

Purpose:

The intention of Elders and Novices is to provide folks new to the SCA with a contact person to assist with acclimating to the culture and traditions of our game. The relationship between the Elder and the Novice is intended to be of a defined period, primarily informational in nature, and one desired by both the Novice and the Elder. A coordinator will assist local and regional chatelaines with matching across organizations, assisting with requests, and looking into the possibility of working interkingdom for folks on the move.

Description:

Elders and Novices is an idea that grew from a lengthy discussion of how we as an organization, could support new members. As a society, we have a rich and varied culture with its own rules, standards, and language. This can be a barrier to newcomers. Much as the world of sororities and fraternities support new members with Bigs and Littles, Elders and Novices would pair a willing experienced member of the SCA with a willing newcomer to assist and answer questions.

Some guidelines have been established to give both Elders and Novices a picture of what this relationship would involve.

The Elder is available as a generalist, to answer questions and share ideas about the culture of the SCA or to find someone who can assist the Novice with their questions. For example, the Elder is an archer and the Novice wants to learn more about children's activities. The Elder would introduce the Novice to a local Children's worker.

This is designed to be a short term relationship, perhaps 6 to 8 months. Elders should be available for communication, either in person or via phone or email for occasional chats. Based on the interests of the Novice, the Elder should be able to assist with questions, contacts (for example Gold Key for loaner garb), share traditions, or make introductions to others who have similar interests with the Novice.

Attending 2 events together, should give the Elder the opportunity to explain much of what is unique to our society in a basic way to the Novice. An event with a royal court would be most helpful, because the full pageantry of what we

are is on display. (And it is often confusing)

Local Chatelaines are important to this process. They are the folks who are aware of what is going on locally. They may find among their members both possible Elders and Novices and may pair them within the local group. It is not, however, for chatelaines to manage alone. Local pairs are good, but not necessary. Working across baronies and even across the region can give the program easier access to folks. Communication via phone or internet can shorten the distance. A coordinator is planned to assist with this.

This short version is:

Elders and Novices are paired for 6-8 months.

Perhaps they will attend 2 events together.

While in attendance at events, both parties need to meet to discuss occasionally, but the Novice needs the time to explore independently.

The Elder is available as a generalist and does not need to be “matched” with a Novice on the basis of interests.

Chatelaines are the front people, but not the only people. This is a group effort.