



Drachenwald Branch Herald's Guide

2nd edition
AS XXXIX (Gregorian 2004)



Table of Contents

<u>DRACHENWALD BRANCH HERALD'S GUIDE</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>TABLE OF CONTENTS</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>INTRODUCTION.....</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>DOCUMENT HISTORY</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>REFERENCE WEBSITES</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>WHAT IS A HERALD?.....</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>REQUIREMENTS</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>BE SURE TO HAVE FUN</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>SCOPE OF THE POST</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>THE POWERS OF THE POST</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>DEPUTIES</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>WHAT A HERALD CANNOT DO.....</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>WARRANTS</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>LOCAL HERALDS' RESPONSIBILITIES.....</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>WORKING WITH SUBMITTERS</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>SUBMISSION FINANCES</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>VOICE HERALDRY</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>CONDUCTING AND ENJOYING COURT.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>REPORTS</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>QUARTERLY REPORTS</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>COURT REPORTS</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>BEYOND THE LOCAL POSITION.....</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>HERALDIC TITLES</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>APPENDIX A: ARGENT SNAIL'S ARMORY INSTA-BOING CHECK LIST.....</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>I. DOES THE SUBMITTER HAVE AN SCA NAME?</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>II. IS THE SUBMISSION DARK ON DARK, OR LIGHT ON LIGHT?</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>III. IS THE SUBMISSION SLOT MACHINE?</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>IV. IS IT MARSHALLED ARMORY?</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>V. DOES IT USE A FORBIDDEN CHARGE OR GROUP OF CHARGES?</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>VI. DOES IT USE A RESTRICTED CHARGE THAT THE SUBMITTER IS NOT ENTITLED TO USE?</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>VII. IS THE SUBMISSION TOO COMPLEX?</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>VIII. ARE THE BUMPITY LINES DRAWN BIG AND BOLD AND BUTCH?</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>IX. ARE THE CHARGES DRAWN IN THEIR MEDIEVAL FORM?</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>APPENDIX B: HOW THE SUBMISSIONS PROCESS WORKS IN DRACHENWALD</u>	<u>17</u>

Introduction

This short guide introduces you to the job of local herald for branches (baronies, shires and cantons) in Drachenwald. It's designed to aid new heralds but is not a complete guide to every aspect of the post. If you need clarification or more information on any part of the post please contact the Kingdom Herald or one of the Deputy Kingdom Heralds.

The Administrative Handbook of the College of Arms defines the job of herald, and Drachenwald's Herald policy outlines our kingdom-wide practices. In case of a conflict with these documents, the Administrative Handbook, then kingdom policy, have precedence.

The most up to date version of this document is available from
<http://www.drachenwald.sca.org>

Document history

This document updates Mistress Adelaide de Beaumont's first guide published in 1993, the year Drachenwald became a kingdom. Hers was a large volume that endeavoured both to outline the requirements of a local office, and to introduce newcomers to heraldry (before widespread Internet access).

This edition assumes that you have some access to the Internet and its many SCA and historic heraldry resources, to learn the basics of blazon and heraldry theory, the best sources for authentic names, and to subscribe to your local newsgroups.

Copyright 2004 Judy Gerjuoy and Elizabeth Brown

Reference Websites

SCA, Inc official website – a good starting point for all newcomers
<http://www.sca.org>

Official Laurel Sovereign of Arms website, including governing documents
<http://www.sca.org/heraldry/laurel/welcome.html>

The Drachenwald Herald's website
<http://www.drachenwald.sca.org/files/herald/>

Kingdom heraldry policies
http://www.drachenwald.sca.org/Law/herald_policies.htm

Forms to subscribe to the Drachenwald heralds' list, and other kingdom lists
<http://lists.drachenwald.sca.org/index.html>

What is a Herald?

The SCA Herald's role is modelled on the heralds in the English College of Arms, an institution that still exists and serves the British royal family and Commonwealth countries today.

SCA heralds:

- Maintain the ceremonial side of the Society
- Help people design, document and register names, devices and badges to use in the SCA
- Advise members about heraldic display
- Maintain orders of precedence (OPs), recording the honours and awards given to members

Requirements

The requirements to fill a branch office are simple:

- A general interest in one or more aspects of heraldry (designing arms, finding authentic names, heralding court or tournaments, etc.) and a willingness to learn
- Paid membership in SCA Inc. or an organization affiliated with the SCA such as SKA: As a local officer, you are a representative of the SCA Inc, and thus must be a paid member. Non-members can be heralds, but cannot serve as a local officer in a branch.
- Means to send a quarterly report to the kingdom herald. Most correspondence now circulates by e-mail and the kingdom website has a quarterly herald's report form you can easily fill out, but postal correspondence is equally acceptable.

Be Sure to Have Fun

While this guide contains a lot of do's and do not's and other bureaucratic information, always keep in mind that the job of herald is also a lot of fun. The submissions part of the job means that a herald helps people with their name and device. The voice heraldry part of the job means that the herald does something similar to what medieval heralds did, such as being the voice of royalty and organizing ceremonies. Most SCA officers do not get a chance to recreate the role of their medieval counterparts, and doing so is quite rewarding.

Scope of the post

A local herald has a series of small but important responsibilities, summed up as a list of points explained below:

- Assisting submitters with designing, researching and documenting their submissions. The operative word here is **assisting**. It is **not** the job of the local herald to do the research and/or documentation, but rather to assist the submitter to describe and document what they want. Nor is it the job of the local herald to do the artwork for the heraldic submission. You can volunteer to help, if you have the skills, but it is **not** the herald's responsibility.
- Reporting to the Kingdom Herald and/or relevant deputies in a timely and relevant manner. The quarterly herald's report form on the kingdom website can make this quite easy.
- Submitting any required financial reports regarding submissions money.
- Keeping abreast of heraldic developments in the kingdom and the Society and relaying this information to the branch (for example, discussing new awards or a new group device). If you have an e-mail account, please join the Drachenwald's herald's mailing list.
- Maintaining a file of submission copies for local submitters, and heraldic correspondence.
- Organizing field heraldry or announcements at local events as needed.

- Organizing or assisting royal, principality and baronial courts as needed.
- Liaising with other branch officers and supporting local group activities. A herald can be one of the officers (and paid members) required to sustain a group's active status in the Society.
- Working towards the well-being of the branch as an active member.

The powers of the post

As a mainly supporting and advising role, the Herald has very few powers. You can be one of the required officers to maintain a group's status, but this role is not directly related to your herald's duties.

Deputies

As Herald of a branch you can and should recruit deputies to assist you to run the office. Your responsibilities require a wide range of skills and knowledge: some people are excellent field heralds, but are not interested in submissions, others prefer looking up names to assisting in court.

Deputies can deal with an overflow of work or assist with specific tasks as well as train to take over the job, since it is not a good idea to stay in office forever. Though you should endeavour to learn as much as you can about heraldry, no herald is expected to be good at everything, or to do every aspect of the job. Having deputies in charge of specific functions is **highly** recommended.

What a herald cannot do

As an advisor, a local herald **assists** submitters with heraldic submissions, but you do not have the authority to tell a submitter that the College will or will not accept a name or device. Within the kingdom, only the kingdom submissions herald can return a submission; at the Laurel level, only the Laurel Sovereign of Arms, aided by the commenters, can decide the final yay or nay.

Valuable advice: never tell a submitter "You can't do that" (even if you're certain you are right!). Submitters can be very sensitive about their choice of name and device, and a flat negative comment will be poorly received.

See "Working with submitters".

Appointment of officers

It is the duty of all new officers to contact their kingdom officer.

The outgoing branch Herald should contact the Schwarzdrachen (kingdom) herald to inform Schwarzdrachen of the changeover. This message should include a statement from the branch seneschal, confirming that the branch supports the new applicant.

The incoming herald sends Schwarzdrachen their membership and contact information. (Your membership number appears on your membership card, and your Dragon's Tale or Tournaments Illuminated mailing label.)

Schwarzdrachen adds the new herald to the list of warranted heralds. Once the new person is warranted then he or she is an officer of the branch.

Warrants

Unlike a fighter's authorization card, a herald's warrant is not a piece of paper. The kingdom herald warrants you by accepting your application to become a branch herald. A list of warranted heralds appears on the kingdom heraldry website. If you aren't listed, you aren't warranted.

The typical term for a local officer is two years. You keep your warrant as a local herald as long as you continue to report for the branch. If you miss two quarterly reports in a row, Schwarzdrachen will contact you and your group seneschal, to see if there's a problem to resolve, and to confirm that you wish to remain active. If Schwarzdrachen doesn't get a reply, you are dropped from the warrant list, and your group needs a new officer.

If you enjoy heraldry and want to retain your warrant after you step down from your local office, let Schwarzdrachen know. You will remain on the warrant list by continuing to send in reports (even a short message saying, "I'm not doing anything heraldic right now" is acceptable to retain a warrant).

Local heralds' responsibilities

For an overview of how the submissions process works, see Appendix B.

Working with Submitters

Working with submitters is the most important and the hardest job for a herald. The herald must explain rules that can often appear arbitrary and nonsensical. They aren't, but unless the submitter knows about medieval heraldry, medieval naming practices, and how the College of Arms works, they can appear that way. Therefore, the herald must endeavour to remain polite and helpful at all times.

While it is no favour to tell a submitter that something is registerable, if you know it is not registerable, it is also not a good idea to say "no" too quickly. Try to find out what is important to the submitter, and try to help them get as close to what they want as possible.

While it is important to strive for authenticity, if their chosen name or device is registerable (as opposed to perfectly authentic), it is their choice, and they have a right to have it. You can explain medieval practice politely (for instance purple was rarely used as a tincture, but is common in the SCA), but don't push the issue.

Your local submitters are people you see and work with on a regular basis. If you're having trouble communicating with someone over their choices and want to avoid hard feelings, you can "kick problems upstairs", and ask a senior herald for input. That is part of the job of senior heralds.

Remember: if the person's submission is accepted, **you** helped the submitter do it, but if it's returned **they** (the senior heralds) did it!

You cannot refuse to pass on a complete submission (complete means the proper number of forms and payment, if any are given to the local herald), even if the submission breaks one or more heraldic rules. However, you should inform the submitter of any likely problems, and encourage the submitter to correct them, and not wait until the kingdom herald or Laurel returns them. It can often help to explain to submitters that it will take a couple of months for submissions to be returned from kingdom and if that happens then the submitter must start over.

Documentation, research, and artwork are all the job of the submitter, and **not** you. You can help them, but it is **not** your responsibility.

Make sure that the armory passes the Argent Snail "Instanta-Boing" check list (see Appendix A) and leave it at that. This list is a style checklist. Submitters don't like or always understand style returns, so taking care of those right away, before the submitter has had time to grow attached to the design, helps.

Most submitters understand conflict returns: "Good idea, but someone else got there first." If you are comfortable with the Rules for Submissions (RfS), and know how to check for conflict, you can offer to do it. Conflict checking takes time and practice, so feel free to leave it to the commenting heralds at kingdom level.

Remember that names need documentation. The submitter must show that:

- A given (first) name was used by a human being in Europe or a country that Europe had contact with, prior to 1600.

- A last name (byname/surname) was used as a name, or is a form that could have been a name, prior to 1600.

If you aren't sure, ask a senior herald, or post your question to the heralds' discussion list.

Under no circumstances should you hold onto a completed submission more than 30 days. Send submissions on promptly.

Submission Finances

There are several ways for submitters to pay for heraldic submissions.

- Give or send the money to the kingdom exchequer (making sure that who and what it is for is clearly marked).
- Get a bank or postal money order and mail it with the submission to the Edelweiss herald.
- Transfer funds electronically to the Schwarzdrachen bank account.
Account name: SCA-Schwarzdrachen
Sort code and account no: 800024-14327261,
IBAN: FI0680002414327261
SWIFT code: PSPBFIHH
Sampo Bank plc,
Finland
- Hand-deliver the money and submissions to the Edelweiss herald.

If you handle money, you **must** fill out a financial report (see Reports). If you do not want to handle the money yourself, it is perfectly appropriate to have the submitter send it directly to Edelweiss or the kingdom exchequer themselves.

Voice Heraldry

Voice heraldry is the ceremonial part of the herald's job. There are several forms of voice heraldry, including field heraldry, court heraldry and announcements.

For any form, keep one thing in mind at all times: when you wear a heraldic tabard (either with the arms of the group, or just the herald's green and gold) you are the voice of the ruling noble (or the branch you represent) and **not** yourself.

This means that you do not have a personal opinions on **anything**. Your job is solely to represent your group, or the ruling noble. If anything happens that means you have to do something as yourself, versus "the herald", you take the tabard **off**. For instance, if you are heralding court, and you are called in court, you take the tabard off **before** you come into court.

When being a voice herald, especially when doing court, you will find yourself privy to information, such as what awards are planned. This information is confidential, and you do not share it with **anyone** including your spouse, best friend, seneschal, ceremonial ruler, etc.

There are many good articles about voice heraldry on the Drachenwald heraldry website. Some basic pointers are:

- Never surprise your boss. **Everything** done in court should be cleared with you, **and** the noble(s) whose court you are supporting. They decide what happens in court. **There is no such thing as a surprise presentation for the crown.** If the person(s) presenting the item are not willing to tell you or the presiding noble what they are presenting, then it shouldn't happen in court. And, of course, if the presentation is in bad taste or disrespectful, it does not belong in court.
- Check carefully the intent of all presentations. If it is a presentation for the **group**, e.g. new cloaks for the crown, kneeling pillows for the prince and princess, a new banner for the barony, do it in court. If it is a presentation to the **person(s)** do it when the royals are sitting in state, or during feast, privately. This distinction makes it easier to tell, after the fact, what gifts are personal and what gifts will become regalia or possessions of the group.
- If it is possible, try to find out how people pronounce their names ahead of time. You can do this discreetly, by asking the seneschal of the group, or local peers. Also try to determine if the people are **at** the event. If they are not present, inform the presiding noble, so they can decide if they want to give out the award at this time anyway, or postpone it until a later date.
- Remember to send in a court report!

See: Reports.

Conducting and enjoying court

Some heralds enjoy public speaking, others do not. Every herald should try assisting in court, but if you really do not enjoy this public role, do not force yourself. Find a deputy who enjoys the job! You, and the populace, will be glad you did.

Some pointers to get started:

- Get together with the Crown/Coronet/Baron and/or Baroness in advance of court so you can put together the order court and find out how to pronounce people's names.
- Ask the presiding nobles if they want you to "call for business" (ask if the populace wishes to speak or present something in court).

- In the royalty room before court, review the scrolls and promissories, and make sure you can read and pronounce them. If you can't, get a "cheat-sheet" with the wording, that you can read instead of the scroll. Make sure all scrolls are signed.
- Make sure you have all necessary ceremonies, preferably in multiple copies.
- Make sure you have comfortable (including not too hot or too cold) clothes to wear, and most importantly, **comfortable** shoes!
- Pace the awards and yourself. For a long court, consider sharing the court with another herald, subject, of course, to the approval of the ruling noble. That gives someone else on the job training, **and** gives you and your voice a break. Make sure you have plenty of water to drink! And drink it during pauses, such as when other people are talking or doing things.

Reports

Quarterly reports

Schwarzdrachen requires a quarterly report to summarize your branch's heraldic activity, due

- 25 April (for the period January 1 through March 31)
- 25 July (for the period April 1 through June 30)
- 25 October (for the period 1 August through September 30)
- 25 January (for the period 1 October through December 31)

The first three quarterly reports cover only the previous three months. The December report (often called a "Domesday" report) covers the whole year.

If your group is within a principality or a barony you can send a courtesy copy to your regional or baronial herald, but this is not required.

Reports need not be long or onerous and can be done on plain paper, via electronic mail or using the online form. You list:

- Your SCA name
- Your real name
- Your contact information: postal address, e-mail address, phone number
- Your membership number
- Recent activities: submissions sent, courts held, field or event heraldry organized, other activities like banner-making.

Every warranted herald who receives payment for submissions must report every three months and send it to the Dragon's Tear Pursuivant and Schwarzdrachen. You can combine the finance details in your regular quarterly report.

For each submitted item, include following information:

- Submitter's legal name
- Submitter's primary persona name
- Item submitted
- Currency Amount received
- Date received
- Date sent and to whom
- Currency Amount sent and to which account
- Date sent

See the kingdom heraldry website for the online report form.

Court reports

For all courts held within the Kingdom, the court herald submits a report within a week of the event. The report must include

- The names of the person(s) holding the court
- The name of the herald
- The date of the court
- The awards:
 - SCA Name
 - Mundane Name
 - Gender

- Award
- Any token or scroll received (so the signet knows whether or not to assign a backlog scroll)

Send court reports to:

- Schwarzdrachen
- Post Horn Pursuivant
- Kingdom Clerk of the Signet
- cc to the royals who held court (e.g. their Majesties, their Highnesses of Nordmark, the Viceroy and Vicereine of Insulae Draconis, their Excellencies of one of the baronies)
- cc to any assisting heralds

All the contact information is on the Drachenwald heraldry website.

Beyond the local position

If you enjoy heraldry and want to serve as a herald beyond your local branch, let Schwarzdrachen know, and talk over your interests, to help you develop a project that you will have fun pursuing.

If you enjoy researching names, for example, you could research names from a region or a period in your own country, possibly in your native language. If you prefer drawing and painting devices, you could start a local roll of arms for your region. If you enjoy court, volunteer to serve in court when you can, and research any ceremonies from your period, to adapt for Society use.

You could also consider taking another regional or deputy office. Most terms are for two years, though you can hold an office for longer, if you're enjoying the job.

Keen heralds are always welcome!

Heraldic titles

Each kingdom has titles for its senior deputies in charge of an area of heraldic activity. The larger branches (principalities and baronies) also have titles for their heralds.

Titles are a conceit of the SCA College of Arms, based on the period example of the English College of Arms. The names often relate to a charge in a kingdom device, a kingdom order, or a well-known region. While initially confusing to non-heralds, titles are a fun and authentic way to extend the recreation of our medieval society.

Titles and responsibilities for Drachenwald:

Schwarzdrachen: Principal herald

Edelweiss: Internal submissions herald (in charge of receiving submissions and running internal commentary)

Albion: External submissions herald (in charge of collating commentary, sending LoIs, and contacting submitters with results)

Post Horn: clerk of the Order of Precedence

Dragon's Tear: Treasurer of the College of Heraldry

Aurochs: Heraldic education

Signet: a deputy of the College of Heraldry, in charge of assigning scrolls to scribes for current and past awards

Regional titles:

Silversparre: principality herald for Nordmark

Gyllene Bandet: deputy herald for Nordmark

Broken Wain: herald for Barony of Knight's Crossing

Troischesnes: herald for shire of Drei Eichen (was formerly a barony, retains the title)

Susi: herald for Barony of Aarnemetsa

Rautahirvi: deputy herald for Barony of Aarnemetsa

Rockall: herald for Crown Principality of Insulae Draconis

Drachenwald kingdom policy allows individuals to register heraldic titles, in Drachenwald's name, for their own use. They retain these titles as long as they remain active heralds in Drachenwald, but the titles remain registered to the kingdom. Current personal titles include:

Vesilehti: personal title of Master Johan Magnusson

Rabe: personal title of Sir Hartmann Rogge, former Schwarzdrachen

Koira: personal title of Master Pietari Pentinpoika Uv, former Schwarzdrachen

Finally, the SCA College of Arms allows kingdoms to transfer heraldic titles to individuals, in recognition of exceptional and longtime service to the College and to their kingdom. This is a rare and special honour, held only by a handful of people across the Known World.

Argent Snail: personal title of Mistress Jaelle of Armida

Appendix A: ARGENT SNAIL'S ARMORY INSTA-BOING CHECK LIST

This checklist originally appeared as part of a paper in the Proceedings of the Known World Heraldic Symposium held in Tree-Girt-Sea and Rokkehealden, Middle Kingdom, June A.S. XXVIII (1993). Copyright 1993 by Judith Gerjuoy.

I. Does the submitter have an SCA name?

You cannot register a piece of armory without a name. The name can be registered or submitted before the armory is submitted, or it can be submitted when the armory is submitted; but there must be a SCA name to attach the armory to.

II. Is the submission dark on dark, or light on light?

This is commonly known as the color on color, metal on metal rule. You cannot put color on color, or metal on metal. For instance, you cannot have a sable (black) charge on an azure (blue) field. However, even items that are not in true heraldic tinctures must follow this rule. For instance a chipmunk "proper" is brown. Brown is dark. Therefore, it must be on a metal (light) field. Caucasians proper are considered metal, and must be on a dark field.

III. Is the submission slot machine?

Armory is "slot machine" when there are three or more different charges in the same charge group. For instance "Or, a bell, book and candle sable." is slot machine. "Argent, on a bend between a bell and a book azure, a candle Or." is not, because the candle is on the bend, thus not in the same charge group as the others.

IV. Is it marshalled armory?

Marshalling is a way of showing familial relationships. It was done in the middle ages, but we don't register it in the SCA. Therefore, the following arrangements are not allowed. First: you cannot have a field divided per pale with different charges in each half of the field, if there is a plain line of division. If the per pale line is bumpity, then it is allowed. The same rule holds true for quarterly: Unless the same charge is in each quarter, there needs to be a bumpity line of division. The only exception is in the case of quarterly where quarters that are only a solid metal or color are also acceptable. For instance, "Quarterly sable and argent, in bend two eagles displayed Or.", would not be considered marshalled arms.

V. Does it use a forbidden charge or group of charges?

There are a number of charges that no one can use. They are either presumptuous (claiming a mundane rank), or offensive. Examples of presumptuous charges include: Tudor rose, crowned shamrock, crowned rose. Examples of offensive charges include: the hand of glory, swastika, triskelion gammadion. Note: this list is not all-inclusive.

VI. Does it use a restricted charge that the submitter is not entitled to use?

There are a number of charges that only some people in the SCA can use. To have a crown or coronet on your device you must have been a king, queen, prince or princess or be a court baron or baroness. Only official SCA groups can have laurel wreaths on their devices (and they must have them). Only members of the order of Knighthood can use white belts or closed loops of chain; only members of the order of the Pelican can use a pelican in its piety in their armory. Note: this list is not all-inclusive.

VII. Is the submission too complex?

Our rule of thumb is that if the number of different types of charges plus the number of different tinctures used add up to more than eight, the submission is too complex. For instance, "Per bend sinister ermine and gules, a tiger rampant azure and a horse passant erminois, a bordure purpure semy of roundels argent ermined vert.", would be too complex with four different charges (tiger, horse, bend and roundels) and 6 tinctures (argent, sable (the tinctures in the ermine), azure, Or, purpure and vert).

VIII. Are the bumpity lines drawn big and bold and butch?

Medieval lines of division were drawn big and bold. Slim and elegant is not period for heraldry. In medieval heraldry charges were drawn to fill the space. Remember, the purpose of heraldry is identification from a distance.

IX. Are the charges drawn in their medieval form?

We register medieval, not modern, heraldry. We use a quill pen, not a fountain pen; a cart, not an automobile. All charges used must be items used in that form prior to the year 1600.

Appendix B: How the Submissions Process Works in Drachenwald

The submitter or the local herald sends a submission to the Edelweiss Herald (internal submissions herald) who confirms that the submissions are complete.

About once a month, Edelweiss assembles copies of the submission into an Internal Letter of Intent (ILoI). This letter goes out electronically to any heralds in or out of the kingdom who wish to comment on the submissions (add more documentation, perform conflict-checking, etc.). Commenters send their comments to the Albion Herald.

The Albion Herald (external submissions) collates the commentary and decides either to return a submission (e.g. for obvious conflict or style problems) or send it off to Laurel in an External Letter of Intent (ELoI). This process (receiving comments, assembling the letter) takes roughly two months depending on when Edelweiss gets the complete paperwork.

Once the submissions reach Laurel in hard copy, they are reviewed by the commenting heralds: approximately 60 heralds throughout the SCA who advise Laurel. For example, some heralds have a particular area of expertise, like Scottish naming practices. These heralds have four months to provide their comments to Laurel.

Laurel holds scheduled meetings monthly to look at the submissions and all the commentary, and decide to either accept or return the submission. Laurel then issues a Laurel Letter of Acceptance and Returns (LoAR) which contains all of Laurel's decisions for the month. These decisions are posted to the Laurel web site, e-mailed to external submissions heralds, and are mailed in hard copy to the heralds who commented on the submissions.

Albion posts the news about accepted and returned submissions to the Dragon's Tale and contacts each submitter individually with the outcome of their submission. Albion also usually posts the results to the kingdom newsgroups.

Delays can occur in the mail, if submitters did not send a complete submission (e.g. missing money or documentation or copies), if the Edelweiss herald made a mistake in the ILoI (rare, but possible!), or if Laurel pends a submission for further discussion (e.g. the submission prompts a review of current practice, or presents a new charge never used before). The volume of Laurel's monthly decisions can also cause a delay between holding the decision meeting, and publishing the LoAR.

Ideal turnaround time from submission date to LoAR announcement is about 9 months.