

Baronial Questionnaire 2020 - Dragon's Laire

1. It's traditional that the Coronets attend weekly Social and Fight Practice for 1.5-2 hours, starting at 6 PM. Is this a commitment you can keep?

Yes. Social and Fight Practice are a part of our normal schedule. Maenach will miss them occasionally due to work travel and there is the occasional illness for both of us but in general they are a priority.

2. What are your plans for encouraging new players and reaching out to those Scadians who have left for one reason or another?

The best we can do as a Barony is to try to offer variety in a welcoming and encouraging environment. The SCA is not for everyone interested in pre-17th century history and Dragon's Laire may not be for everyone interested in the SCA. But if we can provide a welcoming atmosphere which supports participation and learning, that will reach the most number of people.

Do you have specific plans for increasing active participation in the Barony?
Describe these plans.

Active participation is a result of people engaging with their interests with minimal obstacles. To help our Populace connect with their interests and explore to find new ones, we should:

- Continue to use communication tools to reach out
- Advertise activities and classes
- Promote cross-interest learning opportunities: persona development, garb for looking great on the warfield, etc.
- When possible, ensure that participation in one activity doesn't cause someone to be excluded from another.

How do you make new members comfortable and help them understand the Society and what is entailed in actively playing?

The SCA is, at its heart, a social venture. If we help new members explore our Barony and find people who share their bliss we also effectively help new members find a support structure within the Barony. A few ideas to help include:

- Meet and greets
- Introductory classes and handouts
- Introductions to people and social media for shared interests
- Gold key and basic garb
- Champion the attitude that no activity, interest, or person is inherently "above" or "better than" any other; let's each find our own bliss and cheer each other on!

3. The barony has historically swung between being Arts and Science focused and combat oriented. Do you plan to maintain a balance of support between martial focuses and Arts and Sciences?

We plan to try! It can be tricky to balance but the Populace of Dragon's Lair is both large and active and as a group we should be able to succeed in both.

It is definitely our goal to support all activities. Ciar has primarily been active in event planning and the Culinary & Spirit-makers Guild as well as Scribal activities. We have both participated in target archery, although we've had to take a break from some planned activities due to injury recovery. Máenach would like to experiment with heavy combat and combat archery, but we recognize that neither of us is currently in strong touch with the martial communities of Dragon's Lair.

In general we would always welcome input and feedback from anyone; this is especially vital with ventures in which we do not directly participate. We do have friends who have participated or do participate in all aspects of the SCA who can provide advice, introductions, and so on, but we would encourage those outside our circle to chime in as well!

4. Are you familiar with the 'Omnibus Martial Peerage' proposal?

Yes

If so, what is your position on it?

We are in support of the Omnibus Martial Peerage proposal given the existing peerage structure in the SCA.

If you support it what steps will you take to move it forward?

There are limited actions a branch Coronet can take in support, beyond verbalizing that support to the Crown and the BOD. That said, we can certainly support and assist in presentations and sharing of information to further educate the Populace, support those creating the framework for the peerage, and generally champion the cause and help spread the word.

If you do not support it, why?

(N/A)

5. To the Respected Candidates for Baron: Each of you have stated in the past that you are not the most social, outgoing people. How will you overcome this to be successful in representing the Barony both internally and to the Kingdom at large?

From Máenach:

I think it's important to note the difference between being quiet and being shy. I certainly admit to being quiet and often I allow others to do the majority of the talking in a conversation. On the other hand, when the situation calls for it I'm happy to speak to a group. For example, in my "day job" I attend at least one conference each year, and nearly always lead or co-lead a talk or workshop session there.

Those of you who attend the Dragon's Lair monthly business meetings will have heard me present my monthly report to the group; as the meeting is in general very dry I often put a little extra effort into my report to ensure that it's engaging -- or at least that it helps keep people awake. If I'm allowed the honor of serving as Baron, I very much look forward to bringing my own flavor to court, business meetings, events, and so on; the pageantry and ritual of Court, and of granting awards in particular, is an aspect of Scadian life that lies close to my heart.

The Baronial social & fight practice is something of a special case: a Baron or Baroness should certainly be seen and heard at the weekly meeting, but on most days not necessarily any more so than other members of the Barony. It is sometimes said that everyone is a Chatelaine, and I believe that wholeheartedly but feel that we need to go further. Everyone in the Barony has a role in encouraging both new and existing members to grow and thrive, and as such the Coronet's presence at social & fight practice should be at least in part to support, inspire, and welcome members both inside the hall and out on the field.

6. What do you think the Barony's strengths are and where would you like to help the Barony grow?

The Barony of Dragon's Lair has many strengths. Some of our strengths come down to exceptional individuals; for those we consider ourselves both lucky and grateful. To grow in these strengths we would continue to spread the word-fame of our Barony throughout the Kingdom and the Known World, and endeavor to provide an welcoming and supportive environment for our future such individuals.

Another of our strengths is rooted in the breadth of interests that the Populace of Dragon's Lair pursues. Improvement and growth come from supporting these interests and creating connections between them, as well as encouraging the exploration of new interests. We are big fans of small classes, presentations, and demonstrations about people's interests and we'd like to see more of them.

7. Have you thought about baronial retinue? If chosen, how much retinue? Guards? What help do you believe you will need or want to incorporate?

We've thought about Baronial retinue. Retinue can serve as support staff for the Coronets and can act as a means of communication for the Populace but they also play

a large part in the pageantry. How much retinue would depend in part on the level of interest from the Populace. It's also important to note that while many hands make for lighter work but we also wouldn't want to establish an "inner circle" and cause others to feel excluded. With a large enough pool of people interested in retinue, we might be able to vary participation so as to avoid that.

8. Do you play on having any emphasis on Sargentry?

We love the concept of the Sergeantry but in the end we feel that this decision should be the result of discussion with current and former Sergeants as well as the Populace at large. If there is enough interest we would certainly enjoy reviving this tradition.

9. What do you plan to do to support youth engagement in the Barony?

Youth engagement has been a long term goal of Ciar's, stymied in part by the lack of youth. Ciar has been a YAFA mentor since 2017 and has worked to have youth activities at Baronial events since stepping up as deputy Seneschal. While the Youth and Family Activities Officer position had been put in abeyance due to lack of interest, it was a goal for Ciar and Their Excellencies, Conchobar & Eilidh, to have youth and family activities where possible. Ciar was the youth and family activities coordinator for the 2018 September Crown, which had a full day of youth or youth-friendly classes as well as water-bearing and a family scavenger hunt.

Any plans on expanding outreach for youth combat, youth archery, and youth thrown weapons?

It took a bit to recruit someone to do YAC but the Barony now has a great set of YAC Marshalls (thanks guys!) and a core group of amazing youth participants! The BOD and the Kingdom of An Tir have also been expanding approved youth martial activities and there is now a, An Tir youth rapier program in development. Youth thrown and archery have long been available but interest could lead to the development of Baronial youth championships.

10. What role do you see Dragon's Laire playing as a nonprofit in Kitsap County? Do you think we need to do community outreach and volunteering? Should we focus solely internally on the SCA? Why or why not?

Our favorite description of the SCA is as a living history education and re-enactment group. Ideally we would like to do more demonstrations and outreach but that has to be supported by the larger Populace: a small group doing all of the work leads to burnout. For similar reasons volunteering also depends on Populace interest, though we do wish to call attention to several previous and current volunteer efforts:

- Members of the Populace have done work in support of the VFW Hall and June Faire locations in the past.

- We have a tradition of a goods drive and a dessert auction depending on the year, event, and Coronets.
- Projects have been done in support of raising funds for the Kingdom, other branches, or for causes such as curing breast cancer.
- As we answer these questions, there are members of the Barony participating in the production of masks for hospitals.

Could we do more? Sure! It depends on the interests and intent of the Populace. The Barony works with two Boy Scout Troops and Kitsap CERT as part of June Faire and we could offer reciprocal efforts for some of their activities. There are non profit groups who organize tree planting, park clean ups, and beach clean ups to name a few. We could also reach out to special interest groups and cons to do presentations and demonstrations for example, some of the fiber groups in the region or Geek Girl...

11. How important is it to you to stay informed on how the Kingdom operates administratively? Do you regularly attend Curia meetings? Will you do so as Coronets? What is your familiarity with the SCA Corpora, Kingdom and Baronial rules and regulations? How important do you believe knowledge of these is?

It is very important to stay informed on how the Kingdom operates as Baronial operations must fall within Kingdom guidelines. Ciar regularly attends Curia and Finance meetings (even though it means 8 AM -- why?!) and she is very familiar with Society, Kingdom, and Baronial corpora, handbooks, and customary. We believe it's most important to be familiar with WHERE the information can be found although it is not necessary to have it memorized, especially considering how often it is updated. Strictly speaking this is more the Seneschal's duty but as the duties of the Coronet often involve these rules it's best to have at least a passing familiarity.

12. What is Dragon's Laire's role in the Kingdom?

We believe that the Populace and circumstances of Dragon's Laire lead us to occupy two primary roles in the Kingdom.

First, as a large and active Barony with participants at local, regional, and Kingdom level events, a number of current and former Baronial and Kingdom Officers, former Kingdom Champions, and Peers our Barony has both an opportunity and, we believe, an obligation to help set an example for An Tir's culture and attitude toward change. For example, we can help and indeed are helping to lead the way on issues of equity and inclusivity.

Our second role is far easier than the first: to put on Kingdom level events to the best of our ability while recruiting and working with volunteers from throughout the Kingdom. Running June Faire for more than 35 years has given us a large amount of practice and expertise regarding putting on large-scale events -- more practice than most branches will have the opportunity to get. We continue to adapt and adopt new practices, such as

recent efforts to better support our volunteers with a break tent and food. We do this while continuing to hold ourselves to a high level of event quality, and we can and should then share and demonstrate this expertise for others to adopt and adapt for themselves.

13. What are you excited about in the Barony and what would you like to promote?

Learning new things! We both enjoy trying things and learning from people who are excited about what they're talking about. We'd like to promote more sharing of persona research, for example: we have people in the Barony who have done some really cool research and we'd love to hear more about it.

14. Some of the populace prefer an atmosphere of levity, while some prefer an atmosphere of formality. What is your preference in this?

There's no one answer to this: each has its place, and in some cases it can even vary by moment. For example, both of us have a huge amount of respect for the Absent Friends feast tradition; that's certainly a circumstance which calls for formality and dignity. Likewise, the ceremony around certain awards in court also calls for a certain amount of grandeur. However, the level of pomp appropriate for a Wyvern ceremony would not necessarily be appropriate when awarding a Hyphen and wholly inappropriate in the case of -- perish the thought! -- a WOAW. Each of these is a part of this balanced Barony.

15. How will you make yourselves accessible to the populace?

We are available through email, Facebook, and Facebook messenger as well as in person as Social/Fight Practice and events. We have the flexibility to meet up at other times as needed and would be willing to discuss via phone or an alternative texting program as needed.

16. What does "inclusiveness" mean to you?

The subjects of diversity, inclusion, equity, and equality are hot topics lately for a variety of reasons. In general we are in favor of the idea that to the best of our ability everyone is welcome, and within reason we would like to accommodate and make welcome all members, participants, and visitors whenever possible.

That said, it's important to remember phrases like "reasonable person," "best of our ability," and "within reason" when discussing these topics. These phrases of course mean different things to different people, but we suggest framing efforts of inclusiveness in terms of effort and financial cost: if including even a few more people requires only a small amount of effort and little or no cost, we should almost certainly do so. On the other hand, accommodating a moderate or large number of people could justify the

dedication of significant time or money; one example of this is the various forms of mobility assistance we offer at June Faire.

17. If you don't receive the bid for B&B what will you do to continue to promote your vision for the barony to support the new B&B?

We will continue to serve in our current Officer positions. Ciar's final year as Seneschal would start in May and she is working with Lady Furia to transition the Seneschal position. Once that position is transitioned, she will continue to promote youth and family activities as well as the Culinary & Spirit-maker's and Scribal Guilds. She has an active interest in event setup and running and is also the co-steward on the 12th Night 2022 event. Shoulder allowing, she'd like to get back to doing target archery as well. Máenach is seeking a Webminister deputy and has several plans for expanding and improving the Baronial web site. Regardless of his position within the Barony, Máenach plans to continue participation in the Culinary & Spirit-maker's guild and would like to get back into target archery and explore some armored activities.

18. Given the SCA is a 21st century institution recreating a historical past, what do you think the role of the Baron & Baroness in using modern technologies, especially social media, should be?

I think communication via modern technologies and especially social media is necessary in order to reach as many people as possible. It does not eliminate the need or desire for in-person communication but they are useful tools. The current pandemic highlights that modern technologies allow us to do virtual arts and sciences, make videos for training scenarios, and have "face to face" verbal conversations at a distance.

We do need to remember that Social Media is not the only tool available and that Internet service availability and speed varies widely across our branch and region. Similarly our Populace has a wide variety of technological interest, ability, and preference. Even further, posts on social media (including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) are not currently considered "official" for the purposes of posting Baronial notices and announcements -- that rule comes from Society. As such, we need to make sure that we are cross-posting on social media, email, and on the website so that everyone can keep informed.

19. Do you participate in SCA combat? If not, how would you lead and inspire Dragon's Laire's forces upon the field?

We currently do not. We will want to inspire the forces and find someone or several someones who are comfortable leading on the field. Martial activities, tourneys, and war are a part of the Barony and should be inspired and supported.

Will the Dragon's Laire war band still be the Legio Draconis?

Yes, as long as that is the desire of its participants. The Legio has previously won and currently holds the War Eagle granted at An Tir/West War and continues to grow in word fame; if it is the wish of the war band to continue then we will not deny that wish.

20. What are your top priorities for your entire term as Coronets?

We discussed this with some detail in our Letter of Intent and feel the best answer we can give is to repeat that answer here. It's worth noting that we're both hesitant to claim that we could set priorities for an entire term with any level of detail, beyond promoting an enthusiastic and engaged Populace in all ventures.

"While our priorities and intentions will develop according to the ongoing needs of the Barony and the Kingdom, we have identified two areas which we believe the next Coronet would do well to consider as they begin their tenure. Each is a form of division within the Barony: one between the various interests a member of the Barony might pursue, the other between those who have extensive experience and those who have the energies of the Newcomer.

To a degree, a divide between interests within a barony is to be expected. After all, practicing the martial arts could be considered disruptive to those engaged in illumination, for example, as the excitement inspired by a good fight might cause a scribe an unsteady hand. However, we must recognize that each realm of interest is another facet of The Dream, and a healthy barony includes a variety. Dragon's Laire does host a healthy variety of activities but we believe we could do more to encourage individuals to engage each other across these perceived boundaries and, where appropriate, better support those who wish to engage in multiple activities sometimes seen as incompatible with each other.

The experience divide is perhaps an even more pressing concern within the Barony. Dragon's Laire is not unusual in that the majority of our events, feasts, and official duties are fulfilled by a small portion of our Populace. In an organization of volunteers, it is natural that some would find their bliss in serving others in this way, and that those would be a minority. Our task lies in encouraging those with experience -- especially those who enjoy such service -- to sometimes step aside in order to allow a relative newcomer to discover this same joy, to sometimes offer counsel to these newcomers, and over all to recognize that the longevity of the Barony lies in the combination of wisdom with excitement."

21. Conflict is bound to happen. What is your strategy for dealing with conflict between members of the populace that do not directly involve you? For dealing with conflicts that do directly involve you?

Firstly, it's important to remember that those involved in a conflict are often well-meaning and have encountered either a miscommunication or misunderstanding or a disagreement regarding how best to accomplish some goal. With this in mind,

facilitating calm communication and understanding is sometimes the most important step and occasionally the only thing necessary to resolve a conflict.

It's also worth noting that the SCA has an established grievance procedure as well as an anti-bullying and harassment policy. These can provide guidance in cases which fall under their purview.

The space in between is dedicated to calm, careful discussion of the circumstances, feelings, and desires of the parties involved. It's hard to generalize the resolution of conflict but respecting all parties is a good start. In some cases, especially in cases where one member of the populace has complaints about the behavior of another, it may be important to maintain confidentiality: both Ciar and Máenach have experience doing so in both modern and Scadian life. Whether we are selected or not, we welcome anyone to discuss sensitive topics with us without concern that we might gossip about it.

22. Do you have non-SCA commitments that will prevent you from attending events both in and outside the Barony that the Coronets are expected to attend? If so, how do you plan on handling those conflicts?

Yes and no. Maenach is occasionally expected to travel for work but Ciar does not often travel with him. If we become the Coronets, unless there is an emergency, work travel will not be scheduled at those times. As of January 1, 2020, Máenach has increased control over his travel schedule so ensuring that he is available for events should be easier than it has been in the past. If it should happen that Máenach cannot avoid travel for a particular event, Ciar will most likely still be able to attend and represent the Barony, even in his absence.

23. For some it is the Pageantry of the SCA that really evokes the ambiance of a 'Camelot' or 'Medieval' style. How do you feel about pageantry? How will you include it in your Courts, your Camp, retinue, progress, etc.?

It is our opinion that chief among the responsibilities of the Coronet is to champion the "Dream" side of the Barony's activities, which includes but is not limited to pageantry. We are already taking steps to improve the period-esque nature of our camp and garb, regardless of whether or not we are selected for Coronet, but we would certainly like to continue to improve the pageantry at Court and events in general. If selected, we intend to consult with heralds, costumers, woodworkers, and others, as well as doing our own research, to find reasonable ways in which we can improve the pageantry and period atmosphere of our courts and events.

All that said, we acknowledge that period garb, furniture, tents, etc. require time and especially money. We are aware that some members of the populace sometimes feel excluded or marginalized because their gear is less period-appropriate. We would encourage everyone to participate to their own level of interest and ability and therefore

hope to find ways to address this problem. We would rather slightly compromise “the Dream” than make members of our populace feel unwelcome.