

Society for Creative Anachronism
College of Arms

*Lohkpellontie 18 A 2
FI-00650 Helsinki
Finland
+358 400 812 354
laurel@heraldry.sca.org*

For the January 2026 meetings, printed April 4, 2026

To all the College of Arms and all others who may read this missive, from Birgitta Laurel, Sara Pelican, Iago Wreath (outgoing), and Ollivier Wreath (incoming), greetings.

From Laurel: Mid-year KWHSS 2026

After some setbacks, we are happy to announce that the mid-year Known World Heraldic and Scribal Symposium will be hosted by the Barony of Shattered Crystal in the Middle Kingdom (in Collinsville, IL), on 22-23 August 2026. The symposium will be a hybrid event, with attendance possible both in person and online. Further information will be available later at the KWHSS page at <https://heraldry.sca.org/kwhss/>

From Laurel and Wreath: Office Transition

This month marks the second of a three-month transition in Wreath decisions. This month's armory decisions for the kingdoms of An Tir, Artemisia, Atenveldt, Atlantia, Caid and Calontir were made by Ollivier. Decisions for the remaining kingdoms were made by Iago.

From Laurel: Name Similarity

As directed by section VI.C.3.a of the Corpora, the College of Arms has standards 'to provide sufficient difference from names and armory registered within the Society to avoid undue confusion'. In the case of names, we currently require that a new name differs from those already registered in both spelling and pronunciation. Both these requirements have been in place since the first Rules for Heraldic Submissions were published in November 1979; under those original rules, a name would also conflict with its translations to other languages, but that criterion proved to be infeasible and has long since been dropped except for Society-wide orders.

The requirement for names to differ in pronunciation has always had its problems. These problems have become gradually more severe over the past four and a half decades, as the Society has spread to cover most regions where English is spoken natively in a wide variety of ways, and as our scope has expanded to cover new languages and name systems. Even in English alone, pronunciation varies enough that the names *John*, *Jean*, and *Jane* can all be pronounced identically, and as we deal with languages unfamiliar to even most of our senior name heralds let alone the membership at large, the concept of aural difference is breaking down.

At their January meeting, the Board of Directors agreed to start a discussion within the College of Arms regarding our rules on name conflict, with the understanding that any major changes will need to be presented to both the Board and general membership for their input. At this stage, a LoPaD will be forthcoming.

From Pelican: SENA Appendix A and Appendix C Updates

Updates to SENA Appendix A, Patterns That Do Not Need Further Documentation by Language Group, and Appendix C, Regional Naming Groups and Their Mixes were proposed on Palimpsest's October 11th Rules Letter. The proposed updates to Appendix C are returned for further work. Work has begun on revising this appendix, and some of the proposed changes will be included in this revision. The proposed changes to the Greek section of Appendix A are partially accepted. The addition of Minoan (1800 to 1450 BCE) and Mycenaean Greek (1400 BCE to 1200 BCE) are returned for further work. The sections dealing with later Greek dialects are

accepted. The revisions to Appendix A will be available at <https://heraldry.sca.org/sena.html#AppendixAGreek> within a few days.

From Wreath: The long and the short of primary charge groups

This month we had cause to consider our definition of mixed primary charge groups where the central charge is a long charge and the other charges are compact, and vice versa. When these cases arise there is confusion as to whether the primary charge group consists of solely the sole central charge or all the charges of similar visual weight.

As specified in the introduction to SENA Appendix J, "a charge group is a group of charges of approximately the same size and visual weight that act as a single visual unit". However, it is difficult to maintain a single visual unit when combining a long charge and compact charges in a primary charge group, even when they are of the same visual weight.

We will be opening a letter of Pends and Discussion to discuss how best to treat this motif going forward.

From Wreath: Top of the pile

This month we had cause to consider the default orientation for tertiary charges on piles that are orientated other than on the vertical. Henceforth, tertiary charges on piles bendwise, fesswise and bendwise sinister will default to the same orientation as those on the corresponding bend, fess, or bend sinister; That is, the default orientation of long charges will have their long axis follow the long axis of the underlying ordinary, and the default orientation of compact charges will be bendwise sinister, palewise, and bendwise respectively.

As these defaults have been inconsistently applied in the past, we have reblazoned registered armory that does not meet this standard on this letter and also taken the opportunity to simplify the blazon of the directionality of the piles.

From Wreath: Charges Within Charges

On the October 12, 2025 Letter of Pends and Discussion, we asked for examples of charges within charges in period armory, and for opinions on how this sort of motif should be treated for the purposes of style and conflict rules.

There were a few factors to consider:

- First, period practice. The examples provided showed that, for different depictions of the same arms, the relative visual weight of charges wasn't consistent. For example, under our current standards some emblazons of the arms of the German family Loß, *Gules, a frog within a laurel wreath vert*, have the frog as the primary; some have the wreath as primary, and some have the two co-primary, with roughly equal visual weight. This demonstrates that our past practice of basing charge groups on visual weight is flawed, and may limit submitters to only a subset of the possible period-style emblazons of their armory.
- Second, our rules. SENA Appendix I defines the primary charge group as "the charge or group of charges which are directly on the field in the visual center of the shield." This is a clear, bright-line standard that current practice has somewhat obscured. This definition recognizes that being in the center of the design carries a prestige beyond the technical visual weight.
- Third, actual use. In practice surrounding charges are most often used as frames and are not the most important item in the design. These framing charges are often added to clear conflicts. In branch arms, a charge within the required laurel wreath is most likely to be considered the branch's symbol, rather than the wreath itself.

After considering these factors we have decided to implement the following guidelines:

- Charges on the field fully enclosed within other charges in the center of a design will be considered the primary charge, and the enclosing charge will be considered secondary, regardless of the comparative visual weight of the two charges.
- Similarly, charges on the field in the center of a design that are entirely within a crescent or wreath will be considered the primary charge, and the crescent or wreath will be considered secondary. Other surrounding charges that do not enclose the central charge will be considered as they arise.
- Central charges drawn extremely small compared to the surrounding charge, to the point where it is impossible to consider them primary, will be pended for redraw or returned.
- There is no change to current precedent [March 2024 Cover Letter] regarding non-central charges within charges: when a charge within a charge on the field is not in the center of the design, the two charges are part of the same charge group.
- There is some impact on current precedent [May 2013 Cover Letter] regarding charges between the horns of a central crescent: if the crescent is primary then the other charge is a secondary, and if the crescent is secondary, then the other charge is part of the same secondary charge group as the crescent.

We direct Palimpsest to issue a Rules Letter to add this information to SENA Appendix I1.

These guidelines will take effect immediately. However, armory appearing on Letters of Intent dated before June 1, 2026 will be considered under our previous guidelines if doing so would avoid a return issue.

Affected armory will be recategorized (and reblazoned, if necessary) in the Ordinary and Armorial as we are able. This will be a large project, and will take some time. Those checking for conflicts in the meantime should keep in mind that charges may not coded according to these new guidelines.

From Wreath: Changes to Augmentations and Arms of Pretense

Palimpsest's October 23rd Rules Letter proposed changes to SENA A3A3, Augmentations of Honor. These changes are accepted. The change to A3A3a adds a list of style rules that augmentations may violate while the change to A3A3b clarifies how fimbriated charges that appear to be a display of independent armory are treated when they are part of an augmentation. The same Rules Letter proposed adding points pointed as a means of displaying an augmentation and clarifying how charges treated as forms of display are treated in fielded armory. These changes are accepted, with minor changes, and added to SENA A6C1, Arms of Pretense and Unearned Augmentations. The revised wording for A3A3 and A6C1 will be available at <https://heraldry.sca.org/sena.html> within a few days.

From Wreath: Independent Displays

On the August 2025 Cover Letter, we asked for feedback about the sections of SENA that deal with independent displays of armory. Based on that discussion we have developed a more coherent set of guidelines for how independent displays are treated. We direct Palimpsest to issue a Rules Letter to add this information to SENA. Thank you all for the commentary.

Society Pages

On 17 January at Nottingham Coill Baronial Birthday, the Crown of Atlantia brought Alisoun MacCoul of Elphane, Metron Ariston Herald and Laurel Queen of Arms emerita into the Order of the Golden Elephant. This is a group service award that carries an augmentation of arms.

On 14 February at the Tourney of Manannan mac Lir in the Kingdom of Atlantia, Hróðgeirr Hrafnsson, Baron of Hidden Mountain, bestowed on Alisoun MacCoul of Elphane, Metron Ariston Herald, the Baron's Award of Excellence not only for decades of heraldic service to the barony but also specifically for creating not only his own name and arms but also the names and arms of a majority of those who have served in the baronage over the past thirty years.

At the same event, the same Baron bestowed the same award on Geoffrey d'Ayr of Montalban, Coral Branch Herald, for his years of service as exchequer and seneschal in the barony.

Also on 14 February at Calontir Coronation, Xerxis and Andromir, Kings of Calontir, elevated Matsudaira Takauji, Gold Falcon Principal Herald emeritus, to the Order of the Pelican. On the same day, Dýrfinna Tonnudóttir, Gold Falcon Principal, created him a Herald Extraordinary.

On 21 February at East Kingdom Rapier Champions, Their Majesties Donovan and Meghanta of the East made An{e'}{zv}ka Li{sv}ka z Kol{i'}na, current Eastern Crown Herald and Blue Tyger Herald Emerita, a Baroness of their Court.

Please send information about happenings to major heralds and major happenings to all heralds to Laurel, so that it can be published here.

Send What to Whom

Letters of Intent, Comment, Response, Correction, et cetera are to be posted to the OSCAR online system. No paper copies need be sent. All submission forms plus documentation, including petitions, must be uploaded to the OSCAR packet for that letter. For armory, only colored forms are required.

Cheques or money orders for submissions, payable to "SCA Inc.-College of Arms" are to be sent to Trent Le Clair, 928 Frazier Dr, Walla Walla, WA 99362.

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

To subscribe to the mailings of the LoAR, please see the bottom of <https://heraldry.sca.org/heraldry/lists.html#lists> for more instructions.

For all administrative matters, please contact Laurel.

Scheduling

Items listed below in square brackets have not been scheduled yet. For information about future scheduling, please review the status table located on the Web at <https://oscar.sca.org/index.php?action=137>.

The January Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, January 18, 2026 and the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, January 10, 2026. These meetings considered the following letters of intent: Northshield (01 Oct, 2025), Calontir (04 Oct, 2025), Gleann Abhann (04 Oct, 2025), Trimaris (04 Oct, 2025), Caid (06 Oct, 2025), Atlantia (08 Oct, 2025), Meridies (10 Oct, 2025), Palimpsest Rules Letter (11 Oct, 2025), Laurel LoPaD (12 Oct, 2025), Artemisia (15 Oct, 2025), Palimpsest Rules Letter (23 Oct, 2025), Outlands (28 Oct, 2025), Ealdormere (30 Oct, 2025), An Tir (31 Oct, 2025), Atenveldt (31 Oct, 2025), Drachenwald (31 Oct, 2025), East (31 Oct, 2025), Lochac (31 Oct, 2025), Middle (31 Oct, 2025), Meridies (01 Nov, 2025), Laurel LoPFR (20 Nov, 2025). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Wednesday, December 31, 2025.**

The February Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, February 22, 2026 and the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, February 7, 2026. These meetings considered the following letters of intent: Ansteorra (31 Oct, 2025) (pushed due to incomplete packet), Calontir (03 Nov, 2025), Atlantia (09 Nov, 2025),

Gleann Abhann (09 Nov, 2025), An Tir (11 Nov, 2025), Caid (11 Nov, 2025), Laurel LoPaD (19 Nov, 2025), Artemisia (23 Nov, 2025), Avacal (23 Nov, 2025), Palimpsest Rules Letter (24 Nov, 2025), An Tir LoItUP (25 Nov, 2025), Outlands (25 Nov, 2025), Laurel LoPaD (27 Nov, 2025), Ansteorra (30 Nov, 2025), Atenveldt (30 Nov, 2025), Caid (30 Nov, 2025), Drachenwald (30 Nov, 2025), Ealdormere (30 Nov, 2025), East (30 Nov, 2025), Gleann Abhann (30 Nov, 2025), Lochac (30 Nov, 2025), Middle (30 Nov, 2025), West (30 Nov, 2025), Laurel LoPFR (30 Dec, 2025). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Saturday, January 31, 2026.**

The March Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, March 29, 2026 and the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, March 7, 2026. These meetings considered the following letters of intent: Calontir (04 Dec, 2025), Atlantia (09 Dec, 2025), Avacal (15 Dec, 2025), Northshield (17 Dec, 2025), An Tir (23 Dec, 2025), Lochac (26 Dec, 2025), Outlands (27 Dec, 2025), Meridies (28 Dec, 2025), An Tir (29 Dec, 2025), Artemisia (30 Dec, 2025), Ealdormere (30 Dec, 2025), East (30 Dec, 2025), Atenveldt (31 Dec, 2025), Drachenwald (31 Dec, 2025), Middle (31 Dec, 2025), Northshield (31 Dec, 2025), Middle Other Letter (18 Feb, 2026). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Saturday, February 28, 2026.**

Not all letters of intent may be considered when they are originally scheduled on this cover letter. The date of posting 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.

Be assured that I remain

In service

Birgitta Lulli
Laurel Queen of Arms