid core, is springy enough to absorb some of the force of the blow without snapping, and light enough to approximate the weight of a steel sword. Swords are constructed by wrapping a yard-long piece of rattan in duct tape and attaching a hilt. Building armor is much more complex – a complete suit has many parts, which can be made from hammered steel, rivets, leather, even rigid plastic (if well-disguised). Some pieces of armor can take many, many hours to construct.

Novice fighters are trained by the more experienced fighters. They are taught how to use their weapons, how to defend themselves, and how to judge blows received in combat. Every fighter on the field is on his/her honor to accept a blow sufficient to “wound” or “kill”. At the end of training, if the marshals (our safety officers) decide that the fighter is safe – not necessarily good, but unlikely to hurt him or herself or an opponent – then the fighter is considered authorized to fight. The process of becoming authorized can take from a few weeks to several months.

Another type of SCA combat is fencing, also known as **rapier combat**. Participants use real blades and for protection they wear regulation fencing masks, padded torso protection, and shirts and pants made from heavy fabric to protect their limbs. Unlike modern fencing, SCA fencing is done “in-the-round”, and combatants can fight in close with their opponents. Blows are acknowledged by the recipient (as in armored combat), not by a set of judges. Fencers can face each other one-on-one in tournaments, or in large melee battles with dozens or even hundreds on a side.

SCA fencing has its own set of marshals who supervise the authorization process. New fencers must demonstrate their knowledge of the rules and ability to participate safely before they can compete in tournaments.

In all SCA combat, safety is the most important consideration. There are armor requirements and rules which all participants must follow. Before combat begins, the marshals inspect the combatants’ equipment to make sure they are safe. During the battles, the marshals watch for unsafe situations and keep spectators safe.

Why do you all have such funny names?

Every person in the SCA picks a name to go by in the Society. It could be something simple and familiar (Mary of London or Thomas the Smith) or something elaborate and exotic-sounding (Oisín Dubh mac Lochlainn). However, no one may use the name of an actual person from history or legend (such as “Richard the Lionheart”).

The SCA has its own College of Arms to help you select and register an SCA name and heraldic device. The College of Arms has many resources to assist members in their research, to ensure that their names and devices are appropriate to the world we try to recreate, and that each registered name and device will be unique.

Don't worry about figuring out a name before you join the group. Many people go by <real first name> of <name of SCA group> for a while until they figure out what name they'd like to adopt.

Some SCA members try to create an entire "persona" for themselves, as someone who could have lived in a specific time and place within the scope of the SCA, fitting their costume and activities to that persona. Some dedicated people try to behave at events as if they actually were their persona. Others simply pick a name and go ahead with life in the "Current Middle Ages."

Even our local groups have their own names. Lansing, Michigan is "The Barony of Northwoods"; Toronto, Ontario is "The Royal City of Eoforwic"; Boston, Massachusetts is "The Barony of Carolingia"; and the San Francisco Bay area is the "The Principality of the Mists".

Rank in the SCA, or Who are those people wearing crowns?

The SCA has an elaborate system of rank, awards, and honors to reward participants' accomplishments and service to the Society. Everyone is presumed to be minor nobility when they join the SCA, but any noble titles or honors used in the SCA must be earned in the SCA. These honors are bestowed by the King and Queen during their Royal Courts. You will find that the SCA's system of rank differs rather radically from that of Europe during the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Like many of the SCA's institutions, our system of rank wasn't so much planned as evolved.

The people wearing crowns are the reigning Kings and Queens. The heirs to the kingdom, the Prince and Princess, wear coronets which are usually a little less elaborate. In principalities, the reigning Prince and Princess wear coronets, as do their heirs.

After departing the thrones, former royalty become Royal Peers: Viscounts and Viscountesses (those who ruled principalities), Counts and Countesses (those who have reigned once as King or Queen), and Dukes and Duchesses (those who have reigned twice or more as King or Queen). The different Royal Peers are entitled to wear coronets in a specific style.

Another group of people entitled to wear coronets are Barons and Baronesses. They may be in charge of a Barony, or may have simply received the title of Court Baron (or Baroness) as a reward from the royalty.

Bestowed Peers are those who, through talent, hard work, and long effort, have earned recognition for their contributions and skills. There are three of these peerage orders. Companions of the **Order of Chivalry** are Knights and Masters-at-Arms, fighters who have achieved great skill on the tourney field and are considered by the other members of the Chivalry to be models of prowess, chivalry, and honor. Companions of the **Order of the Laurel** are craftsmen and artisans recognized for their research and skill in crafts practiced during the Middle Ages and Renaissance, and their willingness to teach those skills to others. Companions of **Order of the Pelican** are those whose service has made a great difference to the SCA. Companions include those who have run Society-wide publications, organized our largest events, held kingdom offices, and managed complicated finances.

The above ranks are common to all the SCA Kingdoms. Each kingdom also has its own set of awards and honors that can be given to reward a variety of skills, efforts, and achievements.

Feasting, Dancing and Merrymaking

The major activity in the SCA is our events – the opportunity for us to put on our medieval clothing, cook and serve the recipes we've been researching, dance the dances we've been practicing, socialize, and generally have a good time. You can find a variety of SCA events taking place almost every weekend of the year, including:

Tournaments, coronations, masked balls, collegiums, interkingdom wars, and more. Activities at events can include fighting, fencing, archery, art exhibits/competitions, indoor games, feasts and royal or baronial court.

What kind of person joins the SCA?

SCA participants are just plain folks who enjoy doing something more with their weekends. People from all walks of life join the SCA – students, teachers, historians, writers, secretaries, law enforcement personnel, chemists, and insurance agents. Many SCA participants are involved in high tech fields – computers, aerospace, high energy physics, etc. People who spend all week with highly complex, modern technology can find it relaxing to spend their leisure time using simpler technologies in a less modern setting.

How you can get involved

We welcome you to come to our local meetings and events. You are not required to buy a membership before you start attending, although you may wish to join if you decide to be with us regularly. Members do pay lower entry fees to events, and some kingdoms require membership to participate in certain activities.

Many local groups have officers called “chatelaines” or “hospitallers” whose sole duty is to help new members find their way in the SCA, and they can provide you with loaner costumes for your first event. Each SCA participant remembers the day he or she started, and most people are happy to help out a newcomer.

To locate the group nearest you, see the “Finding a local SCA Group” section on our [“Information for Newcomers”](http://www.sca.org/chatelain/newcomers.html) webpage (www.sca.org/chatelain/newcomers.html). If you can’t determine which local group covers your area, contact the kingdom chatelaine/hospitaller through your kingdom’s website. Failing all else, you can contact the Society Chatelaine at chatelaine@sca.org.

Welcome to the Current Middle Ages!

This article is based on one originally written in 1996 by Mistress Siobhan Medhbh O’Roarke.

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

The Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc.



For Immediate Release

Contact: (LOCAL CONTACT) XXX-XXX-XXXX

Contact@domain.com

[NOTE- make sure this address has no innuendo]

(Title of Event)

On **DATE**, **LOCATION** in **CITY**, **STATE**, will be transformed from its everyday existence as a **DESCRIPTOR** to a colorful medieval encampment for the pageantry, celebration, and mock battle of the **EVENT**.

Example: On October 2, 2004, Gopher Hill State Park in Hilldale, Montana, will be transformed from its everyday existence as a quiet recreational park to a colorful middle ages encampment for the pageantry, celebration, and mock battle of the Shire of Podunk Brawl and Ball.

This **LENGTH**-long gathering of the local chapter of the Society For Creative Anachronism (www.sca.org, www.LOCALSCA.org,) brings together regional history enthusiasts from as far away as **REASONABLE BUT IMPRESSIVE DISTANCE**.

Example: This weekend-long gathering of the local chapter of the Society For Creative Anachronism (www.sca.org, www.podunksca.org) brings together regional history enthusiasts from as far away as Beulah and Missoula.

The SCA is an international not-for-profit organization devoted to bringing the Middle Ages and Renaissance to life through research and re-enactment, and employing their knowledge of history to enrich their lives and the lives of others. With over 100,000 participants worldwide, the SCA is one of largest living history societies in the world.

[include as is]

Press Office of The Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc.

5314 Lilibet Court, Cincinnati, Ohio 45238

513-403-3301 media@sca.org

For General Information on the SCA, Please see www.sca.org

The **EVENT** features (pick from this list) **HISTORIC ARTS AND CRAFTS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE, CRAFTS DEMONSTRATIONS AND CLASSES, DEMONSTRATIONS OF ARMORED TOURNAMENT COMBAT, MOCK BATTLES, DANCING, FEASTING, AND MUSIC**, with a special focus on **PERIOD OR ACTIVITY**.

Example: The Shire of Podunk Brawl and Ball features Historic Arts and Crafts available for purchase, dancing and music at the evening bonfires, with a special focus on demonstrations of armored Tournament Combat and 14th century Scottish mock battles taking place Saturday from 10am to 4 pm.

(IF INCLUDING MARTIAL ARTS:)

Wearing armor made as authentically as possible to emulate the mail, boiled leather, and plate steel used between the 10th and 15th centuries, combatants- who have been through rigorous safety training and equipment inspections to meet SCA armor standards- wield broadswords, maces, and clubs made of rattan to simulate the balance and handling of the original weapons, without the lethal qualities.

[include as is]

(IF FOCUSED ON TEACHING:)

Drawing inspiration from the guilds and great universities of the historic world, the SCA places a strong emphasis on teaching and sharing knowledge. Classes being offered at this event include **(CHOOSE 3 GENERAL CATEGORIES IF AT ALL POSSIBLE - FOR EXAMPLE, COSTUMING, DANCING, AND COOKING. IF YOU MUST LIST SPECIFIC CLASSES, DO NOT INCLUDE BREWING, WENCHING, FLIRTING, RELIGION, HAND KISSING, CODPIECE MAKING - CHECK IF YOU ARE UNSURE!)**

[include as is, with listing of 3 class categories or individual classes]

Event Basic Information- Use fact sheet info here, or (even better) attach fact sheet.

For more information on this event, go to www.podunksca.org/bnb04

For further information, including where to find your local SCA chapter, how to join, and events happening in your area, please see www.sca.org.

Press Office of The Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc.

5314 Lilibet Court, Cincinnati, Ohio 45238

513-403-3301 media@sca.org

For General Information on the SCA, Please see www.sca.org

Commercial Film and Photography Rules

These rules, dated February 4, 2005, hereby supersede and revoke all previous versions of the film crew rules.

1. Commercial/Documentary video and film crews wishing to record activities at events of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (SCA, Inc.) must obtain permission of the Event Staff through the Regional Publicity Liaison before setting up any filming equipment and beginning filming onsite. Crews who setup or film without permission will be asked to leave site without refund of any entry fees, and permission to use the material filmed at the event will be withdrawn.
2. Event attendees, including film crews, are expected to abide by all various local, state and federal laws, as well as any site rules and regulations, SCA Corpora, Kingdom Laws, and any special event policies; and to follow instructions given by authorized members of the event staff, SCA officers, and site employees. Failure to comply may result in expulsion from the event site without a refund, as well as legal prosecution.
3. All commercial/documentary film crews must carry written "Permission to Film" and pass from the event staff while onsite and filming. Passes must be visibly displayed at all times.
4. Film crews or photographers may not place flyers, billboards or advertising in any of the public areas of the event such as Troll booth, food courts, merchants row, and portable toilets.
5. Film crews must obey safety requests from Marshals (usually carrying black/yellow staffs), event staff, and Chirurgeons (first aid staff), especially during combat activities. No film crew may, under ANY circumstances, film an injured person obtaining medical attention without receiving express permission from the injured person. Failure to comply may result in expulsion from the event site without a refund, as well as legal prosecution.
6. Film crews may not solicit volunteers from attendees.
7. Filming by floodlight is not permitted anywhere on site. Filming is restricted to the use of ambient camp lighting. While film crews may provide their own "ambient" light in the form of candles, torches, or lanterns, these must be in compliance with the site rules, and any requests by attendees to remove the light source must be obeyed.
8. Large equipment (scaffolding, camera dollies, track, booms, ladders etc) may not be set up on the site. Film crews shall not stand on vehicles. Use of tripods to gain a vantage view is acceptable.
9. Film crews need to remember that the event is primarily a campsite and to respect the privacy of attendees and the overall medieval ambiance of the event. For purpose of clarity, battlefield, "court," marketplace and roads will be considered public areas. Camp areas set off by borders such as, but not limited to rope, sheet walls, gates, and obvious close tent circles shall be considered private, and releases will need to be signed in order to film in these areas. The same shall apply to classes being

taught, and the teacher shall retain any and all rights they may have, including but not limited to intellectual property rights.

The Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. and its individual branches, officers and directors does not waive any intellectual property rights held by it. The Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. and its individual branches, officers and directors does not waive any rights held by any attendee, including, but not limited to, intellectual property rights. Entry to an event held by the SCA, Inc., or any of its branches does not implicitly give permission to film individuals. Compliance with the various local, state and federal laws remains the burden of the photographers and film crews, and they are urged to take all suitable action to ensure compliance.

(<http://sca.org/officers/media/filmcrewrules.html>)