THE BARONY-MARCHE OF THE DEBATABLE LANDS

AUTOCRAT'S HANDBOOK



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Change Record

Date	Revision Number	SCA Name/Modern Name	Notes
2003	Original Publication, V1	Olyf Moorcroft/Jennifer Stanley	This was the initial publication of this document.
2014	V2	Olyf Moorcroft/Jennifer Stanley	Review and update with new information.
2019	V3	Olyf Moorcroft/Jennifer Stanley	Revised the Budgeting section to accommodate a policy change for events.
2/2023	V4	Olyf Moorcroft/Jennifer Stanley	Major update. Rewrote sections, restructured information, created new resources, and refined existing resources for publication.
11/2023	V4.1	Olyf Moorcroft/Jennifer Stanley	Handed off to Muirgheal/Heather for review and editing. Also requested recommendations for additional editors.
1/2024	V4.2	Casimir Zelený z Strášná skála/Cas Zemba, Brienne The Scorned/Katy Haught, Joel Messerer/Joel Lord	Editing pass.
4/2024	V4.3	Elss von Augsburg/Roxanne Hayeslip, Jean Eric Peasant/Jason McMullan	Editing pass.
10/2026	V4.4	Olyf Moorecroft/Jennifer Stanley	Updated out of date information - removed Aethelmearc Gazette and changed notes about Lutherlyn pricing. Adjusted some graphics for clarity.

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Introduction/Acknowledgements

By definition, an Autocrat is (from dictionary.com):

1. A ruler having unlimited power; a despot.
2. A person with unlimited power or authority: a corporate autocrat.

In the context of the SCA, it may be more accurate to call this person an “event coordinator”, because that is what this person does.

Without those willing to create and execute events, we in The Society for Creative Anachronisms would not have the opportunity to share time, ideas, information, skills, or social interactions in a forum that is not specifically Guild or Administration oriented. Events are absolutely essential to our interactions as Medievalists. This is true whether it be a 25 person mini-schola or a 400 person Coronation.

Many people find the idea of Autocratting quite daunting, and I’m here to tell you that although Autocratting is not necessarily for everyone, it is not complicated or difficult as long as you have the ability to organize. If you can organize, you can run an event. Autocratting at its most basic level is organization and planning.

This handbook is written primarily for someone bidding an event in the Barony-Marche of the Debatable Lands within the Kingdom of Aethelmearc and reflects the experience of people who have lived all over the Known World.

With this fourth edition of this handbook, I want to take the time to thank the original contributors to the first edition back in 2003:

Countess Genevieve du Vent Argent
Baroness Graidhne ni Ruaidh
Mistress Hildarun Hügelman
Mistress Illadore de Bedegrayne
Mistress Karana Yabochi
Baroness Margaret Makfee
THLady Rua MacAodh
Baroness Ts’vee’a bas Tseepora Levi

I’ve updated and restructured the information to reflect current costs, practice, and to use google document functionality to make searching for information easier. Any

sections that were not changed significantly from their original are credited to the original author.

This is by no means the final word on what information you will need to autocrat an event in the BMDL. If you find a section of this handbook lacking, please contact me at dameolyf@members.aethelmearc.org or send a hard copy to: Jennifer Stanley, 3000 Harts Run Road, Allison Park, PA 15101. Please include your Society and Modern names along with contact information in case I have any questions.

In Service to All,



Dame Olyf Moorcroft, OL

Dedication

To my mentors: Master Huen Dambrygge, Mistress Ts'vee'a vas Tseepora Levi, Master Christofano Vecchione, and Baroness Hildarun Hügelman. Without your guidance and leadership I would not be the person that I am today.

To my daughters, Signora Benedicta di Venetia and Frú Vigdis stilling, and my Partner, Drótin Eamonn na Laimhe, whose support, partnership, and love are what makes everything that I do possible.

First Steps: Planning Your Event

What Kind of Event Do You Want to Run?

New Event

Before you even get to budgeting or bidding your event, you need to plan out what kind of event you would like to run.

The kinds of questions that you need to ask yourself are

- What kind of event do I want to run?
- If there was an event that you enjoyed, what was it that made that event enjoyable?
    - Was it the activities?
    - The way it was run?
    - Some interesting aspect (like a scavenger hunt) that made it fun?
- Do I want to run a new event or another version of an older event?
- If I ran the event, what do I want to see as part of this event? Classes?
    - An A&S Display? All-day fighting?

Your answers to these are important to flesh out what your site needs to be like and the kinds of people that you will need onboard to make the event successful.

Established Event

Here is the list of signature and traditional events for the Kingdom of Aethelmearc. Typically these events have someone that runs them each year, however, this does not mean that you can't take on a traditional or signature event for your group. This does need to be handled with some Emotional Intelligence[1] because people can feel proprietary about "their" event. Probably the best way to do this would be to have a conversation with the usual autocrat and let them know that you're interested in autocratting that event in the future.

What you should never do is just bid an event that you know someone else usually runs. While you may be excited about the prospect of running the event, it is very hurtful to someone to be shut out of an event that they may have been running for years. The best way of doing that would be to express an interest and ask if the person would be

[1] Here is a person assessment quiz identifying your Emotional Intelligence.strengths and weaknesses. Take the self-assessment and use it to help you be more successful in interactions that require EI, which is basically everything.

interested in allowing you to run the event eventually. Typically, there is a transition period where you'd be co-autocrat for a year or two before becoming the primary autocrat. Long-standing events with long-standing autocrats take a bit for them to let go. This is a best-case scenario as some long-time autocrats can be fiercely protective of their event and unable to watch someone else run what they see as "their event".

In any case, if you have never autocratted an event in the SCA, most groups require that you have a mentor to walk you through the process of how to run an event. This ensures that you have support throughout the process and someone to make sure that all bases are covered. The recommendation in general is to find someone that you can work with that will talk you through everything so you can run the event and reach the vision that you have for it.

Staffing Your Event

Now that you know what kind of event you'd like to run and an idea of what you'd like to have happen at your event, you need staff. The people that you are "hiring" will then run their departments independently of you but you should be checking in with them regularly to make sure that they have everything that they need to be successful.

The required staff for an official SCA event are the autocrat, registration clerk, and Head Tollner. The Head Tollner and the registration clerk are typically the same person, but that's not a requirement.

You've most likely heard the adage "many hands make light work", and I can honestly say that this is very true in the case of Autocratting. I define "auxiliary staff" as the staff that is not necessarily required to identify at the time that you write up your event bid (the required people are: the Autocrat, Head Cook (Feastocrat), Tollner (Troll), and Reservationist (who can be the same person as the Tollner, in fact, I'd actually recommend it)).

To better define auxiliary staff, some examples of the kinds of people you would engage are: Hall Clean-Up Staff, or Kitchen Clean-Up Staff, a Herald to make announcements throughout the day (so you don't have to run around looking for one when you absolutely have to have one *now*), or any number of supports that are absolutely essential to making your event run smoothly and keeping you from tearing out your hair by the end of the day. There are also the random people who just pitch in to work in the kitchen, or to sweep a bit before they head to the post-revel, or someone who offers to find out

just who has the key to the closet with the toilet paper in it before that last roll in the men's room is about to run out. Without these "many hands", your event would simply not run as smoothly.

Depending on the type of event you are running, the following people may also be good to have. This is a very complete list, do not be daunted, I'm allowing for every eventuality I can come up with in this section. There is no significance to the order they are listed:

- Musician Coordinator (for arranging musicians to play during court)
- Performance Coordinator (liaison between you and your local choir/consort/other)
- Royalty Liaison (someone that is a single point of contact for the Royalty, who also makes sure that the site has all of the necessary rooms/staff/etc. for them at the event – please see the section entitled "Royalty at Events" for more details.)
- Marshal-in-Charge (heavy weapons, fencing, thrown weapons, youth fighting, equestrian activities, and archery all need their own Marshals)
    - For Equestrian, please visit the section on Equestrian Insurance because there are special considerations for the event announcement.
- Minister of the List (for Heavy Weapons)
- Class Coordinator (if you are holding any classes)
- A&S Coordinator (A&S Displays/Competitions or Artisans' Forums)
- Heraldic Consult Table
- Games Coordinator (anywhere from someone to make sure that some board games make it to the event, to someone to coordinate a full-scale competition)
- Merchant Coordinator

I have found that using a program like Trello to keep my staff organized and their information at my fingertips when it comes time to write thank yous has been very valuable to me. If you're more of a 3x5 card or a notebook person, then you should do what works for you. The most important thing is that you have a central space for organizing who you have engaged to do what. This makes contacting people to follow up with them easier and it makes sure that if you have any gaps in your staff, you're aware of them.

Delegation is key. When you have determined your Staff, they can then go off and do their thing and you will just need to check in with them periodically to make sure that all is going smoothly. My recommendation is holding an "all-staff" meeting monthly until two months before the event, then every two weeks until two weeks before the event,

then every week. A useful format is to have each person give a 5-minute status report. This can be done either in-person, virtually, or in a hybrid situation.

Obviously this can and should be modified depending on how things are going. If there are pre-event “challenges”, being more available and touching base more often will help avoid them becoming Event Chaos.

There are several ways to persuade people to help you with these tasks that are mutually beneficial. These things are different for every event, for example:

- To ensure that you have more than one person washing dishes during the entire event, offering either a “comp” (they don’t have to pay anything), or a “site-fee only” charge is a nice way to encourage someone to spend their day getting a steam facial and grease driven under their nails.
- You can offer a discounted entrance fee for people who volunteer to be servers.

There are also other “trade offs” that aren’t expensive and will make things easier for everyone, be creative. However, keep in mind that comps must be included in your Event Bid and added into your break even. Since these things must be determined prior to your event bid, it is important that you talk with your Head Cook so that you know just how much help they will need in the kitchen, and since you know the maximum number of people that can attend a feast, you can plan for the correct number of servers.

I also recommend that you make sure that your Hall Clean-Up Coordinator sits down at some point while clean-up is happening to get everyone who is helping’s name down. Same with your Head Cook and Head Server. Then, send a nice thank you letter, mentioning them all by name, as well as allowing that someone may have been missed, to your local newsletter for their next issue as a way of showing your appreciation.

If you are gracious with people’s help, treat your staff well, and reciprocate when one of them is Autocratting an event (or Staffing an event and need help) you can pretty much guarantee yourself a strong and skilled staff for every event you run and every event that they run. It’s all about reciprocation and well-expressed gratitude.

Bidding Your Event

Local Events

These are the events that most people are familiar with, the locally held and locally financed event. These are things like the Bears Event in Hunter’s Home or the Feast of the Seven Deadly Sins in Delftwood. You will need to check on your Barony or Shire

webpage to see what their requirements are for bidding an event and often there will be an event bid form template available.

Post-Event Retrospective

This is a meeting that you should have with the whole staff about 2-4 weeks after the event to discuss what worked, what didn't work, and what could be improved for the next time. This is not an environment for judgement or finger-pointing. This is an objective assessment of how the event went so that you can improve for the future. This meeting will take at least an hour, so plan accordingly.

The easiest way to structure the meeting is to create a document that can be shared online, or use an online space like Miro, which is a space for visual collaboration. The categories that you can use are:

1. What went well?
2. What needed improvement?
3. Actions?
4. Future ideas

During the meeting, you will share a space or document and then have everyone brainstorm in each category. Give about 7-10 minutes for everyone to do this. Once the time is up, begin clustering similar thoughts and ideas. You can then discuss any action items or ideas for a future version of the same event.

A retrospective is a valuable way to identify areas of improvement that can be generalized and applied to other events. Making sure that this meeting is kept focused on objective improvement is important to having a productive and meaningful experience.

Kingdom Events

Kingdom events are events that are sponsored by and controlled by the Kingdom at large. All Kingdom events, except for Coronation, are listed as part of the Kingdom rotation. These events are paid for by the hosting group, however, the Kingdom will pay for any losses if the event loses money so that the event at least breaks even financially. They are also bid twice - once to the officers for the local group and again to the Kingdom Officers for their review. You will need to check the Kingdom Website.

Relevant Links:

Appendix A: Suggested Events

Online Event Planning Resources
Signature and Traditional Events

Reservations and Head Tollner

(Edited from the original content written by Baroness Hildarun Hügelman, OP)

What follows is an explanation of the duties of your Reservations Clerk and Head Troll of your event. Please keep in mind that there are many ways to perform these functions. This is only one way, but it is a common and (I hope) relatively organized way. As an autocrat, your main responsibility is to *choose your staff wisely*. The positions of reservations clerk and Tollner should be held by someone who is at least marginally organized and pretty detail oriented. If you don't have a good idea of who to contact, start with your local exchequer and see if they are available or if they have a recommendation. The reservations clerk and head tollner need not be the same person, but should you have different people for the two positions, they should be in close communication immediately before the event at least.

Some notes to keep in mind

- Whatever is said here should not override any Society, Kingdom, or Baronial Law. Where there are inconsistencies between this writing and current Law, you should always follow the Law.
- Sometimes the Reservations Clerk and the Head Tollner are the same person. Sometimes (especially for small events) the Reservations Clerk and the Autocrat are the same person. The Autocrat and the Head Tollner should NOT be the same person because the autocrat should be free to deal with problems that may arise during the day or weekend.
- Our society is a game based on chivalry and courtesy and a wonderful dream that you are helping to bring to life. It is, however, a game that really does exist in the real world. Reservations Clerk and Head Tollner are going to be dealing with people's real money, and the problems and responsibilities that working with money entails.

Reservations Clerk

When people pay money for an event, usually the autocrat allows them to pre-register. This means they have an option to pay in advance instead of at the door. Someone accepts money (usually cash and checks) through the mail and in person before the event, and takes down the names of the people pre-reserving and the amounts they pay.

The Clerk should

- Keep a record of the names of the people who are coming (SCA and mundane, or mundane only),
- Keep a record of how much they have paid and in what category (i.e.: on-board adult, out- board child, etc), including those people who are coming for free (i.e.: royalty or babies),
- Make sure the Head Tollner have all these records before the event opens, and
- Periodically give funds collected (checks and/or cash) to the Exchequer, who will deposit said funds into the Baronial bank account. This is important because when someone writes you a check, it is rude to hold it for months and months, making it annoying or difficult for the check-writer to balance their checkbook.

<u>The Autocrat should</u>

- Decide (with the Clerk) whether to have attendees fill out a form with registration information,with payment will only be taken at the event. Or if they will run pre-registration as has historically been done where you request pre-registrations be mailed to the reservations clerk and paid by check with the option to just arrive and pay on-site.
- Make sure the correct pricing information is published in newsletters and on-line (including whether the price goes up after a certain date, clear age and food price categories, and whether the Non-member Surcharge may be included with the reservation),
- Make sure correct contact information is published in newsletters and on-line (DO NOT publish email addresses or phone numbers of your staff unless they give you express permission!), and
- Keep all lines of communication open among the autocrat, cook(s), Exchequer, and Troll.

> ***Notes: It does not matter HOW the records are kept, as long as it is clear, logical, and easily decipherable by anyone looking at them. I prefer to use a spreadsheet (like Excel) since it is easy to alphabetize names and otherwise sort information. Some people put names on separate index cards. This is very organized, but it can slow down your Troll, and it makes it much harder for the Exchequer to put together an event report. I have also found the best way to organize the list of people pre-registered is by mundane last name. Everyone has one and knows what it is and how to spell it, which is not always the case with an SCA name. Plus a mundane name is usually required for the event report.***

<u>Variations</u>

- Sometimes you cannot pre-register for an event and all fees are collected at the door (in which case you do not need Reservations Clerk).
- Sometimes there is a discount in the event fee if you pre-register, and prices go up if you pay at the door.
- You could also make it a requirement that people or a subset of people (like merchants) pre- register, and no fees are collected at the door.
- If you are running an event where people do not have to pay, you could have a person whose job it is to collect donations, or someone who is keeping track of who is bringing what to the potluck. There are many possibilities, but the bottom line is that either you have someone keeping track of who is coming, or you don't.

Head Tollner

The Head Tollner is the person in charge of checking people into an event. The Head Tollner will organize other people to sit at the check-in table (Either Tollner's Table or "Troll") and check people in. As of this writing, there must always be two people sitting at the check-in table while it is open, and they may not live in the same household, be family members or significant others. This is because the people working Troll are dealing with other people's money. Please educate yourself as to the specific Laws pertaining to checking people into events and taking payments that exist during your time.

The Head Tollner should

- Make sure all the people working at the check-in table (including themselves) do the following:
    - Keep a careful record of the names of not pre-registered people who check in (SCA and mundane, or mundane only),
    - Keep a careful record of how much not pre-registered people have paid and in what category (i.e.: on-board adult, out-board child, etc), including those people who are coming for free (i.e.: royalty or babies),
    - Check off the names of the pre-registered people who come in,
    - Check proof of membership of everyone who comes to the event,
    - Collect the Non-member Surcharge from people who are not members of the SCA,
    - Make sure all non-members, people with white membership cards and parents with children sign waivers (some sites require that ALL people who enter must sign a waiver, regardless of membership),

- Count the cash you have collected every single time you change shifts (i.e.: when one or both people working at troll leave and have someone else take over their place),
- Hand out site pamphlets and tokens as necessary,
- Keep a feast space waiting list as necessary,
- Sell said feast spaces at the designated time (see below),
- Keep a careful count of how many people have paid for on and off-board spaces for the cooks, and
- Give the money (cash and checks) and records to the Exchequer or Autocrat at the end of the event so that they may make the event report.

<u>The Autocrat should</u>

- NOT overload the check-in table with complicated site pamphlets and tokens to hand out (PLEASE do not expect the people working at the check-in to collate or fold or otherwise put together pamphlets or site tokens. The duty of the Tollner staff is to collect money and keep records for you. If you need something to be assembled, find some bored-looking people to do it),
- Decide when the check-in table should open and close,
- If necessary, send a herald around to make sure everyone has checked in (this may not be possible at very large events),
- Decide when to sell feast spaces of people that have paid but not shown up to people who may be on the feast waiting list. This should be done as part of closing duties for troll to ensure that people have the maximum amount of time to arrive and check in.
- Be able to tell the Head Cook how many people have paid for feast if they ask,
- Solve any problems that may arise, and
- Make sure the Head Tollner has enough change and adult and children's waivers. It does not matter who provides these things, but the Autocrat must make sure some sort of arrangement is made so that Head Tollner has them.
    - Please check with the Head Tollner first as there may be arrangements already made for having a starting amount of change in the Tollner's money box.

<u>Important Notes</u>

- Make sure you have plenty of one-dollar bills and quarters if you need them. Depending on the size of the event and the event fees, Troll should be equipped with at least $50 in ones, unless the site fees are multiples of five. If you are expecting more than 100 people, or the site fees will engender giving lots of ones as change, Troll should have at least $100 or more in ones. Use common sense. Expect that most people will pay with twenties and estimate how many people

will come. Plan your change accordingly. It is better to have too much change than not enough.

- **NEVER, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, LEAVE MONEY UNATTENDED!**
- If you have a lot of cash, you may wish to give some of it to the Exchequer in the middle of the day.
    - Arrange this with the Exchequer in advance so that they are aware that they will be holding onto a large amount of money that day as they will need to make plans to keep that money safe while remaining at the event, or making plans to take the money directly to the bank for deposit.
- At events where feast space is limited, you may sell out of feast space.
    - For example, say there are 100 feast spaces, and 30 people are pre-registered on-board. That means you can sell 70 feast spaces. Be sure to include children and babies that will need seats in that number! Be clear about whether people sitting at the High Table are included in that number. The 71st person and subsequent people who want to eat at feast may be put on a waiting list. That person will pay the off-board price and come back later and pay the rest if a feast space is available. You can tell people to come back at a specific time and check, or you may send someone to find them if space becomes available.
- Feast space may become available if someone who is pre-registered for Feast does not show up, or decides to leave, or if the cook and autocrat decide to allow another table.
- REFUNDS MAY NOT BE GIVEN OUT AT THE CHECK-IN TABLE. If someone requests a refund, for any reason, the matter must be taken up directly with the Exchequer. Have the Head Tollner take the person's name, number and the reason for the request, and have the Exchequer contact them.

Above everything, remember to have FUN! Responsibly.

Related Documentation

Troll Cash Count & Balance Sheet: Microsoft Excel or PDF

Autocrat's Event Report Form: Microsoft Excel (with formulas) or (without formulas)

Finding the Right Site for Your Event

When you are building your event bid, one of the first things you will need to determine is where you will hold your event. The site is very much activity-dependent, as well as money-dependent. In the Barony Marche of the Debatable Lands, at the time of this writing, there are some sites that have become frequently used due to their accessibility, cost effectiveness, and convenience. However, this does not mean that you can not use new locations that are better suited to your comfortability level (perhaps it's your church or school that you've found will rent to you) or to the event that you're having.

You must consider the kind of event you are having, and the time of year that you're having it. There are special needs for events that involve heavy-weapons fighting, fencing, thrown weapons, archery, hound coursing, equestrian activities, classes, and Royalty. Each of these things requires extra rooms (if there is no outdoor space) or outdoor space (with potential for indoor space if the weather doesn't cooperate). There are also requirements that Heavy Weapons Fighting and Fencing have as to how large of a space they will require. Talk with your local Marshall to get this information so that you are sure that you choose a site that will accommodate the activities you would like to have.

Overall, finding a site is a very "form follows function" activity. In **Appendix D** of this handbook, there is information on some of our more frequently used sites, including contact information.

Insurance

Proof of Insurance

Some sites will require that you either provide proof of insurance coverage up to a certain amount (usually $1,000,000). There is a proof of insurance document that you can get from the Seneschal that shows this coverage. If the amount requested exceeds one million dollars, you will need to contact the offices of SCA, Inc. to see what can be done.

Insurance Certificate

This can also be referred to as "special insurance", "limited liability insurance", or "additional insured".

This must be ordered from SCA, Inc and costs $50, as long as the request is received by the SCA, Inc office 30 days before it's due to the site. This is not the same as 30 days before the event. If you need it in less than 30 days, you will pay a penalty of $175. There have been instances where the late fee was waived, but you will need to contact

the SCA, Inc. corporate office to see if your circumstance warrants the cost being waived. You will also receive additional instructions for what kind of paperwork the corporate office will require in order to have that charge reduced back to $50. My recommendation is that you send in your request for additional insurance shortly after you pay the deposit to make sure that you don't end up scrambling at the last minute.

If you are requesting this kind of insurance, your $50 payment must come with the request. If you (or your exchequer) is sending the payment via physical check, you will need to print out the paper form and fill it out, and then you send both things to the corporate office (SCA, Inc., P.O. Box 611928, San Jose, CA 95161). If you are paying by credit or debit card, you can send that information in the email that you send to the corporate office. You will need to provide the following information to have your credit/debit card charged:

- Name on the Card
- Card Billing Address (either the company that issued the card or your bank's name/address)
- The cardholder's email address and daytime phone number
- Credit/Debit Card Number
- Expiration Date
- CVV (three digit code on the back of the card)

You also have the option to pay via PayPal, which means that you can still send the request via email and then the request that you be able to pay using PayPal. If you are approved to pay via PayPal, you will be given specific directions on how to proceed.

There are also instructions for sending in information via FAX on the PDF for submitting the request for additional insurance.

Equestrian Insurance
Equestrian insurance is slightly different from site insurance and has to be requested/submitted separately from additional insured or "special insurance".

If you are going to have an Equestrian themed event or equestrian activities at your event, you will need to request Equestrian Insurance. Speak with your local Equestrian marshal to see if they already have their insurance done for practices as Equestrian Insurance is unique in that you can list a series of dates to cover practices for a specific period of time. If it has not been submitted for that season, you can ask that the date of your event be included in the dates on the insurance form. Otherwise, work with your

Equestrian marshal to be sure that you are able to add your date to the Equestrian insurance with minimal fuss.

When you write up the event announcement, you need to include the following:

- Name of the Equestrian Marshal in Charge (MIC)
- Contact information for the Equestrian MIC
- Anything required for participation by the site (ie: Trailering rules, whether coggins, rabies, or health certs are required by the site).

SCA, Inc may not require equestrian documents like the above, only the site.

Your Head Cook and You

Selecting your Head Cook is part of the planning process and your selection of a cook should follow the general theme of the event. Different cooks have different skills and areas of study, but this does not mean that you can't ask someone that you know who is really interested in Early Middle Ages food to cook a 14th Century French feast, they may be really excited about learning about and making food from another time/place than their area of specialty.

The most important thing is that you can work smoothly with your Head Cook. There is a balance to the relationship between the Autocrat and the Head Cook that echos that of front-of-house/back-of-house in a restaurant. The Autocrat is the public-facing person that handles the customer service piece while the cook can focus on the creation of the food. The Autocrat has to trust the Head Cook's judgment in all things as the Cook will be spending quite a lot of money and making decisions that will affect everyone at the event.

Some questions that your Head Cook will need to answer for you while you are creating the event bid are:

1. How much per person is needed for lunch?
2. How much per person is needed for feast?
3. Will you be cooking both the Feast and the Lunch, or will someone else be handling Lunch with your supervision?
4. Are there any comp spaces for Feast?
5. What is your cap for Feast?
    a. Some Head Cooks prefer not to cap their Feasts, however, I've found that establishing a specific number for Feast slots helps control costs better. Lunch is always going to be either too much food or not enough food as the number of pre-registrations is never going to fully reflect the total number the day of the event. There is a level of financial loss that comes as a normal part of providing lunches as part of the overall day's fee.
6. Would you like to see the kitchen before the event?
7. Will you be providing drinks for the hall during the day, or only at lunch/feast?
8. Will you need additional funds for cleaning supplies for the kitchen?

If you know that your Head Cook has never cooked a feast in the Barony before, they will need a mentor to guide them through the process. Often the mentor is only there to troubleshoot and make sure that the Head Cook is aware of the policies surrounding being a Head Cook. You will need to include the name of the mentor on your event bid (there's a space for that).

When discussing your timeline before the event, be clear as to when you need a published menu for the event. Typically, this would be two months out from the event at minimum. Further out is better. The menu is one of the factors that people use to decide whether or not to attend an event so you want to make sure that it's published far out enough in advance that people can make travel/lodging plans before the event without having to pay more for those things.

In the time leading up to the event, stay in touch with your Head Cook to make sure that things are going well and that they don't need you to clear any obstacles for them.

Expediters and Head Server

Expediter

This is someone that is outside of the kitchen staff who will be your liaison between the kitchen staff and either the head server or wherever food is being staged for "one-per-table" service. This must be coordinated with the Head Cook and if the Head Cook has someone that they prefer to do this, let them identify who will be helping them. Since this directly affects kitchen service, they need to be included in the decision to even have an expediter and get final say.

They will need a copy of the menu that has been marked with how many servings there are (ex: If you are providing one loaf of bread, one butter, and one honey butter per table to 10 tables, the expediter will make sure that you have exactly that number and content of servings).

Their job is to help make sure that the food goes out efficiently and correctly so that the kitchen staff can focus on producing food, cleaning up the kitchen, or setting things up for the next course.

Head Server

Hiring

Engaging a Head Server is another position that you need to directly coordinate with your Head Cook as they are a liaison between the kitchen staff and the guests. The role of Head Server is the same as Maître d'hôtel in an upscale restaurant. They are responsible for coordinating the kitchen staff (or expediter, if there is one) and making sure that the feast hall is ready for everyone to arrive. When people arrive for feast, they will help with any requests made by the guests (ex: moving chairs/tables to improve

accessibility). While it's not necessarily part of the core job description, it would be helpful if your Head Cook is comfortable heralding each course as it comes out as it adds to a sense of occasion[2].

The most important thing to look for when hiring someone is that your candidate has excellent organization and people skills. They will need to coordinate volunteers to help serve tables and coordinate with either the Head Cook or the Expediter for service. Ideally, these volunteers will be coordinated before the event, rather than hoping that people will volunteer the day of the event.

One way to help the Head Server recruit is to comp dinner for the Head Server and other servers as they will not be able to enjoy the feast as a guest. Make sure to ask the Head Cook to hold some food for them in the kitchen so they can eat after they're done serving.

Once you hire a Head Server, you and the Head Cook will need to provide the following information before the event:

1. What are the names of the dishes and which are in each course.
2. Are there any known vegetarians/allergic people eating feast? Where are they sitting?
3. How many tables need to be set up? How many people per table?
4. Are there going to be special dishes and/or serving platters for High Table?
5. How many and what kind of serving dishes are being requested from the larder?
6. Will there be an expediter the day of the event or will they be working directly with the Head Cook?
7. Will server meals be comped or provided at a reduced price?
8. Will the seating be assigned, or will sign ups happen the day of the event?
9. Are there enough serving dishes for each course, or will they need to be washed and re-used during service?

Before the Event

Recruit servers for the event, assuming one server per table. You can work with fewer, however, if you can avoid that, it will make the guest experience better.

At the Event

Make sure that all of your servers were able to make it to the event. If you have some gaps, you can recruit people at the event, however, this can be more tricky as choosing from people that are already signed up for feast means that they will not be able to

[2] You can also ask one of the servers to do this as well.

enjoy the feast as a guest. If available you may consider offering someone signed up for feast a comped meal explaining that they will not be able to join their table as they originally expected. The Tollner can reimburse the feast fee, however, that will have to be mailed to them as a check after the event.

Create a space where your servers can sit and eat that is separate from the feast, but still in the hall (if possible). Otherwise, there should be space made in the kitchen where the serving staff can eat without being in the way of the kitchen staff. This needs to be discussed with the Head Cook to ensure that they will definitely be out of the way.

One Hour Before Feast

- Check the serving dishes to ensure that they are clean and ready to be used.
- Count the number of dishes and if they need to be washed and re-used during service, talk with the Head Cook to confirm that you understand which dishes and when they are to be washed/re-used.
- Confirm how each dish will be plated (which lets you know what needs to go on the tables during service)
- Begin setting the feast hall up with the appropriate number of tables and chairs.
- Connect with the Royalty Liasion or the Royal Chamberlain so they know which table the Royalty will be sitting at and how many seats there will be available for them to invite people to sit with them.

Thirty Minutes Before Feast

- Gather your servers together and review the order of service, explain how many serving dishes they are allowed to carry, if there is a need for them to collect/return certain serving dishes during the service, and any other information that they may need to be successful.
- Select two servers for High Table who will be responsible for keeping an eye on the guests there to ensure that their cups are always full and that they are enjoying their meal. These servers would also be responsible to ensure that any dietary restrictions/preferences are being delivered to the correct people at High Table.
- Make sure that any pre-sets that are supposed to be on the tables are on the tables.
- Fill pitchers with water and/or whatever drink they are serving with feast and set those on the tables.

During the Feast

You or your designated herald will announce the course.
High Table is served first.

Then other tables are served.
The servers should then check to make sure that each table has water/other beverages throughout the feast.
If serving items are to be re-used during the feast, the servers will collect those and bring them to the dishwasher to be cleaned.
It would be helpful to the kitchen staff to have the servers dry those dishes and return them to the kitchen to be filled.
Servers should also patrol the tables to remove any serving dishes that are empty and return them to the kitchen to be washed. This keeps the tables clear and allows the dishwasher to catch up on dishes, which shortens how long it takes to clean and pack the kitchen.

Serving High Table
Countess Genevieve du vent Argent, OL, OP

Usually, depending on the nature of the event (large or small, local or Kingdom-level), you will need to provide a "High Table" or "Head Table". This is the table where the Royalty (King & Queen, Prince & Princess) or Baron & Baroness or other ranking nobles of the Kingdom (or important visitors or their other guests) will sit. It should be able to seat anywhere between 6-12 people, usually at the front of the hall, with space for everyone to sit on one side, facing the rest of the tables (as though they were on a stage). This is usually achieved by putting two tables end-to-end to make one long table.

The High Table serves as a "place of honor", and feast cooks will often add some extra dishes or special dishes or subtleties (special, decorated dishes) to be served to the High Table. If the event is a local Baronial event, then the Baron & Baroness will usually choose who sits at High Table, and if it is a Kingdom-level event, then the King & Queen or Prince & Princess will choose who sits there.

Out of courtesy, these parties will usually invite each other to sit at their High Table. Usually this table is specially decorated with nice tablecloths, some candlesticks, and maybe some other nice things such as salt cellars or nice water pitchers. The royalty may have their own table decorations or may be traveling "light" and only bring their feast gear. Some royalty have their own people decorate the table as well as set out their feast gear, others may just have people set out their feast gear for them. If you have a royalty liaison for your event, they can find some of this out ahead of time, and can be put in charge of coordinating this activity (or delegating it to someone else) for the day. If you have a head server, this can be delegated to them.

Who should serve the High Table? Many people feel that it is an honor to serve the High Table. People of high rank or peers of the realm may volunteer for this duty. The Baron & Baroness may sometimes feel that it is important to serve the High Table themselves, especially if it is a Kingdom event, or they may wish to participate in the serving process in some way, since they are serving as the "hosts" for the event being held in their Barony, and the royalty are their guests. (It is a good idea to ask the Baron & Baroness ahead of time what their thoughts are on this subject, and find out how they would prefer it to be handled at your event.)

It is a good idea to have at least two servers specifically assigned to serve the High Table and nothing else. This way they can focus their entire attention on making sure that the people at the High Table have everything they need. It is important that at least one of the pair of servers has had prior experience at serving High Table, or that they be one of the older members of the group. If there are two very new people who really want to serve High Table, assign an extra experienced person to work with them, even if only the new people take the dishes up to the table itself.

Important Considerations

- Since the High Table is the "place of honor", dishes for each course should be delivered to the High Table first, before delivering to the other tables.
- Make sure that water pitchers and those of other beverages are replenished regularly.
- Make sure that dishes of food are cleared from the table regularly, such as between courses, but ask the head of the table if everyone is done with a certain dish before removing it.
- Pay attention to whether the serving spoons in the dishes were provided by the kitchen, or whether they belong to someone sitting at the High Table. (I have lost more serving spoons while sitting at High Table than I care to recall!) It is a nice idea for the kitchen to provide serving spoons with each dish going to High Table, but this doesn't always happen.
- Pay attention to what is going on at the High Table. If someone is speaking with Their Majesties or Their Highnesses or Their Excellencies, do not interrupt them, but wait until the conversation is finished before serving food. If the conversation is taking a long time, the servers should stand at attention, at the back of the hall, and the head server should send an old, experienced person up to High Table to quietly inquire if it would be alright to serve the next course. This will subtly get things moving.
- Do not interrupt someone who isgiving a toast; wait until the cries of "Vivat" are finished, then serve.

- Do not interrupt entertainment by serving a course, wait until the performance is done. It is alright to quietly clear away serving dishes or to replenish water pitchers, as long as it does not draw too much attention away from the entertainment. Use your best judgment.
- Subtleties (special, often elaborately decorated dishes) are usually served towards the end of a feast, and are announced with some fanfare. The subtlety is usually presented to the High Table for their approval first, and then sometimes paraded about the feast hall so everyone can see it before it is placed on a sideboard to be cut up and served, or placed on the High Table itself. (This depends on the nature and size of the subtlety and how the dessert course is being handled, whether it is a served dessert or a sideboard for after a feast.)
- After the feast is over, it is also nice (though not necessary) to have someone designated to wash the royalty's dishes, or to allow the royalty's retainers access to the kitchen to wash their dishes.

"One From Each Table" Serving: Some feasts do not have people who are designated to serve food. These are usually at smaller events, and are more informal feasts, where the feasters will be asked to have one person from each table to come up and pick up the food from the kitchen for the people at their table. If there is a High Table with the Royalty or Baron & Baroness sitting there, someone (or two people) should be specifically designated to serve the High Table (the High Table should not be expected to ask one person sitting there to fetch the food).

The main thing is that you want the royalty to feel welcome, and for them to enjoy your event. You also want to make the Barony look good by providing hospitality.

Marketing Your Event

Event Announcements

Event announcements serve the purpose of letting people know when and where the event is and to entice them to attend. There are also requirements for what information is required to include for it to be an official SCA event as well as where you need to publish the event information.

Know the Rules

When writing an event announcement, there are specific requirements for content in order to be an official SCA event. An official event is where official business, such as courts (Baronial, Kingdom, or Principality) or changes in office, may be done.

All event descriptions must have

1. Date
2. Time of the event (when the site opens and closes)
3. Name of the sponsoring group (if the group is incipient, the sponsor must be listed as well)
4. Name, street address, city and zip code of the site (if there is no street number, this must be stated clearly)
5. Name, both SCA and modern, address and phone number of the autocrat. If there is a separate reservations clerk, include the reservation clerk's complete information as well.
6. Statement: "Make checks payable to SCA (state), Inc - " and the cost of the event if there is a fee

The Aestel has a word limit of 500 words for the event announcement, and you are required to provide the information above for the announcement to appear in the Aestel, however, you can provide a longer event announcement on the Aethelmearc website. There are separate boxes on the event form for this purpose.

What's Your Hook?

A hook, in this context, is your one to two sentence declaration to engage your reader. This sets the tone for the event and is where you need to get the reader excited about attending the event. Here are some examples of hooks used for other events:

> "Come celebrate the child in us all at the Barony Marche of the Debatable Lands' Fest of St Nicholas."

> “Do you have all of the skills you need to be a Knight? Are you sure? Find out at the Master’s Tourney at Mill Creek!”

As you can see in those examples, they are using either an engaging description (“celebrate the child in us all”) or a call to action (“do you have all of the skills you need to be a Knight?”). You can use a quote, or any other means by which to really catch people’s attention. It’s a way to grab attention from the first sentence.

Organize Your Announcement
Most event announcements can be written in 5 paragraphs. I have underlined where the required elements would appear for ease of scanning:

Paragraph 1: Basic event information. This paragraph should include the hook, the date of the event, the event name, sponsoring group name, street address of the site (Name, street address, city and zip code of the site (if there is no street number, this must be stated clearly)), and the name, both SCA and modern, address and phone number of the autocrat.

Paragraph 2: Activities. This paragraph tells people why they should come to your event.

Paragraph 3: Site Policies. Make sure people know the restrictions and freedoms of the site.

Paragraph 4: Food. Everyone's got to eat, so let them know what to expect foodwise. Also let them know who to contact if they need to know whether they can eat the feast.

Paragraph 5: Reservations. The reservation clerk’s complete information (name, both SCA and modern, address and phone number). If the flow of your first paragraph wasn’t conducive to inserting the autocrat’s name and information, you can do that here. You will need to list out the fee structure and include the statement “Make checks payable to SCA (state), Inc - “ after the fee structure.

Read your event announcement out loud. Often that will let you know where you have some clumsy wording or if you need to clean up a sentence so it’s more understandable. Run through the content to make sure that you’ve hit all of the required parts of your event announcement.

Now, check it again. Is your announcement clear? Is the grammar correct? Does the information flow well and is it presented in an interesting manner? This is important, since clarity and flow of information is what keeps people reading.

When you've checked your announcement twice, have someone else check it. A second pair of eyes will catch things you missed and notice errors that weren't apparent to you.

Submitting Your Event Announcement
Once your announcement is written, complete, and double-checked, it's time to submit it. Such an announcement will generate interest in your event and help give it the success it deserves.

VIDEO: Filling out the Kingdom Event Form at aethelmearc.org

VIDEO: Updating your event information using the Update Event Form at aethelmearc.org

You will need to send a copy of your event announcement to the Debatable Lands Chronicler and to the Debatable Lands Webminister. The Chronicler will include it in the Althingand the Webminister will create a page for you on Debatablelands.org. You can also ask the Webminister to include it on Storfrettir, which repeats to the baronial email list and official Facebook page.

You will need to contact the Baronial Social Media Deputy to request that they create an official event on Facebook for you. Events are required to be part of the official Facebook group. You will be made a moderator on the event so you may change/update it as needed.

Creating a Marketing Plan
Now that we have multiple platforms where people get their information about events, you need a plan for how you're going to use each platform to advertise your event. Each platform has a slightly different strategy that needs to be employed to make sure that you are delivering signal and not noise.

Identify Your Channels
A channel is a platform on which you will be sending out information. Currently (as of 2023), there are eight major channels available to us in the Debatable Lands:

- The Aestel (Kingdom Newsletter)
- The Althing (Local Newsletter)
- Storfrettir (Local Blog)
- The Aethelmearc Gazette (associated publication)
- Kingdom of Aethelmearc Facebook Group
- Barony-Marche of the Debatable Lands Facebook Group
- Kingdom Announce Email List
- Barony-Marche of the Debatable Lands Email List

The table below divides out each channel, shows the best means of communication (visual or text), and offers advice and information about how to approach each channel:

Channel	Visual	Text	Notes
The Aestel		X	You submit your announcement to them when you use the form on the website to get your event on the calendar.
The Althing		X	You need to contact the Chronicler with your event announcement to have it published there. See “Submitting Your Event Announcement”
Storfrettir		X	Ask the Webminister to put the event announcement on Storfrettir.
Kingdom of Aethelmearc Facebook Group	X		Graphics are prioritized by the algorithm so you will want to have a nice graphic to go with a shortened version of your event announcement.
Barony-Marche of the Debatable Lands Facebook Group	X		Graphics are prioritized by the algorithm so you will want to have a nice graphic to go with a shortened version of your event announcement.
Kingdom Announce Email List		X	You can post your event announcement wholesale to this channel. You can even set up delayed emails if your email provider allows that so you don’t

			have to manually send them each time.
Barony-Marche of the Debatable Lands Email List		X	You can post a longer event announcement to this channel. You can even set up delayed emails if your email provider allows that so you don't have to manually send them each time.

To create professional-looking graphics, my recommendation is to create a Canva account. There are numerous templates and a good selection of appropriate graphics for our use. There is a free tier that gives you access to quite a lot and is a valuable resource for quickly creating graphics on the fly, especially if you have no experience designing graphics.

Branding Your Event

You will want to create some visuals that connect people instantly with your event using visual cues. This will make it memorable and increase your chances of success. To get started, think about the purpose of the event, who your target audience is, and the message you want to convey. This will help establish a unique personality for your event, which you can then use to design a logo and choose a color scheme that aligns with your brand.

When designing your logo, ensure it's simple and easy to remember. The colors you choose should complement your logo and represent the mood of your event. Consistency is key, so ensure your branding is the same across all channels.

Social media is a powerful tool to promote your event and increase its visibility. Once you've covered the step of contacting the Baronial Social Media liaison and having them create a facebook event, you can use the event page to provide regular updates and announcements, generating excitement and buzz around your event.

Branding your event involves defining its personality, designing a logo and color scheme, and maintaining consistency throughout your promotional materials. Leverage social media to increase your reach and generate excitement.

Example of a Successful Branding of an Event

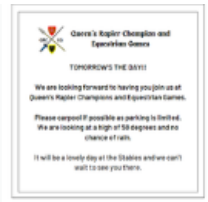
Queen's Rapier Championship and Equestrian Games

Introduction

I wanted to create a logo that would easily identify the event and differentiate it from the other events happening around the same time. This was particularly important as I was running another event three weeks previous to this one and needed it to be visually separate from the other event.



Logo


Event Announcements



Event Signage



Lunch Ticket

My goal was to create something visually clean, continuing symbols of both fencing and equestrian using pre-packaged elements in Canva. Unfortunately, the lances (to symbolize the equestrians) and the available fencing swords were not visually compatible. I elected to use a katana as it was easier to visually identify as a sword. I added elements that made sense, like the arms for the Barony and Kingdom and then added the letters to balance everything.

I don't have a record of my iterative process as I moved elements around until the logo "felt" right visually and would be a reasonable representation of the event.

Lessons learned and future considerations

The logo was successful in that it was well understood and easily identified by everyone that it was the logo for this event. When a couple of people wanted to send out announcements related to the event, they ended up asking for a file of the logo or taking a screen capture of the logo to include with their announcements. In the case of the latter, I didn't know that they had made the association and used the logo until the announcements were posted.

The logo could only be used on Facebook as often people who only receive the Kingdom email list, don't have the ability to see visuals on their devices, so I only used text announcements there. On Facebook, I developed a template for announcements that included the logo for consistency.

The logo became associated with the event easily. The feedback that I got was that it made things seem very polished and “fancy”. The branding clearly identified the event and provided a visual cue for people, just as intended.

Royalty at Events

By Countess Genevieve du Vent Argent

The Royalty (King and Queen and/or Prince and Princess) typically have a Chamberlain or head retainer or some other person serving them in an administrative capacity. This person coordinates the schedule and serves as their primary contact. This person may be the one to contact the autocrat (or sometimes the Baron and Baroness), to let them know that the royalty are planning to attend the event. Most of the time, however, you will find out when they are added to the event announcement on Facebook or the Kingdom website. It helps to reach out to the contact person for the Royalty proactively if you see that they will be attending your event. That information will be available on their websites, which are usually linked from the front page of https://www.aethelmearc.org.

It would be of benefit for you to have a Royalty Liaison, a specific person to work with the Chamberlain not only for pre-event activities (like adding them to the comp list, providing lunch at no charge, etc) but for the day of the event. This person needs to have some level of comfort with communicating with the Chamberlain and the Royalty. If your event is very large or if you are uncomfortable or would prefer to have someone else contact the royalty, you could appoint a "royalty liaison" for your event. This person should be one of the older, more experienced members of the group, who might even already know the royalty or their chamberlain/head retainer. (If this is a Kingdom event, you might want to ask your Baron and Baroness for their advice on whom to select for this responsibility.)

The royalty liaison should ask the contact person what the royalty will need for the event, including food preferences and allergies. Typical things that are needed may include: a "royalty room", a place to hold court, a "High Table" at feast, people to serve as retainers. The idea is to show your group's generosity by providing hospitality to the royalty; however, don't promise more than your group can deliver.

Royalty Room

Usually a small room (or other private space, like a tent or pavilion), where the royalty can change clothes and leave their belongings. They may also need space to sign scrolls (if they are holding court at the event), or a place to meet with people privately. They may also just need a place to relax or "hide out" for a few minutes to take a break

during the day. The amount and type of space you should provide will depend on the nature of the event. If it is a big Kingdom event, such as Coronation, Crown Tourney, or Kingdom Twelfth Night, you should try to provide a larger room (such as a classroom or conference room, or a large pavilion if no room is available), so that the royalty have the space to do everything listed above. If it is a smaller event, they may just need a private place to change clothes and leave their belongings in a secure location, so a smaller room will do.

Court

Ask the contact person whether or not the royalty will have a head retainer traveling with them or attending the event. If so, this person usually will coordinate the court setup at the event and the retainers needed to serve during court. You should contact this person (ahead of time if possible) to see what sort of space is needed for court. In general, you should have an auditorium or a room where the thrones can be set up and chairs can be set up auditorium-style (in rows, facing the thrones, with an aisle down the center). Find out if the site allows banners to be hung on the walls or if a banner stand will be needed. Court could also be held outside; if so, it is nice to have some sort of sunshade for at least the royalty. If there is a large outdoor picnic pavilion where everyone can sit in the shade, even better. The royalty usually have a herald already arranged (usually the Kingdom herald or Baronial herald if it is a Baronial court), but if not they may ask if the local herald is available to serve. The royalty will work out their court business with their herald; the autocrat does not need to get involved. If there are announcements to be made, such as winners of competitions or other event-related announcements, this information should be given to the person collecting business for the royalty's court (usually their herald).

High Table

There is another section in this book talking about how to serve High Table. Usually, depending on the nature of the event (large or small, local or Kingdom-level), you will need to provide a High Table. It should sit anywhere between 6-12 people, usually at the front of the hall, with space for everyone to sit on one side, facing the rest of the tables (as though they were on a stage); usually this would be two tables put end-to-end. If it is a local event, the Baron and Baroness will choose who sits at High Table, and if it is a Kingdom-level event, then the King and Queen or Prince and Princess will choose who sits there. Out of courtesy, these parties will usually invite each other to sit at their High Table. Usually this table is specially decorated with nice tablecloths, some candlesticks, and maybe some other nice things such as salt cellars or nice water pitchers. The royalty may have their own table decorations or may be traveling "light" and only bring their feast gear. Some royalty have their own people decorate the table as well as set out their feast gear, others may just have people set

out their feast gear for them. If you have a royalty liaison for your event, they can find some of this out ahead of time, and can be put in charge of coordinating this activity (or delegating it) for the day. It is also nice (though not necessary) to have someone designated to wash the royalty's dishes, or to allow the royalty's retainers access to the kitchen to wash their dishes.

Food for High Table

Feast cooks will often add some extra dishes or special dishes or subtleties to serve at the High Table. Sometimes the cooks worry about having enough food to serve the High Table, so they may ask how many chairs will be at the High Table. It is often the case that those sitting at High Table will often not eat everything set in front of them (sometimes out of exhaustion from a busy day or because of the excitement of the day), so unless you know ahead of time that there will be more than 12 people up there, don't worry, just tell the cooks to plan for a regular table of 8 or so people, and to just add a couple of special dishes. The servers can always bring up more food if it is needed (based on what is not eaten at other tables). The most important thing to find out ahead of time is whether or not the royalty have any food allergies or other dietary concerns, since the cooks may need to prepare special dishes. The royalty liaison should ask about this ahead of time, and make sure that the information is communicated to the head cook.

Note that the Royalty and High Table are served the same food that everyone else is served. We are not allowed, for example, to serve prime rib to the High Table and Spam to the populace.

Retainers

If there is a head retainer in attendance at the event (especially at a Kingdom event), they will probably be the person coordinating volunteers to serve as retainers to the royalty. If not, the royalty may ask for a couple of volunteers to serve during the day. You should probably have an experienced person from your group serving as royalty liaison to coordinate this. Usually one or two people are needed to stay with the royalty all day long, to fetch & carry things, deliver messages, and run errands.

Other Things That Are Not Required but Which Are Very Nice To Provide

Speedy check-in at Troll

If you know that royalty are coming to your event, it would be good to let the people who are working at troll know about this, and if possible, to make it very easy for the royalty to "jump the line" and check-in quickly, especially if they are running late, or if it is a Kingdom event and they have little time to spare.

Someone to meet the royalty at the Troll
This would be a perfect thing for the person serving as royalty liaison to do. They can direct the royalty to their royalty room or changing room, give them a copy of the schedule for the day, find out any last-minute needs, etc.

People To Help Unload and Load the Royalty's Car
Not required, but very nice, especially if the royalty are traveling without their own staff. If they already do have a head retainer or a household, the people willing to help should just offer to help out, but not dive in if things seem like they are under control. Usually, people are willing to accept offers of help. If this is to be done, have the person serving as royalty liaison coordinate it.

Lunch
Have the cooks (or someone specifically assigned to do this) make up a lunch tray for the royalty. This could be delivered to the royalty room or to wherever the royalty will be during lunchtime. If the royalty are traveling with a head retainer, this person may either collect lunch for them or assign someone to do it. If you have already provided the lunch ahead of time, it will be a simple matter of having someone collect it from the cooks.

A Sunshade or Pavilion for Outdoor Activities
If your event will have a lot of outdoor activities, such as a tournament or other martial competitions, you should consider setting up a sunshade or pavilion for the royalty to sit under during the day. If the event is a Kingdom event such as Coronation or Crown Tourney, the royalty may need a place to "sit in state" (where people give oaths of fealty or give gifts, or where the royalty can receive visitors), so an outdoor pavilion may be just the thing. You or the royalty liaison should ask the Crown's contact person whether or not the royalty are planning to bring a sunshade or pavilion with them.

The main thing is that you want the royalty to feel welcome, and to enjoy your event.

Children's Activities

Children are an important part of the Barony and deserve to be treated as such. In the past children's activities were held far away from the event, which meant that parents couldn't enjoy the event with their children as a family.

Your first stop is to talk with your local Youth Minister or the Kingdom Youth Minister to verify what the requirements are to hold children's activities at your event. Since there are stringent rules surrounding any activities involving children, this is an essential contact that you will need to make.

Location, Location, Location

Indoor Events

Children's activities should always be held near the main activity area for the event. This makes sure that parents can participate in the event as well as engaging their children in age-appropriate activities.

The space for children's activities should be well defined. There has been success with defining the space with benches so that during active games, the adults are actually sitting around the edge watching and cheering them on.

Using rectangular tables is a best practice (if possible) as circular tables can cause a delay in reaching a child that is about to knock something over.

Outdoor Events

Again, the children's activities need to be placed near to the central activities of the event. It will also require shade (a pop-up or other cover). An outdoor site also allows for more active and/or messy activities than an indoor site. Having a table and chairs under the cover is also recommended to allow for children to sit for a while, even if it's just long enough for a snack.

Any Event

The space should be set up near the bathrooms so that children don't have to walk a long way to use the bathroom. This is particularly important as children don't always notice that they have to go until it's nearly too late.

Any children's activities space should be away from any martial activities (fencing, fighting, thrown weapons, and archery) to ensure the safety of the children. Children don't always notice that there is a dangerous situation before bolting into a space, particularly if they see a parent that is not present at the activities.

If some sort of space is set up for children's activities during court, it should be near the space where court will be held. Proximity to court will allow parents to pop in and out, share time keeping an eye on the short people, sneak out of the boring parts...

Kinds of Activities

When there is a theme for the event, try to fit the activities to that theme. It helps make children feel more a part of things, helps them to learn, and it's distinctly more fun. There should be a blend of activities, with some active games, some sit-down crafts, some storytelling, and something that they learn. A best practice is to aim for something that they can take away with them; a new game that they've made, a gift for their parents, a toy they made themselves, a craft item. You can also put together a craft that the children can present to the king and queen or the baron and baroness in court; the more often that they are in front of people and on their best behavior, the more quickly our children will become acculturated to this game we love so much.

Provide activities that can be adapted to more than one age group; the six to eight year olds will produce a far different painting project from the ones provided by the ten to twelve year olds. You can also bring a puzzle or other project that is geared toward the older kids, something that they can work on their own if I know an older crowd will be there (ex: painting scroll blanks)..

Considerations

- ☐ Is there a budget for the children's activities?
- ☐ Estimate about $25 for consumables; paper, bubble fluid, craft items, etc. You can find many of these things at a Dollar Store.
- ☐ Is there a budget for snacks? Estimate about $35-$40. This includes juice boxes, some kind of kid-friendly snack (fruit snacks, apples, oranges, occasionally candy).

A sign up sheet at troll for the children is often a good idea, though it’s not necessary.

The requirements for children’s activities are that you must have two people present at all times (the “two deep” rule) and everyone assisting needs to have their clearances complete before the event.

Please visit the Aethelmearc Youth Page for more information about clearances and requirements for Youth Activities at events.

Set a definite start-up and close-down time for activities. Post these at troll, as well as a schedule for any special activities you might be doing that might be a draw for the older kids. If you have an older-kid-activity that they can work on themselves, salt the mine: get one or two shills...er, interested helpers... to sit down and start working on it. Others will join them.

Martial Activities

By Mistress Karana Yabochi

Introduction

There are five main types of martial activities that can occur at events:

1. Heavy Weapons
2. Fencing
3. Archery
4. Thrown Weapons
5. Equestrian

Martial activities generally can be divided into two general classes, those that involve hand-to-hand combat, and those that involve competition to achieve the highest score. Heavy weapons and fencing belong to the former category, and archery and thrown weapons belong to the latter. In Aethelmearc, equestrian activities do not involve actual combat between horses and riders. Games of skill on horseback predominate and the high score usually determines the eventual winner.

Event Bid and Site Considerations

In some cases, certain sites will not permit certain activities to occur. Most do not allow equestrian in any form, some do not allow weapons, including swords and axes. The autocrat must determine this from the proposed site as soon as possible
.

To prepare an event bid, an autocrat must first determine if martial activities can and are desired to occur. For some events, martial activities are primary, and for others they're secondary or non-existent. If an event has a theme, the theme may determine what will occur. Examples include a Holmgangr heavy weapons tourney at a Viking event, multiple archery ranges at an event with an archery theme, etc. Hosts of events can also determine what, if any, martial activities will occur. Their reigning Majesties host the semi-annual Crown and Kingdom Rapier tournaments, and landed nobility can

host tournaments to choose their Champions. There are certain space requirements for each martial activity, and these must be taken into consideration when selecting a site. If an event site has been used previously for martial activities, staff from the former event can tell the autocrat what would be feasible. The primary four, heavy weapons, fencing, archery, and thrown weapons, can all occur in a space the size of a standard high school football field. Fortunately for autocrats, a single large space is not required, and individual areas are actually preferred. The following are approximate space requirements, and may vary depending upon the specific tournaments involved. Heavy weapons and fencing lists occupy about 900 square yards each (30 yards by 30 yards). An archery range would require 600 square yards (10 yards by 60 yards), which allows for a 40-yard range and an off- limits area behind the targets. A thrown weapons range would require a 300 square yard area (10 yards by 30 yards). If equestrian activities occur, the site would have to give permission, and areas for horse activities would need to be clearly identified and separated from spectators. In addition, a separate area such as a barn or a portable shelter would be needed to give the horses shade and an area to rest, drink and relax away from spectators.

Staffing

Each martial activity will need a marshal-in-charge and additional support staff as required. The autocrat should identify certain key staff members, and then let them choose the remaining. Of course, if an event is not hosting a specific martial activity, staff for that activity is not required.

Key staff members

- Archery marshal-in-charge
- Equestrian marshal-in-charge
- Fencing marshal-in-charge
- Heavy weapons marshal-in-charge
- Thrown weapons marshal-in-charge
- Minister of the list (primarily for heavy weapons and fencing tournaments)
- Herald (for Kingdom events. Contact the Sycamore Herald as they are specifically in charge of voice heralds for Kingdom events)

Additional staff members

- Marshals (assistants to the marshal-in-charge)
- Heralds (assistants to the herald-in-charge)
- List runners (messengers)
- Judges (for specific tourney formats)

Tournaments by Type

Archery

The archery marshal-in-charge will determine what types of archery activities will occur at the event in consultation with the autocrat and the hosts, if any. An archery range consists of targets typically spaced at 20, 30, and 40 yards. These targets can be standard archery targets for royal round shoots, or novelty targets that challenge the archers. Some of these targets can be stationary or they can be mobile, depending upon the inventiveness of the archery staff. A roving range involves a series of targets or any type set up along a walking path. The available space at a site will determine the types of archery contests that can occur.

Equestrian

The equestrian marshal-in-charge will determine what types of equestrian activities will occur at the event in consultation with the autocrat and the hosts, if any. Races between horse/rider combinations and tests of agility and accuracy are the most common. The available space at a site will determine the types of equestrian contests that can occur.

Fencing

The fencing marshal-in-charge will determine what types of fencing activities will occur at the event in consultation with the autocrat and the hosts, if any. Round robin tournaments, where every participant fights every other participant, are most common. Simulated indoor fights and challenge tournaments are also popular. The available space at a site will determine the types of fencing contests that can occur.

Heavy Weapons

The heavy weapons marshal-in-charge will determine what types of heavy weapons activities will occur at the event in consultation with the autocrat and the hosts, if any. Double elimination tournaments, where participants who lose twice are eliminated, are the preferred format for certain events (e.g. Crown). There are many other types of tournaments, and the available space at a site will determine the types of heavy weapons contests that can occur.

Thrown Weapons

The thrown weapons marshal-in-charge will determine what types of thrown weapons activities will occur at the event in consultation with the autocrat and the hosts, if any. A thrown weapons range consists of targets spaced at 20 yards or less. Participants can throw at standard targets or at novelty targets that challenge the thrower. The available space at the site will determine the types of thrown weapons contests that can occur.

Additional Key Points for Autocrats

In addition to the providing a site for martial activities, there are also a number of other points that the autocrat may wish to consider. The autocrat in consultation with the martial staff determines the overall layout of the outdoor events. This includes the layout for pavilions for the royalty and spectators. Also the autocrat determines the overall schedule of events. The layout and the schedule must be communicated to the entire martial staff. The martial staff may provide their own shade, tables and chairs, but the autocrat should confirm this. Water and Gatorade are typically provided by the event, so the autocrat may be asked to purchase the Gatorade, cups, trash bags, etc., and/or help locate five-gallon containers. This should be separated from the kitchen budget and made as part of the event costs.

Marshals-in- charge typically provide the equipment necessary for their particular activity, but the autocrat may wish to confirm all arrangements with all key martial staff approximately 2 weeks before the event. Martial staff will not be able to leave the field to go to the hall for lunch. Depending upon the importance of the tournaments, many of the spectators will not leave either. The autocrat may wish to coordinate with the lunch staff to bring lunch outside. If lunch is brought to the fields, please provide separate tables for the food. The martial staff will be closely following the action on the field and should not have to deal with the crush caused by lunch.

What Every Marshal-in-Charge Must Know

You have just agreed to be marshal-in-charge for an upcoming event. Now what?

Preparation

1. Does the event have a theme? Does the autocrat have any specific martial arts activities in mind?
    a. Example: Holmgangr tourney at a Viking event.
    b. Example: Mongolian combat archery.
2. Are there hosts for the martial activity?

    a. Example: The Baron and Baroness are choosing their new Baronial Champions.
    b. Example: Their Highnesses request a Swiss tourney for their Coronation.
    c. Example: The Company of the Southern Watch sponsors a tournament.
3. Tourney format
    a. Single elimination, double elimination, round robin, tavern brawl, weapons proficiency, Swiss tourney, Bear Pit, alley fight, Holmganger, Atlantian speed tourney, challenge, etc.
4. If there are hosts, they are involved in the tournament selection if they want to be. If not, the decisions are made by the marshal-in-charge, the autocrat, and others if needed.
5. Supporting staff needed/available?
    a. Other marshals
    b. MOL
    c. Herald
    d. Judges
    e. List runners

Before the Event

1. If tourney format is non-standard, prepare a written description and list of rules.
2. Discuss with supporting staff.
3. Determine who is bringing what supplies (water/Gatorade), shade, list ropes, etc.).
4. Coordinate the timing of the day's martial events with the autocrat's master schedule.

The Day of the Event

1. Arrive before the list opens and begin to set up the list field.
    a. List ropes, layout, etc.
    b. Assist/direct the placement of spectator pavilions, etc.
2. Coordinate with the MOL to begin check-in of combatants.
    a. Authorization cards
    b. Waivers
3. Conduct weapons inspections.
4. Tournament begins.
5. Tournament ends.
    a. Results are announced.
6. Court, announcement to the populace, etc.
7. MOL files report.
    a. Tournament trees, waivers, list of combatants, etc.

Appendix A - Event Themes and Ideas

Viking Winterfinding
Recommended Time of Year: Winter (November - March)
One Day Event

This is a more “traditional old-school SCA event” where there’s something for everyone and the theme is pretty loose. It’s an excuse to get together and enjoy each other’s company.

Recommended activities:

- A Hjolmganger Tournament
    - This is a heavy weapons tournament
- “Feats of Strength” Activity
    - Everyone is given specific tasks to do that demonstrates their physical strength
    - These tasks don’t have to be serious.
- Bardic Circle
- Classes focused on Viking culture

A Day of Song and Dance
Recommended Time of Year: Autumn/Winter (September - March)
One Day Event

This would be a music and dancing event offering performances, group performance, and dance/music classes.
I would heavily recommend holding a performance during dinner (invite a group to do this and plan for their being able to have dinner early so you aren’t asking people to perform without eating) and a “ball” after dinner with someone calling dances and live music to accompany the dancing (if possible).

The Castle of La Motte-Feuilly
Recommended Time of Year: Any
One Day Event

The Castle of La Motte-Feuilly is one of the castles built by the notorious Borgia family. This would be a day of intrigue and court hijinks based loosely on Italy in the late 15th Century. You can have a murder mystery in the evening, poisoning (handing someone a piece of paper saying “You’ve been poisoned”), and end the event after a masked ball.

This would be the kind of event where fancy Italian clothing would be appropriate. If you live in a Barony, work with your local Baronage to see if they would be willing to do a court part way through the day as that offers a good break in the middle of things. You can start the murder mystery after court.

This is just a day of fun and involves no heavy weapons fighting. You can plan a fencing tournament in the morning before court, which would be appropriate for the environment, but would require space that can be used for combat. This event can literally take place in two rooms if that's what you have access to.

Appendix B - Insurance Certificate Ordering

Link to the pdf document at sca.org

This is ONLY for additional insured. Please work with your local Equestrian Marshal for Equestrian Insurance.

Email template for site

Dear [site manager]:

In order to order the additional insurance that you requested, here is the information we will need from you -

Please confirm the following:
Name & Physical Address of the SIte: [Insert the name and address of the site]
Group Contact Person & Daytime Phone Number: [insert their information]
Insurance Type (General Liability, Equestrian, Host Liquor, Golf Carts, & Endorsement): [insert type requested]
Certificate Holder's Name & Address: [Insert name of contact and the address of the site]

Please fill out the following:
Additional Insured (this is the exact wording that you wish to appear on the certificate)

Just to let you know the timeline for this, once the insurance certificate is requested, it may take 30-60 days for the request to be processed and the final certificate sent out to you via fax. If you would please contact me to let me know when you've received the final certificate, I would appreciate it so I know that you have it in hand.

Thank you for your time and please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Best regards,

[Your Modern Name]

Email template for SCA, Inc.

Forward the response from the site with your request to SCA, Inc. You will still fill in each line with the information requested. The forwarded email is not enough to get this

processed. It's to show that you have the information supplied for you by the site. You will also need to provide a picture of your current SCA, Inc. membership or a screen cap from the SCA membership website showing that your membership is current through the date of the event.

To: insurance@sca.org

This is a request for [type of insurance being requested]. Please see below:

1. Name of Event/Practice:
2. Group Sponsoring Event or Practice:
3. Group Contact Person & Daytime Phone Number:
4. Insurance Type: (General Liability, Equestrian, Host Liquor, Golf Carts & Endorsement)
5. Fax Number for Site Owner: If available, otherwise put "n/a" (don't skip).
6. Routing Name for Fax: (Site Owner's Contact Person)
7. Certificate Holder's Name & Address: (This is not your local group – it is the Church, Park's Dept., etc. who is requesting that they be furnished a certificate.)
8. Additional Insured: The exact wording that the Certificate Holder wishes to appear on the certificate. They will provide you with the wording in your contract.
9. Name & Physical address of the site:
10. Beginning and ending DATES of the event. For multiple dates, please list each date.
11. Event Coordinator: Membership Number, Expiration Date, Legal Name, Mailing Address, Email Address & Daytime Phone Number.

Please let me know if you need any additional information to receive the requested insurance.

Best regards,

[Your SCA Name]
[Your Modern Name]

Appendix C - Event Checklist

Note: This checklist is as complete as I could make it, and I'm sure that I've missed something. This checklist does not include any "how-to" information.

- ☐ What is the theme of your event?
- ☐ Who will be cooking your feast?
- ☐ If this is your first time autocratting, you will need a mentor, who will that be?
- ☐ Who will be taking reservations?
- ☐ Who will be running the Troll for the event?
- ☐ Who will be coordinating the Hall Clean Up?
- ☐ Who will be coordinating the Kitchen Clean Up?
- ☐ What kinds of activities would you like to have?
- ☐ If you have fighting/fencing/thrown weapons/archery do you have the correct marshals for these activities?
- ☐ If you are going to have any A&S activities, would you prefer to have an A&S Display, an Artisan's Forum, or an A&S Competition.
- ☐ If you have a Competition, do you have a judge?
- ☐ Will the judge need to provide a prize or prizes?
- ☐ Are you going to have Children's Activities?
- ☐ Do you wish to have merchants?
- ☐ Who would the merchants contact to sellat the event?
- ☐ How much space do you have for vendors?
- ☐ Is there a table fee for merchanting at the event?
- ☐ Is this fee applicable whether or not they bring their own tables?
- ☐ How much space do you have for merchants?
- ☐ Will there be performances at this event?
- ☐ Choral performance?
- ☐ Instrumental performance?
- ☐ Will there be court/courts?
- ☐ Baronial Court?
- ☐ Royal Court?
- ☐ Both?
- ☐ Will you need musicians for court?
- ☐ Who would be best to coordinate these people?
- ☐ Do you have a copy of a blank event bid?
- ☐ Local event bid?
- ☐ Kingdom event bid?

- [ ] Have you double checked the requirements for what is needed for different types of event bids?
- [ ] Have you double checked your cost analysis so that you will cover your costs for this event?
- [ ] Did you include enough for site tokens?
- [ ] Decorations?
- [ ] Site book?
- [ ] Feast book? (if not in the feast budget, if separate from the site book)
- [ ] Prizes for any competitions?
- [ ] Have you made enough copies of the event bid for the Officer's Meeting?
- [ ] Have you written an Event Announcement?

Appendix D - Staff List

Enter Event Name and Event Date Here

SCA Name	Phone Number	Mundane Name	SCA Position	Other info you may need such as “cannot work due to Covid”	Same
Helen the Graceful	888-735-3333	Helen Helium Hands	Head Cook	Will recruit own kitchen staff	Can these people be comped?
Justen the Strong	888-657-4444	Justin Strongman	Merchant wrangler	Has three already	How much space is available for merch
			Tollner		
			Parking Marshall		
			Setup		
			Cleanup Co-ord		
			Brewers’ Guild		
			Head Server		
			Marshal in Charge		
			Staff Meeting Location		
			MoL		
			etc		

			etc		
			etc		

As the autocrat, you may find it appropriate to add or delete columns, reorder them and otherwise make the form meet your needs. It is also suggested that the Autocrat distribute the list to those on the list so that inter-staff communications may occur more easily.

Appendix E - Oft-used Event Sites in the Barony-Marche of the Debatable Lands

This is a list of the sites most commonly used by the BMDL at this time. This does not mean that we are only permitted to use these sites, just that we use them a lot. If you find a site that is useful, then by all means, use it and pass along the information so that other Autocrats can use them later.

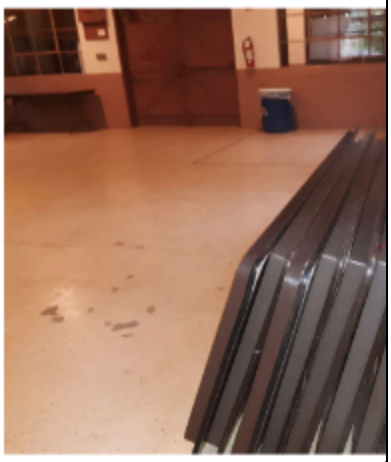
Lutherlyn
Contact: Lutherlyn Registrar, 724-865-2161 registrar@lutherlyn.com

Site	Lutherlyn, 500 Lutherlyn Lane, Butler, PA 16001
Description	This is a camp run by the Lutheran Church and is located in Sunderoak.
Do I need to contact another group for permission?	Yes. This is located in Sunderoak
Cost	The pricing changes from year to year, contact the registrar for the current pricing.
Facilities	**Wallace Lodge** ● Heated building located ~30 yards from Dogwood Shelter ● Capacity = ~100 ● Bathrooms, each with two sinks, two stalls, and two showers. A little tight for wheelchair access but could be done. ● **NO KITCHEN** - There is a kitchenette with sink, microwave, residential size fridge, coffee pot, limited counterspace ● Fireplace ● ~12 tables ● ~100 chairs









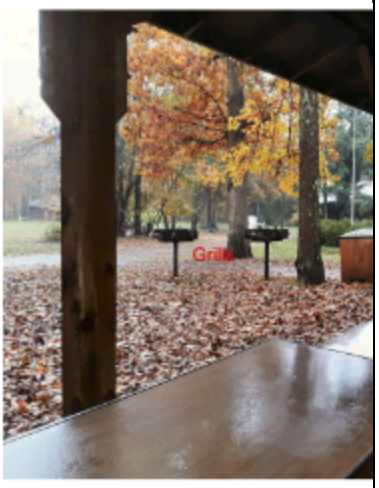




Dogwood Shelter

	● Seats up to 200 people ● Lights ● Electric outlets ● Grills ● Fire pit in center which we can cover if we don't want to use ● Two large space heaters ● Picnic tables with laminate tops This is an excellent space for outdoor court.   




Grills





End Notes