

# SECTION XI -- QUESTIONS COMMONLY ASKED OF THE HERALDS

1) The West Kingdom Version  
(August, XXI, Updated: Summer AS XXXIV)

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## QUESTIONS COMMONLY ASKED OF THE HERALDS

Frederick of Holland, Eilis O'Boirne, Alison von Markheim,  
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To the herald: This section is an overview of some of the common questions and comments that are made to and about heralds, the College of Heralds, the College of Arms and the whole matter of heraldry in the SCA. The answers given here are correct, but not necessarily the only ones, or even the best ones, although we have tried. If there are questions which you are asked all the time or comments that you have to deal with frequently which are not covered here, by all means write to the College Office and let us know what they are. If you have discovered an answer to them, or to one of the questions herein that you think is good or better than ours, let us know of it. We will include it in the next update if we agree.

To the populace of the West: This section contains many answers to some of the questions you commonly ask the heralds, but not necessarily all of them. If you have a question that you haven't been able to get an answer to, write to us with it. First, we will answer you directly in a letter. Then, if the question is one of general import, it will be added to this article in the next update together with an answer so that the rest of the populace (and the heralds) can benefit.

To all and sundry: THERE ARE NO "STUPID" QUESTIONS! Herald, if a member of the populace asks a question, he is trying to cure his ignorance, a laudable goal. Non-herald, if you do not understand something, ask! The herald will not know that you do not understand unless you question him.

### QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS DEALING WITH REGISTRATION

#### **Why should I register my (name/device/badge)?**

Herald, this is an important question, and one with philosophical as well as practical implications. The answer given below is at best an outline of the various reasons why participants in the SCA should register their names and devices. Remember that the people of the West are our clients, and we are providing them with a service. Let them know of the nature of the service and its importance in the recreation that we are all involved in.

Medieval heraldry (which is what we are attempting to recreate to a major extent) had one major purpose - to uniquely identify the person the device (or arms) are registered to. Registration of your name and device is encouraged by the College to prevent someone else from

registering the same name/device. The reason for having a name and device in the first place is to uniquely identify yourself within the SCA. If you are using a name or device that someone else is using, then it doesn't represent just you, but you AND someone else. By registering with the College, you ensure this uniqueness. Note that just because no one in the area you are currently living in has a name or device similar to yours doesn't mean that such a person couldn't move into the area tomorrow. In the Original Middle Ages people didn't move around much; in our modern Society, they do. Thus the protection you gain by registration covers the entire SCA, not just your local area or Kingdom.

In addition, if you are given an Award of Arms (or certain other honors for which scrolls are given) by the Crown or by your Prince and Princess, you will not receive a scroll until your name and device are registered. Scrolls are official documents and must therefore conform to the principles of protection inherent in having registration of names and devices in the first place. Finally, the name and device registration process includes a review as to the appropriateness of your name and device to the re-creation that we are engaged in. It allows you to find out if some of your fellow members of the SCA (who may not live near you) would be upset by either your name or device because they would find them offensive by reason of presumption of honors or because they were excessively modern and reminiscent of the 20th Century, or for other reasons.

#### **Do I have to be a member before I register my (name/device/badge)?**

While becoming a paid member of the SCA, Inc., is encouraged for several reasons, it is not required that you be a registered member of the SCA before you attempt to register your name/device/badge. It is, however, preferred that you be an active participant in the SCA, since once you have registered, your name and device will be protected as long as the SCA exists. (In some other Kingdoms, people who are not paid members of the SCA must pay extra fees for registration, but this is not true in the West.)

#### **My name is registered - I sent it to the Registrar ...**

Actually, it doesn't work that way. The Registrar does not send us lists of "Registered SCA Names", and the Registry does no checking on whether the name you filled in on the Membership Form is unique or is "legal" under the Rules of Submission before putting it on your

membership card. The only way to register an SCA name and have it protected is to register it with the College of Arms, and the only names the College can register are those that conform to Rules of Submission for SCA Names. (Likewise, once you have registered a name with the College, it is your responsibility to inform the Registrar if you want the SCA name on your membership changed. The College of Heralds does not do it for you.) A change of address sent to the Registry will not be forwarded to the College of Heralds, either. If you have a submission in process, please send a change of address card to the College address (given in the PAGE).

**I thought you couldn't register a name or device with the College until you had been given an Award of Arms by the King or Prince.**

Anyone can register a name and device with the College. The device will not become arms until you have been given an Award of Arms or other armigerous award. If you are given an award, but do not have a name and device registered, you will not receive a formal scroll until you have registered a name and device. Instead you will receive a promissory note which lets everyone know that you have the award. You will get a "real" scroll eventually, some time after your name and device are registered.

The converse of this is that the College of Heralds does not grant arms. We register devices. You must be given arms by the King or Prince. (This is different from the practice in the Original Middle Ages, when Kings of Arms did give grants of arms under their own authority. In our Society, only Royalty has that right.)

**I heard that it takes YEARS to register anything with the College.**

Unfortunately, at one time this was true, and old myths die hard. If the name you submit is acceptable and your device does not need to be redesigned because of lack of uniqueness or another problem, it will be between five and seven months from the time we receive your device to the time you receive the final letter of acceptance. If there is a problem with your name or device, and it is not discovered until the final review at the College of Arms level, then the registration process will take longer, but the Kingdom College of Heralds will be in communication with you. This is why it is important for you to tell us, as well as the Registry, when you move.

**How can I get my (name/device) passed the first time?**

There is no way to guarantee that your name and device will pass the first time through. However, the heralds hold a consultation table at all Kingdom events except 12th Night, and at most Principality events, and can help you select a name and device that will probably be accepted

by Laurel without redesign. Fifteen minutes or a half hour spent at the table can save months of sending things back and forth. (See section VIII.4 in the Handbook for information about the Consultation table. See also section VIII.2 on what happens to submissions.)

**If my device is approved by the Kingdom College, can I use it?**

Well, you can use the device if it was approved at Kingdom level, but it is not a good idea to do anything really fancy with it until you have received your official letter from Vesper stating that it has been registered by the SCA College of Arms. It can be very disappointing, as well as a waste of effort, to create your fancy applied banner, and then to find out three or four months later that your device didn't pass for some reason. (One possible reason is that someone else in another Kingdom had a device passed which was too similar to yours the month before Laurel considered your submission.) It may be frustrating to have to wait, but it is usually the best idea.

On the other hand, simple projects, such as painting your shield or making a simple banner of glued felt or the like, are just fine. If there is a problem, then they are easy to re-do -- the shield can be painted over in no time at all, and there wasn't a lot of effort put into the banner. (It is considered courteous to immediately stop using a device or name which has been returned for being too similar to that of someone else. Think of how much you will appreciate it when your name or device is the one that is being protected.)

**I've got a device registered, now I want a badge...**

If you really wish to register a badge, the easiest and best method is to take a major charge from your device and create a badge from that. A badge taken from your device will aid in identifying it as "yours". The major use of badges is to mark things as belonging to you, so they should be kept simple. Keep the concept of "simple" in mind above all else when trying to register your badge.

Consider first, however, why you want to register a badge. Why not just use one? If you have a simple device, then you should probably use that rather than registering a separate badge. Otherwise, just take a charge from your device and use it as a badge to mark things. If there is a problem of conflict with someone else who is using a similar mark, it can probably be settled by you and that person. The College of Heralds doesn't want extra paperwork more than anyone else. (See also the next question.)

**How can I use a badge?**

A personal badge is generally used to mark those things that are yours. The usual method of using such a badge is to place it on items of yours that you are concerned might be confused with someone else's, like chairs, dishes, small children, armor, etc..

A household badge, on the other hand, is worn by members of the household, or is used to show the presence of the household at an event by being displayed on a banner. If you are going to form an active household, then you probably should register the badge, since its use is going to be far more public than the use of a personal badge.

**My (name/device/badge) was returned - do I have to pay the fee again?**

No - once you have paid the fees for your device and name (or whatever), you have purchased a registration. If the submission is returned, in whole or in part, then the returned submission is not yet registered. When you resubmit it, the College does not charge you again. "One payment = one (eventual) registration" is the firm policy of the West Kingdom College. (It should be noted, however, that other Kingdoms, under College of Arms allowance, have established a time limitation on this policy. Usually you must make your resubmission within a year of the notification of return. The purpose of this policy is to make sure that people are actively pursuing registration. The West Kingdom College decided to stick to the tradition of one fee per action, no matter how long it took.)

**My device was given to a herald in another Kingdom ... (usually followed by, "and I haven't heard from them since.")**

The usual reason for this is that you, the person in question, did not give a change of address to your herald, or to your Kingdom College of Heralds. We will do our best to trace the submission and find out what happened to it. To do this we will need as much information as you can give us, what name you used when you submitted, the date you submitted, where you were at the time, what your device looked like, etc. Then we will check and see if it passed. If not, we will try to find out why. Once all the checking we can do is done, which may include talking to heralds in the other Kingdom, we will attempt to notify you of the results. If it was returned, we will let you know why, and will work with you on designing a resubmission. If we have found evidence of your submission, or you can provide us with the same (e.g., a copy of the canceled check), then the resubmission will fall under the policy noted above, and there will be no further charge.

**I gave my name/device/badge to the herald x years ago, and never heard anything...**

See the previous question. Give us the date you submitted it, and all the other information you have, and we will start a tracer on it. Even with the best of intentions, local heralds, and even the Kingdom College, occasionally lose things.

**What do you mean by "Enough Difference?"**

The Rules of Submission establish criteria for determining when an SCA submission is sufficiently different from other registered SCA and mundane armory. Basically, under the current Rules, the difference between two SCA devices must be two major changes in the appearance of the device. There are several articles in the Handbook which deal with this question.

**What do you mean a (\_\_\_\_\_) looks like a (\_\_\_\_\_)?**

What we heralds are talking about here is what something looks like from a distance. For instance, if you are across the field from someone, a hawk displayed painted on a shield will look very much like any other type of bird displayed. What we are dealing with is the outline of the charge. (Sometimes we invoke a rule called the "Eyeball Test" to see if things look alike. This is done by looking at pictures of the two devices from a distance equivalent to looking at two shields across a tourney field. If they appear too similar, then a \_\_\_\_\_ looks like a \_\_\_\_\_.)

**I want to register supporters/ crest/ motto/ etc...**

We do not register these. If you are a peer you can have certain of these on your scroll(s), otherwise you cannot. They are one of the perquisites of advancement to the Peerage. You should talk to the scribes if you want supporters/crest/motto on your award scroll(s).

**Can I register arms for my (dog/cat/car/etc.)?**

No. You can't register their names, either. See the section on persona (below) for reasons.

**Can I register devices for my children?**

You can, but it is not a good idea. Suppose you registered something for your child that he/she ended up not liking? They would either be stuck with it, or have to go through the process of changing the name and/or device. Also - what if your child decided that he/she was not going to stay in the Society? Then the device you registered for them will be registered forever anyway! The best idea, if you wish your children to wear arms at an event, is to have them wear your arms with an appropriate mark of cadency. (Ask your herald what the appropriate marks are.) In this way everyone will know who the child belongs to in case of problems. Then, when the child is old enough to decide for themselves, they can register something that they like.

**Can I register a simple device?**

Absolutely! As a matter of fact, simple devices are what the College of Heralds and the College of Arms prefer to register. Sometimes what you had in mind originally may not be possible, due to similarities to mundane or SCA devices, but a simple variation of the same thing will be. Sit down and discuss your device ideas with a herald or two. Usually something will come out of it that is both simple and acceptable. If your local herald doesn't have the expertise, visit the consultation table. (See above.)

**QUESTIONS DEALING WITH DESIGN AND USE OF ARMORY****What is a "simple" device?**

This is a tricky question, and is dealt with in more detail in other places in this Handbook. To heralds the term "simple" normally implies uncluttered. Uncluttered usually means that there are not lots of "things" or colors on your device. It also usually means that the device is "medieval" rather than "modern" in concept, arrangement and symmetry. If you can, look at examples of armory in old rolls of Arms for the best ideas of what our ancestors thought of as "simple," or ask a herald for some good SCA examples.

**Why is there a restriction on the number of charges in a device?**

The reasoning behind this restriction goes along with the idea of "simple" devices. See the previous question. The College of Heralds cannot legislate "good taste", but we can, and do, set certain minimum standards of heraldic suitability.

**"They" told me I couldn't have a (sword/unicorn/etc...) on my device.**

There is no "THEY". All reputable heralds have names. And it is possible to have almost any charge on a device. There is a short list of restricted or forbidden charges (like laurel wreaths, crowns and a few others), but aside from those, there is NO charge which we cannot include in an acceptable device. If you want a charge that is very popular, you may have to be flexible about colors, numbers and/or position. But you can have a device with that charge. If your local herald is unable to help you with a difficult design, come to the consultation table.

*(By the way, if THEY say something like this to you, WE would appreciate knowing who THEY are, so that we can give THEM the correct information. Please send THEIR names to the College address.)*

**Why are there forbidden charges?**

The reason there are forbidden charges is that they have special meanings. In the SCA, charges like a laurel wreath

or a crown have meanings. A laurel wreath on a device means the device belongs to a branch of the society, or it stands for the Order of the Laurel; a crown means that the device belongs to a Kingdom or Principality or to someone who has ruled over one. Charges that are forbidden entirely in the SCA usually have very special meanings or connotations in the mundane world, and we do not wish to have problems with that either. (Examples would be the Red Hand of Ulster, or the fylfot, otherwise known as the swastika.)

**QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE USE OF MUNDANE NAMES/DEVICES/ETC.****Why can't I use my family (arms/crest) as my SCA device?**

This is a very common question in one form or another. The reason most commonly given in the West is that, while the SCA is a re-creation group, the members are not creating persons that actually existed in the Middle Ages. Rather we are creating people who MIGHT have existed. This means that while your actual ancestors may have existed in the Middle Ages, and may even have been granted arms at that time, your persona is not a member of that actual family and did not exist then. (See the questions on persona.) It is thus inappropriate to attempt to use your "family" arms in the SCA. (Remember that, in the Middle Ages, families did not own arms, individuals did.)

This also relates to "real-world" problems with respect to assumption to arms in countries that are under the authority of mundane Colleges of Arms, a subject too complex to go into here.

**Why can't I use real-world arms at all?**

See above question. The original reason for this was the idea that SCA personae were new and unique individuals, and should thus resist new and unique arms. However, this is a matter currently under intense discussion in the College of Arms, due to recent rulings of the Board of Directors of the SCA, Inc. In the mundane world, Colleges of Arms generally pay little attention to the actions of other Colleges of Arms, while the SCA has paid attention to them all. Stay tuned for updates.

**Why can't I use my whole mundane name as my SCA name?**

This relates to the question about family arms/crests. In addition, if your mundane name has elements which are SCA titles (such as Earl) then it is obviously inappropriate for you to use the name (unless you have earned the title). There are also legal problems with assumption of arms in countries that are under the purview of a mundane College of Arms. If you are using a pseudonym for the

purposes of the game that we are playing, then there is no problem. If you use your mundane name, then you may be breaking the law. The easiest answer to this question is that it is against the Rules. The next easiest is the argument given above.

### QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE USE OF NAMES AND TITLES

#### Why can't I be (\_\_\_\_\_) ?

This question normally comes about because someone wishes to be a member of an order (SCA or otherwise), or wishes to be a non-human (usually elf), or an historical personage, or some such. There are many answers possible. The primary ones deal with the purpose of the Society. We are attempting to re-create the Chivalric Middle Ages. As far as we know, non-humans did not really exist. Famous people did exist, but we are re-creating the ambience of the Middle Ages, not a specific time/location. Within the SCA, membership in Orders is something that is earned, not inherited. The answer to this question must be based on the specific instance.

#### Why can't I use (title)?

The reason you cannot assume a title within the SCA other than the "courtesy" form of address of "milord" or "milady" granted to all, is that all titles have to be earned. In addition, certain titles imply that you hold lands from some mundane authority, or hold rank in some mundane group (such as the church), and we could get into trouble if we allowed such. Some people are called informally by a title other than the ones regulated and used within the SCA. There is nothing the Heralds can, or want, to do about such informal usage.

#### This name has been in my family ...

But how far back do your family records actually go? We attempt to document names as being used in period. If you can show the name was used in your family before 1600, then it is very probable that it will be acceptable. Otherwise, you will have to find some other method of documenting the name.

#### I found this name in a baby name book ...

Baby name books are not the best sources in which to find names. Occasionally a baby-name book comes along that was put together by a true scholar. However, most of the commonly available baby name books are not always accurate when they give dates, if they give dates at all. The College does not accept most baby-name books as good documentation. However, if you can find the name in a source that is reliable, we will allow it, even if it is in a baby name book as well. (See Section IX.2,3)

#### I can't find this name in a name book, but ... is it ok?

If it can't be documented from a reliable source there may be a real problem. Once in a while a "made-up" name is judged acceptable, but it is normally very close to a name we can document and varies in a "normal" way or it is made up of elements which we can thoroughly document. (See the article in Section IX.)

#### I want a (Norman/Viking/Italian) name - where can I look?

See Section IX.3 - an Annotated Bibliography of Name Books. This has been put together by some of our best name researchers. Also stay tuned -- sooner or later one (or more) SCA name book(s) will become available to help you.

### QUESTIONS ABOUT HERALDS (In General)

#### How do I get to be a herald?

It is often said by other heralds, "There are never enough heralds." We mean it. We can use your help. Look at this handbook, then talk or write to us. "Us" is either your local herald, Principality Herald, or the Kingdom heralds. We will try to help you learn how to be a herald and encourage you in your endeavor.

#### What does a herald do?

The easy, flip, answer to this question is, "Work!" A serious inquiry requires a real answer and explanation, which should include all the aspects of the herald's job as you know it. (See section III of the West Kingdom Herald's Handbook.)

#### What does the regalia (green/trumpets) stand for?

The trumpets on the heraldic regalia stand specifically for the College of Heralds. If a person is wearing them on a tabard, baldric or cloak, it means that they are on duty as the Voice of the Crown. The badge/arms of the office were designed with the green and gold taken from the arms of the SCA (and the West Kingdom, back in the days when that was all there was), and the use of the trumpets in saltire is due to the association of heralds and trumpets in the minds of the people who were starting the College.

#### What does "Voice of the Crown" mean?

Exactly what it says. When Their Majesties wish to inform the populace of something, They often speak through the heralds. Any announcement made by the heralds in the name of the Crown carries the same weight as if the words had been pronounced by Their Majesties. This aspect of being a herald places us under Royal Protection, and no one can challenge a herald because of the content of an announcement. The same protection applies to other announcements made by the heralds, and

places on us the burden of making sure that our personal opinions are not uttered under that Protection.

**You keep talking about the College of Heralds and the College of Arms. What is the difference?**

The College of Heralds of the Kingdom of the West is the organization of heraldic officers serving the King of the West and the populace of the Kingdom. The College of Arms of the SCA, Inc., is the organization of heralds on an inter-Kingdom level, devoted mainly to the registration of names and devices, and also to research into heraldry in general. The use here of the two terms is to differentiate actions taken at the Kingdom level and actions taken at the "Corporate" or "Laurel" level.

**The Heralds seem to be very cliquish and unfriendly.**

This is not actually true, any more than it is of any other subgroup in the SCA. The only reason the Heralds seem unfriendly is that it seems that no one else can talk to us! Actually, one reason Heralds tend to travel in clumps is the same reason golem keepers (computer hackers) tend to travel in clumps -- we speak a technical, highly specialized shorthand "language" which can be all but incomprehensible to outsiders. But we are willing and eager to teach that language to anyone who is willing to put forth the effort to learn it. If you are interested in the Art and Science of Heraldry, talk to us at an event, or attend one of our meetings. We would love to have you join us.

**QUESTIONS RELATING TO PERSONA**

**Do I need a persona?**

This is a tricky question. In some Kingdoms a lot of weight is placed on personae. In the West, we do not worry about personae much. Many of the oldest members of the Society do not have a "persona", unless you count what they have done and are doing in the Society.

**My persona is (\_\_\_\_), I want a device that reflects my persona . .**

Do you really need a device to reflect your persona? How about one that depicts one or two of the things you like to do in the Society? The Kingdom of the West does not really push personae, and therefore we do not normally worry too much about whether your device is a completely accurate reflection of such. (Example: Vikings did not have heralds, and did not register "devices/arms" at all! Yet, there are many people in the SCA who want to be Vikings who have registered devices. There are many Viking-type motifs available which can be used in heraldic devices; similarly with other non-heraldic cultures.)

On the other hand, if you decide that you do want a device appropriate to your persona, and your persona

lives in an heraldic culture, talk to your herald and he will do his best to help you.

**Why can't I register an alternate persona?**

Actually, you can. Up until a few years ago, the College of Heralds of this Kingdom had a policy to discourage such, but a ruling came down from the Laurel Sovereign of Arms that stated we could not have an internal policy that went against College of Arms policy. However, please think of the paperwork involved in just the primary persona of the over 10000 members of the Society. Then think of the compounding of that work if we registered an alternate persona for each one of those people. If we registered a name and a device for an alternate persona (that you may use once a year, or whatever), you would be taking a possible name and device away from someone else who may wish to register one very close to it for their primary persona. This would not be fair. So only do this if you *really* feel a need ...

**Can I register a device for more than one persona?**

Yes, you are allowed to register a badge for an alternate persona. Please see the discussion on alternate persona above.

**MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS**

**He has it, why can't I?**

Normally what we have here is a "grandfather clause" question. When the SCA started there was no organized College of Heralds, and no method of registering devices, names, etc. Even after the College got started, certain things were allowed that aren't today, because we have, since then, learned more and more of what was really done in medieval heraldry. We have allowed the older usages to continue, because they were registered and it would be unfair to change things post hoc, but new submissions must follow the current Rules, not the old ones.

Another possibility is that the person in question has earned the right to use a restricted charge, and you haven't. An example would be a loop of chain, reserved for Knights.

**I just moved from another Kingdom, how do I transfer my (awards, heraldic files, etc.)?**

Talk to us. Once we have all the information you can give us, we will do several things. We normally do not transfer heraldic files from one kingdom to another unless you are going to register something new or change a previously registered item. Once your device is registered with the College of Arms, it is registered in all Kingdoms. If you have awards from another Kingdom, you need to talk to the heralds, who will verify them through your

original Kingdom and add your name and titles to the Order of Precedence.

#### **How do I find out if someone has an award?**

The best method is to look at a copy of the Order of Precedence. This lists all known awards at Kingdom-level (including all armigerous and precedence-carrying awards Arms that may have been given by Princes and Princesses of the Kingdom and similar awards given by other Kingdoms), and the dates they were given. (See section VI.2 and VI.3) If you discover a mistake in the Order of Precedence, please let us know and we will correct it!

#### **How do I get a scroll?**

Do you have an award from a King or Prince? ...and is it an award for which a scroll is given? ...and is your device registered? If so, talk to the College of Scribes -- the College of Heralds verifies the content of scrolls and applies the seals, but does not create them. If not, talk to us about registering a device. Once it's registered, then talk to the College of Scribes.

#### **Can I wear a crown/coronet/circlet?**

Like titles, the right to wear a crown or a coronet must be earned. You can wear a crown or coronet if you have earned it. Anyone can wear a circlet, as long as it is not so decorated as to make it appear as a crown or a coronet. (See section VI.4 on regalia for awards.) (Note also that some other Kingdoms have Laws regulating the wearing of circlets which the West does not, and inquire about local customs if you move out of the West.)

#### **Can I hang my banner when I'm not at an event?**

This is an interesting question. Normally your banner is hung at an event to signify your attendance at the event. However, there are situations where you may wish to hang your banner to signify support of someone, or some event or project, even though you cannot attend yourself. Think seriously about why you would wish to hang your banner at the event before doing so. Remember that your banner represents your person.

#### **Why did the herald mispronounce my name? And what can I do about it?**

The herald may be new to the job or may have been having an "off" day, or your name may be in one of the languages that is difficult for many people to pronounce (Gaelic, Cymru, Russian, Czech, etc.). If you do not wish your name to be mangled, you may wish to seriously consider changing it to one that is easier to pronounce or adopting an easily pronounceable nickname. Talk to us - we're full of suggestions!

Most likely, the herald mispronounced it because he didn't know how to pronounce it properly. At least for the first time, simply tell him. If it is a really unusual name, then resign yourself to the fact that you will probably have to tell each herald in the Known World how to pronounce it, probably several times.

#### **"I have this announcement . . ." or "I have a presentation to (Their Majesties, Their Highnesses, etc.) ..."**

As the herald involved in a situation like this - you should use your judgement. Some announcements are just not appropriate. Presentations are even trickier. Presentations to Royalty are even MORE so. If you are not sure about a presentation, ask the person(s) the presentation is being given to before it is done in court. They may not wish to have it done, or they may, but not wish a surprise. Think long and hard first... If someone presents His Majesty with a cat, and His Majesty just happens to be allergic to cats, think of the repercussions... (See section V.2)

#### **Where can I find the (officer/privy/nearest grocery)...?**

This question is asked often at events (the heralds know everything!). If you don't know, you should try to point the person to someone who does know. If the officer asked for is displaying the badge of the office on his pavilion it will make life much easier. However, you can also ask around early in the event and find out who is set up where. The most frequent requests are for the autocrat, Gold Key, medic, constable and people running competitions. Autocrats should know the answers to questions about privies, water, grocery stores, etc.

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