

## Gold Key

This outline was found in the East Kingdom Handbook, and updated by Fru Ellisif of Endless Hills on 5/07.

1. What is it?
  - (a) Extra garb, feast gear, and \$1/yrd material to purchase and anything else that a newcomer might need to borrow for their first few events.
  - (b) Chatelaine/hospitaler's office holder or his/her deputy are in charge of it, but it may be run in conjunction with the Minister of Arts and Science.
  - (c) Gold Key should all be kept together if possible. If not, make sure that one person has an inventory of what is available and where it is so that things will be available for newcomers on short notice.
2. How to Build a Gold Key.
  - (a) Ask older members to donate good cast-offs. Even old garb can be better than no garb. Worn garb can be refurbished for smaller people if seams and hems are shot. Fabric from worn goods can be made into hoods, pouches, sleeves, napkins, table runners, and children's garb.
  - (b) Make sure that you have some accessories (belts, pouches, veils, hoods), these can make a newcomer feel "pulled together".
  - (c) Ask for donations of old bowls, plates, goblets, utensils, napkins, table clothes, and candle holders when members replace their first gear with new, fancier stuff.
  - (d) Hit yard sales and flea markets with newcomers or alone to stockpile things people can pay you back for later.
  - (e) If you have no funds for a Gold Key, earmark some of the money from your next paid demo to start one. You might even take up a collection at an event for spare change. Spare change from 50 people can add up to a lot! Please check with your local and Kingdom exchequer to see what kinds of fund raisers you can run and how to earmark your demo monies, as all official local group fund raiser monies must be turned into the group's exchequer.
  - (f) If all else fails, check with other chatelaines. Some of the older groups have large Gold Keys and can maybe donate a few pieces to your group. Or they can lend things to your newcomers for events. This is one good reason to have a good working relationship with your other local and regional chatelaines.
  - (g) Offer to help other groups create Gold Key garb in return for occasional use of it until you have the funds to start your own. Remember your manners. Ask well in advance and return the materials promptly and in good shape.
3. How to keep Gold Key once you have it.
  - (a) If possible, garb should be kept someplace where it can be hung up. If this is not feasible, keep it on a shelf or in a box, neatly folded. Air it out and iron it, if necessary, before loaning it out. Check occasionally to see if garb needs mending or refurbishing.

- (b) Label all gold key with some kind of symbol or write the name of your group in the collar of each piece, so that is harder for newcomer to walk away with it or that if it gets lost, it can be returned more easily.
- (c) Garb should be washed before storing, if possible. If you have any velvets or brocades that require too much expense to have cleaned after each wearing, make sure borrowers wear a chemise under them. Better yet, only lend the velvets to people who wouldn't mind paying a little bit toward the up-keep of the garment. Also air the garment out before storing, all this will lengthen the life of the garment.
- (d) You should probably clean Gold Key yourself, or have a fabric conscious deputy do it. Newcomers, who might mean well, may not realize how to wash some of our more richly fabric-ed garments.
- (e) Have a sign-out sheet for people borrowing the garb, so you know how to get in touch with them, if they do not return the garb when you expect.
- (f) If you are having trouble with people walking off with Gold Key, you can make it standard policy to only lend it out for the event day. You can do this by giving out the garments at the beginning of the day and explaining to the newcomer where you will be, so that they can return it to you later. Ask your exchequer for advice before asking newcomers for a deposit on borrowing Gold Key.