

Terms Coined in the Current Middle Ages

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Every niche in society has its jargon, and the SCA is no different. After 30 years, the SCA has coined terms for many of its cultural, social, and technical aspects. Below is a table dealing briefly with terms you may run into:

Archery Marshal - person qualified to review archers, archery ranges, and archery equipment for safety.

Archivist - officer in charge of keeping track of the history being developed within the SCA.

Autocrat - the organizer of an event. Schedules activities, gives directions to the event, etc.

AOA/Award of Arms - Usually the first award anyone will receive in the Society. Gives the bearer the right to have a coat of arms and be called Lord or Lady.

Babes-in-Arms - children under 3 years old.

Bardic Circle - a gathering for the performing arts, artists and their audience.

By-Laws - legal riders which, along with Copora (below) define SCA activities and structure. Many of the Kingdoms, Baronies and Principalities have their own By-Laws.

Camping Events - events which take place over multiple days, where there may be cabins available, or you bring your own tent.

Chatelaine/Castellan/Hospitaller/Chamberlain - officer in charge of recruitment, basic education, and orientation. Generally in charge of the supplies to loan to new members for their first events.

Chiurgeon - person trained in first aid. Includes nurses, doctors, EMTs, etc. SCA insurance & policy covers only basic first aid, more serious injuries will be referred to off-site medical facilities or hospitals.

Chronicler - officer in charge of distribution of newsletters and taking minutes at meetings.

Classes/Workshops - art, science, or research-based instruction, both hands-on or lecture. Workshops imply spaces to practice, learn and get experience with companionship and guidance from people who know something about the topic. Typically out of persona, unless held at a larger event or University.

Commons - general membership, multi-purpose business meeting, out of medieval persona. Members discuss upcoming events, request volunteers, give out information on local classes and meetings.

Corpora - legal documents regarding the institution of SCA, Inc. It outlines the structure of the organization as a whole, including policies that actually affect SCA activities and events.

Court - a formalized group meeting, in costume, used to handle business and awards, as well as the handing out of prizes for the days activities. They are presided over by the ceremonial leaders of the group. A royal court is presided over by the King &/or Queen, a baronial court by a baron or baroness, etc.

Crash Space - informal lodgings at a private home. BYO sleeping bag/pillows.

Crown - the reigning King and Queen, or their position as in King/Queen is equal & tied to their land, rather than themselves as individuals. Swearing fealty to the Crown

includes swearing to protect the land that is their Majesties.

Curia - a royal referendum composed of the Crown and society officers.

Dance Master/Mistress - court dancing instructor.

Dayboard - lunchtime buffet usually consisting of cheese, bread, and fruits, etc. Usually requires that you have a table setting available.

Day-Tripper - just there for the day, not camping, or will be leaving before the feast

Demos - showcase or string of lectures on subjects pertinent to the Middle Ages. May be given at museums, to inform the general public, or at schools for students of history. There may be hands-on demonstrations of arts and sciences, handouts, fighting demonstrations, etc. Members are usually strictly in persona at a demo.

“Discreetly Damp/Wet” - all alcoholic beverage containers should be kept out of sight, out of mind. Your consumption of alcohol should not be obvious to onlookers.

Dry/Damp/Wet Site - Wet - alcoholic possession is only restricted by age. Dry - consumption of alcoholic beverages is strictly prohibited. Damp - wines, ciders, meads and beers are allowed.

Exchequer - officer in charge of an area's treasury.

Event - one-day gathering, in persona.

Favor - piece of cloth or ribbon used to signify either good esteem or that one is willing to serve as the receiver's consort in the event that a Crown Tournament should be won.

Fealty - an oath of servitude in exchange for protection.

Feast - a formal dinner usually held in the evening,

Feast Gear - table setting (plate, bowl, mug, fork, spoon, sharp knife, napkin, tablecloth, candles, candleholder, matches).

feastocrat - main cook, coordinator of the kitchen staff at a specific event

Fencing Marshal - person qualified to review fencers, fencing lists, and fencing equipment for safety.

Garb - costume from the Middle Ages (or a Period Costume), Undergarb (bras, underwear, chemisa, undertunic, socks, etc.). Garb (Tunic, surcoat, tabard, leggings, stockings, pants, gown, etc.). Overgarb (cloak, wrap, etc.). Accessories (shoes, hats, scarves, belts, jewelry, knives, etc.) Some people don't like to think of them as “costumes” because actors and trick-or-treaters don't have to live in them for a whole day or more.

Gentle - generic term for a person. “Gentles, pray attend....” means “everyone, please listen”.

Gold Key - items including costumes and feast gear, and sometimes other accessories and equipment, usually kept by the chatelaine for members in need.

GOA/Grant of Arms - one step above the Award of Arms, given for further service.

Herald - office in charge of developing and registering persona names and heraldic coat of arms, and of making

announcements at events.

High Table - table at the head of a feast hall where the presiding nobility and invited guests will be seated for the feast.

"Hold!" - key word used to alert people within hearing distance of possible danger. It requires for fighters to disengage, and people to stop moving or talking and to pay attention to their surroundings.

Household - a non-official group within the society which is persona-related. One is invited to join, after which you are considered family to the people within the household.

Iron Key - items such as armor, weapons and shields, which are usually kept by the knight marshal (or earl marshal) for members in need of fighting equipment.

Knight - a member of the Chivalry (an order) who has chosen to swear fealty to the Crown.

Knight Marshal - officer (at Kingdom level it is the Earl Marshal) whose responsibility is to review fighters, fighting lists, and fighting equipment for safety, and the overseeing of any fighter practices or tournaments in his group. This does not mean the person is an ordained Knight.

Laurel - a member of a high order who has shown excellence in arts and sciences, and who has shared their knowledge with other members, furthering the aims of education within the SCA.

Lists/Lists Field - The cordoned-off area in which armed combat may take place. Also Fencing Lists and Archery Lists. Pronounced "list".

"Mi'lord/Mi'Lady" - social term used when addressing someone of unknown name or rank. "Excuse me, mi'lord!"

Minister of Arts & Sciences - office which keeps track of classes and workshops and promotes the educational aspects of the arts and sciences within the SCA. Also Master/Mistress of Arts & Sciences.

Mistress/Minister of the Lists - officer in charge of keeping track of local qualified fighters, and their standings in tournaments at events.

Munchkin - very young children

Mundane - things modern, people who are not a part of the SCA, work or modern-day pursuits.

Newbie - a new member of the SCA, or a person who is attending their first event.

On-board/Off-board/Out-board - Onboard - eating the prepared feast. Offboard - sitting at a table on the fringes of the main feast, bringing your own foods. Outboard - not eating in the main feast hall (if any).

"Oyez! Oyez!" - an attention-grabbing cry used by a herald who has an announcement to make.

Patent of Arms - a step above a Grant-of-Arms, usually given in conjunction with one of the higher orders (Pelican, Laurel, Chivalry).

Peer - a member of a great order.

Pennsic War - camping event where you can attend from (approximately) three days to 17 days. There are many tournaments and battles, courts, merchants, an ongoing "university", etc.

Period - a term used by many living history groups to describe their particular timespan through history. Something can be "in period" or "not period". In the SCA this is usually pre-1700's, and the subject of some debate.

Persona - a character portrayed by an individual in the SCA. This can range from simply a name to a mythical

person with a history, household or theoretical family, cultural ties and costumes which are all tied together.

Porta-castle - portable toilets, usually found in large campgrounds when they are expecting an unusual number of people to be there.

Post-revel - something to do after the event, to hang out. Ranges from pre-planned parties to spontaneous get-togethers. Usually not in garb.

Proof of SCA Membership - your SCA membership card, or the back page of your kingdom newsletter (ie: Pikestaff) which shows the expiration date, or some similar receipt from the membership office.

Regnum - a list of officers with their contact information, usually found in newsletters.

Rattan - a solid-core bamboo-like material used to approximate the weight and properties of steel in armed combat.

Royal Progress - event where the king and/or queen will be officially attending, and a formal royal court session will take place. Listed as RP in kingdom newsletters.

SCA Name - the name of a persona within the SCA.

Seneschal - officer who acts as legal representative of the SCA within a group, also in charge of meetings and negotiations as the president of their chapter.

Site - location of an SCA event i.e. a local church, campground, or school.

Site Fee - entrance fees, fees to get onto the event site, paid by reservation check or at troll.

Token - received when you pay your fees and check in at troll. Your receipt, usually it is worn in plain view during the event, and becomes a keepsake after the event.

Troll - the physical location of collection for entrance fees and giving out receipts (see Token). Also the people who are in charge of it. Called "The Troll" regardless of the numbers of "trolls" there are at the "Troll Booth".

Tygers - the East Kingdom term for "Dollars". Other kingdoms may have other words for dollars.

Universities - a day of classes in a single location, usually in persona.

"Vivat!" (plural, "Vivant!") - cheer wishing someone a long life. Heard in court when a gentle has received an award or during a feast when someone performs a toast. It is said 3 times. Use Vivat when one person is honoured, Vivant when more people are being honoured (for instance "Their royal majesties").