

The Society for Creative Anachronism

Welcome! We are members of the Society for Creative Anachronism, and we'd love for you to join us!

Who are we? The Society for Creative Anachronism, commonly called the SCA, is a non-profit, educational, historical re-creation group. The term 'anachronism' refers to something that is out of its own time and place — if you are watching people in armor fighting with swords and shields in the 21st century, you are seeing something anachronistic.

What do we do? We try to recreate the medieval and renaissance eras, bringing all of the arts and sciences of those days into the present: the fighting in armor, archery, fencing, brewing, calligraphy and illumination, sewing, embroidery, spinning and weaving, dancing, singing. We study and then do all these and more — and then many of us teach these arts and sciences to others.

How did the Society start? In 1966, a group of people got together in a backyard in Berkeley to hold a medieval themed party based on chivalric ideals of medieval life. They dressed up in old-fashioned clothes, held a tournament and had a feast at the end of the day. It was so much fun that they decided to do it again, and again, and pretty soon they had so many people involved that they incorporated the group as a non-profit organization and began expanding, with a New York chapter formed in 1968.

Who are our members? SCA members do many things in their regular lives. Our members are teachers, lawyers, construction workers, EMT's, accountants, computer programmers, truck drivers, office workers, and more — but we all share a love of history, and a desire to learn and teach new skills.

How many members do we have? The SCA is organized into twenty kingdoms that make up "The Known World" and encompass the United States, Canada, as well as portions of Europe, Africa, Asia and the Pacific. Approximately 100,000 people participate in our activities, of whom around 30,000 pay annual membership dues to support the organization and obtain voting privileges and event discounts.

What times and places do we study? The Society's field of study includes all of history prior to 1600. Many members choose a time period and a geographical place to study and then create a persona to fit that time and place. Medieval and Renaissance Europe are popular choices, but other regions and eras are becoming more common, so at a single event you might meet Viking raiders, Italian courtiers, Mongol horsemen, Flemish merchants, Saxon landowners, Middle Eastern sheikhs, Scottish lairds, Norman crusaders, Japanese samurai, Irish clansmen, Aztec warriors, and many more. Whatever the persona, all strive to be chivalrous and courteous, so do not be surprised if a scruffy barbarian bows and calls you 'my lady' or 'my lord' when they greet you!

What activities do we offer? We hold events almost every weekend, gathering for tournaments, where our fighters compete in the lists to determine a champion, or exhibitions of fine art and practical crafts, or feasts where we sample the cuisines of different medieval times and places, or musical performances and dance classes where you can learn galliards and bransles. We also hold classes in various medieval activities, and provide demonstrations of medieval arts and sciences at fairs and festivals. The only requirements to attend one of our events are an attempt at pre-seventeenth century clothing and a willingness to participate in recreating the life of the pre-modern era.

Interested? We'd love to meet you! Learn more at sca.org or visit our local chapter at ostgardr.org.