

# Riverbend Medieval Society

## Knighthood Guidelines

*Riverbend Medieval Society Inc*



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| <b>Document Name:</b>  | Riverbend Medieval Society<br>Knighthood Guidelines |
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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **Esprit De Corps**

1. Esprit de Corps is a French phrase that was founded in 1780. The meaning of Esprit de Corps, philosophically, is that of the common spirit existing in the members of a group and inspiring enthusiasm, devotion, and strong regard for the honour of the group.
2. This feeling of Esprit de Corps is one that we need to establish and maintain within our society if we are to attract and retain new enthusiastic members.
3. To do this we need people to feel they are valued not only by our words but by our actions and procedures. They also need to feel that they are a part of the overall team that is striving to make a society that is inclusive and rewarding, and one that they can be proud to represent and participate in.
4. To this end Riverbend Medieval Society (RMS) has decided to introduce its own Knighthood group with clear and transparent direction for those wishing to pursue advancement in this area.
5. To assist in this aim Riverbend Medieval Society will establish a Riverbend Medieval Society Knighthood Committee.

## **2. IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL CANDIDATES**

### **How do members indicate their desire to be a Squire or Knight**

1. RMS will establish a register of members in which those wishing to be considered as squires or Knights will be able to enter their names and know that they are under consideration.
2. This would provide two things
  - a. Firstly, the RMS Knighthood Committee would have a clear list of possible Squire/Knight candidates and their current situation. This would then allow them to watch those members with the clear knowledge that this member wishes to be a Squire/Knight (as some may not desire this position with its associated responsibilities).
  - b. Secondly, it would allow the members to know that they are in the eye of the RMS Knighthood Committee and remove the pressure of never knowing and the endless question of “do I ask or will they ask me”.
3. RMS members who have indicated desire to be squired or considered for Knighthood within RMS will be observed and discussed by the members of the Knighthood Committee.

### **3. CRITERIA GUIDELINES FOR ELEVATION TO KNIGHTHOOD WITHIN RIVERBEND MEDIEVAL SOCIETY**

#### **Elevation to Knighthood**

1. Members of Riverbend Medieval Society will be considered for elevation to Knighthood based on their Honour, Chivalry, and ability to represent themselves and Riverbend Medieval Society in a light that brings renown and credit to the society.
2. Although a consideration, time within RMS or ability to defeat all comers in the List field are not prerequisites for advancement. Chivalric conduct within the List is at least as important as martial prowess.
3. Competence with at least one of the knightly weapons (Longsword, Sword and Shield, Foot Lance/polearm, Dagger) is a requirement.
4. Potential Knights must present a persona with soft kit, harness and attitude that reflects the status of a Knight within RMS and brings renown to RMS.
5. Potential Knights in RMS must actively seek to advance RMS and its members by assisting in training of combatants, participation in RMS events and assisting members with persona, soft kit and harness development. Active participation and chivalric conduct are an essential requirement.
6. Potential Knights in RMS must conduct themselves with regard to the RMS Knightly Virtues at all times as an indicator of their ability to represent themselves and RMS as a Knight.

#### **RMS Knightly Virtues**

1. Chivalry and honour within RMS are based on the ancient “Song of Roland”. The “Song of Roland” is recognised as one of the original Knight’s Code of Chivalry. The code taken from this song/poem has been distilled into virtues which are as follows:
  - a. Charity
  - b. Justice
  - c. Prudence
  - d. Temperance
  - e. Honour
  - f. Respect
  - g. Truth
  - h. Diligence
  - i. Valour

## **4. KNIGHTHOOD WITHIN RIVERBEND MEDIEVAL SOCIETY**

### **Knights within RMS will be raised as Knights Bachelor**

1. The most basic Medieval Knight Rank within the realm of Knighthood was that of a Knight Bachelor. This is a Knight that does not belong to a particular Chivalric Order. These knights operated without formal ties to any specific lord or noble house, functioning as independent and freelance warriors. They actively sought opportunities for military service and battlefield valour.
2. In their role as Knights Bachelor, these Knights partook in a wide array of activities, including tournaments, battles, and campaigns. Their participation allowed them to showcase their chivalric behaviour and martial skills, thereby earning recognition for their chivalrous conduct and martial proficiency. Knights Bachelor frequently received grants of lands or estates as tokens of appreciation for their dedicated service.
3. Raising our Knights to the rank of “Knights Bachelor “gives us the ability to have Knights that, may in time, wish to be considered for advancement within the “Order of The Stag and Thistle” or remain within the RMS system.

## **5. ASSESSMENT OF CANDIDATES**

### **Riverbend Medieval Society Knighthood Committee**

1. Riverbend Medieval Society will establish a Knighthood Committee
  - a. Membership of this committee will consist of all Knights of Riverbend Medieval Society. The committee will be chaired by the senior Riverbend Knight or his delegate.
  - b. Where RMS has less than three (3) Knights the committee will consist of all RMS Knights, the Seneschal (President) of RMS and the Armoured Combat Marshal.
  - c. Other members may be co-opted at the discretion of the senior Riverbend Knight or his delegate.
2. The Knighthood Committee will confidentially discuss candidates informally throughout the re-enactment season. Where a candidate appears to be a suitable candidate for elevation to Knighthood the committee will meet formally to confidentially discuss the candidate’s suitability for elevation.
3. If the candidate is considered suitable for elevation to Knighthood the Knighthood Committee will make a recommendation to the Riverbend Medieval Society Committee that the member is considered suitable for elevation to Knighthood.
4. If the RMS Committee does not agree, a confidential meeting of the Knighthood Committee and the RMS Committee will occur to discuss the candidate and resolve the matter. These discussions will remain confidential. The result of this meeting is final.
5. RMS would aim to elevate no more than one (1) candidate per calendar year but if in the opinion of the Knighthood Committee no suitable candidates are available then no Knighting will occur.

## **7. KNIGHTING CEREMONY**

### **Conduct of Knighting Ceremony**

1. Riverbend Medieval Society will conduct a Knighting Ceremony based as much as possible on documented Knighting Ceremonies of the 13-15<sup>th</sup> Century period.
2. The Knighting Ceremony will be conducted as a Members of Riverbend Medieval Society event. Family members of the candidate who are not members of RMS may attend.
3. The timing of the Knighting Ceremony will be arranged between the Knighthood Committee, the RMS Committee, the Candidate and Victory Village.
  - a. It is generally considered that the Knighting Ceremony will be conducted on a Saturday at Victory Village either afternoon or night and be followed by a feast of acclamation for all present.
  - b. If possible, this will be the Saturday of a Fayre Day week-end to allow the new knight to be presented to the public on the Fayre Day.

## **8. RESPONSIBILITIES OF RIVERBEND MEDIEVAL SOCIETY KNIGHTS**

### **Knighthood within the RMS responsibilities**

#### **What is Knight Service?**

1. In the European feudal system, Knight Service consisted of, but was not limited to military duties performed in return for tenures of land. The military service might be required for wars or expeditions or simply for riding and escorting services or guarding the castle.
2. Given that RMS Knights will not be required to perform military duties as described above, RMS has developed a number of responsibilities in lieu of these military duties.
3. Knights raised within RMS will have the following responsibilities:
  - a. Take under their guidance at least one squire (if a suitable candidate is available),
  - b. Be available to train and actively seek to train members of RMS in knightly virtues and weapon skills,
  - c. Be available and actively seek to assist members with development of persona, soft kit and harness,
  - d. Actively seek to give talks on medieval subjects of their choosing at Fayre Days throughout the year,
  - e. Actively seek to advance RMS through attendance and participation at Fayre Days and outside events.
  - f. Always strive to bring renown to RMS and never to bring dishonour to themselves or RMS.
  - g. Always strive to maintain the Knightly Virtues and lead others through their example.

## 9. CONCLUSION

1. Knights of RMS have a responsibility to remember that being granted your spurs is only the beginning of the journey. You must now always strive to be worthy of the honour of representing RMS as a Knight.
2. The introduction of not only a Knighthood within RMS but a pathway for members to strive to be a part of the Knighthood group is a step forward for RMS and will provide not only a feeling of belonging and camaraderie in the group but a sense of Esprit de Corps that is the desire of many within the RMS.

Compiled      Mark Marshall  
                    May 2024

Sources        "Song of Roland" ca 100 Probable author Turol  
                    "Book of the Order of Chivalry" ca 1274-1276 author Ramon LLull  
                    other Historical Documents  
                    Input from Knights of other orders  
                    Input from members

Authorised     Riverbend Medieval Society Committee  
                    9<sup>th</sup> June 2024

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