

I WANT YOU



TO HAVE HERALDRY

Póry Veðardóttir's guide to choosing Your Name and Heraldry

Hello! My name is Þóry, which is said like 'Story!' with more Thor.

I moved from the East Kingdom to the Midrealm in the Year Without Pennsic, and I want to help members of my new Kingdom design and register your Name and Heraldry.

This class focuses on Heraldry and explains the basics of registering your Name. Every Heraldic Art Submission requires a Name to submit it under.

This class uses simple terms instead of Proper Heraldic Language. My goal in the Society is to make Heraldry accessible to everyone.

HeraldicArt.org

Facebook.com/vedardottir

Middlewiki.midrealm.org/index.php/Talk:Thory_Vedardottir

What's in a (Heraldic) Name?

- In the Society for Creative Anachronisms, you get to pick your own name!
- Your name should be from the time period and culture you love. What brought you into the Society? Do you love to shoot arrows? Fight? Fence? Dance? Cook?
 - An archer might have an English persona.
 - A fencer would probably lean towards a late period Italian or French persona.
 - A fighter might prefer a Viking or Roman persona.
- When in doubt, earlier periods are simpler in terms of clothing, armor, and gear.
- When you look for a name, ***do not start at the beginning of the alphabet.***
 - The SCA is full of names beginning with “A.” Please pick a different letter.
 - Your name should be your own. Flip through resources. Pick a few letters. Look at “I” and “K” and “T” names. Check out the end of the alphabet.
- **A short, unusual name is critical if you are a Fencer or a Heavy List Fighter!**
 - If your name is yelled in combat, you need to hear it. Choosing a short name with one or two syllables is best. A longer name with a short nickname is also good.
 - Choosing a common mundane name like “Eric” or “Michael” will cause confusion on the field of battle and can result in you losing battles or tournaments.

What else is in a Heraldic Name?

- If you use a name in D&D or a LARP, ask if there's a similar sounding name that is registerable. It might need a syllable adjusted.
- When you have a few names you like, show the list to your friends.
 - Ask how they would say those names. Think about ways that name could be mispronounced.
 - Show the list to children. Ask how they would make fun of those names.
 - Creating a mnemonic for pronunciation is helpful. My name, Þórý, is often mispronounced "Pourey," so my mnemonic is to say my name is like "Story!" with more Thor. (I have taught myself to answer to Pourey.)
- Once you have chosen a name, practice responding to it.
 - A friend used the name 'Angelanne de Mercy' because she was the angel of mercy who always had bandaids, sunblock, and water for others. Her name was perfect...until her first camping event, when her long, trailing sleeve came too close to a campfire.
 - Everyone yelled "Angelanne, you're on FIRE!" and she jumped up to see who was that clueless. A young man jumped over the firepit and tackled her to smother the flames.
 - *Then* she realized SHE was on fire. She now uses her mundane name in the Society.

I can Use my Mundane Name!?

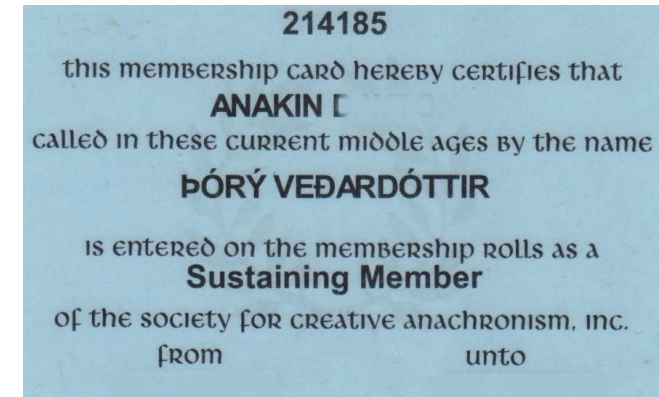
- The Legal Name Allowance lets you register one component of your legal name.
- It can be your first, middle, or last name.
 - Only one component of your name can be registered, because you are not your persona.
- If there is a problem with the documentation of your name, the Heralds may create a “holding name” so that your Heraldry can still be submitted and approved. Disallowing a Holding Name may make your Heraldry not pass.
 - Changing a Holding Name does not cost money and allows you a name you prefer.
- If you really, truly do not want to go through the process of choosing a name for your persona, you can always choose to register “[Your Legal First Name] of [Your Local Group].”
 - This name must still be submitted with paperwork and paid for.
- Each name needs to be different from every other registered name.
 - All names and heraldry are in the Ordinary & Armorial Database: <http://oanda.sca.org>
 - If your name is close to a registered name, you can be [First Name] [Last Name] of [Place].

What about Heraldic Last Names?

- Once you have a first name, you will need to choose a last name and/or a place of origin. Some cultures allow for more than two names.
 - Both parts of your name need to be documentable within 500 years of each other if they are from a single culture.
 - If you would like to have a cross-culture name, both parts of your name must be documentable within 300 years of each other and be from cultures that interacted with each other.
 - You could have an English/French name, but a French/Japanese one is not registerable.
- An alternative to a last name is a location name. Locations are interesting because you can be from a place in history, or from your local SCA group.
 - If you want to be from a historical place, you must provide period documentation of that place's name, because spellings can change over time. (Ask a Herald for help. There are Heralds who love researching old maps and period documentation.)
- If you want to register a locative of an SCA group, that group must have registered its name with the College of Heralds.
- If you don't want to go through the process of choosing a name and surname, you can always register "[Your Legal First Name] of [Your Local Group]."

Common Name Misconceptions

- My name is on my Blue Card, so the Heralds have Registered it!
 - Not true. The College of Heralds has nothing to do with your membership.
- I need a Blue Card to Register my Name with the Heralds!
 - Heralds never ask for membership cards. Your name is registered to you!
- Once my name is Registered, it's permanent!
 - Names can be changed, but you need to complete paperwork and pay for the change submission.
- I can't Register my Name and Heraldry until I have an Award of Arms!
 - There is no award prerequisite to register Heraldry in any Kingdom.
 - Heralds ask your legal name, because things are registered to you, not your persona. Children can also register their Name and Art Heraldry, and parents can make submission for babies.
- My name is on my Award of Arms scroll, so the Heralds have Registered it!
 - Award of Arms scrolls are awarded to whatever name you use.
- I've been using this Household Name and Badge for decades, so it's Registered!
 - Unless you have sat down with a Herald, completed the paperwork, and paid for the submission, it is not Resisted, and anyone can use that design.



What about Funny Names?

- I want to register a funny or crude name, but the Heralds won't let me!
 - Heralds love puns! If appropriate documentation is provided and the name is not Offensive, Presumptuous, or Obtrusively Modern, it can be registered. Examples:
 - Crow Barr http://oanda.sca.org//oanda_name.cgi?p=Crow+Barr
 - Effing Thomas http://oanda.sca.org//oanda_name.cgi?p=Effing+Thomas
 - Violet Hughes http://oanda.sca.org//oanda_name.cgi?p=Violet+Hughes
- You'll never get *that* past the Heralds!
 - No kidding, there I was: checking in at the War of the Roses. After I handed my Blue Card to the Gate, the gatekeeper would not believe that anyone with the legal name of 'Anakin' could register the last name 'Vedardottir.' So I showed him the O&A: https://oanda.sca.org//oanda_name.cgi?p=Thory+Vedhardottir
- I want a German name and French Heraldry, and the Heralds won't allow it!
 - Your Heraldry should have meaning to you. If you want period Heraldry to go with your period name, there are resources available. My winged cat heraldry has nothing to do with my Viking persona, and shows that I am a fan of Tamora Pierce's books.



Sir MacGyver, East

Onward to Heraldry!

Heraldry is the oldest form of
Identify Friend or Foe.

When you see a person running towards you on the battlefield, you must be able to glance at their heraldry and instantly know whether to kill them or let them into the shieldwall.

There are three components to Heraldry:

- High Contrast design
- Easily Identified Images
- Different from every other Design

Why Contrast Matters



This is a piece of Very Iconic Heraldry.

- No, it can't be registered; people have tried.
- Notice how the silver circle “pops” from the red background. The star also pops from the blue circle. This is good contrast.
- The blue circle on the red background does not pop. Poor contrast is not registerable.

This shield is also an excellent example of the three ‘layers’ of heraldic ‘cake.’

Background	Solid red color (patterns are allowed)
Object or Objects	Blue Circle
Things on Objects	Silver Star and Orle (inset border)

Can you paint with all the colors of...Heraldry?



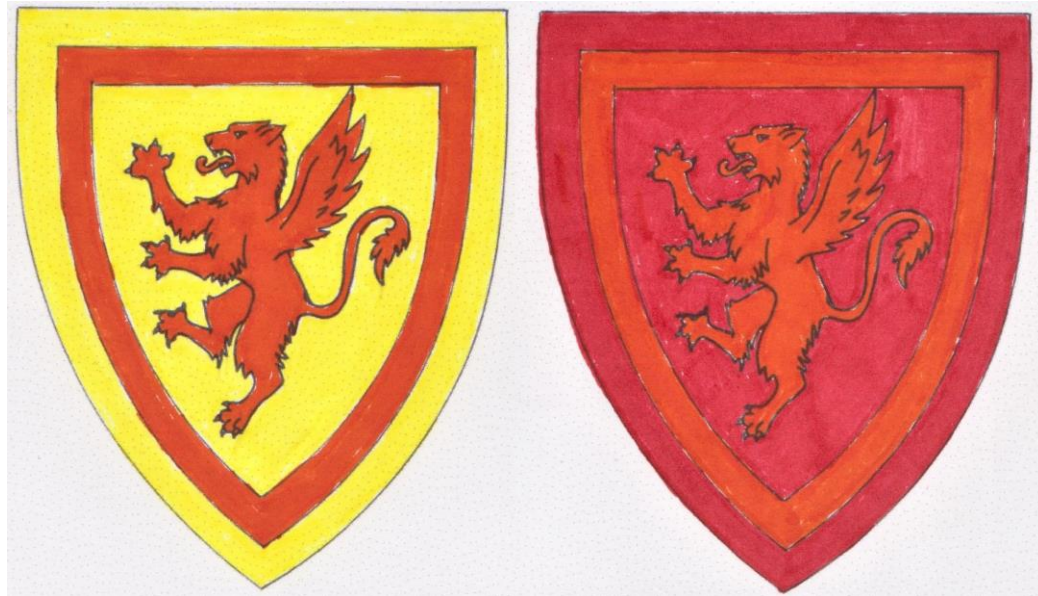
Heraldic tinctures are divided into two groups: Metals and Colors.

Metals are Gold and Silver, which can also be shown as Yellow and White.

Colors are Red, Green, Blue, Purple & Black.

When you build the layers of your heraldic 'cake,' you place colors on metals and metals on colors. This contrast of light and dark makes heraldic designs easy to see.

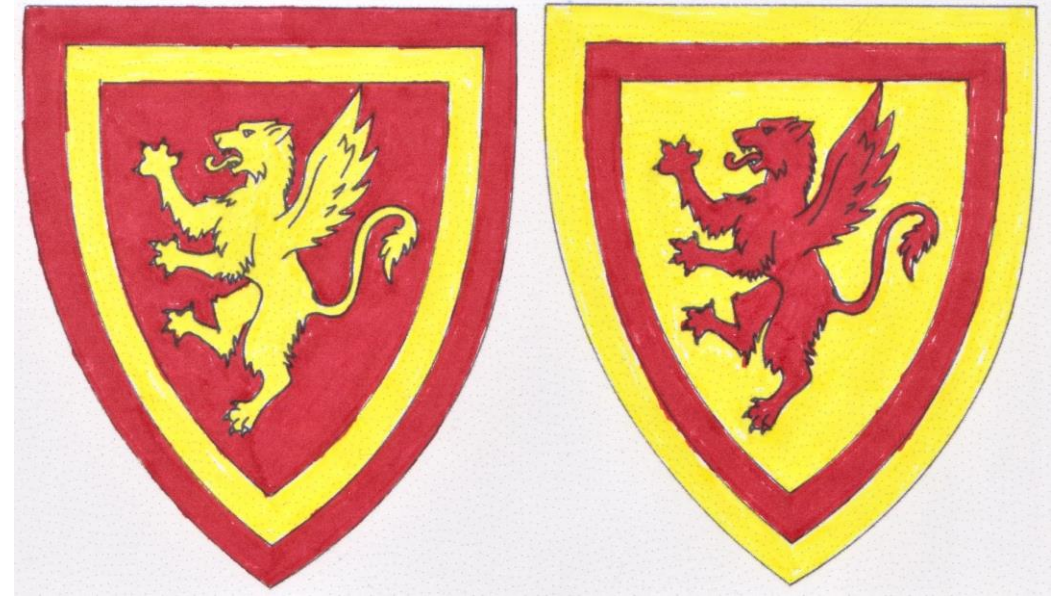
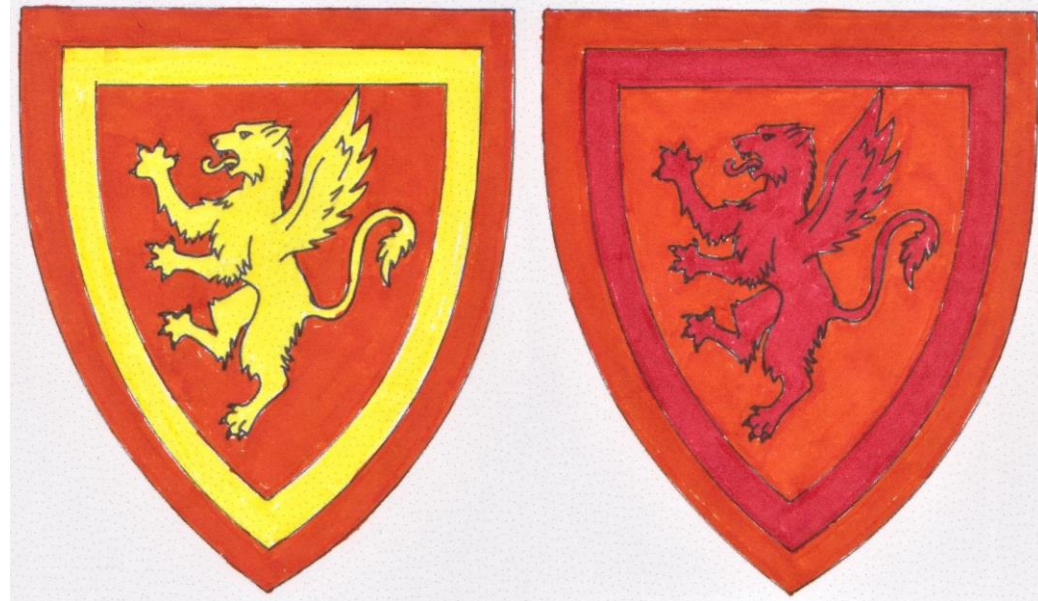
Orange-rageous! Why can't I have that color!?



Orange, Pink and Gray are almost never used in heraldry. Brown is used rarely, for wood or leather.

Orange can look like red or yellow. Images on the left show how orange lacks contrast against red or yellow in different combinations.

Below is my heraldry, recolored in red and yellow.



Why Heraldic Beasts Look Left

I joined the Society because I wanted to learn fencing. I registered my Heraldry at my first Pennsic, and my cat faced the left side of my shield.



When I became a Heavy List fighter, my bad right shoulder forced me to learn to fight left-handed.

This shield on my left arm looks strange.



My Heraldry farts in your general direction!

Heraldry is less about intimidating your enemy than identifying yourself, but a farting cat is not as impressive an attacking cat.



For Heavy List, I display my heraldry To Sinister, or facing the correct way for a left-handed fighter.

If you are trying to clear conflict with other Heraldry, making your design To Sinister gives you one degree of difference.

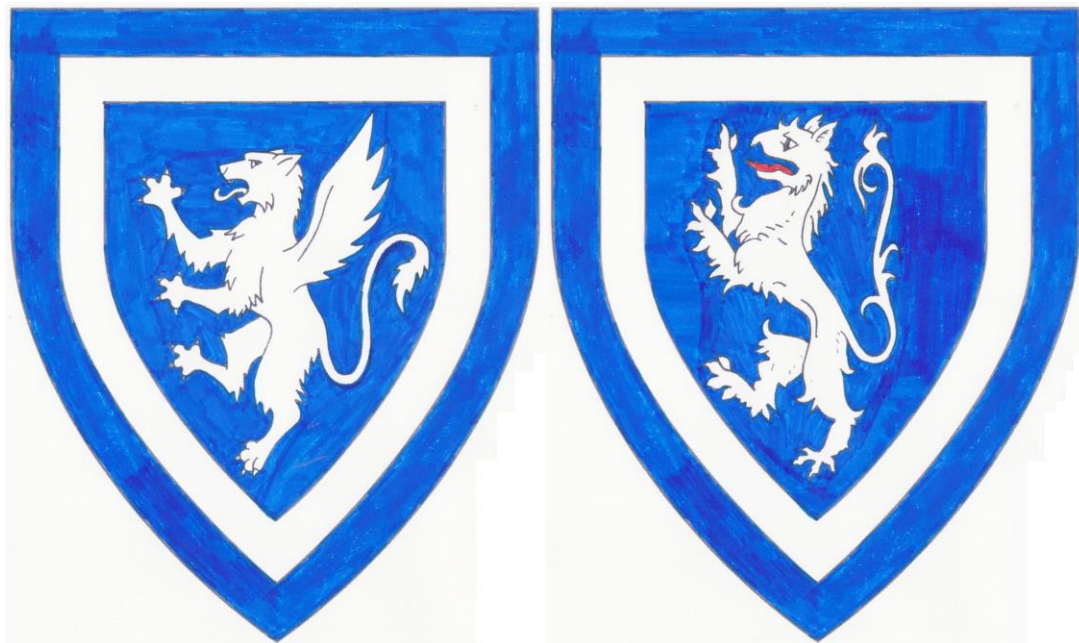


What is Heraldic Conflict?

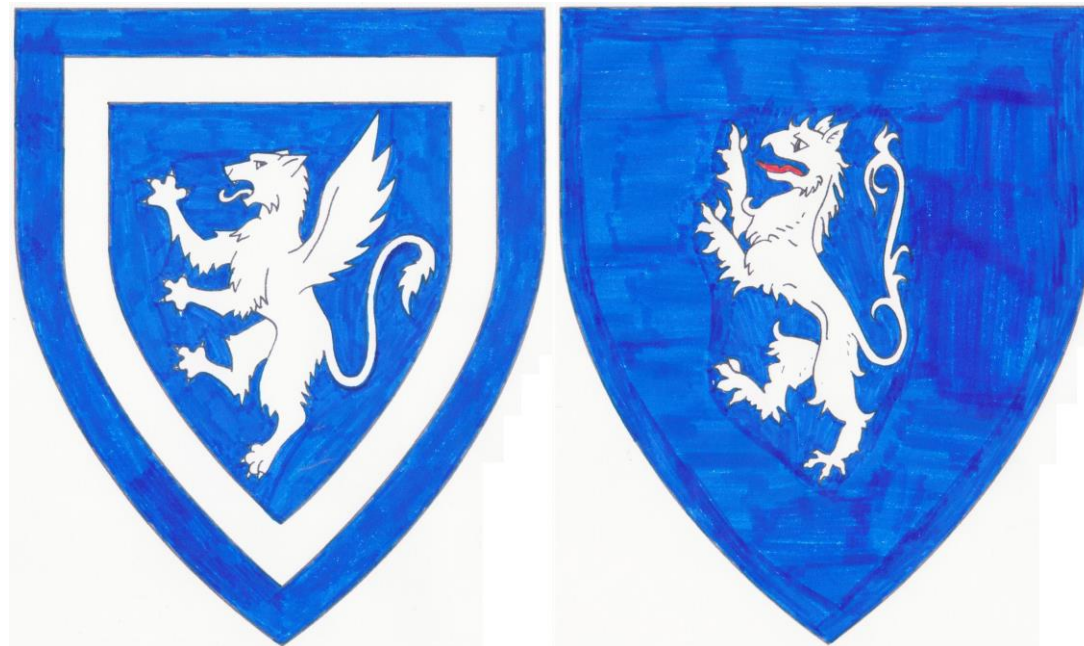
When you design your heraldry, it is checked for Conflict. This ensures your design has at least two degrees of difference from all others—it all comes back to identifying someone on the battlefield.

If there is a conflict, the registered owner must give written Permission to Conflict for it to pass. Not long after my heraldry was registered, the East Kingdom had to ask my permission to conflict with their new Grant of Arms award for heavy list, the Order of the Silver Tyger.

My Heraldry verses the Silver Tyger. They look similar; only the wings distinguish them. (The Tyger's red tongue is artistic license.)



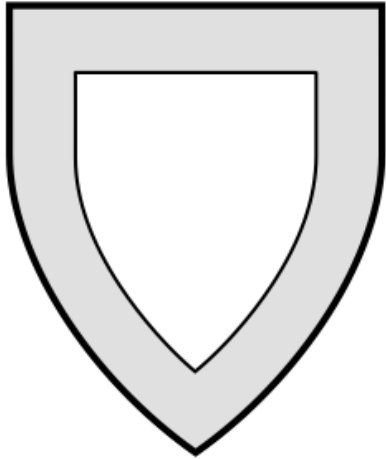
This is my heraldry next to the wingless and borderless Tyger. Two changes make them distinctly different devices.



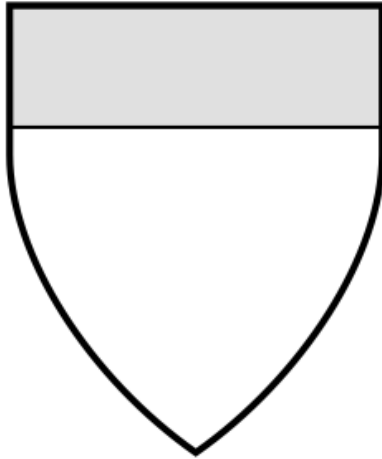
Do you Wanna Clear a Conflict?

Once you have the basic idea for your design, a herald can run a conflict check against our database. If your design conflicts with another, you can change or add to it. If your heraldry has an animal, you could have it face To Sinister, or add wings or a fish tail. Here are more options to clear a conflict:

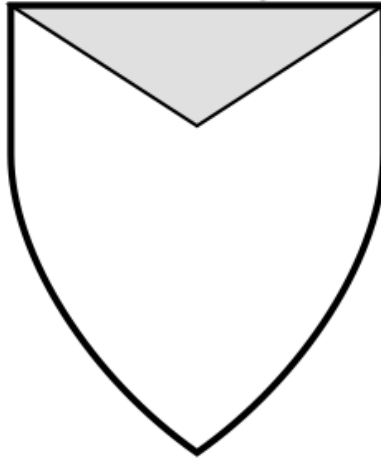
Bordure



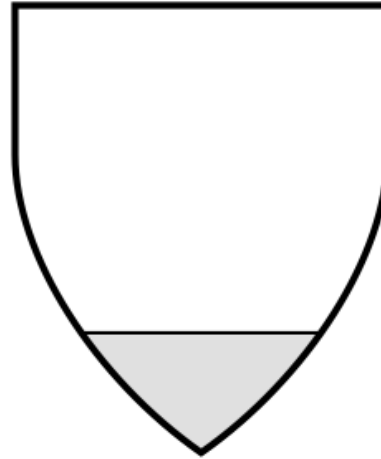
Chief



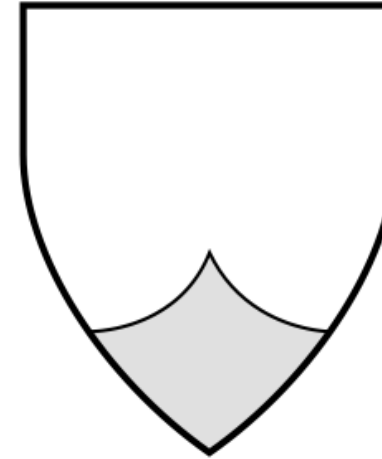
Chief Triangular



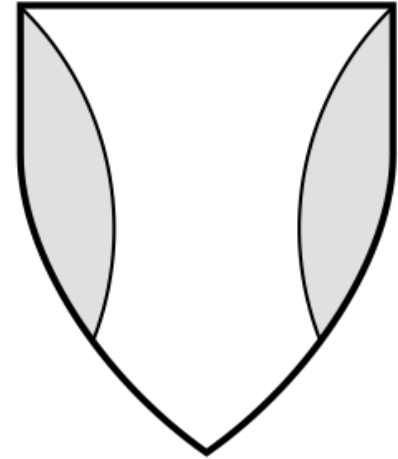
Base



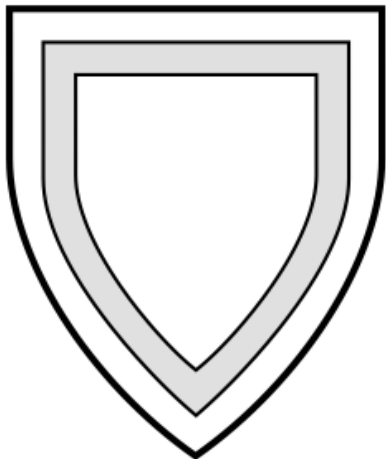
Point Pointed



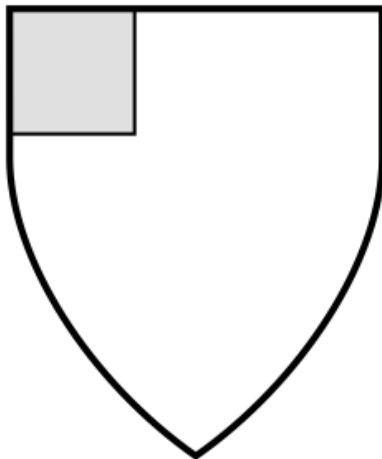
Flaunches



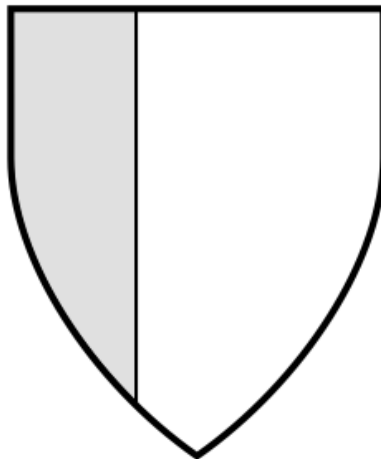
Orle



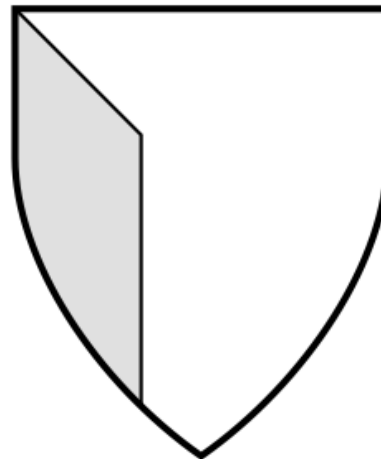
Canton



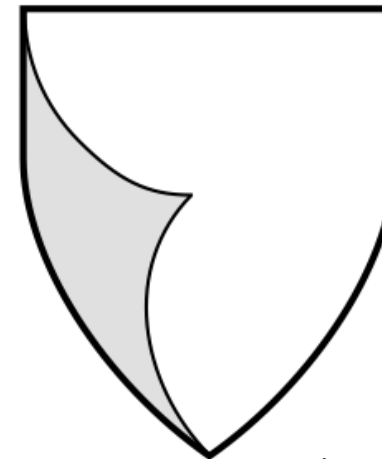
Tierce



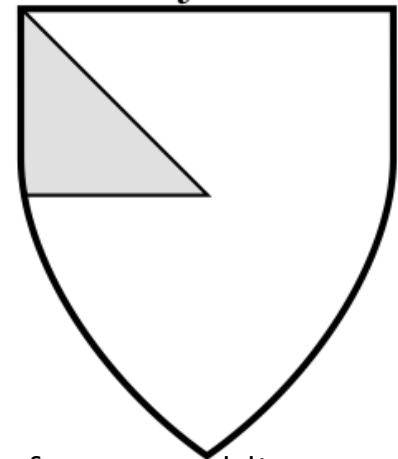
Gusset



Gore



Gyron



Beyond Beasts: What else can be Heraldry?

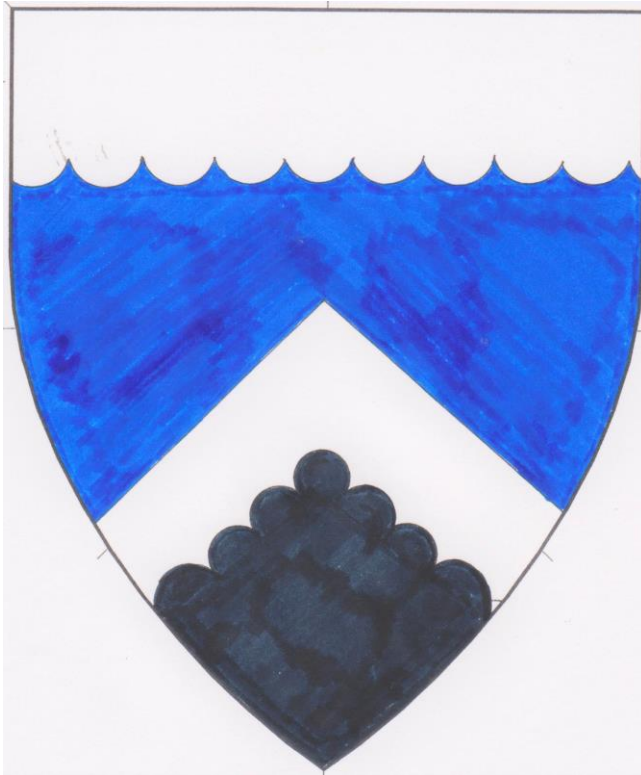
Anything medieval can be used in Heraldry. Your heraldry could be inspired by a tattoo, a really old movie poster, or the carving on a Pictish gravestone.

Find imagery that has meaning for you. Heraldry is like a tattoo: it should be carefully chosen because it will define who you are. Like a tattoo, it can be changed or replaced with time and money.

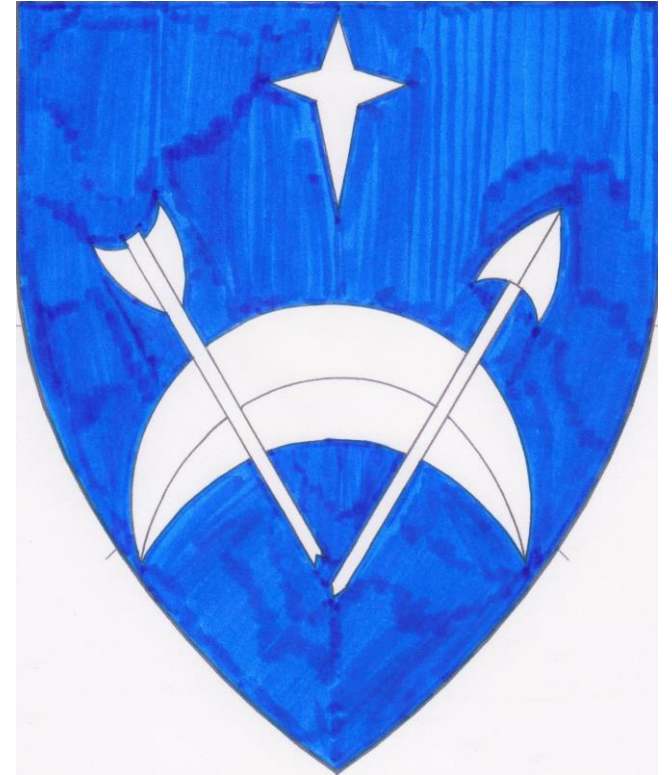
Taichleach an Chomhraic mac Ualghairg



Hugoline the Delicate



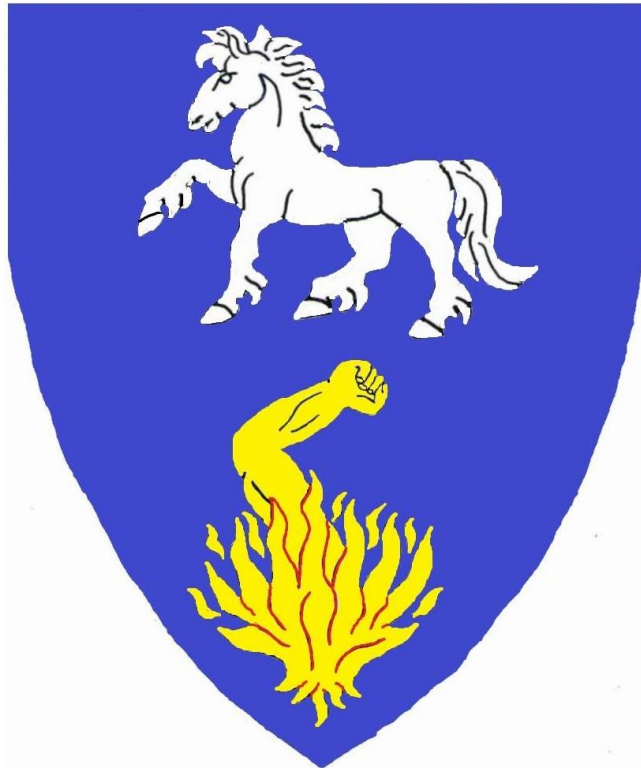
Wrguist mac Wrguist



Heralds love Visual Puns!

Some people think Heralds are Super Serious People who want to ensure Clients Register Appropriate Designs. I like to laugh and help clients register things that make them smile!

Eloise Coulter



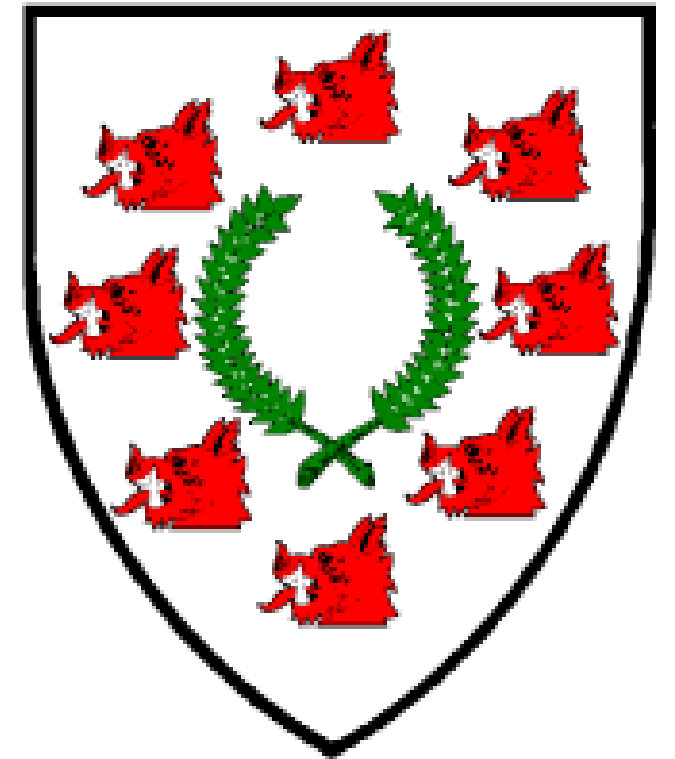
A Colt Fire Arms

Wade Greenwall



Die in a Fire

Barony of Coeur d'Ennui



A Boar-Ring Design

Why We do Need (Stinking) Badges

This is my Heraldry. It represents me. It is beautiful. It is detailed. It shows my love of thunderstorm colors, and Tamora Pierce's books about Lady Knights. It takes a looooooong time to draw or paint or sew or embroider.

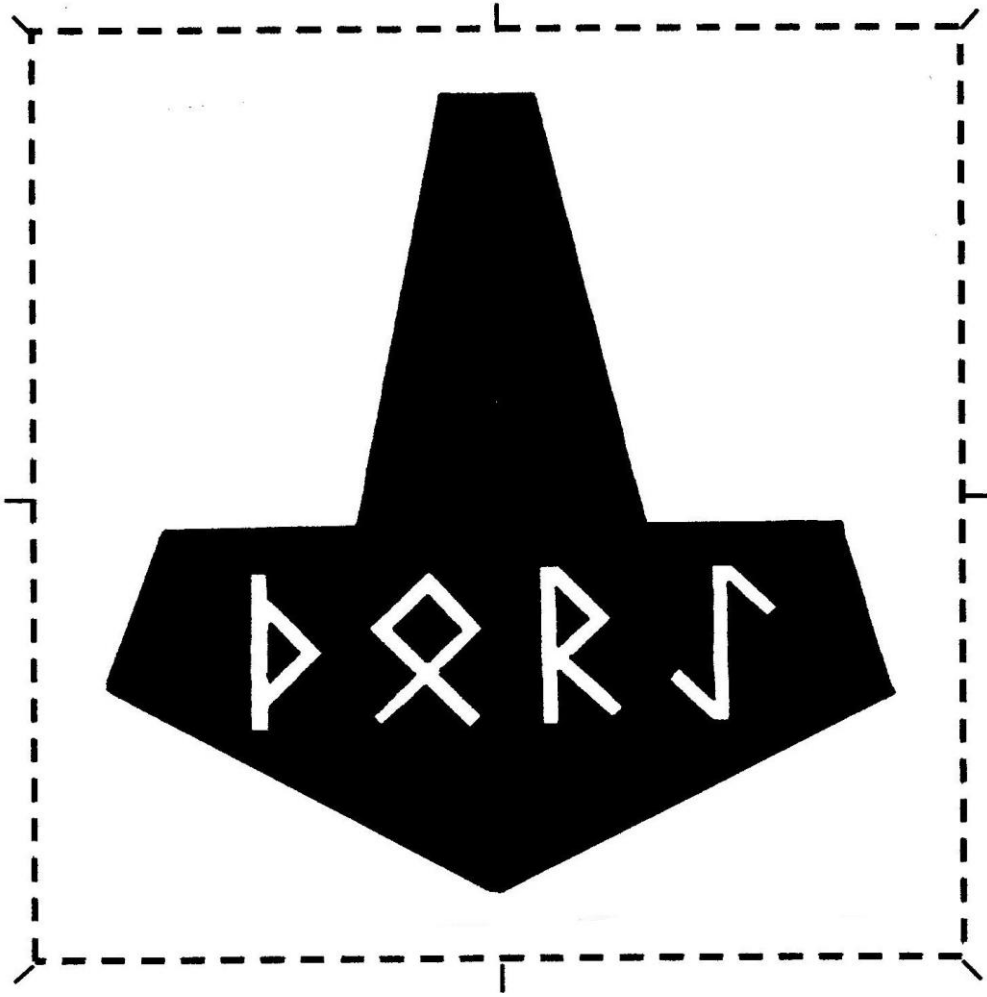


This is my Badge. It tells people that anything with it belongs to me. I can draw my badge in five seconds with a Sharpie.

(The letters spell TH-O-R-EI in Elder Futhark.)



Honey, Badges don't Conflict (as much!)



- Badges can be Fieldless, which means they have no background.
- A Fieldless design automatically has one degree of difference from every other design.
- For a Badge to be Fieldless, it must be one continuous shape, capable of being carved into a signet ring.
- Badges can also have backgrounds like Heraldry. Badges with backgrounds need to have two degrees of difference from all other registered items.

It's your Heraldry. Have it your way!



**Most Heralds:
Heraldry should be Serious and Period.**



**Me:
You want a Tree and a Raccoon? Let's do this!**

Many heralds feel that you shouldn't put all the things you love to do in the SCA on your Heraldry. This is often referred to as someone's 'SCA resume.'

I am not one of those heralds.

When you see your Heraldry, I want you to grin and say, "That's me, and I love it!"

Heraldry can be serious. Heraldry can be accurate to your persona's time and culture. We have plenty of period examples to draw from.

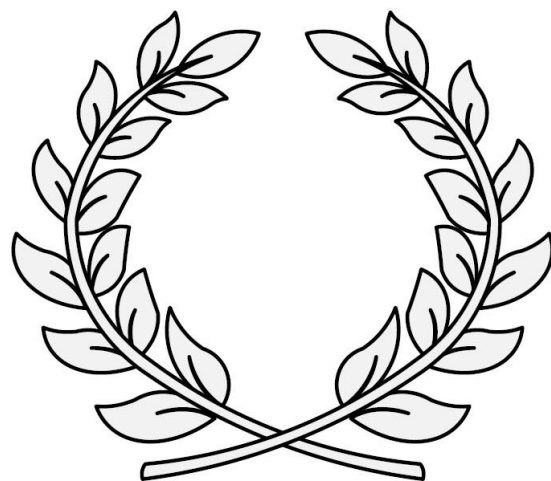
However, if you want a walking tree and a raccoon with a gun, I want to make it happen!

You Can't do *That* on Heraldry!

Now that you have a general idea of what can become your heraldry, you should know what cannot be used.

Swastikas and fylfots are explicitly forbidden in the Society. Boy bits are inappropriate and not registerable. Recently, all variations of the hail hydra! phrase have been removed. (My opinion of hydra is on the left.)

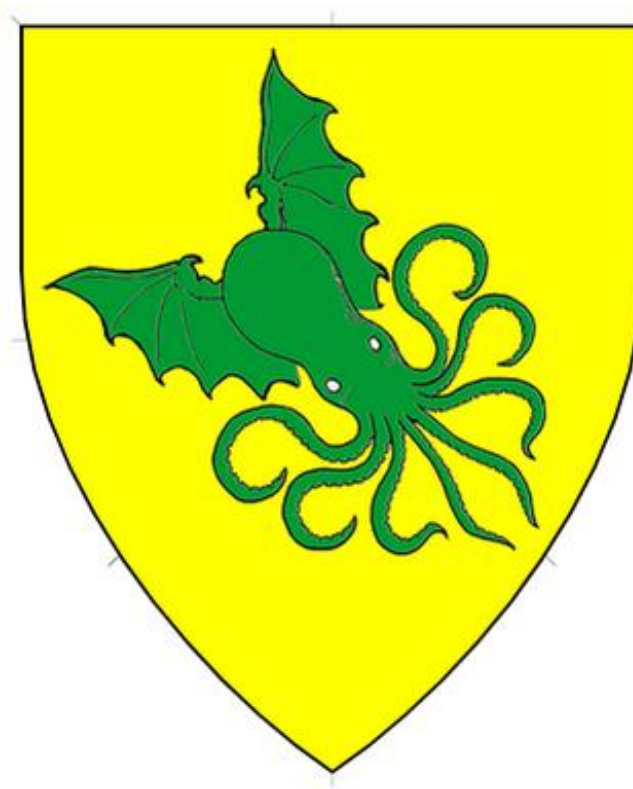
Some charges are Restricted to those who have earned awards in the Society. The Laurel Wreath is for landed groups, and the Pelican in its Piety may only be displayed by members of those Orders, for the same reason that only members of the Order of Chivalry may wear white belts.



Artistic License for the Win

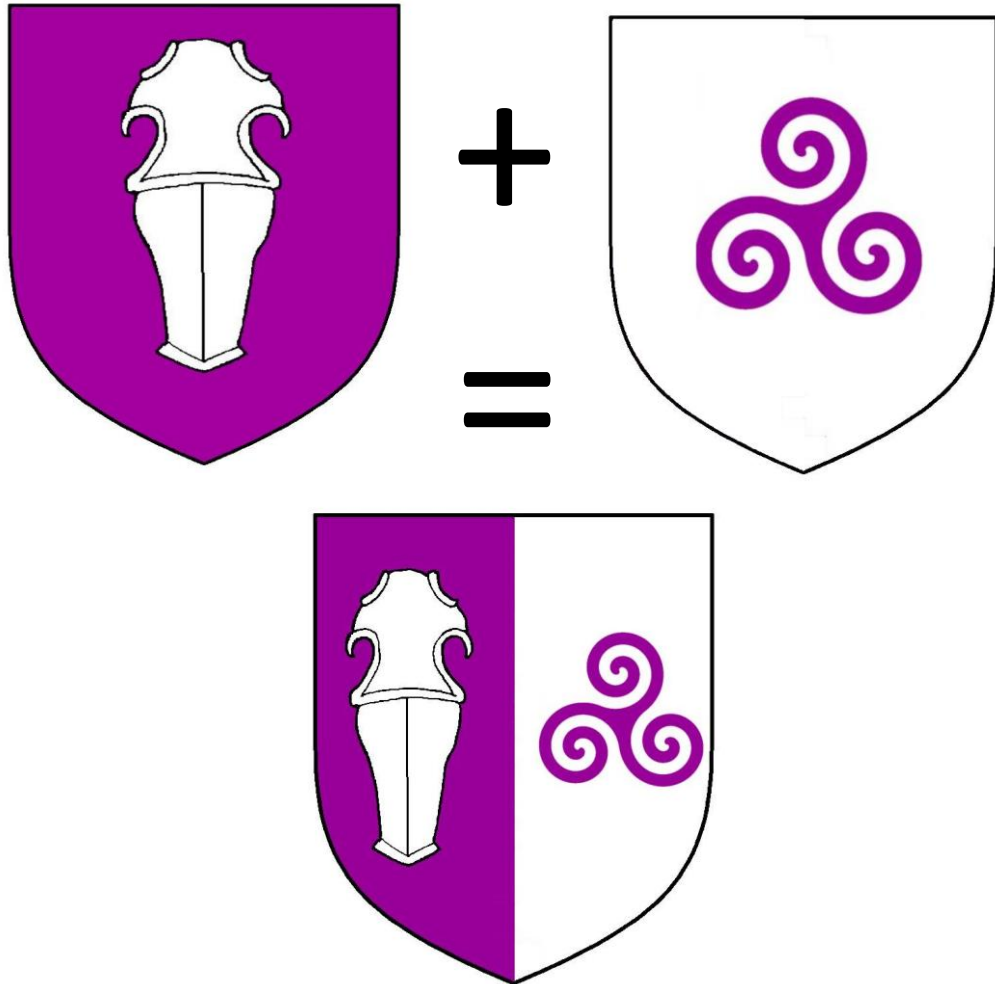
My friend Máel Dúin mac Cába collects Cthulhu paraphernalia with the same enthusiasm that I have for everything Captain America. When he wanted heraldry, I suggested a winged squid, sickly green and gold design. It is diagonally to sinister because Cthulhu is the *definition* of sinister. (Diagonal lines imply threat, whereas horizontal and vertical lines imply stability, and rounded curves imply comfort.) (Look, I used my art degree today!)

The image on the left is how I've drawn his heraldry for him. But for the design to be approved, I had to have an octopus showing all its legs equally with fully spread wings. There are no Heraldry Police. Guess which way he displays his heraldry? (I may have made him a list tree shield for his birthday.) (This is what happens when your friend is an Art Herald.)

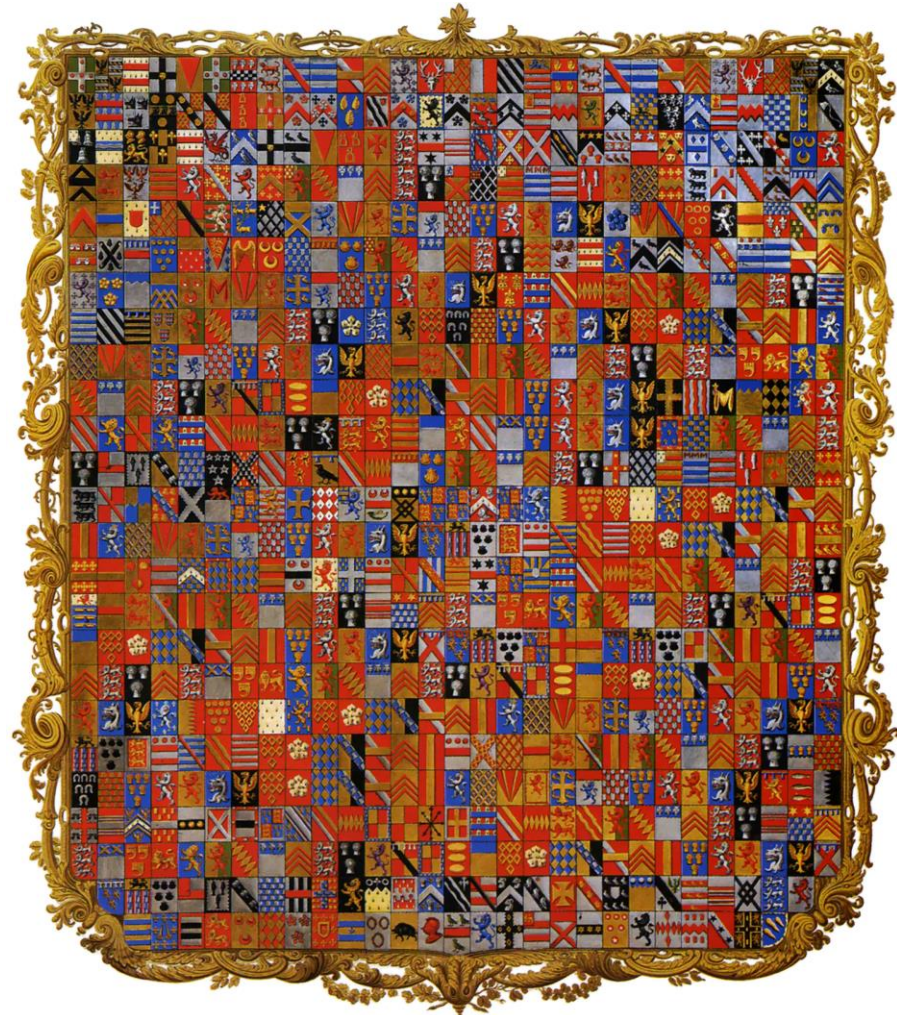


Marshalling: not in Scadian Heraldry, please!

When Heraldry was being hammered out in the middle ages, it was used to trace lineage, so the child of two nobles with heraldry would combine them.



This is what happens after many generations of marshalling. The Heralds don't want to recreate this:

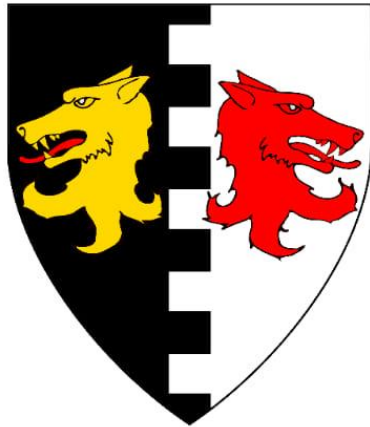


How to avoid Marshalling

(not registerable)

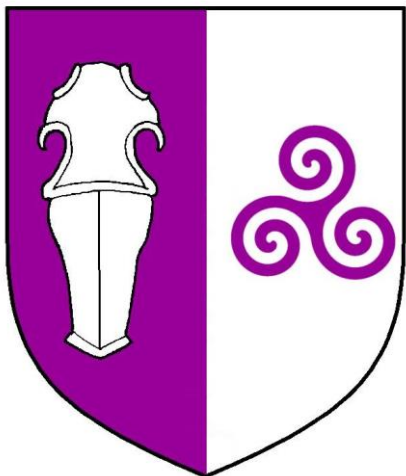


Shona of Redwolf

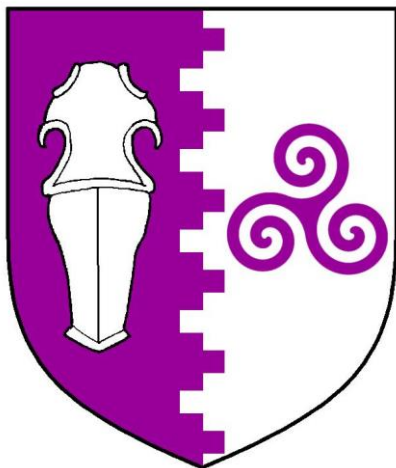


If you want to have two charges on to different backgrounds, you must make the line between them not straight. The one exception is if you have two of the same charge in reversed colors, like Sir McGuyver. This is called Countercharging.

(not registerable)



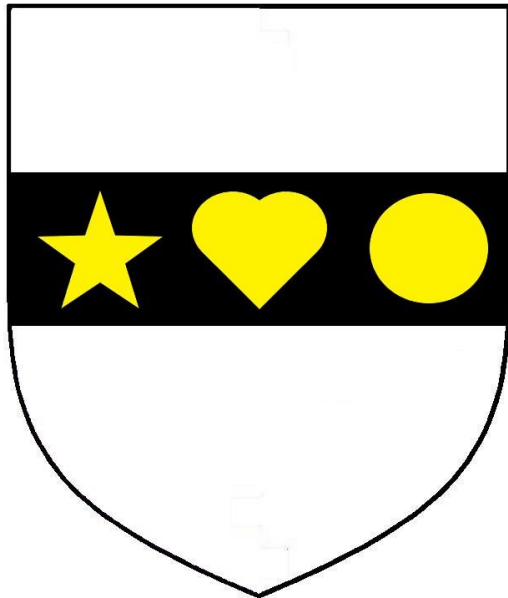
Jofurr Raudsson



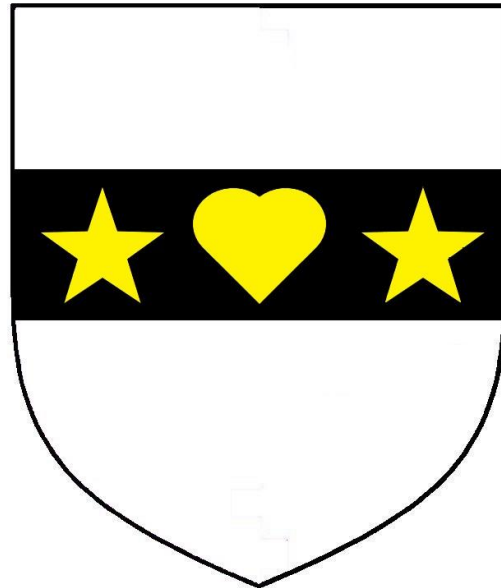
The Slot Machine Issue

The Slot Machine rule prevents three separate images from being grouped together. You can avoid Slot Machine by having two identical or two mirrored charges, with a different third charge.

Slot Machine
(not registerable)



Two-and-One
(registerable)



This is a piece of heraldry registered before the Slot Machine Rule was put into place. It belongs to Nina of the Lost Caverns.



HOLD! A Herald told me I couldn't have _____!

- You said I couldn't have three separate objects on my Heraldry! How is this slot machine registered to Nina of the Lost Caverns!?
 - The rules of Heraldry have changed over time. Some things that were registerable in the past cannot be registered now.
 - The Barony of l'Île du Dragon Dormont (Quebec) has a sleeping dragon. Since it is hard to discern a sleeping creature, they are no longer allowed to be registered.
- In the early days of the SCA, it was easy to pass things.
- Then the Heralds became worried that they could register items conflicting with real-world Heraldry, and it became harder to get things passed as Heralds did detailed conflict checks.
- Recently, SCA Heraldry rules were changed to only exclude conflict with famous people in history and the heraldry of countries and other organizations.
- This means that it is easier to register simple designs now. Simpler is better!
- The Internet has made it much easier for clients to talk to multiple Heralds when considering a design.
- If your idea that was returned in the past, it may be registerable now. Try again!



Heraldry as Intimidation

I don't display my Heraldry as a fighter. Senior Fighters look at my device and think I am a Really Good Fighter who has been kicking butt for Many Years. (Disclaimer: I am a clumsy baby fighter, and I win very few bouts.)

If you want to be seen as a better fighter, register Heraldry.



Midrealms, who has fought my husband's household? How intimidating is this to square off against?

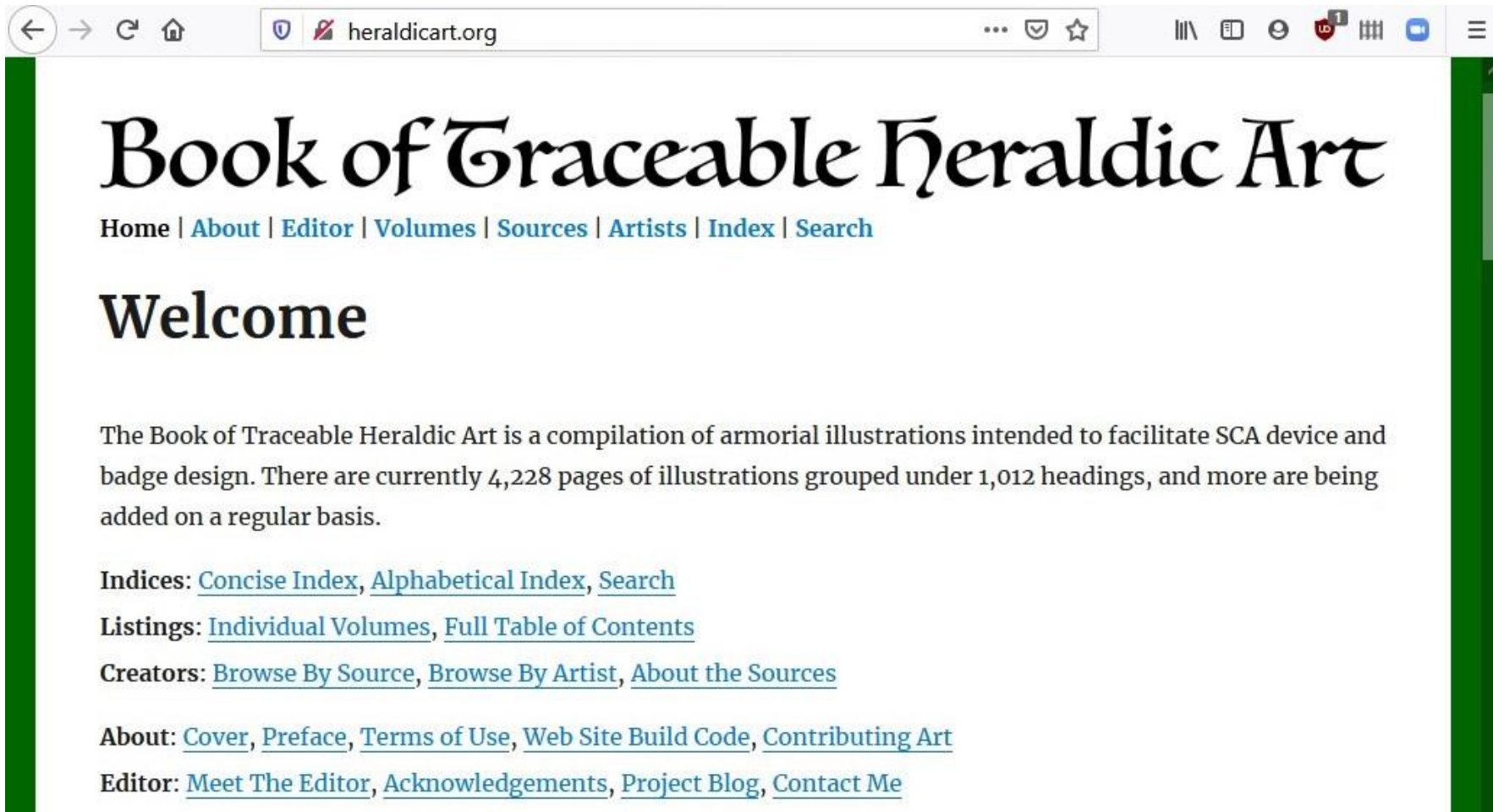
Black Talon's heraldry is simple, easy to see, and uniform.

Heraldry takes How long!?

- There is a significant amount of time between when you pay for your submission and when it becomes Officially Registered to You.
- Before The Internet, the registration process took about two years.
 - No kidding, it really took two years.
 - Submissions were snail-mailed to all the Heralds in the Kingdom, and then the Heralds would write Letters in response. Heralds paid for a lot of postage.
 - There was a loooong list of Registered Arms, and books of Known Real Life Heraldry.
- Thanks to The Internet, submissions now take about eight months.
 - The Heralds still call them Letters of Intent, and the Letters start with each Kingdom, and then are moved up to the Society Heralds.
 - The documentation is reviewed, information is double checked, and the Heralds can google things to make sure there's nothing Offensive or Glaringly Modern.
 - Sometimes issues arise from this processing lag. So, I needed to give Permission to Conflict with the Order of the Silver Tyger because my submission was in process when the East Kingdom went to register their award.

The Heraldic Traceable Art Project

When I became Herald at my first Pennsic in 2013, I was shocked that the only art resource available was hundreds of pages of badly scaled and pixilated art. I wanted to improve this resource, but it took me a few years to get my bearings. I wanted a vector art database and started the ball rolling, but it was my friend [Mathghamhain Ua Ruadháin](#) (Mah-huwen Ooah Ru-ahn) who made this happen:



Don't worry if you want a dragon on your heraldry and your artistic skill level is not up to the challenge.

The Heraldic Traceable Art library is full of vector graphics that can scale to any size, and can be translated into clothing decals, 3D prints, or CNC cutouts.

Heraldry is for everybody!
www.HeraldicArt.org

The Next Steps

- Midrealm Heraldry Webpage:
<https://midrealm.org/herald/submissions>
- Midrealm Consulting Heralds FaceBook group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MidrealmConsultHeralds>
- Baby Heralds of the SCA Unofficial FaceBook group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/458411554260838>
- SCA Heraldry Chat Unofficial FaceBook group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SCAHeraldryChat>
- Feel free to friend me on FaceBook, but please be aware I am working two jobs and extremely busy:
<https://www.facebook.com/vedardottir>