

For the May 2006 meetings, printed July 28, 2006

To all the College of Arms and all others who may read this missive, from Elisabeth Laurel, Jeanne Marie Wreath, and Margaret Pelican, greetings.

In the following lists, items in square brackets are tentative, and have not yet been scheduled pending receipt of payment or paperwork.

The May Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Saturday, May 6, 2006 and the Wreath meeting held on Sunday, May 14, 2006. The meetings considered the following letters of intent: Calontir (31 Dec 2005), Atenveldt (06 Jan 2006), Laurel (06 Jan 2006), Middle (15 Jan 2006), West (18 Jan 2006), Caid (25 Jan 2006), Drachenwald (25 Jan 2006), Gleann Abhann (25 Jan 2006), Meridies (25 Jan 2006), Northshield (25 Jan 2006), Atlantia (26 Jan 2006), Palimpsest LoItUP (26 Jan 2006), Outlands (27 Jan 2006), An Tir (31 Jan 2006), and Trimaris (31 Jan 2006).

The June Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Saturday, June 10, 2006, the Wreath meeting held on Sunday, June 11, 2006, and the Laurel Roadshow at Known World Heraldic and Scribal Symposium on Sunday, June 18, 2006. The meetings considered the following letters of Intent: Lochac (26 Jan 2006), Ealdormere (31 Jan 2006) (redated to 7 Feb based on postmark), Middle (01 Feb 2006), Atenveldt (10 Feb 2006), Laurel (10 Feb 2006), Drachenwald (22 Feb 2006), West (22 Feb 2006), Atlantia (23 Feb 2006), East (23 Feb 2006), Meridies (25 Feb 2006), Lochac (27 Feb 2006), An Tir (28 Feb 2006), and Northshield (28 Feb 2006).

The July Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday July 16, 2006 and the Wreath meeting held on Sunday July 23, 2006. The meetings considered the following letters of intent: Artemisia (22 Feb 2006), Drachenwald (21 Mar 2006), Ansteorra (22 Mar 2006), Caid (22 Mar 2006), West (22 Mar 2006), Æthelmearc (23 Mar 2006), Ealdormere (24 Mar 2006), East (24 Mar 2006), Ansteorra LoItP (25 Mar 2006), Lochac (26 Mar 2006), Outlands (27 Mar 2006), Atlantia (29 Mar 2006), Atenveldt (30 Mar 2006), An Tir (31 Mar 2006), An Tir LoItP (31 Mar 2006), Calontir (31 Mar 2006), Laurel (31 Mar 2006), and Middle (31 Mar 2006).

The August Laurel decisions will be made at the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, August 19, 2006, the Pelican meetings held at Pennsic, and the Laurel Roadshow at Pennsic on Tuesday, August 15, 2006. The meetings will consider the following letters of intent: Caid (19 Apr 2006), Drachenwald (19 Apr 2006), Gleann Abhann (19 Apr 2006), West (19 Apr 2006), Ansteorra (20 Apr 2006), Atlantia (20 Apr 2006), Æthelmearc (20 Apr 2006), East (24 Apr 2006), Meridies (25 Apr 2006), Middle (25 Apr 2006), Lochac (27 Apr 2006), Outlands (27 Apr 2006), [Atenveldt (28 Apr 2006)], Laurel LoPaD (28 Apr 2006), Northshield (29 Apr 2006), An Tir (30 Apr 2006), and Trimaris (30 Apr 2006). **Original commentary on these LoIs must be in the College's hands no later than June 30, 2006. Responses and rebuttals to commentary must be in the College's hands no later than July 31, 2006.**

The September Laurel decisions will be made at the Wreath meeting held on Sunday, September 17, 2006 and the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, September 24, 2006. The meetings will consider the following letters of intent: Middle (11 May 2006), East (22 May 2006), Ansteorra (24 May 2006), Artemisia (24 May 2006), [Caid (24 May 2006)], Drachenwald (24 May 2006), West (24 May 2006), Atlantia (25 May 2006), [Æthelmearc (25 May 2006)], Meridies (25 May 2006), Ealdormere (26 May 2006), Outlands (27 May 2006), [Lochac (28 May 2006)], Calontir (30 May 2006), An Tir (31 May 2006), [Atenveldt (31 May 2006)], Laurel LoPaD (31 May 2006), and Trimaris (31 May 2006). **Original commentary on these LoIs must be in the College's hands no later than July 31, 2006. Responses and rebuttals to commentary must be in the College's hands no later than August 31, 2006.**

The October Laurel decisions will be made at the Wreath meeting held on Sunday, October 15, 2006 and the Pelican meeting held on Saturday, October 7, 2006. The meetings will consider the following letters of intent: Gleann Abhann (12 Jun 2006), [Middle (12 Jun 2006)], [Ansteorra (21 Jun 2006)], Drachenwald (21 Jun 2006), West (21 Jun 2006), Atlantia (22 Jun 2006), [East (24 Jun 2006)], Meridies (26 Jun 2006), Siren LoItUP (26 Jun 2006), [Lochac (27 Jun 2006)], Outlands (27 Jun 2006), Palimpsest (27 Jun 2006), [Atenveldt (28 Jun 2006)], and [An Tir (30 Jun 2006)]. **Original commentary on these letters must be in the College's hands no later than August 31, 2006. Responses and rebuttals to commentary must be in the College's hands no later than September 30, 2006.**

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 - This Month at OSCAR

OSCAR's capabilities have recently been expanded to enable it to handle appeals properly. I will once again remind submission heralds that putting your LoIs onto OSCAR now will give you good practice for that day, possibly not so very far distant, when this is the sole means by which we handle LoIs. Consider it a strong suggestion.

I encourage everyone to refresh their memories of the requirements for circulation of commentary, to be found in Section VII, "Commentary on Submissions", in the Administrative Handbook. At present, everyone must send Laurel a hard copy of their commentary as well as an electronic one. Electronic copies of commentary may be sent only to those who have expressed their willingness to receive commentary in such a fashion.

We are presently in transition, trying out OSCAR but not yet using it exclusively, and the provisions of the Admin Handbook still apply. I would ask those members of the College presently on the mailing list and engaged in commentary to please bear this in mind.

To help us through this interim period, OSCAR commentary is being sent out at Laurel expense by SquidPak West, and many thanks are due to Lady Vivienne for undertaking this additional responsibility. This allows everyone, whether they presently accept electronic commentary or not, to have access to comments being made on the system while we are in the trial period.

It should be understood, however, that this is mainly for the benefit of those presently commenting on OSCAR who are *not* currently on the mailing list. If you are, as above, the procedures as outlined above in the Administrative Handbook are still in force, and I will ask you to bear this in mind. You, or your Kingdom as the case may be, are still financially and procedurally responsible for distributing your own commentary, and I know I may leave this to your own sense of propriety. We can scarcely expect others to respect our rules if we don't do so ourselves.

From Laurel - On the Form Front

As per last month's cover letter, the new revised forms have been distributed to all the Kingdoms. I am now waiting to receive the personalized versions of these from each Kingdom, so that I may review them and approve them for use.

To date, I have heard from the following Kingdoms (in no particular order): Æthelmarc, Lochac, Drachenwald, Ealdormere, Outlands, Caid, Calontir, and Ansteorra.

The sooner I hear from the rest of you, the sooner we may start phasing out the old forms. If you think the above list is in error, please contact me directly.

From Laurel - Job Openings on Laurel Staff

Mistress Gwenllian finds that her modern obligations have mounted up to the point where she needs to retire as Laurel Education Deputy. I am deeply grateful for the work she has put in so far, and very much wish to see it continued. If you would be interested in this position, or want more information, please contact me at herald@sca.org.

After long and dedicated service, Meradudd Cethin, Codex Herald, wishes to step down from management of the Laurel web site. He will be very much missed. Although he will be difficult to replace, I would like to do this as soon as may be so that service to the College and the populace at large may carry on smoothly.

Codex Herald is responsible for the day-to-day operation and maintenance of the Laurel web site. This position requires internet access and approximately 5-10 hours/month. There are monthly deadlines which MUST be met, in addition to routine maintenance and updating. The applicant should also possess the following skill-sets:

- Fluency in HTML, PHP, and CSS programming.
- Competency in SSH and CVS protocols.
- Understanding of ECC compliance protocols.
- Ability to respond to basic heraldic questions posed by e-mails.
- Ability to work well with the Sovereigns and provide flexible support and be a resource as needed.

Applicants should contact Elisabeth Laurel and Meradudd Codex at herald@sca.org and meradudd@yahoo.com.

Grandfather Clause

On the January 6 Letter of Pends and Discussion, we asked the College's opinion on whether we should continue to interpret the grandfather clause to include naming patterns, or whether it should be narrowed to include only the actual words found in a registered name. This was partially in response to a volume of commentary on some order name submissions complaining about interpreting the grandfather clause this way. In particular, we asked:

- Does grandfathering patterns produce names further from historical practice than just grandfathering specific elements?
- Would groups and others not extremely familiar with the heraldic community be confused by grandfathering elements only?
- Does grandfathering patterns serve a larger purpose with the Society?

There was one response to this request for comment, from Argent Snail. I can do no better in summarizing the answers to these questions than to quote her thoughtful response:

Does grandfathering patterns produce names further from historical practice than just grandfathering specific elements?

In our opinion the answer to this is "It depends." It really depends on what is grandfathered and what is being submitted based on the grandfather clause. For instance, Drachenwald has registered to it "Companions of the Order of Albion". Based on that, Laurel registered to Drachenwald "Order of the Hospitallers of Albion." If you ignore the "Albion" they are both reasonable order names. On the other hand, Drachenwald has a number of "Order of the Dragon's XYZ" registered to it, including "Order of the Dragon's Tear". Based on that, at least in theory, Drachenwald could have (I am ignoring conflict) "Order of the Dragon's Bile and Order of the Dragon's Blood. Dragon's Blood far more closely resembles a period order name than Order of the Dragon's Bile or even Order of the Dragon's Tear.

The bottom line is that we don't think that there is a yes/no answer to this question.

Would groups and others not extremely familiar with the heraldic community be confused by grandfathering elements only?

Yes. We have allowed "pattern grandfathering" for a long time now, and people will not understand why Fred was able to register something last year and they can't do it this year. This will be especially upsetting to official SCA groups that were able to use grandfathering a pattern in the past to get something registered and now would be unable to do so. Considering that grandfathering a pattern seems to be used most often by SCA groups, this could cause a great deal of ill will and problems.

Does grandfathering patterns serve a larger purpose with the Society?

Yes. For better or worse we use it in a lot of official SCA groups that try to have "theme" order names. While I am personally sick of Order of the Dragon's X, the fact is that we have 21 order names with Order of the Dragon's X in them (to 5 different official SCA groups) showing it is a popular pattern. Note: there are other patterns which are also very popular - I just happen to be more familiar with the Order of the Dragon's X.

We agree with these statements. Therefore, we will continue to apply the grandfather clause to patterns within names as well as to particular name elements.

From Pelican: Call for Discussion on Changes to Temporal Disparity Allowances

One of the basic principles of onomastics is that languages, names, naming pools, and naming patterns change over time. Over the years, there have been various precedents set in an attempt to describe what sort of temporal disparity is registerable in a name and what is not. Currently, precedent holds that a name where the individual elements are documented more than 300 years apart is a step from period practice. In March 2003, Laurel ruled:

in a number of my recent rulings, I've ruled that excessive temporal mismatching can be considered a "weirdness", costing the submitter the benefit of the doubt. With this LoAR, I hereby make the new policy official: If the elements of a submitted name are dated too far apart, then any other anomaly in the name may combine to force it to be returned. The greater the temporal divide, the greater the anomaly: a given name and byname whose spellings are documented within, say, a century of each other will probably be all right, but a three-century divide is pushing it.

In general, precedent holds that names whose parts are documented 1000 years apart are not registerable because the elements are dated too far apart. Occasionally, a smaller gap than 1000 years is used, although usually there is also a lingual or pattern disparity combined with the temporal problems in such cases.

There is one further related precedent that, although it is stated in terms of language, is also about temporal compatibility:

This name mixes an Early Welsh given name (which is pre 9th C) with Middle English (which doesn't exist until at least the 11th C), two languages that did not exist either simultaneously or concurrently. If two languages have no temporal point of contact, it is logically impossible that names could exist that combine elements from each language... [Taliesin of Lysonesse, June 2005]

Corpora states that "Laurel shall define standards suitable to the type of item to be registered, and apply them uniformly to all such submissions. These standards shall be designed to support the historical re-creations of the Society..." The question I have is "does allowing names documented 1000 years apart serve that goal?" I believe it does not; 1000 years always means there are significant enough changes in language, names, naming pools and patterns that in most cases, the two elements will be parts of languages that have no temporal point of contact. However, we are only now just starting to move into codifying what this means for most languages used for name registration. We believe this time period should be shortened; the question is "by how much?" It would be easy to pick 600 years, after all, twice as long as the period that is one step from period practice can be said to be two steps from period practice. However, easy as this would be to do, pulling a number out of a hat is not good practice and does not further the goals of historical re-creation within the Society. We would like to hear the College's opinion of this matter, along with documentation to back these opinions.

From Wreath: Steps from Period Practice or Weirdnesses

A number of recent registrations have been "one step from period practice", what used to be called "one weirdness". Similarly there have been returns for armory being "two steps from period practice". I would like the College's opinion on what should be considered a step from period practice in armory. I don't mean what precedent has previously ruled a weirdness or a step from period practice, but what you believe should class as a step from period practice (and why).

Principal and submission heralds: I would appreciate it if you would forward any comments from your local heralds that may not be on the roster of the College of Arms.

From Wreath: Abstract Symbols

While writing and reviewing the April LoAR decision I was in four kingdoms (three countries). Due to this fact, there was an error in a ruling - an early draft made it to the final LoAR. In accepting Vincenzo di Bartolomeo da Brescia's device, the April LoAR stated:

While a quaver is a symbol, it is not an abstract symbol for the purposes of the March 2006 precedent (q.v. Yamahara Yorimasa) banning armory that consists solely of abstract charges. Multiple quavers thus can be registered as the only charges in an armorial design. A single quaver will continue to be considered a solitary abstract symbol per the July 2000 precedent (q.v. Iohann se pipere), and thus unregistrable as the only charge in an armorial design.

That ruling should have stated:

While a quaver is a symbol, it is not an abstract symbol for the purposes of the March 2006 precedent (q.v. Yamahara Yorimasa) banning armory that consists solely of abstract charges. Quavers thus can be registered as the only charges in an armorial design. We are hereby overturning the July 2000 precedent (q.v. Iohann se pipere) that considered a quaver an abstract charge and unregistrable as the sole charge in an armorial design.

Send What to Whom

For all Letters of Intent, Comment, Response, Correction, et cetera, send one paper copy directly to each of the Sovereigns of Arms, Laurel, Pelican and Wreath at their mailing addresses as shown on the College of Arms Roster.

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, Pelican 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)

to the SCA College of Arms, PO Box 31755, Billings, MT 59107-1755.

Send the required electronic copies of all submissions-related files to submissions@sca.org. This applies to all LoIs, LoCs, LoRs, et cetera.

Cheques or money orders for submissions, payable to "SCA Inc.-College of Arms" are to be sent directly to the Society Chancellor of the Exchequer, who is acting as Laurel's chancellor of the exchequer, at Laurel Chancellor of Exchequer, 4N400 Church Rd, Bensenville, IL 60106-2928.

Send roster changes and corrections to Laurel. College of Arms members may also request a copy of the current roster from Laurel.

For a paper copy of a LoAR, please contact Laurel, at the address above. The cost for one LoAR is \$3. 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.

Pray know that I remain,

In service,

Elisabeth de Rossignol
Laurel Principal Queen of Arms