ON BEING A SUBMISSIONS HERALD

By Alys Mackyntoich (mka Alissa Pyrich) and
Brunissende Dragonette (mka Mathilde Poussin)[i]
June 2014

Overview of the Submissions Process:

- The submitter works with a herald to prepare a name or armory submission.

- The submission is sent to the appropriate officer in within the Kingdom.

- The submission is input into an OSCAR "letter"

- Submissions on the Internal (in-Kingdom) Letter are reviewed and commented on within the Kingdom, usually for about a month.

- A decision is made whether to send the submission up to a second round of review at Society level, or return it to the submitter for additional work.

- If forwarded to the second-round of review, the submission is transferred within OSCAR from the Internal "Letter" to the External "Letter."

- Submissions on the External Letter are reviewed and commented on by a Society-wide audience for two months.

- The Pelican Sovereign of Arms (names) or the Wreath Sovereign of Arms (armory) reviews all of the submissions from the Kingdoms for a month and reaches decisions to accept, pend or return them.

- Pelican and Wreath draft Letters of Acceptance and Return ("LoARs"), which are then reviewed and proofed by their staffs.

- The LoARs are published with final decisions. The items accepted on the LoARs are then entered into the SCA Ordinary and Armorial.

- The entire process takes 7-8 months depending on various factors.

The Role of the Submissions Herald

The Submissions Herald(s) are the people responsible for keeping the submissions process running. They have a number of responsibilities. Submissions Heralds are responsible for:

- Receiving paperwork from submitters and/or heralds;
- Reviewing paperwork to ensure all necessary requirements are met (correct number of copies, all required information provided, etc.);
- Ensure submissions are paid for in whatever manner is Kingdom-appropriate;
- Inputting submissions into OSCAR for review and commenting[1];
- Monitoring OSCAR commentary at the internal Kingdom level;
- Making the decision to forward submissions for Society-level review or return them for additional work;
- Transferring submissions from Kingdom-level OSCAR to Society-level OSCAR;
- Scanning and uploading forms and packets to Society-level OSCAR;
- Monitoring OSCAR commentary on your Kingdom's submissions at the Society level and answering questions;
- Responding to inquiries and requests from Pelican and Wreath about your Kingdom's submissions at the Society level.

Each of these responsibilities will be discussed in more detail below.

Some Kingdoms split up responsibilities between two Submissions Heralds, one for Internal (in-Kingdom) review and commentary and the other for External (Society-wide) review and commentary. Others have a single Submissions Herald with multiple deputies for handling discrete tasks. There is no single "right" way to split up the work.

---

[1]   Caid and the West still do most of their in-Kingdom review and commentary at meetings rather than through OSCAR

Reviewing Received Submissions

- Know your Kingdom's paperwork requirements:

    o Has the submitter/herald provided the correct number of forms?

    o The right kind of forms?

    o The most current forms?

- Has the submitter/herald filled out the form(s) correctly?

    o If a name form, is it clear what name is being submitted?

    o If a name or device change, does the form indicate what is to be done with the old item?

    o If a resubmission, has the submitter/herald provided the date of the old submission?

    o If an armory form, is the name on the form already registered or in submission?

    o If an armory form, is it colored properly using markers, rather than crayons or colored pencils?

    o If an armory form, has the necessary black and white outline copy been provided?

    o If the submission is for a local group name or local group device, has the necessary Petition of Support been provided? Is the Petition of Support dated and filled out correctly?

- Check the documentation against Appendix H of the Laurel Administrative Handbook. Have photocopies been provided for documentation relied upon but not listed on Appendix H?

- If the submitter is using a reserved charge such as a coronet, has the herald/submitter provided evidence of her right to that charge?

- If the submitter is relying on the Grandfather Clause to register an element from someone else's name, has the herald/submitter provided the necessary letter attesting to the real world relationship?

- If the submitter has obtained permission to conflict, has the herald/submitter provided the correct letter of permission with all of the required information?

- Has the submitter/herald forwarded the correct submissions fees?

- Has the submitter approved the final version of the artwork and/or the name?

Creating the Internal Letter

To issue the Internal Letter, the Submissions Herald or her designated deputy needs to have an OSCAR account and the required level of authorization from the Kingdom's Principal Herald. More than one draft Internal Letter can be in process at one time. A Kingdom also can have more than one finalized and issued Internal Letter at one time.

When the designated person signs into OSCAR, he will see "New Letter" as an option among the menu options across the top of the screen. To start the process, click "New Letter."

- The next screen will show several fields. Data entered into these fields can be edited later.

    o Tentative letter issue date: this field usually defaults to the date when the letter is created. It can be set to any future date.

    o Letter type: check the option appropriate for creating your internal Kingdom letter – either ILoI or LoP, depending on the Kingdom

    o Salutation text: text entered into this box will appear as the introductory text at the beginning of the Letter

    o Footer/Signature text: text entered into this box will appear at the close of the Letter

    o What goes in the Salutation and Footer/Signature boxes varies by Kingdom; the Footer/Signature used to be used as a place to include a bibliography for the Letter, but that practice seems to have fallen out of use.

- Select the "Done!" button to go automatically to the screen where data and submissions are entered.

- Once the Letter is created, to enter a submission, click the Submit option at the top of the screen

    o If there is more than one draft Internal Letter in the queue, be sure select the correct letter. OSCAR will default to putting the submission on the first draft Internal Letter chronologically.

- Enter the necessary data and information for the submission

    o ***A Letter does not need to be completed in a single sitting; it can be edited up and have items added to it up until the point when it is issued.***

    o Don't hesitate to use the "What goes in the fields" link provided by OSCAR

- Submission Type: OSCAR has a pull-down menu listing various submission types; most are self-explanatory. If the appropriate Submission Type does not seem to be listed, try asking for advice on the Submissions Heralds e-mail list.

- New or Resub? These radio buttons indicate whether something is a new submission or a resubmission at the level for which you are creating the Letter.

  - If a submission was initially returned at Kingdom, it is a Resubmission on the Internal Letter. However, the entry will need to be edited to show that it is New to Society level if the submission is forwarded.

- Submitter E-mail: The Submitter E-mail field will be visible only to the Submissions Herald(s), the person responsible for notifications, and other people with high-level permissions. Submitter e-mails are not available to the general public. Submitter e-mails are used for e-notifications through OSCAR.

- Associated With

  - This field is used to indicate that a specific item is to be associated with another piece of name or armory. It should be used, for example, when a Barony submits a badge to go with an award name that has already been registered.

  - The name entered into the "Associated With" field need not always been registered. For example, the title "King's Bard" is too generic to register, but a Kingdom may wish to register a badge for the position.

- Item to Pair This With: This field is used to associate names and armory within the same Letter.

- Submission Notes: This field should be used for any information necessary to reviewing and registering the submission.

  - Name documentation goes here.

  - If needed, information about charges used in armory (such as whether an unfamiliar charge is period, whether the submitter is entitled to a reserved charge) goes here.

  - Some Kingdoms include the name of the consulting herald who assisted with the submission.

  - Notes from the Submissions Herald about issues to be addressed in commentary go here.

  - If the item is a Resubmission, information should be provided identifying the previous item and the reason for the return.

  - Include anything else that may be relevant to commentary and review.

- OSCAR allows uploading of images to be attached to the submission in Letter. This is useful when documenting unfamiliar or new charges.

- A document containing personal identifying information (including legal names and e-mail addresses) should NOT be uploaded using the Image buttons unless the personal information has been redacted.

- The SAVE button saves your work.

- The RESET button clears all of the fields on the page.

- Once all of the submission information is entered into the Internal Letter, the Submissions Herald is also responsible for scanning the images for armory submissions.

- For armory submissions, OSCAR will display three images: the black and white outline emblazon, the scanned color emblazon, a computer-generated color-corrected emblazon.

  - The color-corrected emblazon is intended to is intended to give the an idea of whether or not an uploaded emblazon is actually a particular color; this is useful when the colored form as scanned is unclear, such as between blue and purple.

- When all data is entered and all emblazons uploaded, set the date when commentary closes. It is also a good idea to mention the date when commentary closes in the introductory text to the Letter.

- To release the letter for review and comment, hit Finalize. It will appear on the KLoIs screen in OSCAR.

On Summarizing Documentation

- Summarizing documentation is one of the most important functions of the Submissions Herald (or a designated deputy). Poorly summarized documentation makes it more difficult to comment effectively.

- A Submissions Herald should use discretion when summarizing documentation. Submitters are not familiar with documentation requirements and frequently supply things that are irrelevant or unnecessary.

- A Submissions Herald also must be familiar with what is and isn't acceptable documentation. You should not include irrelevant or inappropriate documentation provided by the submitter.

    o For example, if the submitter cites a book that has been ruled unreliable (like Hanks & Hodges) or supplies user-submitted record from the Family Search Historical Records, there is no need to include this unacceptable documentation on the Letter.

    o An incomplete list of sources that have been ruled unreliable can be found at http://heraldry.sca.org/admin.html#APPENDIXF

- Summarizing documentation requires more than just listing the name element and a url or a name element and a book name. At a minimum, documentation should include:

    o The name of the article or book where the name element is found;

    o The author of the article or book;

    o The url for any on-line source (be sure to check that the link works!);

    o The date given for the name in the source; and

    o Proof of the name formation pattern, particularly if it is in a language other than English. Documented name patterns can be found in Appendix A of SENA.

- If documenting a name from the Family Search Historical Records (www.familysearch.org), at a minimum, documentation must include:

    o The name;

    o The gender;

    o The date when the name was found;

    o The country where the name was found; and

    o The Batch number.

    Family Search Records are no-photocopy sources.

- Even if the submitter does not provide this information, the Submissions Herald (or designated deputy) should provide it. Otherwise, it puts an undue burden on commenters.

- ***Note: One or two examples of a specific name element is generally sufficient to prove that element.***

Examples of Properly Summarized Documentation

For the name **Eoin Ó Mathghamhna**

"Quick and Easy Gaelic Names (3rd Ed.)" by Sharon Krossa (http://www.medievalscotland.org/scotnames/quickgaelicbynames/#clanaffiliationbyname) sets out the pattern for clan affiliation-style bynames as: <single given name> Ó <eponymous clan ancestor's name (in genitive case)>

Eoin is an Early Modern Irish Gaelic name with 58 Annals dates between 1246 and 1600, appearing in "Index of Names in Irish Annals" by Kathleen O'Brien (http://www.medievalscotland.org/kmo/AnnalsIndex/Masculine/Eoin.shtml)

Mathghamhain is also found in "Index of Names in Irish Annals" (http://www.medievalscotland.org/kmo/AnnalsIndex/Masculine/Mathgamain.shtml), with Annals dates of 1255, 1266, 1271, 1314, 1461, 1472, 1483, 1489, 1588. Mathghamhain is the nominative form; **Mathghamhna** is the genitive form.

For the name **Mergery Potticary**

Mergery is found in "English Given Names from 16th and Early 17th C Marriage Records" by Aryanhwy merch Catmael (http://heraldry.sca.org/names/english/parishes/parishes.html) s.n. Margery dated to 1583.

Potticary appears in Bardsley, A Dictionary of English and Welsh Surnames, p. 617 s.n. Potticary, with this spelling dated to 1591.

This naming pattern for English names is found in Appendix A of SENA.

For the name **Meliana Trinidad de Valero**

The pattern given + byname + de + locative for Spanish names is found in Appendix A of SENA. All elements are found in the Family Search Historical Records:

Meliana Lopez; Female; Marriage; 12 Nov 1599; Nuestra Señora De La Consolación, Ballesteros De Calatrava, Ciudad Real, Spain; Batch: M86466-1

Ana **Trinidad**; Female; Christening; 30 Jan 1564; San Juan Evangelista, Villafrades de Campos, Valladolid, Spain; Batch: C02523-2

Gonzalo **De Valero**; Male; Christening; 22 Sep 1567; San Andrés, Valladolid, Valladolid, Spain; Batch: C87100-1

Note: Simply attaching copies of photocopied or printed pages of sources to the Letter is not a proper documentation summary.

Kingdom-Level Decisions

After Kingdom commentary closes, the Submissions Herald (or designated deputy) must decide whether to forward submissions on to the Society level or return them to the submitter for additional work. As a general guideline, if there is a plausible ground for registering an item, the better course is to forward the item for additional review and commentary.   If the commentary in Kingdom was sparse, or Kingdom-level commenters lack expertise in the subject matter, the better course is to forward the item.   On the other hand, if it is clear that the item is not registerable, returning it at the Kingdom level saves work for the commenters and Sovereigns.

Questions about issues of offensiveness and presumption generally are best decided at the Society level. The issue should be noted in the External Letter, however.

Kingdom Submissions Heralds are not expected to know everything, although they should be familiar with the principles and requirements of SENA. Submissions Heralds should not be afraid to ask for help in making decisions where issues are unclear, either from experienced heralds within the Kingdom or from other Submissions Heralds.

Some Submissions Heralds like to have meetings, either electronically or in person, to discuss decisions before rendering them.

Kingdom-level decisions should be publicized somewhere so that submitters and heralds can keep up with the status of their submissions. The reason for the decision should be summarized in a clear and understandable fashion.

Once decisions are issued or made public, the Submissions Herald must mark the internal Letter as "Decided" in the Kingdom Spreadsheet on OSCAR.

Making Changes at Kingdom

The best time to contact submitters and discuss problems with their submissions is while the submission is at the Kingdom level. Very often, if a name is not documented or not registerable, commenters will suggest alternatives. Whenever possible, Submissions Heralds should contact the submitter and offer those alternatives, rather than returning the name. If the submitter is willing to make changes to the name, then Kingdom can make the change and send it up.

The Kingdom level is also the best time for handling redraws to address artistic issues. If a redrawing is done for artistic reasons, the new art should be approved by the submitter before being forwarded.

Changes to names made at Kingdom should be indicated on the form(s) in the "Society Name" or "Name Being Submitted" line.

Creating an External Letter

If your Kingdom uses OSCAR for its Internal Letters, then all of the data and images from those letters can be transferred into Society-level OSCAR with one click. On the Kingdom Spreadsheet, there is an option for "TRANSFER" next to the menu for the status of each Internal Letter. Selecting "TRANSFER" will automatically create an External Letter using the data and images from the Internal Letter.

Once the new External Letter is created, it needs to be edited:

- Items that were returned at Kingdom need to be deleted from the External Letter

- Changes made to names or blazons need to be reflected in the External Letter

- Changes made to names need to be explained, even if the change is only to a single letter or to an accent.

- Any communications with the submitter related to changes should be noted (E.g., "The submitter allowed no changes. However, when contacted, she permitted X change to better reflect the documentation found for the given name.")

- Items that were resubmissions at Kingdom, but were new to Society, need to be marked as "New"

- Relevant comments made at Kingdom should be summarized.

  o As with summarizing documentation, summarizing commentary requires judgment, thought and discretion, not just blind cutting and pasting.

  o If commenters have substantially improved the documentation for a name, the original documentation can be deleted and only the new documentation used.

- Any questions or issues raised in commentary should be mentioned.

- Any questions or issues that might be relevant to the ultimate decision by Wreath or Pelican should be mentioned, even if not raised in Kingdom commentary.

Be sure to proofread the Letter. Better yet, have someone else proofread it.

After the editing is done, hit "Finalize" to finalize and issue the letter.

If you notice a mistake or problem with the External Letter after it has been issued, you can add a Correction, which will appear at the end of the documentation for that entry. Corrections should be issued as soon as possible. Failure to make a timely correction could result in the submission being pended or returned for administrative reasons.

The Packet

The "Packet" is the complete set of paperwork for all of the actions on your External Letter. Previously, the packet had to be mailed to the Laurel office. Now, it simply needs to be scanned and uploaded into OSCAR and linked to the items on the External Letter.

The Packet must include:

- One copy of the form for each name submission

- The colored copy of the form for each armory submission

- One copy of any documentation for names or armory that does not appear on Appendix H of the Administrative Handbook (http://heraldry.sca.org/laurel/admin.html#APPENDIXH)

Packets must be uploaded and linked at the end of the month after the External Letter is issued. A delay in uploading the Packet will delay decisions on the External Letter.

Letters and Permissions

A Submissions Herald needs to be familiar with the various kinds of standard letters found in the Administrative Handbook (http://heraldry.sca.org/admin.html#APPENDIXD).

- Word copies of the standard form letters can be found at: http://heraldry.sca.org/submissions.html

- If permission to conflict is sought from a Local Group, the permission letter needs to be signed by the ruling nobles (if the branch has one) and the group seneschal. Signatories are encouraged, but not required, to consult with their group herald when asked for permission to conflict.

- A submitter relying on the Grandfather Clause to register an element found in someone else's name needs a letter attesting to the relationship between the submitter and the person with the registered name. This is NOT the same as a letter of permission to conflict.

- A local group registering a name or a device needs a petition of support from the local group.

    o The petition of support needs to be dated.

    o Members of the local group need to sign with their legal names.

    o Name petitions need to give the intended name of the local group on the petition.

    o Device petitions must have either blazon or emblazon of the local group device on the petition.

- Proof of a Legal Name element needs to be provided. The July 2012 Cover Letter provides the procedure for proving a Legal Name element:

    o [F]or most submissions, we expect photocopies of the submitter's identification.

    o Attestation should be used only at locations where photocopies cannot be easily made (like camping events) or where making photocopies is prohibited by law.

    o A proper attestation of a Legal Name element must include:

        ▪ The type of identification;

        ▪ The complete name exactly as it appears on the identification (for example noting the name is rendered completely in capital letters);

        ▪ The names and titles of the two heralds who have seen the identification;

        ▪ The signatures or initials of those heralds. If a signature cannot be obtained, the herald can confirm in commentary that she has seen the documentation.

        ▪ If only one herald is available at an event, another group officer can serve as the second witness.

TEN TIPS FOR BEING A SUBMISSIONS HERALD

1. Read and be familiar with SENA.

2. Read and be familiar with the Administrative Handbook.

3. Pay attention to issues raised in commentary.

4. Ask questions during commentary.

5. Read other Kingdom's letters and steal their good ideas (and documentation).

6. Double check all the paperwork. Twice.

7. You can never have too many proofreaders.

8. Split up the work – have Deputies or assistants.

9. Plan for your retirement. Start training your successor as early as possible.

10. Your job is not to be perfect. Your job is to filter out the easy returns and/or the submissions that are so broken that they cannot be fixed by more research.

---

[i] Many thanks to Istvan Non Scripta and Marie Clarion for their helpful notes and commentary.