

For the August 2003 meetings, printed October 31, 2003

To all the College of Arms and all others who may read this missive, from François Laurel, Zenobia Wreath, and Mari Pelican, greetings.

The following is a table showing the status of Letters of Intent, Laurel Letters of Pend and Discussion, and Letters of Intent to Protect. The header rows are the dates of the meetings that will consider them, the dates when primary commentary is due, and the dates when responses to primary commentary are due. The key follows.

Wreath meeting	Aug 16	Sep 13	Oct 18	Nov 22	Dec 13?	Jan 17
Pelican meeting	Aug 23 & 13	Sep 27	Oct 11	Nov 15	Dec 20	Jan 17
Comment by				too late	Oct 31	Nov 30
Respond by				Oct 31	Nov 30	Dec 31
Letters of Intent being considered:						
AEthelmearc	Mar 24 & Apr 26	May 28	Jun 26	Jul 24	-	Sep 25
An Tir	Apr 29	May 28	Jun 26	Jul 28	(Aug 28)	(Sep 29)
Ansteorra	Apr 21	May 21 [P May 29]	Jun 22	Jul 18 [P Jul 26]	Aug 21 [P Aug 29]	(Sep 22)
Artemisia	Apr 30	-	Jun 30	-	Aug 29	Sep 30
Atenveldt	Apr 25	-	Jun 25	Jul 25	(Aug 25)	(Sep 25)
Atlantia	-	Apr 26 & May 29	Jun 25	Jul 22	-	-
Caid	Apr 20 & Apr 30	May 28	-	Jul 05 & Jul 30	Aug 25 & Aug 26	-
Calontir	Apr 24	-	Jun 25	(Jun 25)	Aug 08	-
Drachenwald	-	Apr 25 & May 29	Jun 26	Jul 24	Aug 28	(Sep 25)
Ealdormere	Apr 20 [P Apr 28]	May 20 [P May 29]	-	Jul 17 [P Jul 26]	-	Sep 18 [P Sep 29]
East	Apr 06	-	May 17	Jun 20 [P Jul 01]	-	Sep 05
Lochac	-	Apr 15 [P Apr 28]	-	-	-	-
Meridies	Apr 30	May 31	Jun 30	Jul 31	Aug 31	Sep 30
Middle	Apr 07	May 12	Jun 25	-	Jul 25 [P Aug 14] & Aug 25	(Sep 25)
Nebuly	-	-	-	-	(Aug 21)	-
Northshield	-	-	-	Jul 01 [P Jul 31]	-	Sep 30
Outlands	Apr 28	May 30	Jun 25	-	Jul 23 & (Aug 28)	(Sep 25)
Siren (RfS X.4.j)	-	-	-	-	Aug 30	-
Trimaris	-	May 26	-	-	(Jul 31 [P Aug 02])	-
West	Apr 22	-	Jun 18	-	Aug 27	Sep 24
Laurel LoPaD [LoAR date]	Apr 21 [Jan LoAR]	May 27 [Feb LoAR]	Jun 03 [Mar LoAR] & Jun 30 [Apr LoAR]	Jul 16 [May LoAR]	-	Sep 29 [Jul LoAR]

Month day: the date on the Letter of Intent, Letter of Pend and Discussion, or Letter of Intent to Protect.

(Month day): for administrative reasons, this LoI has not yet been scheduled.

[P Month day]: postmarked on that bracketed date, so the LoI is redated or postponed.

"-": no LoI is scheduled for that meeting from that kingdom.

?: tentative.

December: Wreath's meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 13.

Not all letters of intent may be considered when they are originally scheduled on this cover letter. The date of mailing of the LoI, date of receipt of the Laurel packet, or other factors may delay consideration of certain letters of intent. Additionally, some letters of intent received may not have been scheduled because the administrative requirements (receipt of the forms packet, receipt of the necessary fees, et cetera) have not yet been met.

REMINDER: Until all administrative requirements are met, the letter may not be scheduled.

From Laurel: Beyond the Encyclopedia

During the commentary on this issue, most indicated a preference for a simple criterion or concrete list that can be used by the local consulting herald as well as the College of Arms for identifying which names will be protected. Until recently, we were using the very existence of an entry in an encyclopedia as that criterion; that policy was amended in the January 2003 LoAR to be the starting point, thus allowing Laurel and the College of Arms to discuss the relative merit or prominence of each name.

Many have voiced concern that this is too arbitrary. Indeed, it does leave room for the Sovereign of Arms responsible for name decisions to register names that would have been returned simply because a 19th C statesman had an entry in an encyclopedia. This policy does add some uncertainty in favor of registration if the name has a similar entry in a general-use encyclopedia.

There were several creative ideas presented in answer to my request for methods of weighing the prominence of the people and names with an encyclopedia entry. The goal was a simple non-arbitrary formula that could be used by anyone. The range of suggestions showed that no formula will satisfactorily provide an answer.

Until such time as a list or other criteria can be defined, we will weigh each potential conflict with an encyclopedia entry on a case-by-case basis. We ask that commenters state whether or not they feel a person is important enough to protect when citing a potential conflict with an entry in an encyclopedia. Ideally, this statement would be provided early enough to allow other CoA commenters time to provide input to Laurel as comments on comments.

From Laurel: Next Laurel Team Chosen (or, Habemus Mamem!)

At their October meeting, the Board of Directors selected Shauna of Carrick Point to be the next Laurel Queen of Arms. Shauna just stepped down as Sage Herald for Artemisia, and recently she stepped down as Golden Wing Principal Herald after a very successful term. She will be handling the administrative duties and has assembled a team to handle submissions. Margaret MacDuibhsithe will serve as Pelican Queen of Arms and make name decisions; Evan da Collaureo will serve as Wreath King of Arms and make armory decisions.

They will be making all the decisions as of the April 2004 LoAR, although they may be making some of the March decisions as part of the transition. They will not officially be warranted in their offices until the April 2004 Board of Directors meeting.

Beginning with the **December 2003** Letters of Intent, please send all packets and payments to Jacquie Ziegler, 812 S 32nd St, Billings, MT 59101-3924. Her e-mail address is shauna@bresnan.net (will accept e-mail LoIs and LoCs). Note these addresses; her address and e-mail address as listed in the roster distributed with the July LoAR were **incorrect**.

Electronic copies of Letters of Intent, Comment, Response, et cetera, should continue to be e-mailed to submissions@sca.org.

I hope that you will give them all the support you have given me, Mari, Zenobia, and Daniel.

From Laurel: John Hancock Did Not Use E-Mail

There are several letters used in the submissions process that require a signature. If a signature is required, then the letter must include a copy of the handwritten signature. A text e-mail message does not meet the requirement for a handwritten signature.

From Laurel: Electronic Copies of LoIs and Commentary

During the last two years, we have seen increased and apparently universal use of electronic word-processing packages to create Letters of Intent. In all but a few cases, we have received the second required copy of the Letter of Intent electronically.

With the increased dependence on electronic tools for processing of submissions into Letters of Acceptances and Returns, the need for electronic versions of the LoI has moved from a nicety to a requirement.

Currently, the Administrative Handbook (V.C.1) allows the second of the two required copies of the LoI to be either a single-sided copy (which was once used for actual cut and paste processing) or an electronic copy. It is my intent to remove the phrase "*a single sided copy or*" from the second line so the line reads, "*One of these must be an electronic copy (either via e-mail or on diskette).*"

The same move to electronic production has been seen in Letters of Comment. The inclusion of commentary into the working documents used for decisions also requires electronic versions to be received by the Laurel Sovereign of Arms. We intend to change the Administrative Handbook to make an electronic copy of the letter the preferred format for the second copy of the LoC. Although a vanishingly small number of letters of comment have been received in only paper form recently, we will allow a paper copy as the second copy on a case-by-case basis. The Administrative Handbook section VII.D.1 will be modified to read:

All commenters must send two copies of their comments to the Laurel Sovereign of Arms. One of these should be an electronic copy (either via e-mail or on diskette); a single-sided copy may be sent to Laurel Sovereign of Arms in place of the electronic copy with prior written permission. The other copy must be a printed copy.

The changes will be in effect for Letters of Intent and Letters of Comment from January 2004 forward.

From Laurel: Laurel Letter of Intent Enclosed with This LoAR

We look forward to receiving your comments.

From Wreath: Responses to Some Requests for Reblazon

In the last few months, we have received some requests for systematic reblazon of certain types of blazon in the Ordinary and Armorial. We thought we would set out Wreath and Laurel's current philosophy regarding such requests for systematic reblazon, and some of the specific requests.

There are two main reasons why armory is reblazoned. The first reason is that the submitter requests the reblazon: these cases are by their nature specific, and do not result in systematic reblazons. The second reason is that some specific type of blazon is so confusing that it will most likely not reproduce the emblazon correctly. In this category we have the March 1997 reblazon of all the *seahorses*, *natural seahorses*, or *hippocampi* to clearly indicate the type of charge, and the January 2003 reblazon of all the *trilliums* to clearly indicate the posture of the charge.

It is important to remember that while it is Laurel's right to reblazon armory at any point, a person who already has many scrolls on the walls using the original blazon may not wish to have a reblazon. As a result, we have limited reblazons to cases where the submitter has requested the reblazon or cases where the original blazon is genuinely confusing. We tend not to initiate systematic reblazons for less compelling reasons.

In some borderline cases, the issue of available time affects the decision of whether to do the systematic reblazon. When we reblazon armory, we always have to check in the files to ensure that the reblazon is correct, even if the request only appears to address a simple typographical error. (After all, just as when we do visual comparisons, an examination of the file may find that there is an error in the existing blazon that must be corrected, which may have nothing to do with the original systematic reblazon request). We are not blessed with much free time. We note with thanks those persons who, when requesting a systematic reblazon, are willing to do the (also time-consuming) preliminary research to identify all the cases which may require reblazon, rather than expecting Wreath and her staff to perform this work as well.

It may be determined that, for reasons other than inaccurate reproduction of emblazon, some particular blazon style is so problematic that it requires a systematic reblazon. People feeling strongly about any of the requests for systematic reblazon listed below - or who have similar concerns that have not yet been received - should write privately to Laurel and Wreath.

In some cases, a member of the College requests a systematic reblazon of some style of blazon which is not at all likely to cause an error in the emblazon, although examples of the blazon style in the Armorial and Ordinary may cause new heralds to emulate the undesirable blazon style. For example, despite the fact that (everyone, sing in unison!) "there is no 'e' in *contourmy*", the SCA has registered a number of blazons using *contourney*. We have received one request to correct all the "contourney" spellings. So far, we have not acceded to this request, because *contourney* is interpreted correctly by heralds and scribes and the submitters may not wish the blazon to be corrected.

In some cases, a member of the College may request a systematic reblazon of some blazon style to help with conflict checking. It is (or should be!) generally understood that blazon is to some extent a natural language as well as a technical language, and the Armorial and Ordinary follows that language's accepted variations. Thus, one finds SCA blazons that correctly represent the same charge as, variously, *a griffin rampant to sinister*, *a gryphon segreant and sinister facing*, or *a griffon contourny*. One also finds heraldically identical charges blazoned using terms that span the alphabet (and thus, a section of the Ordinary), often due to the period practice of canting. Thus, a picture of a particular type of stylized dog might be blazoned as a *brachet*, a *hound*, or a *talbot*.

It is important to remember that the Armorial and Ordinary's primary purpose is to record names and blazons, not to provide a data base for conflict checking. While some of our friends in Library or Information Science dream of a controlled vocabulary for SCA blazon, it is unlikely to happen in the Armorial and Ordinary because so many people would have their blazons changed without their request and so many cants would be removed. We may someday, perhaps, see a "controlled vocabulary and normalized style" blazon as an adjunct to the official blazon, used for computer search purposes only. However, the magnitude of the project, and the concerns about mistakenly introducing discrepancies between the official blazon and the "controlled vocabulary" blazon, have been prohibitive.

One request for reblazon has been made on the grounds that similar armorial designs are not phrased similarly in their blazons, which adds to difficulty in conflict checking. The specific issue is the blazon of tertiary charges: the identical designs (*Fieldless*) *On a mullet gules a trefoil Or* and (*Fieldless*) *A mullet gules charged with a trefoil Or* do not have identical blazons and will not be found next to each other in the Ordinary. The request asked that all the "charged with" blazons be changed to follow the "... on a ..." convention. Because both blazon styles are clear, and because different legal blazon choices routinely result in heraldically identical items being phrased quite differently in blazon, we have chosen not to implement this request.

One other request has been received from a few different people, on the grounds that the blazon style may lead to incorrect emblazons and that it is also difficult to conflict check. This is the blazon style that reads *Azure, a bend argent, three estoiles in bend sinister counterchanged*, rather than the more usual *Azure, on a bend between two estoiles argent an estoile azure*. Note that this blazon style may be misleading, as it may lead a scribe to draw the estoiles so some part of an estoile overlaps the edge of the bend (which is usually not the case in the submitted emblazon). This blazon style is also difficult to conflict check.

This request for systematic reblazon seems more compelling than the other requests that have recently been received. We would not, however, embark on such a significant reblazon without getting the opinion of the College on whether it is necessary. It is also important to note that it will be very time-consuming to compile the list of items that may need to be re-blazoned in this request. There is no handy keyword like "trillium" to use for a search: it may be necessary to examine every piece of armory using the word "counterchanged" to assemble the list of items that might need reblazon. We also suspect there will be a large number of items which need to be visually checked at the end of the list compilation. It is important to note that in this tenure, we do not expect that this project could be completed unless the compilation of the initial list of items which may need reblazon were performed by some volunteers other than Wreath and her usual staff.

Reblazons of this blazon style may occur on a case by case basis as they come through Wreath's office, as happened this month for the submission of Christopher Jameson in the Midrealm section of this LoAR, which came to the attention of the office for a different reason.

RfS X.4.j

As mentioned in the Cover Letter to the June 2003 LoAR, this issue is being discussed further on the Siren rules letter dated August 30, 2003. Please do comment on that letter, even if you have commented on this issue previously.

Roster Changes

The office of Star Principal Herald (Ansteorra) has changed hands. The new Star is Etienne de Saint Amaranth (Darin K. Herndon), 1314 S Atlanta Pl, Tulsa, OK 74104-4313, phone ..., e-mail star@ansteorra.org (welcomes e-mail LoIs and LoCs). His predecessor, Rosalia O Brogan ..., is no longer on the mailing list and roster.

Send What to Whom

For all Letters of Intent, Comment, Response, Correction, et cetera, send one paper copy to each of Laurel PKoA and Wreath QoA at their mailing addresses as shown on the College of Arms Mailing List.

Send Laurel office copies of all submissions-related paper, including

- Letters of Intent, Comment, Response, Correction, et cetera (note: such paper copies are *in addition to* the personal copies for Laurel and Wreath mentioned above)
- Submission packets (**one** copy of each name form plus documentation, including petitions; **two** colored copies of each armory form plus **two** copies of any associated documentation, including petitions)
- Cheques or money orders for submissions, payable to "SCA Inc.-College of Arms"

to the appropriate address. If it concerns LoIs dated up to and including **November 2003**, mail to Pelican QoA at her roster address: If it concerns LoIs dated on or after **December 2003**, mail to the incoming Laurel Queen of Arms: Jacquie Ziegler, 812 S 32nd St, Billings, MT 59101-3924.

Send Laurel office copies of all submissions-related electronic files to submissions@sca.org. In particular, the Laurel Clerk would very much appreciate e-mailed copies of all LoIs, LoCs, LoRs, et cetera.

Send roster changes and corrections to Lord Symond Bayard le Gris, Bruce R. Nevins, 2527 E. 3rd St., Tucson, AZ, 85716-4114, 520-795-6000, 520-795-0158 (fax), bnevins@nexiliscom.com. Please also send them to Laurel Clerk, preferably by e-mail to submissions@sca.org, or by mail to Tim McDaniel, 6805 Wood Hollow Dr Apt 212, Austin, TX 78731-3104. College of Arms members can also request a copy of the current roster from Symond.

For subscriptions to the paper copy of the LoAR, please contact Symond, above. The cost for an LoAR subscription is \$25 a year. Please make all checks or money orders payable to "SCA Inc.-College of Arms". For subscriptions to the electronic copy of the LoAR, please contact Laurel at herald@sca.org. The electronic copy is available free of charge.

For all administrative matters, or for questions about whom to send to, please contact Laurel Principal King of Arms, whose contact information heads this letter.

Pray know that I remain

In service

François la Flamme
Laurel Principal King of Arms