

“What does that mean?” – A Partial Lexicon of SCA Terms

Arts and Sciences (A&S)

These are the projects people do based on medieval activities they have researched and are re-creating. If it was done in the Middle Ages, someone in the SCA has researched it and knows how to do it. If you have a modern hobby, it may well be adaptable to the SCA.

Autocrat/Event Steward

This is the person in charge of an Event. They may have a co-steward or co-autocrat, and if there is a feast, there will be a feastocrat (or feast steward). It is understood that “-ocrat” is used to designate the person in charge of something, and while the -ocrat combinations are humorous, they are also functional.

Chatelaine

Or Castellán or Hospitaler. This is the person who acts as a group's "greeter", making sure that new members and visitors are informed of activities, are introduced to group members who share similar interests, and many times acts as the group's demo coordinator. They provide hospitality.

Court

The King and Queen in attendance at an Event may hold a formal court in which they recognize members of the populace for displaying skill in the arts and sciences, combat, or service. Announcements may be made at this time as well.

Demo

Demo is short for demonstration, and this is a demonstration given by SCA members to non-SCA groups in the community, at a school, or a faire.

Event

An official function of the SCA. A larger Society gathering that focuses on re-creating a day at a medieval faire, royal tournament or special feast day. A wide variety of activities occur at an event which may include fighting tournaments, archery tournaments, equestrian tournaments, games, craft competitions, classes on topics of interest, music, dancing, singing, cooking, feasting and general good fun. An event can be one to four days long. Events that run a week or more are Wars (see that entry).

Feast Gear

Feast gear is a place setting one would need to sit at feast. This generally includes a plate or trencher, a bowl, a cup or mug, and silverware (a spoon and knife, a fork if you wish). You may want to include a cloth napkin, and perhaps a tablecloth. Always assume you will need to bring your own feast gear to feast, unless the event has announced differently.

Gate

Also referred to as Troll (a fun play of words on Toll Gate). This is where you sign in at an event and pay your site fee, and feast fee if you are attending the feast. There will usually be a token given as a receipt. At Gate/Troll will also be a schedule of activities, site regulations, etc.

Garb

This is a generic word for the medieval clothing we wear. Garb is required for SCA events, and should be at least “a reasonable attempt at medieval clothing.”

Gold Key

Gold Key refers to garb and/or feast gear that a group has to loan to visitors and newcomers. See your Chatelaine/Castellan/Hospitaler for Gold Key items.

Hold

Or more specifically, “HOLD!” If you hear this, stop. Yes, just stop what you are doing, stop moving. This means there is danger of injury – it may be a fighter is down, a dog has run into the archery range, you are about to trip over a chair as you are carrying your laundry to your car! It is a stop action call. So stop and listen, and proceed when it is determined the situation has been cleared.

Mundane

“Mundane” means ‘everyday.’ We use it to refer to something modern, not SCA related.

Period

‘Period’ refers to the SCA time period, pre 1600 CE. It basically covers the millennia between the fall of Rome and the end of the 16th century (pre Renaissance). ‘Period’ can also be used as an adjective to describe SCA activities or items. “The game of Nine Man Morris is very period,” which means it was a game commonly played in the SCA time period. “Cell phones are non-period,” – that’s an obvious example, but you get the idea.

Persona

This is ‘who’ we are when participating in the SCA. It is a person we create, someone who could have lived in the Middle Ages, but not an actual person who did. For example, you cannot be Edward I, King of England, but you can be, say Thomas Boddewin, who lived at that same time. You may develop your persona in as much detail as you like.

Populace

Populace refers to the people of the shire/canton/barony/kingdom.

Populace Meeting

This is the business meeting of your local group. Past and upcoming events are discussed, officer reports are given, and plans are made.

Seneschal

The Seneschal is the head of the local group, similar to the president of a club.

These are just a few terms. There is a more complete list at this site:

<http://www.modaruniversity.org/Newcomer-Packet-05-General-SCA-Terms.pdf>