



By the Boke

An educational series of articles presented by the Northshield College of Heraldry.

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The Ins and Outs of the Submissions Process

By Aryanhwy merch Catmael, Boke Herawde

I. Some acronyms

We in Northshield are lucky in that we have a very stream-lined submissions process; we have one of the fastest turn around times of any College of Heraldry in the Known World. But for those who are not actively involved in the submissions process, the terminology and the timeline may be a bit confusing. So this month's article is on the submissions process.

First of all, some commonly used acronyms:

CoH = College of Heraldry. Each kingdom has a College of Heraldry. The CoH is made up of the principal herald, his staff heralds, and all warranted branch and field heralds.

CoA = College of Arms. This is the Society-wide College, comprised of the three sovereigns, Laurel, Wreath, and Pelican, the kingdom principal heralds and submissions heralds, other kingdom staff heralds, and commenters.

LoI = Letter of Intent. Submissions are placed on an LoI when it is the intent of the College that said submissions be registered. In Northshield we distinguish ILoIs from ELoIs.

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ILoI = Internal Letter of Intent. This is the letter that contains submissions that are sent to the Northshield CoH for comment.

ELoI = External Letter of Intent. This is the letter that contains submissions that are sent to the Laurel CoA for comment.

LoAR = Letter of Acceptances and Return. Laurel publishes this after each month's meeting.

ILoAR = Internal Letter of Acceptances and Return. Keythong's version of the above letter.

II. The Internal Process

The submissions process within Northshield will be undergoing a change in June or July. Currently, all submissions handling is done by Keythong Herald. Starting in June or July, submissions are sent to Compass Herald, who collects submissions each month and publishes the following month the ILoI, usually around the 15th of the month. (So April submissions appear on the May 15 letter).

The ILoIs are published in two places on the web. Keythong Herald maintains the "Northshield Heraldry Letters" page, at <http://www.northshield.org/keythong/letters.html>. Letters, from October 2003 on, are also published on Northshield Commentary website (<http://www.northshield.org/keythong/commentary/>).

Once the ILoI has been released, an announcement is made on the NS-Heraldry mailing list (<http://mailman.itasca.net/listinfo/ns-heraldry>), and the commentary period begins. The commentary period lasts one month. Anyone, herald or non-herald, Northshielder or non-Northshielder, is welcome to view the ILoI and comment on the submissions. Commentary is preferably submitted via the Commentary website, but emailed comments are also acceptable; they should be sent to Polaris and Keythong.

At the end of one month, Keythong reviews the comments, and based on these comments makes decisions to either forward submissions to the commenting members of the CoA or to return them for further work.

Keythong creates an ILoAR, which lists the submissions from the ILoI, and says whether they have been sent on to the CoA or returned, and if returned, notes the reason why. The ILoARs can be viewed at the Northshield Heraldry Letters page. The status of individual submissions can also be checked via the Commentary website.

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If a submission is returned, the submitter will be notified by Keythong of this decision, and given the reasons why. People may resubmit within a year of this notification letter for free.

Occasionally a submission has problems which are such that it cannot be sent forward, but are not sufficient enough to warrant a return. (Missing paperwork, or emblazons that need to be redrawn, are such problems). At Keythong's discretion, a submission may be pended, instead of returned, until these problems can be rectified. Again, should a submission be pended, Keythong will contact the submitter with the details.

III. The External Process

Between the 15th of the month, when commentary is due, and the end of the month, Keythong collects the submissions that have not been returned, and constructs an ELoI. This is sent to the Sovereigns of Arms and the commenting members of the CoA. The commenters then have a 4 month period to comment on the submissions and to respond to other commenters' comments. (So submissions on a May 30th ELoI will be commented on in May, June, July, and August). After four months of commentary, the Wreath and Pelican Sovereigns review the commentary, and make decisions based on this to either register or return the submission. At their discretion, submissions may also be pended; this is generally reserved for armory submissions whose blazons were incorrect on the ELoI (which means that the submission could not be adequately researched by the commenters).

After the meeting, the Sovereigns write the text of the LoAR, which is sent to proofreaders to check for errors, and then usually within a

month or two of the meeting (this amount is sometimes more for meetings involving an unusually high number of submissions) the LoAR is released. Paper copies of the LoAR are sent to all commenters, and anyone who has a paid subscription. Electronic copies are disseminated via mailing lists, which have open membership. Subscription information can be found at the bottom of this page: http://www.sca.org/heraldry/laurel/SCA_Heraldic_Related_Mailing_Lists.html. A few days later, the LoARs are published on the Laurel website at <http://www.sca.org/heraldry/loar/>.

Once the LoAR has been received, the results for Northshield submissions are published on the NS-Heralds mailing list. Information about accepted arms are generally also announced on the Northshield mailing list, as the Northshield Armorial (<http://www.ellipsis.cx/~liana/sca/armorial.html>) is updated with each new LoAR. Keythong also sends letters of notification to submitters upon the release of the LoAR.

IV. A Timeline

So how is this practically implemented? Let us take a hypothetical submission. John Smythe wants to submit his name and his arms, “Argent, a fess sable.” He completes the paperwork and acquires the documentation, and sends his submission off to Compass in April. Compass receives the submissions by May 1, and puts them on the May 15th ILoI. Commenters review the submissions, and find that while the name has no problems, there is a conflict with the device. At the end of a month (so, June 15th), Keythong reviews these comments and makes the decision to pass the name on, and return the device. John receives a letter of notification of the return.

By June 30th, Keythong creates the ELoI and sends it to the CoA. At the same time, the ILoAR is published on the Keythong website. Commenters then have June, July, August, and September to comment. In October, Wreath and Pelican review the commentary and make their decisions. The LoAR is written and proofread, and released sometime in December. Notification of the registration of John’s name follows shortly.

V. Where in the process is my submission?

There are many places online that you can check the status of your submission. Any submission sent in after September 2003 can be found on the Northshield Commentary website; this will tell you what ILoI a submission was on, show you the commentary on the submission, and give Keythong’s decision. You can also find information on the status of submissions at Boke’s unofficial submissions status page, <http://www.ellipsis.cx/~liana/sca/status.html>. Any specific questions on submissions should be directed to Keythong or Compass.