

Welcome to the Second Class of Elfsea Academie!

SCA Personae – What it is, Why you need one, and How to find one

Part of enjoying the SCA is being able to shrug off the ‘daily grind’ of the modern, mundane world and enter ‘The Current Middle Ages.’ To assist in this enjoyment, it is requested of new SCAers that they create a ‘persona.’

What exactly is a persona?

Per the entry in the Wikipedia article, “The goal of a well-crafted persona is a historically accurate person who might have lived in a particular historical time and place.”

How do I find my persona?

Finding your persona can be a very personal thing.

Some members have simply used their own actual family names as the foundation of a persona (ex. George Lancaster is known as Honorable Lord George of Lancaster.)

Some have explored their family history to find a name or country of origin to base a persona from (ex. Stephen Hays is known as Sir Daire de Haya, with de Haya being the previous Scottish form of Hays.)

Some have chosen a location of interest to be the focus of a persona (ex. Viscount Sir Galen of Bristol suggests that he is from Bristol, England.)

Some have chosen a descriptor as the basis of a persona (Lady Jeanne-Marie la Verriere suggests that Jeanne-Marie is a glass worker, as la Verriere is French for Glazier.)

Some prefer not to make their persona anything at all, and keep it simple (Gemma of Northkeep suggests that Gemma lives in the SCA Barony of Northkeep.)

Can my persona be someone famous?

Ummm.....no. None can take up the persona of someone specific from history (ex. Queen Elizabeth I, Ghengis Khan, Julius Caesar, etc.) nor can they assume the persona of someone else, whether living or dead (Sir Riccardo di Pisa was a Knight and Lion of Ansteorra. Just because he has passed away does not mean his SCA name is ‘released’ and available for use.) Fictional characters who are well known are also not allowed (ex. Robin of Locksley/ Robin Hood, Arthur Pendragon, Bilbo Baggins, Tyrion Lannister, etc.)

What does it mean to register my name, and why should I do this?

Registering your persona name with your local Herald is a very smart thing to do. Firstly, it reserves your name SCA-wide. This means that no other SCA person may have your name. Your registered name will be used to ensure your awards are given to the right person, and may be required for entry in some tournaments or competitions, as well as for some local or SCA wide offices.

Okay, I have a persona picked out. How do I get the registration process started?

Great! The first thing to do is to have your new persona name ‘checked’ by your local Herald. The Herald will conflict-check the name against the entire SCA, as well as most SCA-known resources for names. If your name passes this check, it will be forwarded on to the Society College of Arms. If your name passes this level, congratulations! You have a registered name and persona in the SCA!