

## CCA PROPOSAL: AN INDEPENDENT HERALDIC REGISTRY FOR CRAWFORDS LIVING OUTSIDE OF THE BRITISH ISLES

### THE CCA HERALDRY COMMITTEE

CCA Vice-President Raymond Crawford has spent many years researching and recording the arms of different branches of the Crawford family, and this work has now been collated and presented on the CCA website in the Heraldry section under the heading Arms of Branches of the Crawford family. In addition he has transcribed and edited "Laurus Crawfordiana" a manuscript book in the National Library of Scotland, written by the 18th century historian George Crawford of Carsburn, and this has been published by the CCA

Allen Crawford is an award-winning illustrator and graphic designer with thirty years of experience. Allen is very familiar with designing complex visual systems: he and his wife Susan designed and illustrated the 400-species identification system on permanent display at the American Museum of Natural History's Milstein Hall of Ocean Life in New York. Allen's interest in graphic design began with heraldry; his sporadic interest in the subject has persisted for nearly forty years, but his interest has been rekindled by his online discussions with Raymond.

### BACKGROUND

A little over a year ago, Raymond and Allen began an email correspondence. They soon began discussing the idea of setting up an independent heraldic registry for the CCA, specifically for Crawfords who live outside the British Isles and are unable to qualify for a traditional grant of arms. Such a heraldic registry would enable these Crawfords to participate in establishing new Crawford heraldic traditions, which would complement and enhance the existing Crawford heraldic legacy.

To the best of our knowledge, the Clan Crawford Association would be the first organization of its kind to establish an independent clan heraldic registry. It is to the credit of CCA President Joanne Crawford and the CCA leadership that they would entertain such an innovative, forward-looking project.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE CCA ARMORIAL PROJECT

1. Establish new and distinct heraldic traditions for Crawfords living outside of the British Isles that draw from and enhance the ancient heraldic traditions of House Crawford.

2. Set up a system of clear, coherent, and consistent heraldic guidelines for this heraldic registry, so that it remains democratic, transparent, and respectful of the clan's heraldic traditions.

3. Add genealogical and genetic information to the registry's entries, and compile them into a database to enhance the project's value as a genealogical tool for future generations of Crawfords.

4. Provide CCA members with an opportunity to learn about Crawford heraldry, so they might better enjoy and appreciate it as both an historical legacy and as a living practice.

5. Provide a working example for any other clan associations who might wish to establish their own heraldic registries.

## PROPOSED GENERAL POLICY

Here are some key points in the general CCA Armorial policy that we propose should be in place in order for the Armorial to succeed.

- 1) The CCA cannot grant arms: it can only record and register the arms of members who have assumed arms for themselves. CCA Heraldic Committee would assist members with this process.
- 2) The CCA Heraldry Committee proposes a registry that concerns itself with new variations of Crawford arms. It must establish and maintain a clear distinction between ancient/historical Crawford heraldry and the new/assumed Crawford heraldry in the new CCA registry. The CCA Armorial Project (the registry's proposed name) would be set up to build new Crawford heraldic traditions, and will regard the Crawford heraldic legacy and its bearers with respect. (The New England Historical Genealogical Society's Committee on Heraldry, the oldest non-governmental heraldic body in the English-speaking world, observes a similar policy.)
- 3) All CCA members assuming new arms for the registry will use the ancient "stem" shield of House Crawford (Gules a fess Ermine) as the departure point of their new arms, which will be unique to their bearer. (At the time this was written, no extant Dalmagregan branches of House Crawford have been confirmed.)
- 4) Only arms, crests, and mottoes (optional) will be recorded: supporters, coronets, caps, garters, or any other heraldic symbols of nobility will not be recorded.

5) To enrich the heraldic history of the clan and to clarify the origins of arms to future Crawfords, members will be encouraged to come up with new heraldic elements and charges of their own, particularly those that reveal the history of that particular Crawford line: where they lived, their work, their accomplishments, etc. Members will also be encouraged to use symbols, objects, plants, and animals native to their homes as charges for their arms (Aussies could use galahs or emus; Americans could use elks or bluejays; Kiwis could use wetas or kakapos, etc). Introducing new charges that tell stories about the various family lines in our clan will breathe new life into Crawford heraldry. We want the Crawford families of today to tell their stories to the Crawfords of tomorrow.

6) To enrich the heraldic history of the clan and to clarify the origins of arms to future Crawfords, slight variations of traditional Crawford charges will be used in assumed arms outside of the British Isles. For example: in America, a white-tailed buck's head or elk could be used instead of a Scottish red stag's head. The visual difference will be negligible--but to future researchers, the arms will be unmistakably that of a Crawford whose ancestors settled in America. This will be of great genealogical value in the future.

7) At this time, no governmental heraldic authority in the UK recognizes genetic evidence as admissible in deliberating a rightful claim to a grant of arms--but we can. There may be rare instances when the Y-DNA test of a Crawford matches closely with that of another Crawford who has a solid paper trail to a Crawford ancestor. In some cases, this match may be close enough to link this Crawford to a particular cadet of the clan, and give them a legitimate claim to use in their assumed arms a key element from that cadet's ancestral arms that signifies their family line's connection to this cadet (the linked crescents, in the case of Ardmillan).

In most cases, however, Y-DNA tests won't confirm a connection with a specific family line or ancestor; genetic test results might instead confirm a link to a broader part of the clan, like a branch or cadet. These kinds of genetic links can be vague, since clan cadets often include many generations, and can involve multiple family lines who bear arms. In such a case, a CCA member who is assuming arms might find a subtle way to suggest a connection to the cadet as a whole, without using an explicit symbol from any specific family in that cadet (using a bird-themed crest to suggest a connection to the "Ardmillan" cadet, for example). It's frustrating to be so tantalizingly close to a connection, but the member's arms can be updated if a breakthrough comes to light in the future.

The future genealogical value and historical interest of the arms in this registry would rely on our adherence to these criteria.

## PROCESS

### 1. Payment

To begin the process, members will pay a fee of \$150 to this PayPal account...(TBD)

Once we receive payment, Allen Crawford will contact the applicant for an initial consultation.

### 2. Design

After payment and initial consultation, ~~Raymond will then pass on the applicant's request to~~ Allen Crawford, ~~who~~ will help them design a new coat of arms that will draw from the clan's traditions and be relevant to the applicant.

For practical reasons, our main focus will be on the design of the arms rather than its rendering. We are helping applicants create a symbol, not a picture. We do our best to meet with the satisfaction of an applicant, but generally each member will be allowed two rounds of revisions before final artwork is created for their certificate.

### 3. Certificate

Upon completion and approval of the design by the applicant and the CCA Heraldry Committee (Allen and Raymond), applicants will receive a custom full-color certificate suitable for framing (US: 14x11; Commonwealth: A4).

The certificate will feature the member's name, an illustration of their new arms, and its blazon (a written description of the arms in ancient heraldic terms). Along with their arms, CCA will also enter the genealogy and Y-DNA information of the member in the clan archives for posterity.

## CONCLUSION

This project, if done with integrity and consideration, promises to be an exciting one for the CCA.

Because we would be operating beyond the auspices of any governmental heraldic authorities, there will essentially be no rules outside of the ones we set up for ourselves. If the project is to gain credibility, we must set up a clear framework of guidelines before such a project officially goes public.

We hope that the clear division between old and new Crawford arms will quell the fears of any members who are concerned about the project's effect on the Crawford heraldic legacy. The temptation with a heraldic project of this sort is to focus too much on the past, which ironically would only make the past even muddier for our descendants. But if we decide that instead we're going to be innovative and scrupulous—creating a new, distinct, and vibrant heraldic tradition that would also preserve our clan's older heraldic tradition—then it will be a

worthwhile endeavor to undertake, and a rich legacy to bequeath to the Crawfords who follow us.

Raymond Crawford

Allen Crawford