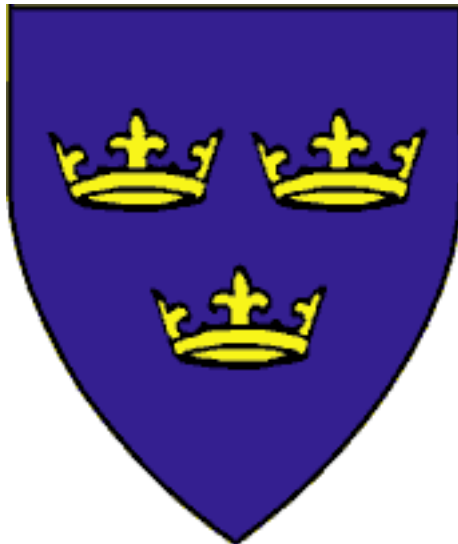


# Realms of Avalon

# **NEW MEMBERS GUIDE**



Version 1.0

## Hail and well met!

First of all, a hearty *welcome* to the world of historical re-creation! Whether you have dabbled before or are completely new to the concept, you are welcome to the Realms of Avalon.

This book is made to help new members learn what historical re-creation is, and to help the veterans of other groups learn more about how things work in Avalon.

But its important to realize that the most important resource any group or person has are the people in the group! So if you ever have questions that the manuals don't seem to help you with, **ASK A PERSON!**

Don't be shy. Avalon prides itself on a friendly welcoming atmosphere. Remember, the goal is the learn more than you knew yesterday and the have fun while doing it. Experienced members, such as knights and officers, are there to help you get started on reaching your personal goals and interests.

With that said, lets move on to learning a bit more about Avalon!

*Aleska Andraitiene*

--Dame Aleska Andraitiene



Two good mistresses examine a vendors booth for wares at a Tourney.

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Baroness Ruth and King Phaelan get armored up for combat.

# **THE BASICS**

## **WHAT EXACTLY IS “THE REALMS OF AVALON”?**

The Realms of Avalon is a 501c3 nonprofit educational organization which studies, researches, and reenacts the skills and practices of the period from 500 -1603 A.D. Avalon members actively study and teach the actual historical aspects of life in this time period. From animal husbandry to combat to pottery, members of Avalon strive to recreate as much as possible the life skills found on what can loosely be called the middle ages.

## **WHAT DOES “REALMS OF AVALON” MEAN?**

Avalon is a place name taken from the King Arthur myths. We use the legend of King Arthur to symbolize a dedication to chivalry, honor, and teamwork, and many of our ceremonies will invoke symbolism from these myths. The regional branches of Avalon are called ‘Realms’, that are dedicated to the shared efforts of Avalon.

## **WHAT IS HISTORICAL REENACTMENT?**

Historical reenactment is the term used to describe the hobby of actively reenacting the various skills and activities of history. Sort of like experimental archaeology, but its done by not only by historians, but by anyone and everyone with at least a little interest in history.

## **WHO DOES HISTORICAL REENACTMENT?**

Anyone with at least a little bit of interest in history can have fun and learn in historical reenactment groups. Some will be very experienced and even professionally trained in historical fields. Others will be hobbyists, who have no training but find it fun to gather with others. Kids, grandparents, and people from all walks of life enjoy historical reenactment.

## **WHAT SORT OF GATHERINGS TAKE PLACE?**

There are all sorts of types of gatherings, but there are two main types, in-group and demonstration.

The first kind are meetings held by the group. These include things like feasts, camp outs practice sessions, social or business meetings, tournaments and competitions, movie nights, lectures and classes, and workshops on specific skills or activities. While anyone is welcome to join the activities, they are called in-group because they may take place in private or public locations and are advertised mainly to members and other in-group methods.

The other kind activities are usually called Demonstrations (or demos), and this is where group members go out into schools and communities to educate about history or promote our organization. These differ from in-group gatherings in that they are specifically designed to take place in public locations and involve people that may know little or nothing about our organization.

## **WHAT HAPPENS AT GATHERINGS?**

There are as many answers to this as there are people! People play games, work on projects, dance, archery, costuming, cooking, brewing and vitning, blacksmithing, armor making, animal husbandry, music, storytelling. . . basically we do just about anything done historically.

Sometimes a gathering will have many scheduled activities, and sometimes a gathering will be focused on just one aspect or activity.

## **HOW OFTEN DO I HAVE TO PARTICIPATE?**

How ever much you want to! There are absolutely NO requirements. Its up to what fits your schedule and your interests. Some people really get into it and do lots of different skills and activities, engage in research , and even get involved in experimental archaeological projects!

Others prefer to be more casual, and just show up at the activities that interest them, such as feasts or camp outs. Whether you show up several times a week, or once a year you will be welcome.

## **HOW EXPENSIVE IS THIS HOBBY?**

That depends on what you want to do; and whether you just socialize, or want to do projects or activities that require equipment. It can also depend on whether you make or purchase your supplies. No matter your level of participation, you can usually reduce costs by bartering skills or objects with other members, and by making your own supplies whenever possible.

Experienced group members can often teach you the skills to make your own kit, for example they could teach you how to sew your own basic costume from scrap fabric.

## **WHAT ARE THE BASIC SUPPLIES I WILL NEED?**

While your needed supplies will depend mostly on what activities you do, the very basics you will want will be at least one costume and some feast gear for eating with-- that is, a bowl, plate, mug or goblet, candleholder, and utensils. Remember, there are folks around to help you learn how to procure or make the basics you need, as well as the special extras you may want.

## **WHAT DO THE TERMS “GAME” , “PLAY” , AND “MUNDANE” MEAN?**

“*Playing the Game*” is phrase often used for engaging in Historical Reenactment activities.

Basically it means that learning can be so fun, that it seems just like play! It also is a way to separate reenactment happenings from happening in the outside world. A persons in-group nickname would be called a ‘game name’ for example. A persons’ real life is called “mundane” or “mundania” . Modern things are also called mundane. For example, someone wearing a t-shirt would be said to be “Going mundane”

## **WHAT DOES IT COST TO PLAY?**

There are five sorts of situations of payment you may run into when doing Historical Reenactment. This includes membership with the group, site fees, feast fees, and supply fees, and donations.

## **Memberships**

Memberships in Avalon are *not required* for most activities! But memberships offer benefits such as the ability to enter competitions, do combat, earn ranks and titles, vote, register “coats of arms” and gain access to special features and personal insurance. If any of these reasons appeal to you, then you are looking at \$20.00 for a yearly membership, prorated on a quarterly basis.

## **Site Fees**

Sometimes locations have to be rented for activities to take place, and a site fee will be requested (or required) to help pay for this rental. The fees may vary depending on the site, but on average range from about \$2.00 suggested donation to \$25.00 or so for reserving campsites for a weekend event. These site fees are separate from memberships and whenever possible are kept low and at a suggested donation rather than a requirement. The more people who contribute to site fees the less each person has to pay, and its usually considered a fair contribution for an evening, day, or weekends worth of entertainment.

## **Feast Fees**

If there is a formal feast, there may also be a feast charge for the event. This would be like going to a formal banquet. Feast charges are kept as low as possible, and costs on the average around \$10 or so, but this includes food and entertainment. Usually you can reduce the cost of the feast by helping prepare, serve, or clean up for the feast, so if you are short on funds but high on interest, respond to the e-mails announcements for feast helpers. A lot of times feasts are run Potluck, where each person brings a food and drink item instead of cash.

## **Supply Fees**

Supply fees may be asked for during workshops or other gatherings where supplies for a project are provided. Usually in this case the person running the event has done the shopping for you and you are reimbursing them for the cost of the supplies. Since some of our historical activities may involve specially ordered esoteric items not often found at Wal-Mart, its a nice convenience. Costs of the supplies will vary depending on what the project is, and are completely unrelated to memberships and site fees.

## **Donations**

As a non profit educational group, donations of money and objects can help benefit the group as a whole, but are never required of anyone.

## **WHAT IS A PERSONA?**

A persona is a role a person plays, where they research a person from a time or place in history, and then try to play that role in person. Sometimes people role-play as if they are that person. It's up to each person how much you want to get into it. It can be simple such as just picking a

name. Or it can be complex where the name, costume, and supplies are match the time, place, and social status of the persona. Role playing your persona is not required, but it does add to the fun flair of gatherings.

### **HOW DO YOU PICK A PERSONA?**

Some people like to play someone from a time or place in their family history, or a time or place in history that looks interesting to them. You can also look at the clothing and pick a time or place that has the clothing styles you like to make or wear. Don't sweat it if you don't have any ideas at first. This is something that you can really take your time with. You can have more than one persona if you want. For example, you could dress as anglo saxon or viking during the day and then for court and ceremony at night go renaissance for "dressing up".

### **WHAT ARE KNIGHTHOODS AND ROYALTY ALL ABOUT?**

Knighthoods are levels of achievement and participation, or if it helps, liken it to the merit badges and ranks in scouting organizations. A knighthood simply recognize that a person has earned a level of achievement and skill in a certain area of knowledge. Knighthoods are earned by participating in tournaments, demonstrations, and teaching skills to others.

Terms of royalty such as Baron, duke, or King , represent jobs held within the group, i.e. management positions. Calling someone a King sounds more historical than saying 'Regional Manager'. Because these terms have a designated meaning, those choosing personas need to avoid assigning their persona a rank which needs to be earned. Its fun to recognize a royal person and offer them respect and ceremony, but that does not mean they are not approachable. Always feel free to talk to and greet someone of any rank. In fact, someone with "high rank" would be more than happy to help a new person get started-- its their job!

### **HOW DOES AVALON DIFFERENT FROM OTHER GROUPS?**

There are many groups that study various periods in history, though they use different methods and have different cultures. Each group will usually have a structure for sponsoring activities, for recognizing the efforts of its members, and for how it manages business. Here are some specifics on how Avalon may differ from other groups.

- \* Avalon is welcoming to all people with an interest in history. Dual memberships with other organizations are fully welcome. Attend often or infrequently as your schedule allows, you won't be forced to attend things that doesn't fit your schedule or interests.

- \* Avalon strives to provide an open and welcoming environment for those who wish to learn of the actual history of our period. Avalon strives for a culture of friendliness, learning, and sharing of knowledge. Asking questions is ALWAYS appropriate, and teaching is a requirement of those who wish to gain rank in the organization.

- \* Our activities are historically focused. You won't find magic users, elves, werewolves

or other fantasy based personas at Avalon events.

\* Unlike most reenactment groups, you don't have to have an expensive kit and head full of knowledge to get started. People are welcome at all stages of equippedness and learning, with the idea that as you play you learn and build up to historically accurate kit.

\* Our combat is not sport oriented, but rather aimed at learning how combat was done and what it was like in period. That means using training styles to practice, leading to using real weapons and real armor. Even though real steel is used at advanced levels, the combat is NOT choreographed. Its done competitively.

\* Our arts and sciences are not aimed at having people make "medievalish" things which appeal to modern senses of design, but rather on how and why things were made or done in period. Arts are judged not only on the item itself, but on research and presentation as well. Scoring difficulty increases with experience, so beginners with first projects are judged more loosely than later ones. Judges also provide feedback and advice that may help the artisan with future projects. Whenever possible, entries are judged by judges who have experience in the category of the entry.

\* Heraldry within the group is based on actual historical rules and styles as well identifiers of people and groups, using basically early period english style and rules.

\* Archery is aimed at teaching people what actual equipment of the medieval period was like and how it was used, rather than just another form of competition.

\* Knighthoods are earned, not awarded subjectively. Members earn knighthoods by earning points in participation, teaching, competing, and demonstrating skills.

\* Knighthoods are available in several categories: Combat, Arts and Sciences, Archery, and Ministry (organizing activities). No one area of participation is considered better than the others, they all contribute to the fun and earning of the membership.

\* Educational outreach in schools and communities is a primary stated goal of Avalon.

\* Kings, Queens, Dukes, Duchesses, etc. are not ceremonial titles, but job descriptions.

\* Arts and Archery Tournaments are usually self-competitions, with each entrant aiming for an objective level of performance rather than competing with other entrants. In each case the object is to approach the skills of the period as closely as possible.

\* And while we strive for historical accuracy on the part of members equal to that seen in historical re-enactors, we don't expect people to begin with anything more than tee shirt,

jeans, tennis shoes , and a desire to learn by doing.

\*Lastly Avalon is a family friendly organization, all ages are welcome at Avalon events.



Ends of the Earth, a historical based band, play for Crown and Crowd at an interregional business meeting.



Assorted arts projects ready to be judged: Bread, Wine, Mead, a sonnet, and a medieval war arrow.

# **GETTING STARTED**

Okay so you have an interest in history, and are intrigued by the idea of getting together in costume with others who share your interest. But where to start?

## **SHOW UP TO GATHERINGS**

The most important step is to just show up to an activity or gathering that interests you. Don't worry if you don't have costumes or know about the topics. Come and meet people, ask questions, and see who can offer you help getting started with the activities you are interested in. Remember, the group is all about learning and having fun. Show up, have fun, and the learning will take place too. And its the best way to learn what activities look fun to you-- See it and try it!

## **START GETTING A KIT**

A basic kit involves costumes (called Garb) and feast gear. Goodwill and Yard sales are both great boons to getting a starter kit together, and of course don't forget that other members will be happy to help guide you. Remember, NEVER not show up to a gathering just because you don't have the gear yet----- we want to meet you! And you can get help from members on learning how get supplied. Others might have gear to lend you, they can show you how to make stuff, or can show you where to buy.

### **Garb:**

Garb is a historically based costume that you wear at gatherings. You can purchase it if you have neither time nor inclination to sew, or you can make it yourself. Usually members like to wear the garb from a time or place that interests them and most groups have a costumer on hand to help you plan. But when you first start, you just want something that doesn't scream out "Modern!"

The Avalon web site has directions for making the most basic and simplest starter garb called a t-tunic. A T-Tunic is a very simple long shirt that is great for tossing over your t-shirt and pants. To help the closet garb effect even more, wear solid color pants rather than blue jeans, try shoes sandals or boots rather than sneakers, try solid colored knit shirts rather printed t-shirts. Skirts and peasant blouses make great girl outfits to start in.

### **Feast Gear:**

Feast gear is what is used when feasts are held, to light our table and eat our food. These are wood, metal, or glass implements that help create the feel that we are in the middle ages instead of modern life. It should include: Bowl, Plate, Cup or Goblet, and Candle holder. Most people also like to have a basket to keep their gear in, and a table covering.

Those who are into historical accuracy may strive for a set of feast gear that matches their

preferred time and place in history, but when you are just getting started you can kit up cheaply by scrounging yard sales and goodwill for wood bowls and platters, metal or glass candleholders. Try to avoid things like correll ware with printed patterns and paper or plastic. When drinking, try pouring your soda or other beverage into a goblet or mug for a more authentic look and feel. If its your very first feast and you haven't had time to get feast gear, just bring SOMETHing you can eat off of! Don't skip a feast just because you don't have the best gear for it yet.

**Accessories:**

Other supplies are things that help you get by while looking as authentically historical as possible. Things like baskets for carrying goods, cloth and fabric for covering mundane gear, wood or wicker boxes for storing gear.

Over time the historical accuracy and detail of what you use will increase. No one will harass a new member for not having authentic garb or gear. Instead, they will want to teach a new person HOW to get a more accurate kit. The members of Avalon are involved in our activities to teach, to learn and to participate, not to disparage the efforts of others. A new person should NEVER not show up because they don't have the 'right' gear. How are you to ever learn or get started on your interests unless you show up?



Master Thorin and Sir David play a game of chess after a candlelit feast.

## **ACTIVITIES**

What sort of activities take place in Avalon?

### **TOURNAMENTS**

Tournaments are friendly competitions of skill that take place once a month. There are competitions in arts and sciences, archery, and combat. Points are earned every time you participate or win in a tournament, and these contribute to earning knighthoods.

### **PRIZE TOURNEYS**

Sometimes there are competitions held where instead of ranking points there is an award or prize of some kind.

### **CAMP OUTS**

Usually lasting a weekend, camp outs are really fun ways to gather and enjoy the weather. People camp out and during the day have competitions, workshops, and other gatherings. At night there will be socializing by star and candlelight, campfires with stories and song, and ceremonies.

### **WORKSHOPS**

These are gatherings to specifically work on a certain skill or topic of learning. They can involve lecture, presentation, and practical. Most usually, workshops are hands-on learning where someone teaches how to do a specific task

### **PRACTICES**

Practices are gatherings, usually held on a weekly or biweekly basis, where folks can gather socially and work on practicing skills. Combat, dance, and archery are usually included in these, but people also use practice nights to work on arts projects, share references, and just have fun hanging out.

### **WARS**

Wars are basically a series of team-based competitions. Participants choose who they want to support with their entry, and any points they earn go their team. There are two kinds of wars: Fun and Contested. Contested wars are competitions to see who has leadership skills capable to run regional chapters. Fun wars are just held for fun or prizes.

### **DEMONSTRATIONS (DEMOS)**

Demonstrations are very important for the group, and are held for two reasons: Advertising our club, and educational outreach. A demo basically involves setting up in a public location and demonstration skills and activities, or sometimes even doing lectures and workshops. At demos people set up displays, talk to passers by, or lecture/education/demonstrate historical skills and information. Demos may be done in a community or school, at a renaissance fair, even a science

fiction convention. Demos can be done anywhere there people interested in learning more about history or our organization.

## **COURTS AND CEREMONIES**

The middle ages were big on pomp and ceremony and we recreate that with our own ceremonies, based on the historical ones. Ceremonies are held to recognize new chapters, bestow knighthood or honors on an accomplished member, to make announcements, give thanks and honors for achievements, and sometimes for just being theatrical.

## **FEASTS**

Imagine sitting by candlelight under the evening stars, listening to musicians or storytellers, eating medieval and renaissance food dishes--- well, that's what feasts are like! They may be indoors or out, but they are always a treat of historical foods and entertainments. There are two main kinds of feasts: Formal, and Potluck.

Potluck feasts usually have no charge. each person brings a food and drink item to share with everyone else. Sometimes there is a menu and everyone gets a recipe, other times its less organized and everyone just shows up with something. new folks can always bring some bread and cheese from the store just to get started at their first potluck. Potlucks can be served, or served buffet style.

A formal feast is one where a team works on cooking a complete meal , usually involving several courses, and the food is usually served. Because the food is purchased and cooked ahead of time, formal feasts usually have advanced deadlines to reserve a space, so the cooks know how much food to buy and cook. Because the food has to be purchased, there is usually a charge for a formal feast, though it is usually a lot of food and entertainment for the money.

## **ARCHERY**

This is one of the more popular activities! Studying historical archery means learning how to use traditional archery equipment of our time period rather than modern equipment. Both western and Asian bows are welcome, as are crossbows. Groups usually try to have enough equipment on hand to let New folks try their hands at the subject. Members often also study and learn how to make their own equipment, from making their own arrows to crafting a bow. You can learn more about engaging in Archery by reading the Archery Manual.

There are two forms of historical archery-- target archery, where you shoot at a target from a given distance, and Scenario archery. Scenarios can be anything that is both safe and fun and different from just shooting a target. It may be a moving target, or timed bout, or something that just seems fun and interesting.

## **COMBAT**

Combat is one of the flashiest and most asked about activities in historical Recreation. It is by the

far the most requested activities in the community, and Avalon chapters are often eagerly invited to community events to display prowess in arms. There are two kinds of combat-- Tournament combat is one-on-one, and Scenario Combat. Scenario combat can be field battles, team battles, or any creative challenge that seem like fun.

Avalon combat is a martial art, focusing on learning the style of combat used in western europe from the middles ages to the renaissance. There are several styles of combat depending on both level of training and inclination. Medieval style combat consists of shinai, waster, and steel. Renaissance style combat uses rapiers. The medieval and renaissance tracts are both considered equally important skills even though they are very different from each other. You can learn more about avalon combat by reading the combat manual.

One often asked question is how safe is Avalon combat? Very safe, actually. There are regulations on equipment and training to keep avoidable accidents avoided. There most common complaint is an occasional bruise. The main types of more serious injuries that occur are “armor bites”, from when where improperly fitting armor pinches or scratches; and environmental “oops” from tripping over pine cones and the like. However, all forms of Avalon combat are a form of martial art, and as such it takes care and attention to safety measures that are put forth. Members can increase their odds of being injury free by knowing their own health, maintaining their equipment properly, and engaging in proper warm up procedures before being physically active. Also, because it is a martial art, minors require parental permission before engaging in combat and memberships are required to participate in combat activities, for insurance reasons.

## **COMBAT ARCHERY**

Combat archery is where light powered bows and special padded arrows are used during shinai style combat. Usually used for field battlers, it adds a whole new dimension to understanding historical battles!

## **ARTS AND SCIENCES**

A very skilled and highly appreciated area is the study of arts and sciences of history. This means things that you make, things that you study, things that are performed. Arts and sciences include things such as making food or beverages, making costumes, studying historical dance, telling stories, making armor, etc.

Tourneys and competitions in the arts and sciences are designed to serve as educational opportunities. Each entrant presents their artwork or performance to an audience. Judging is not against other entrants-- rather, all arts are judged on an objective scale against itself. Points are awarded for research, presentation, and other attributes of the given entry. During the judging the entrant is given advice on how to improve their piece, and comments about attributes that are excellent and/or need extra attention.

Anyone with an interest in making things, researching things, or presenting/performing things are

encouraged to participate. New folks are critiqued with special care and advice, so don't be shy about giving it a try! You have to start somewhere!

### **SPECIAL PROJECTS**

Do you dream of making and sailing a viking longboat? How about making arrows from scratch from point to fletch? Whatever your special dream project, the group welcomes your efforts. Members often meet and work with other members to develop special skills and projects, and its a great place to network to find your own dream team. Sharing of research, skills, and ideas is what Avalon is all about, so go ahead and just do it! And don't forget to take pictures so you can share it with yet more people!

### **MOVIE NIGHTS**

Sometimes people like to gather together and watch movies, documentaries, and tv shows together. It can be purely fun such as watching comedies, or it can be educational such as documentaries or historically accurate programs.



Dame Ruth, Baroness Thatuna, shows off a medieval style goblet she made, and fired in a historical replica of a medieval pit firing.

# **CULTURE**

As you will learn if you have not already seen, there is a subculture among re-enactors. Special terms, special ceremonies, habits and greetings can all add to the fun, but can also seem a bit odd and confusing to someone new! This section tries to address some of these items.

## **ROYALTY AND OTHER TITLES**

You know Joe is an insurance salesman, so why does everyone call him King Alfred??? Why is John a Baron? It's quite easy. Terms of nobility basically refer to jobs or a relationship with someone. Nobles are people who manage various size groups. Squires and pages are people who form a relationship with a knight to learn what the knight has to teach. Calling someone a king or duke is a lot more atmospheric than calling them a manager. When you see someone wearing crowns or being addressed to as Your Grace, relax, it's all part of the fun. It's acknowledging that the person is doing job that benefits everyone and it's part of the historical feel that makes events so fun.

## **WHAT'S IN A NAME...?**

Even though not everyone develops a persona, most people in historical recreation do pick a new name to use within the group, a name that might have been heard at some place during the years 500-1603. The only rules about your name or persona is that you should avoid using the names of real or fictional people, and avoid the use of titles of nobility. An interesting place to start is this database of medieval names: <http://www.lowchensaustralia.com/names/medievalnames.htm>

## **WHAT'S A PERSONA?**

A persona is kind of like role playing....you create and name an individual that might have lived in some place and time in history. You take on the name and attributes of this person at events. How detailed you get depends on your inclination. Some people create detailed life histories of their persona, and choose to dress and equip themselves according to the time and place of history their persona comes from. Other people just pick a name and leave it at that. Personas could be fun, but they are not required.

## **TERMS OF ADDRESS**

Lords, Ladies, Sirs, Dames, and Graces, oh my! How do you know what to call someone? Well, don't sweat it. There are some easy short cuts that will help you steer the conversational waters smoothly even if you don't know all the details. If you really get into ceremony, check out the heraldry manual for details, but for now these three styles will keep you going in most cases.

**Master/Mistress:** This is useful for anyone. It can be used with their name, or with an occupation. For example, "Master John" and "Mistress Juliana" would be good. If you approach someone working on metal such as forging try "Master Smith", or say you see someone working on making arrows, call them "Mistress Fletcher". If you really don't

have a clue to name or calling, try “Good Master” or “Good Mistress” as a general address. If someone has only one name, you can try including their place name. For example, John, whose local chapter is called Thatuna, might be called “Master John of Thatuna” for a more formal address.

**Dame/Sir:** Knights have their own title too. Male knights are called “Sir” and female knights are called “Dame”. Examples would be “Sir John” and “Dame Jane”. An easy way to know if someone is a knight is if they are wearing a blue or white belt, or if they are wearing spurs on their heels.

**Your Grace:** While anyone can be a master or mistress, its fun to add in some pomp and circumstance when addressing royalty. If you see someone who wears crowns or coronets on their head, try calling them “Your Grace” There are specific terms for each that you can find in the heraldry manual, but in a pinch Your Grace is a graceful way to recognize most job ranks and keep the feel of history flowing.

## **BELTS, SPURS, AND POINTY HATS**

As mentioned before titles are used to help acknowledge achievement, positions, or jobs held within the group. With these titles also come other symbols of recognition. Historically it was called sumptuary. For the modern newbie consider these symbols as big targets. The people displaying these symbols are usually experienced in the group and some aspect of history, and can offer you assistance and help! It also helps avoid confusion to avoid wearing things that match these symbols.

**Belts:** The color of belt can tell you something about the person. A blue or white belt is worn by a Knight. A Red belt is worn by a person squired to a Knight.

**Spurs:** Spurs are worn by Knights.

**Pointy Hats:** Pointy hats are a casual way of referring to crowns, or coronets of rank. A crown is worn by a person in charge of managing a regional geographic area.

**Circlets:** A circlet of rank is a metal band worn around the head *with a single stone* in the center. These items are worn by officers who are managers of smaller geographic areas, people who have earned several knighthoods, and by other persons of in-group achievement.

## **HERALDRY**

Heraldry is the art of coat-of-arms. Each member is welcome to develop, register, and use their own coat-of-arms and badge. Banners flying in the wind look really neat, and badges are perfect for identifying your belongings. To find out more about designing, registering, and using a coat-of-arms, check out the Heraldry Manual.

## **WEAPONS**

Most modern day denizens think of things like swords when they think about history. Historically weapons were a part of life and garb, and even the poorer person kept an eating or work knife on their person. Weapons like swords and axes will be around an event site, if not part of costume then as a part of martial arts activities or ceremonial use.

Its important that all members think of weapons not only as costume accouterments but also as potential weapons. That means its important to treat all weapons with respect, be they your own or someone else's. Weapon etiquette is safety etiquette, and following a few certain rules will prevent mishap and misunderstanding even among the new.

- \* Never, EVER, brandish a weapon. If you draw a sword or knife, do so slowly, looking around you to make sure you don't accidentally hit someone who might not see you. Never wave the weapon in the air, or pretend to hurt someone with it.

- \* Never touch a weapon that does nt belong to you. You may see piles of weapons and armor where the combatants store them before armoring up, do not handle these items without permission. In addition to just being polite, there may also be safety reasons that would urge an owner to extra caution in handling.

- \* Never touch the blade or face of a weapon. There are two good reasons. One reason is that oils and salts in your skin will cause a blade to rust. Another reason is that the blade or face of the weapon may be very sharp. Even the swords used in combat, with flat edges, can still be sharp because of spalls kicked up in martial art use.

## **DRINKING**

This is a question asked a lot about Avalon by people concerned about drunkenness. Its very important that new people understand that Avalon is family friendly-- for kids and adult family members. This means that those of legal age may imbibe alcoholic beverages (usually home brewed) but such imbibing should *never* lead to loss of control or awareness of self and others.

In other words, the Avalon culture welcomes moderate social drinking of legal aged adults, but does *not* welcome drunkenness. Members of legal drinking age can feel free to make and share and try wines and ales, *but must be prepared to be asked to leave if they ever behave inappropriately.*

All attendees must be prepared to show a legal ID (such as drivers license) if they wish to drink. Underaged members are not allowed to drink alcoholic beverages for any reason, this is against the law. If a parent of a minor wants their minor to taste an alcoholic beverage, then the parent must take the minor **INSIDE** their own tent to do so.

## **THE ONE LINER. . . .**

No discussion of re-creation culture would be complete without warning the newbie that they WILL run into the use of movie and tv show one-liners. Just why is Sir Jan hopping on one foot, waving his elbows, and yelling in a terrible accent “Its only a flesh wound!” ? It can be fathom less unless you are in the Know. . . ! For your edification-- and amusement-- you can see the sources of many of these quotes by watching the movies *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, *The Princess Bride*, and episodes of the TV show *Black Adder*.

## **WAYS TO LEARN MORE**

There are many ways to learn more within the group--- learning is encouraged as its one of the most basic goals of our organization.

### **Ask Questions**

Never, ever hesitate to ask questions. If you see someone doing something that looks interesting, ask them about it. If you want to learn how to do something, let people know and they will try to get you in contact with someone who can show and teach you. If you can't ask in person, ask on the internet message boards.

### **Become a Squire or Page**

Squires and pages are basically people who ‘apprentice’ to a more experienced member. A squire and page are basically the same thing, except squires are apprenticed to a Knight and pages are apprenticed to non-knights. While everyone is more than willing to share information with people, sometimes a more formal arrangement is pleasing to the individuals. Basically, a squiring or paging is an agreement for the learned one to teach the non-learned one in exchange for help. The knight will set tasks for the squire to do that will help them learn, and the will guide their advancement in an agreed area of knowledge. In exchange the squire helps out the knight and agrees to work towards learning what the knight offers to teach.

### **Join a Guild**

Guilds are subgroups in Avalon that specialize in certain activities or skills. For example, people who like to cook would join the Culinary Guild or people who enjoy crafting with cloth or yarn would enjoy the Sewing Guild. A guild is one way for people to share information, tips, hints, and research with each other, and to organize more activities that relate to the guilds subject.

## **COURTESY AND ETIQUETTE**

Most issues of politeness are pretty universal, but here are a few hints for the new person to consider.

\* Always attempt to cover up modern items, for example pouring a soda into a goblet

rather than have the can visible, or not blasting a radio of rap music from your tent at the camp out. The more people remove modern stuff from site, the better an event looks and sounds!

\*Always ask before touching something. If you don't know who owns something, then ask and someone will direct you to the owner. Most people are very open about lending equipment or showing off their arts project, but sometimes there may be special care involved or the owner might not want to have their object handled without them being present. Be polite and ask before touching or picking up someone's belongings.

\* When you are lent equipment, costume, or other item treat it with care, and make sure to return it to the proper place when done.



Master Mathias, on horseback, introduces his beast to an onlooker at a camping event.

# **Game Play**

## **WHAT IS GAME PLAY?**

Game play refers to the engaging in our activities. On the face of it, people show up, do their thing, and have fun. But the fun hinges around the structure that keeps things happening and organized. This section will talk a little bit about such things.

## **UNDERLYING CORPORATION**

Avalon is legally a non-profit 501(c)3 educational organization. There is also a Board of Directors who deal with the mundane legal stuff of the corporation. The rules about finances and such for starting new groups are set up to take care of the mundane legal requirements that we have to meet to keep our non profit status. Does this paragraph bore you to tears? Don't worry about it :) Most people never deal with this stuff at all.

## **GAME PLAY STRUCTURE**

The game play structure is has nothing to do with the corporate structure. Yippee!

Game play structure is how we organize ourselves to be able to engage in the fun gatherings and activities we like to. Like any social group, it takes management. You can learn more about the structure of Avalon by reading the main manuals, but here is a gloss of what may be useful.

Local: The local chapter is called a Subdivision.

Regional: The regional chapter is called a Realm.

National: The entire organization is called Realms of Avalon, and will use terms like "Imperial

So when you play, you are showing up in your local city, to a subdivision. The subdivision is part of a region, and these regions are part of the national group. Make sense? :)

## **ABOUT OFFICERS**

Club officers are called "ministers" in the group, in keeping with historical terminology. There are two kinds of officers-- general managers, or crown officers, and specific area officers. Specific area officers will run and oversee a very specific kind of activity, such as archery or arts and sciences. The general officers helps all the area officers work together to make events take place.

## **ABOUT THE MANUALS**

The manuals are designed to run game play. These are the texts that define how we gather and how we run competitions and how we organize to make thing happen. Many of the manuals also serve to teach a little bit about history as well, for example the Heraldry manual not only talks about how to use heraldry in our group, but also serves as a basic primer for historical heraldic technique. There is system in place for changing the manuals, so if enough people want to they

can change the rules or systems.

### **AVALON PARLIAMENT (I.E. DOING BUSINESS)**

Business matters are those things that every club runs into, making and changing the rules for interaction and dealing with problems or complications. Not everyone will be interested in participating in the business of the group, but all paid members are invited and requested to take part by making their opinions known.

There is a three tiered structure for business matters. The way people work business in the group is by participating in the Privy Council, House of Lords, and the Commons. The Privy Council is a small group that deals with important issues, made up of elected members. The House of Lords (HoL) is made up of nobles, officers, and knights and some ministers. The Commons is made up of every paid member.

For an example on how it works, lets say there are suggested changes to how arts and science tournaments are done. The changes are made to the manual. The proposed changed manual goes to the The Privy Council for discussion and debate. When problems, if any, are worked out the proposed manual is then sent to the larger House of Lords. The experienced members on the House of Lords debate and revise the manual. When they agrees on the changed manual, then it is sent to the Commons for the general membership to vote on. If the commons votes yes, then the new changed manual becomes the current, active manual that is used to run arts and sciences.

### **VOTING**

Every paid member of Avalon gets to make a vote on issues that affect the group. When proposed changes are made to manuals, or certain major offices are up for grabs, or when changes are made to how the group is structured or run, these sorts of things will go to a vote. All paid members are invited to the Commons mailing list that will allow them to participate. Since Avalon is a national organization, the internet is the tool used to give everyone a chance to discuss and vote. The Commons list will post a poll, and all the member has to do is point and click on the appropriate response. The individual can go back and change their vote if they change their mind, up until the poll closes.

### **ROLLS AND KNIGHTHOODS**

Knighthoods are earned by participating, and the office that helps track these points is called the Ministry of Rolls. Each time a person attends a gathering, enters a tourney, teaches a workshop, etc. they sign in. As your points add up, you rise in rank. Knighthoods are one of the benefits of a paid membership, is also a good reason to make sure to sign in at all events and on the lists of the events you participate in.

### **AWARDS AND HONORS**

Once a year people nominate other people for awards and honors. If you know someone that needs special recognition for their efforts-- if they are new or old-- be sure to offer a nomination

when the yearly call for submissions goes out.

### **WHAT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GEOGRAPHIC AND FREE ASSOCIATION GROUPS?**

There are two main types of groups within Avalon. There are Geographic and Free-association subgroups. A geographic group is a local or regional chapter of the organization. Every member is part of a geographic group, which group depends on where they live.

A Free-Association group usually has a goal or stated purpose, and a person may or may not choose to join one or more of these free association groups. A person may join or leave a free association group at anytime. Examples of Free association groups are guilds and households.

### **WHAT IS A HOUSEHOLD?**

The goal of a household is to provide a social outlet that allows members to be as inclusive or exclusive as they wish. For example, a geographic subdivision is open to anyone who wants to play, but a household may be restricted to only people with certain kinds of persona.

A household is like a sub-club within avalon. It is a group of people that form a club based on some common ideal, culture, or goal. For example, say a group of people like the idea of being pirates. They can form a Pirate household, where each member of the group has to have pirate costume, have pirate personas, and address each other with pirate rankings. Or suppose there are a group of people who like a certain culture or time period, have a certain level of accuracy they want, or wish to promote a certain goal such as service and chivalry.

Each member may choose whether or not they want to join a household-- its not mandatory. IF they do choose to join a household, however they can only belong to one household at a time, though each households will have its own way of doing things and its own rules for entrance. Each member may choose to leave their household at any time, though advanced notice is appreciated. The leader of a household is considered a manager and representative of the households members and thus earns a spot on the House of Lords.

### **HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?**

Remember that you can always ask questions in person at activities. Especially look for knights and officers, who will be glad to offer you their take on your question. You can also check the web site library-- <http://www.realmsofavalon.org/> is there to offer you forms, manuals, and other bits of interest. You can also post questions on the mailing list/discussion boards you are part of, or use the Avalon discussion board, just the place for chit chat, questions, or suggestions. You can get there by this url: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Avalon/>

# **CAMPING CHECK LIST**

*A list of items to help you bring all you may need!*

## **Camp**

- Tent
- Fabric to cover modern stuff
- Foam or air mattress
- Sleeping Bag/ Blankets (even warm days can have cold nights)
- Chairs or benches (with coverings, if mundane)
- Enclosed candle lanterns (non enclosed flame may be fire hazard)
- Lighter and candles
- Flashlight
- Bag for Trash

## **Tournament**

- Combat gear
- Arts project(s)
- Documentation
- Archery gear

## **Personal**

- Sunscreen
- Any medications you are on (including bee sting kits if you are allergic!)
- Toothbrush and other toiletries
- Basic first aid kit
- Sleep wear
- Day Garb (layers are good for when it gets hotter or cooler)
- Ceremonial Garb (for court and feast)
- Straw or felt hat
- Wet Wipes (Also good for 'showering' when showers aren't available)
- Sterilizing hand gel

## **Food**

- Bowl, plate, utensils
- Drinking horn or mug
- Cooking vessels
- Cooler for cold and dry goods (keep critters out of food as well as chilled)
- Ice
- Water and gatorade (remember soda can dehydrate you!!!)
- Camp Stove and fuel and matches
- Food and drink of choice
- Can opener