

**An Introduction to the SCA**  
**A Glossary**  
**by Lady Brigid ingen Maol Mhichill and Mistress Rosanore of Redthorn**

**General SCA Terms**

**SOCIETY FOR CREATIVE ANACHRONISM (SCA, Society)** – The name of an organization whose primary focus is the study and re-creation of Western European Medieval Culture.

**Historical Note:** The name was coined by Marion Zimmer Bradley (Elfrida of Greenwalls) and Diana Paxson (Diana Listmaker) for the SCA's second event off the top of their heads – no real thought went into the name.

**ANACHRONISM** – (pronounced ah-NAHK-rah-ni-zum) Anything out of its proper time. From the Greek words **ana**, meaning backwards or reversed and **khronizein**, meaning to belong to a particular time.

**ANNO SOCIETATIS/A.S.** – literally, Year of the Society. This refers to the SCA's method of numbering the years. A.S. 1 is 1966, the year that the SCA was founded. The SCA year begins on May Day (May 1) since that is the day on which the SCA was founded. A handy conversion chart of modern years to A.S. may be found at: <http://www.sca.org/calendar.html>

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOD)** – This body deals with the modern aspects of running the SCA and makes all policy for the Society as a whole.

**PERIOD** – a term referring to proper dress, mannerisms, speech, etc.; that is, being in the style of an historical period. In the SCA, this historical period is generally considered to be between 600 and 1600 AD.

**OUT OF PERIOD (OOP)** – something that exists outside of the time and place that the SCA strives to recreate ; something that is not Period.

**MODERN** – non-SOCIETY. Used in phrases such as "modern clothing" (blue jeans and tee shirt), "modern food" (hamburger and french fries), "moderns or modern folk", etc. "Mundane" is sometimes used instead but modern is preferred.

**NEWBIE** – Someone new to the SCA ; a newcomer. This term is not meant to be insulting but, since it can be taken that way, it might be better to use "newcomer", instead.

**COLLEGE OF ARMS** – This Society-wide organization is responsible for registering and authenticating devices, arms, badges, and SCA names for Society members.

**SCA NAME** – Period name adopted by a SCA person for use when she or he is in persona. It includes at least one given name, and can have at least one other name or qualifier, but not titles. All titles used in the Society must be granted by SCA royalty. SCA names must be approved by the College of Arms. See your local Herald for more information.

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**DEVICE (ARMS)** – The heraldic design that identifies a person or entity. This design should be registered with the College of Arms, subject to certain restrictions. Ask your local Herald for advice. The right to call a “device” one’s “arms” is granted by the King and Queen.

**PERSONA** – the character (personality, era, culture, etc.) assumed by a Society member while they are functioning within the Society. This may involve anything from adopting a name to developing a full history for a person born and raised at some specific place and time in the period covered by the SCA.

**GARB** – Period clothing worn by SCA members at Events, etc.

**AWARDS** – The royalty of the SCA may grant a variety of awards to those that they find worthy. However, the royalty are busy people and cannot possibly know everyone in their Kingdom or Principality. If you feel someone is deserving of reward, help them out–write a letter of recommendation! Anyone can do it, for any award. In other words, you don’t have to have the award yourself to recommend someone for it.

**OYEZ!** – (pronounced oh-YAY) -- an exclamation used by Heralds, Marshals, and other officials to gain the attention of an SCA gathering before an important announcement is made. When you hear this, you really should stop talking immediately in order to be polite and to avoid missing the announcement. Remember, the Herald is the Voice of the Crown!

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### **Organization**

**KNOWN WORLD** -- 1) all of the members and activities of the Society. 2) the term used to describe the geographical areas in which Society groups exist without regard for modern boundaries, governments, people or institutions.

**KINGDOM** – the largest subgroup within the Society. [Think “country”.] There are now nineteen Kingdoms: (in order of age, oldest to youngest): West, East, Middle, Atenveldt, Meridies, Caid, Ansteorra, Atlantia, An Tir, Calontir, Trimaris, Outlands, Drachenwald, Artemisia, Aethelmearc, Ealdormere, Lochac, Northshield, and Gleann Abhann.

**PRINCIPALITY** – a subgroup within a Kingdom that is made up of many local groups and which is autonomous within the Kingdom. [Think “state”.] A Principality is sometimes regarded as a Kingdom-in-training. Currently, the Principalities are Nordmark in the Kingdom of Drachenwald; Cynagua, Mists, and Oertha in the Kingdom of the West, and Avacal, Summits, and Tir Righ in the Kingdom of An Tir.

**CROWN PRINCIPALITY** -- a Principality whose ruling royalty is the King and Queen of its Kingdom. This form of Principality has been created for use by areas that are greatly isolated from the rest of their Kingdom. At present, there is one Crown Principality: Insulae Draconis in the Kingdom of Drachenwald.

**BARONY** – an autonomous local Society group which has met the official requirements set out in the Corpora and in Kingdom law, and has been elevated to this status. [Think “city”.] It has a Territorial Baron and/or Baroness as a titular head. A Barony is part of a Kingdom and may contain within its borders smaller branches such as Shires, Cantons, and Colleges but it does not have to.

**SHIRE** – an smaller autonomous Society group. March or Riding are names also used by groups of Shire status. A Shire, if it wishes, may advance in status to become a Barony some day.

**CANTON** – a smaller local SOCIETY group which is not autonomous but is under the jurisdiction of a Shire or Barony from which it receives help and support. A Canton can eventually become a Barony if it wishes.

**COLLEGE** – a local SCA group which is co-extant territorially with another local SCA group. Colleges are generally formed at educational institutions or military bases and often are truly functioning only nine months out of the year. A College reports administratively to the local SCA group with which it is co-extant administratively

**FORMING GROUP** – Any group of people who express interest in beginning the process of becoming a full status group in Northshield. More details on the process of forming a new group can be obtained from Northshield’s Deputy Kingdom Seneschal for New Groups

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**APPLICANT GROUP** – the term used in Northshield for a Forming Group that has received agreement from its administering branch and whose officers have been designated as deputies of the officers of that administering branch. A group may be designated Applicant by the Kingdom Seneschal or their designated deputy. Applicant groups may choose their own group Title. Suggestions are Outpost, Colony, Village, Fort, or any other name mutually acceptable to the applicant group and the Kingdom Seneschal that does not already have official SCA status. More details on the process of forming a new group can be obtained from Northshield's Deputy Kingdom Seneschal for New Groups.

**REGION** -- a subdivision of a Kingdom that is made up of many local groups and which exists for administrative purposes only. Regions are official within a Kingdom only.

**HOUSEHOLD** – a voluntary association of friends or people with similar interests organized as a political or social unit within the Society, often not restricted by geographical or Kingdom boundaries, and run according to the desires of the members. Households have no formal standing in the SCA.

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### **People and Officers**

**KING and QUEEN (CROWN is a term for King and Queen)** – The titles given to the titular heads of a Kingdom. These titles are granted to the person who has won a Crown Tournament and to the person for whom they fought.. They also must have served as Crown Prince and Princess.. In Northshield, the Crown Prince and Princess must serve for six months and the King and Queen reign for six months.

**BARON/ESS (LANDED) a.k.a. TERRITORIAL BARON/ESS** -- the title given to the ceremonial head of a Barony.. Territorial Baron/esses are said to be “landed”, that is, the Crown makes them the custodians of the Baronial territories. They do not actually own the land, of course. Thus, the Baron/ess swear an oath of loyalty (Fealty) to the Crown and are the Crown’s representatives in their Barony,

**OFFICER** – Someone who volunteers for and/or is appointed to do one of the jobs in the civil service of a Society branch or of the SCA as a corporation.

**SENESCHAL** – the chief administrator and legal representative of an SCA group; much like the chairperson or President of other organizations. In addition, they are responsible for welcoming new people into the group unless this has been delegated to a Chatelaine. This office is found at every level of the Society. The Seneschal of the Society is the SCA’s Vice-President of Operations.

**CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (EXCHEQUER for short)** – The officer in charge of accounting for the money, i.e., the treasurer. Must make a report to the IRS annually and keep accurate books.

**HERALD** – Officer in charge of heraldry, titles, protocol, ceremony, field and court heraldry. At events and courts, serves as a master of ceremonies and as a sort of living public address system.

**MINISTER OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCES** – Officer who is responsible for fostering the arts and sciences in their group. They can also help organize and run arts and sciences contests and displays

**CHATELAINE** – The deputy to whom the Seneschal delegates the job of welcoming new people, loaning them garb, feast gear, etc.

**KNIGHT MARSHAL** – the local officer who supervises all aspects of Heavy Weapons Fighting: training and authorizing fighters, maintenance of safety in fighting, and armor standards, both on and off the tournament field. He or she also supervises weapons etiquette. Knight Marshals are not necessarily Knights. Each of the Arts Martial (rapier, archery, equestrian, thrown weapons) will have their own local Marshal. The Kingdom level supervisor of all the Arts Martial is the Earl Marshal.

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**CHIRURGEON** – (ki-RER-juhn) -- SCA member in charge of first aid who is a member of the SCA-wide GUILD of surgeons. A Chirurgeon has at least a multi-media Red Cross first aid card, CPR certification, and has served a period of APPRENTICEShip. Chirurgeons serve as OFFICERs at all levels of the SOCIETY. The badge of this office is a white drop on a red background. On the white drop is a charge called a “flea” which looks something like a weird “7”. You may seek first aid wherever you see this badge displayed in the SCA.

**CHRONICLER** – Officer who is in charge of an SCA group’s newsletter and other publications.

**MINISTER OF YOUTH or MINISTER OF CHILDREN** – Officer in charge of supervising and fostering activities for children and youth under the age of 18.

### **(non-officers)**

**CHAMBERLAIN** – the head of household for a Landed noble such as the Crown or Territorial Baron/esses. Such persons take gentle care of those that they serve, watching over such things as physical welfare, schedules, etc. Go to them when you need to organize something with or for a Landed noble.

**BARD** – A bard sings, recites poetry, and tells stories about the SCA and/or about period topics. These performances often take place at bardic circles. There are also “titled” bards sponsored by groups such as our own Bard of Nordskogen who is chosen every year at Twelfth Night.

**SCRIBE** – A person with artistic talent in the area of calligraphy and/or illumination who gives of their time and talent to create award scrolls for recipients of awards.

**POPULACE** – a term used to refer to a group of SCA folk such as the inhabitants of a Kingdom or a Barony.

**GENTLE** – a polite term for an individual member of the SCA. May also be used in the plural to refer to a group of folks.

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### **Fighting Terms**

**ARTS MARTIAL** – those martial arts practiced in the SCA. These include archery, heavy combat, equestrian activities, rapier combat, siege weapons, and thrown weapons

**HEAVY COMBAT** – Also called armored combat and heavy fighting. This is combat wearing armor (see below) using heavy weapons (as defined below) which is overseen by the appropriate Marshal and governed by strict safety regulations

**RAPIER COMBAT** – the term used for the SCA’s recreation of period combat using various types of rapiers which, like all other combat in the SCA, is governed by strict safety regulations

**HEAVY WEAPONS** – those weapons, usually built on a rattan base, that are traditionally used in the SCA to recreate Medieval combat. Included among these weapons are shortsword (and shield); greatsword; polearms; the mace; the maul; and the axe. Their construction is overseen by the appropriate Marshal and governed by strict safety regulations.

**ARMOR** – Armor is worn to protect the body of a fighter. The restrictions on what is required to be worn is defined by a combination of tradition and testing by trial and error over many years. There is a minimum set of requirements for armor that must be met for a fighter to be approved to fight in a tournament or war. Materials that are used for armor include such things as hockey pads, mover’s quilts, kydex, boiled leather, padded and quilted fabric, chain mail, and metal plates. In other words, on the field, one sees everything from modern make-do’s to very authentic, beautiful armor.

**AUTHORIZED** – a heavy combatant, archer, rapier combatant, thrown weapons combatant, or an equestrian 16 years of age or older who has proved before three or more of the appropriate Marshals that he or she is safe to him- or herself and to others when participating in their chosen activity. Each authorized person carries an authorization card upon which are indicated all the styles which he or she is allowed to use. A fully authorized person may fight in these styles in tourneys, melees, wars, etc.

**MARSHAL** – the specially trained and warranted office in charge of overseeing a particular combat activity. A Marshal may be freelance (Marshal of the Field), a local group marshal (Knight Marshal) or a Kingdom marshal (Earl Marshal).

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### **Events**

**EVENT** – a Society gathering which usually consists of a Tournament, Feast, and Revel. Events often have a Period theme. An Event is “official” and will be covered by the SCA’s insurance if it fulfills certain requirements and is published in the Kingdom newsletter. The King and Queen can only give out Awards at official events.

**MOOT** – an unofficial Society gathering. These events are often smaller and have a specialized focus. The Barony of Nordskogen has a Moot on the first Wednesday of each month to which folks are encouraged to wear Garb and our Baron and Baroness hold Court.

**DEMO** – short for “demonstration”. A Society educational lecture-demonstration for Modern folk on Period fighting, arts, crafts, etc

**COLLEGIUM** – a SCA gathering for the organized teaching and sharing of knowledge relevant to our Period recreations.

**ALTHING** – the “town meetings” of Northshield, which examine important issues or concerns among her people, and open discussion about possible solutions.

**CAMPING EVENT** – an Event held outdoors where everyone camps out in tents for the duration of the Event. Everyone lives on the Site more or less medievally

**WAR** – an inter-Kingdom Event, usually a Camping Event, with field battles, woods battles, and other kinds of fighting and examples of the Arts Martial. Wars also often include arts and sciences competitions and merchants' fairs. They always include much socializing. The oldest and biggest war is the Pennsic War between the Middle and East Kingdoms which is held in Pennsylvania on the third weekend in August. Many people from throughout the Known World come to participate. Other wars in which Northshields often participate are Gulf Wars, sponsored by Gleann Abhann, and Lilies War, sponsored by Calontir.

**WARRIORS AND WARLORDS (WW, “dub-dub”)** – the annual Event jointly sponsored by the Baronies of Jararvellir and Nordskogen which is the premiere Camping Event of Northshield. It is held the first full weekend after July 4<sup>th</sup>. As the name implies, this Event specially features all of the Arts Martial. However, the War or Melee version of these arts (rather than the individual or Tourney version) is what is stressed at this Event. In addition, there are all kinds of arts and sciences activities as well as an excellent Merchants’ Row. This Event generally gets the largest turnout of any Northshield Event.

**AUTOCRAT** – person (or persons) in charge of an Event. Makes the final decisions on all matters concerning the Event. Does the planning and makes all the Event arrangements. For large Events, there may be several co-autocrats or subautocrats, each in charge of one aspect of the Event.

**FEASTOCRAT** – a sub-Autocrat in charge of running the kitchen for the Feast. As this is not a Period term, many prefer “Head Cook” or “Kitchener” be used.

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**SITE** – the place where a Society Event is held, either indoors, or outdoors, usually a rented hall or park of some sort.

**SITE FEE** – the fee one must pay to gain entry to an Event. Currently, non-members must pay a surcharge of \$3.00.

**DRY/DAMP/WET SITE** – A Dry Site does not allow any alcoholic beverages AT ALL. NONE. A Damp (or Semi-Wet) Site allows alcoholic beverages with certain restrictions. A Damp Site usually allows wine and beer and forbids hard liquor. A Wet Site allows all alcoholic beverages. Check the Event announcement carefully to see what the restrictions are so you don't find yourself in trouble!

**PORTER/GATE/TROLL** – the check-in point for an Event. You register your presence and pay Site Fees, sign waivers, get maps and other information, and/or pick up Feast tickets.

**TOURNAMENT** (also Tourney) – 1) the combat at a Society Event. This combat is usually one on one. 2) slang for an entire Society Event.

**MELEE** – a combat with more than two people in it that simulates battle. Melees can either stand alone or be one of the rounds in a Tournament.

**MERCHANT'S ROW** – the place at an Event where all the vendors are gathered.

**COURT** – 1) a formal gathering presided over by a landed noble such as a King and Queen or Baron/ess. Announcements may be made, gifts given to the presiding nobles and said nobles may give Awards to deserving folk. 2) the group of people who surround the King and Queen at an Event.

**FEAST** – the part of an Event when people sit and eat specially prepared Period foods, usually accompanied by entertainment.

**FEAST GEAR** – utensils such as plate, goblet, knife, etc., needed to eat one's food at Feast. Most Feasts assume that guests will provide their own Feast Gear. Many folks also bring their own decorative tablecloths, napkins, candles and other items to grace their table.

**HEAD TABLE (High Table)** – at a Feast, the table at which the presiding nobility sit, along with their honored guests.

**REVEL** – the "party" section of an Event that takes place after the Feast. It is devoted to dancing, plays, chatting and other non-martial, non-Feasting diversions.

**POST-REVEL** – the unofficial party after an Event which includes singing, chatting, etc. It is usually held off-Site in someone's home and guests generally wear Modern clothing.

## Geography

### The 19 Kingdoms, 7 Principalities, and 1 Crown Principality of the Known World Plus the 3 Regions of Northshield

AETHELMEARC (ETH-el-mark) -- the Kingdom which consists of western New York State, central/western Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

ANSTEORRA (ANS-tee-OR-ah) -- the Kingdom which consists of the states of Oklahoma and Texas (except for El Paso and Hudspeth counties).

AN TIR (an TEER) -- the Kingdom which consists of the states/provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, the northern tip of Idaho, the Northwest Territories, Oregon, Saskatchewan, Washington State and the Yukon. This Kingdom contains three Principalities: AVACAL, the SUMMITS, and TIR RIGH.

ARTEMESIA (Ahr-tem-EEZ-ee-ah) -- the Kingdom which consists of western Colorado, southern Idaho, Montana, most of Utah and Wyoming.

ATENVELDT (A-ten-velt) -- the Kingdom which consists of the state of Arizona.

ATLANTIA (at-LANT-shee-ah) -- the Kingdom which consists of the District of Columbia and the states of Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and a bit of Georgia.

AVACAL – the Principality consisting of Alberta, eastern and northern British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, and the Yukon. It is a part of the Kingdom of An Tir.

CAID (ki-EED) -- the Kingdom which consists of southern California, Hawaii, and part of Nevada (the Greater Las Vegas area).

CALONTIR (kal-on-TEER) -- the Kingdom which consists of the states of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and northern Arkansas (the Fayetteville area).

CENTRAL REGION (of Northshield) – see Lakes Region.

CYNAGUA (sin-AH-gwah) -- the Principality consisting of the northern central valley and Sierra in California and part of Nevada (the Reno area). It is part of the Kingdom of the West.

DRACHENWALD (DRA-ken-wahld) -- the Kingdom which consists of Europe, Africa and the Middle East. This Kingdom contains two Principalities: the Crown Principality of Insulae Draconis and the Principality of Nordmark..

EALDORMERE (EL-der-mere) -- the Kingdom which consists of the province of Ontario (except for Essex County and NW Ontario around Thunder Bay).

EAST -- the Kingdom which consists of the states/provinces of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Brunswick, New Hampshire, New Jersey, eastern New York, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, eastern Pennsylvania, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Rhode Island and Vermont.

EASTERN REGION (of Northshield) – see Woodlands Region..

FAR WEST -- informal term for those sections of Asia that are part of the Known World. The Far West is part of the Kingdom of the West.

GLEANN ABHANN (glen AH-ven) – the Kingdom which consists of most of Arkansas, a bit of Kentucky (Calloway County), Louisiana, Mississippi and a bit of Tennessee (the Memphis area).

INSULAE DRACONIS – the Crown Principality consisting of the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and Iceland. It is part of the Kingdom of Drachenwald.

LAKES REGION – the central region of Northshield that consists of Minnesota and northwest Ontario.

LOCHAC (LOW-kak) -- the Kingdom which consists of Australia, New Zealand, and Antarctica.

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MERIDIES (mare-I-dee-ace) -- the Kingdom which consists of the states of Alabama, a bit of the Florida panhandle, almost all of Georgia, a bit of Kentucky (the Bowling Green area) and most of Tennessee.

MIDDLE -- short for the Middle Kingdom.

MIDDLE KINGDOM -- the Kingdom which consists of the states/provinces of: Michigan (except for the upper peninsula), a bit of Ontario (Essex County), Ohio, Kentucky (except for the southwest counties), Illinois, Indiana and a bit of Iowa (Scott County).

MIDREALM -- another word for the Middle Kingdom.

The MISTS -- the Principality consisting of the Greater San Francisco and Monterey Bay areas in California. It is part of the Kingdom of the West.

NORDMARK – the Principality consisting of Sweden. It is part of the Kingdom of Drachenwald.

NORTHSHIELD – our Kingdom which consists of the states/provinces of Manitoba, the upper peninsula of Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, northwest Ontario, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

NORTHSHIELD’S LATIN MOTTO: Ducere, Ministrare, Illuminare. The literal English translation is: To lead, to serve, to light [the way].

NORTHSHIELD’S TOTEMIC ANIMAL – the griffin.

OERTHA (oh-WAIR-thah) -- the Principality consisting of Alaska. It is part of the Kingdom of the West.

OUTLANDS -- the Kingdom which consists of New Mexico, most of Colorado, part of Wyoming (Cheyenne), part of Nebraska, and part of Texas (El Paso and Hudspeth Counties).

PLAINS REGION – the western region of Northshield that consists of Manitoba, North Dakota and South Dakota.

The SUMMITS – the Principality consisting of southern Oregon. It is a part of the Kingdom of An Tir.

TIR RIGH – the Principality consisting of eastern British Columbia and northern Washington State. It is a part of the Kingdom of An Tir.

TRIMARIS (tri-MARE-iss) -- the Kingdom which consists of most of the state of Florida. Trimaris also lays claim to Panama.

WEST -- the Kingdom which consists of the states of Alaska, northern California, Nevada, Japan, Korea, and the Pacific Rim. This Kingdom contains three Principalities: Cynagua, the Mists, and Oertha.

WESTERN REGION (of Northshield) – see Plains Region.

WOODLANDS REGION – the eastern region of Northshield that consists of Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.