



## The Chatelaine Handbook

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Greetings! Welcome! These will be the most important words in your position of Chatelaine. As you have agreed to be an officer in the Chatelaine's office you know that it involves helping newcomers, returning persons and transfers from elsewhere. Yet, this is only part of what we do as Chatelaines. We also promote the SCA when/where ever possible; we assist people in finding interests; and, when people move into or out of the Kingdom of the Outlands, we help them connect with their local Chatelaine.

If you haven't been involved in SCA for long or your local group's Chatelaine office has been dormant or not as visible as others, don't worry, we will address, what the job is, how to accomplish your goals and tips to help you in your office.

So welcome to the office of the Chatelaine!

## THE LEGAL STUFF

This Handbook is to assist you in running of your office, as with most written documents it is dynamic and will change over time, plus with the wealth of information we must give credit where credit is due

Contributors of this handbook include:

- Many individuals in the SCA both in various Kingdoms and in the Kingdom of the Outlands who have given their thoughts, ideas and support.
- Organizational Handbook of the Society for Creative Anachronism,
- Information from [www.sca.org](http://www.sca.org)
- The Known World Handbook, Third Edition, 1992, corporate publications of the Society for Creative Anachronism.
- The Known World Handbook, Fourth Edition, 2010, corporate publications of the Society for Creative Anachronism.
- The Chatelaine's Handbook, Kingdom of An Tir, edited by Ekatarina Borisovna Kievskaja, 2000-2004.
- Chatelaine Handbook, Kingdom of Calontir, compiled by Victoria de Sauvignon, dated February 2008.
- Ealdormere Chatelaine's Handbook, revised 2014.
- Meridies Chatelaines' Handbook, edited by THLady Aranwen of Willow Ford, 2014.
- Middle Kingdom Chatelaine's Handbook, Mistress Rhiannon Siobhan Shynane, second edition, June 2010.
- A Handbook for the Chatelaines of Northshield, written by Baroness Eithni ingen Talorgai.

## **I am a Chatelaine, So What Do I Do Now?**

You have just been accepted into your office, so now what do you do? Hopefully, you will be taking over from another who will assist you in your transition, but we will take this from angle that you are stepping into a vacant position. Then, as you become more knowledgeable in your position, keep a look out for a deputy. Have your deputy assist you in planning/ideas, at events and reporting. The more involvement your deputy has the easier the transition into the Chatelaine position and you and your deputy will both enjoy the position.

Whether you are taking over from another or stepping into a vacant position, some of the best resources will be this handbook, other officers, friends and electronic resources such as these links <http://www.sca.org/docs/library.html#officers> , the Chatelaine page [www.sca.org](http://www.sca.org), and our newest website <http://prototype.outlands.org/>.

### **WHEN YOU ARE CONTACTED**

Usually, what happens immediately following your start into your office is you will receive contact information of newcomers looking for information. The single most important thing we can do as a chatelaine is COMMUNICATE. Yep, such a simple concept yet in this current world it can be very complex; there is social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Skype) email groups such as our Society, Kingdom, Shire, Barony and local groups; texting, phone and face to face such as a business meeting.

Hopefully, your group's seneschal/web minister are getting your email account setup; if it is taking longer than expected, either use your own email or if I may suggest, set up one just for your office. Most SCA websites for officers are now forwarding to your own email, which is

why I suggest having a separate email account just for your office. Also, keep simple pamphlets, business cards handy, handing out a business card can make the difference between that person contacting us or not, but more on supplies later.

The other most common way we are contacted is at practices and events. You might notice a person looking a bit lost or someone might bring a newcomer over to you or a newcomer will run into you. Introduce yourself, and find out what brought the person – this can be hard but with practice you will get better. Best advice, remember how you felt at your first practice, event? If you can put yourself in that position, it will make introductions easier over time.

Keep it simple, usually newcomers are looking for the following information;

- o What do we do? What do we wear? I want to\_\_\_\_\_ (fight, shoot, fence, make stuff, cook, etc.). Where is practice, classes or events?

**GOLD KEY** is the inventory that we have for newcomers – clothing and feast gear. Groups either have a Gold Key person or the Chatelaine will also be the Gold Key. The Gold Key person is an important position within the Chatelaine's office; newcomers will be in need of garb (clothing), and the Gold Key office provides not only garb but also is the first person the newcomer will be talking with for a length of time. Gold Key can learn newcomer's interest, what brought them to the SCA, and this information when sent to the Chatelaine, can assist greatly in getting the newcomer established.

**ADVERTISING** is the next most common form of communication with newcomers and is out in PUBLIC! Public as in the regular world... You mean talking with people who know nothing of the SCA?! GULP! This

strikes fear into most of us. Remember, though, you get a chance to talk about a hobby you enjoy! You are not alone; others will help you out; we are a TEAM-oriented group and will help each other.

It is okay, if you don't know all the answers; we learn something new at every introduction. Below are some suggestions to help you and the newcomers you will meet:

- Have a plan. Do you get to have a table at the event, demo, etc? Or what will you do when you meet people at a practice or other informal places? By having a plan, not only will you feel better, and you'll be more confident.
- Have a stash of newcomer information handy; carry some business cards, keep some pamphlet's, current newsletter, a copy of the Known World Handbook, show some pictures on your phone/tablet, or samples of arts & science work – anything that makes you feel comfortable.
- Be Open. People in the SCA are knowledgeable and some will come over and assist you with newcomers. Allow them to share their knowledge, and you might learn in the process.
- Have patience. You might be tired, in the middle of a project or in the middle of practice (archery, heavy, rapier); but take a moment and a deep breath to remember that your time can make the world of difference for a newcomer as they don't know what is going on with YOU, they just want to join this fun game.

This leads us into **DEMOS!** What the heck is a demo? A demo is an opportunity for the SCA to showcase the wide variety of interests the SCA has available. A demo can be as simple as running an errand (in your regular life) to the structured demos such as a Festival.

### WHERE TO HAVE A DEMO?

A demo can take place anywhere from a Fabric store (when someone expresses in interest in the 10 yards of upholstery fabric you are buying - he he) to a Festival or school class event happening in your community, or It can be at a Fighter Practice or at a Tournament.

### HOW TO RUN A DEMO? (Some pointers)

- Review the SCA's demo policy found at: <http://www.sca.org/officers/chatelain/demopolicy.html> and keep a copy for handy reference.
- o Get with others who have run a demo; ask if they would like to coordinate; or, ask if they will help you coordinate. You don't have to do this alone, and other people will help.
- o Ask people and post asking for volunteers to help with your demo. We all have busy lives so please do not get caught up in the moment and volunteer your group or friends without asking first.
- o Make sure all who volunteer know the exact dates and times of the demos, while life happens and dates can change due to extenuating circumstances, communicating with your demo group should occur as soon as possible.
- o Know your audience. Some demos will be for the general public, others might be for children. If you have an idea of who the demo is for you will ensure a better chance for success.

- Follow Up! Please follow up as soon as possible. The more time that stretches between the demos and follow up; the more likely you will lose the interest of the newcomer.
- Have fun. We can get so caught up in making sure everything is just right, we can forget to have fun ourselves. So have FUN!

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND MEDIA RELATIONS** aren't they the same?

Nope, they are similar in nature but different in execution.

SOCIAL MEDIA is responsible for the following:

- Developing publicity materials & press kits for use by local & Kingdom Media Relations Officers.
- Monitoring coverage of the SCA by organized news media.
- Working with the Society Seneschal to ensure that each Kingdom has an adequate media policy in place.

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After reading the above, you are thinking they do the same thing! Well, yes and no. Media Relations is when either we contact or are contacted by organized media (ie: Newspaper, TV, Bloggers, etc). Social Media is when we (chatelaines) utilize the various social networking platforms (Face Book, Yahoo Groups, Twitter, etc) to encourage participation with people in the SCA.

Again, please refer to [www.sca.org](http://www.sca.org) for more detailed information.

**NEWCOMERS, RETURNING MEMBERS & TRANSFERS FROM DIFFERENT KINGDOMS:** What should you do?

No matter how the person(s) came to us, the best thing to do is just to be yourself. Help them to feel comfortable, provide information; no matter if it is a newcomer, transfer from elsewhere, or returning to the SCA, all need information.

Newcomers will need all information about the SCA from the ground up (What, Who, When, Where, How).

A Returning person(s) and Transfers from another Kingdom will need to be “caught up” on information, such as (our Face book account), the Kingdom Website, Local information (Canton, Barony, Shire).

**BUSINESS MEETINGS** can be tricky as by their very nature a business meeting entails going over the business of that group which can be fun for some but may be boring to others. Newcomers can distract from the business at hand or depending on the person, discussion and so forth can add to the business meeting. I suggest the following;

- If the person(s) has come with a member and seems comfortable, relaxed, get with them after the meeting. Give them your card; let them know you are available to assist.
- If the person(s) has come alone and seems uncomfortable, if possible, find a break in the meeting and take them outside. Sometimes a person will feel overwhelmed by the information, details, etc. Give them your information, and if possible, try to find a time/place, practice/event that you can meet up in person or online.



**PRACTICE/CLASSES** when you are attending a practice either for yourself or to support another be aware that most likely a (new, transfer, or returning) person will be there. Be aware that:

- They are there to learn and practice just like you.
- Introduce yourself and be available.
- Have fun: clearly the interest is there, and you and others can help promote that interest.

**EVENTS** this is where the SCA shines! The decorations, the garb, the atmosphere!!!

This is where a newcomer is truly embraced by the current Middle Ages. There is so much to see, hear, touch, taste, learn, to be a part of – that WOW! It overwhelms a person. This is what we need to be aware of and help a newcomer.

- Be on the look out for new people, members might introduce you to a newcomer or you might find them yourself.
- Offer a smile, pep talk or, if they are so inclined, introduce them to others at the event. Try to gauge what assistance, if any they might need/want.
- Touch base with them as the event continues.
- Make sure that newcomers have a place to view court, and if staying for feast, make sure they have a place to sit and feast gear.
- Let newcomers know that they have a resource (you).

### **CAMPING EVENTS**

Camping in the Kingdom of Outlands is a very busy season! We live in a region of outdoor living, and camping is a part of that life. But, camping in

the SCA is different than regular camping – as we are recreating the Middle Ages, we have more camping gear, and that gear is period.

Camping SCA style presents a different set of challenges; you have a newcomer who either has camped and has gear or hasn't camped and has no gear and this includes garb. Here are some suggestions that might be of help.

- As soon as you know a newcomer is going to a camping event, gather information:
  - Is this their first event? If this is their first event, make sure have information on the event (go to Kingdom or Local group calendar).
  - Is this a family or individual attending? If a family with younger family members, let the Youth Officer know as they can be of great assistance.
  - Do they have tent? If yes, either contact or give contact information to the newcomer of the Land Coordinator. I suggest contacting the Land Coordinator (via messenger, text, or email) and copying the newcomer. If no, see if other members might have a tent to loan (check with the quartermaster, gold key, fellow members).
  - Do they have garb? Some newcomers come from other reenactment groups and have garb that is usable for camping. If not, check with Gold Key, and if no again, contact other members, and see if they have garb to loan or at a business meeting, bring it up so a call can go out.
  - Have a newcomer camp class or have a handout or have websites a newcomer can visit to find information.
  - Intermittently, check on the newcomer before the camping event, to make sure they are prepared and have garb and what

their interests are so if there is a schedule, they will be able to attend different activities.

- Have a spot where you can meet up (the campfire or at a landmark) I do not suggest troll/gate as it gets very busy.
- Troll/Gate meet up with troll/gate people during a slower period to go over any newcomers that have signed in. Some might remember or not depending on the size of the event. Have newcomer information available at gate; but please ask permission of the person running gate as there may or may not be room for literature.
- Check in with newcomers during the event, answer questions or introduce them to people who can answer their questions.
- Have fun! Remember you will also have duties, activities to attend and all can have fun if we work together.

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND REPORTING** - Yes, you knew this part would be coming, you have just started your position, met great people and now you have to report all this information, and in some cases every month! Hopefully, the requirements and information below will help this be a relatively painless process.

**ADMINISTRATIVE** this is the information you need to make sure the Society Chatelaine's office has in order to accomplish your position.

- Be a paid member of the SCA.
- All Chatelaine/Gold Key positions must have a warrant. Wait, what is a warrant and why do I need one? A warrant is a contract with the SCA that has description of position, length of time or start/end dates. A warrant notifies Kingdom and Society that you are Chatelaine/Gold Key for a particular

(Canton, Barony, or Shire) and how long you will be in that position. Warrants are not required for deputy positions.

- Contact information including; Name, address, phone number, two email addresses (one can be the website email, but a personal email address is needed as well), Face book name, Twitter, Google + (one of these would be appreciated).

**REPORTING** while the SCA is a volunteer organization much has changed over the years. One of the biggest changes has been reporting. Reporting to the Kingdom Chatelaine and the consolidated report to the Society lets the Society Chatelaine understand each Kingdom's particular style, concerns and problems with chatelaine positions, recruitment and retention.

Many Chatelaines have expressed their concerns of not knowing what information to complete and what to tell is going on in their position. To that end The Kingdom of Outlands has produced a form for all to complete. This form and other information can be found at the back of this packet. Also, keep copies of your reports and files (information, ideas, etc.) whether electronic or hard copies.

**REPORTING SCHEDULE** most are finding that reporting and sending a copy (see below) at the same time as their business meeting is the best for their busy schedules. Reporting schedules do change, the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month is really for the Kingdom Chatelaine's to report to Society and that could also change depending on Society rules and requirements.

- o *The Canton Chatelaine sends a report of happenings in the Canton to Canton Seneschal, Baronial Chatelaine & Kingdom Chatelaine.*
- o *The Baronial/Shire Chatelaine sends report of happening in the Greater Barony and the canton(s) to Baronial Chatelaine & Kingdom Chatelaine.*

- *The Kingdom Chatelaine sends report of the whole Kingdom to Society Chatelaine and Kingdom Seneschal.*

As we move more and more into electronic reporting, you are all encouraged to use the new website <http://prototype.outlands.org/>. Look and see the new format and become familiar with the Chatelaine's page .

I wish to encourage us all to start posting in the Outlands Discussion forum <http://prototype.outlands.org/index.php/outlands-forum>.

Eventually, our reporting will be posted on the website for us to review and share ideas in ways to help this Kingdom and the SCA to not only survive, but to thrive.

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE TO THE DREAM***