

# Northern Shores Regional Principality Polling Informational Pamphlet

Hello everyone:

For several years there has been talk about advancing our region to a principality. The topic flares up, then quiets down, but remains as a potential option for our people.

One of the things I have noticed is there is a great deal of nebulous information available, but it can be hard to interpret it with our own unique situation in mind.

This pamphlet, was created with the aid of those who volunteered to research our options<sup>1</sup>, and those who hold regional deputy positions. It is our sincerest hope that this will help our people understand the options available to them, and what impact, if any, a change would mean to them.

Master Gilbert the Short, OL  
Seashire Legate

What you will find in this pamphlet:

1. Why are we doing this?
2. Our Options - an overview
  - How do things work currently as a region?
  - What would change if we became a crown principality?
  - What would change if we became a full principality?
3. What does this mean to me? - a personalized look at what each option would mean to the typical people in the region
  - I am someone who doesn't travel
  - I am someone who travels
  - I am a local group officer
  - I am a regional deputy
  - I am a territorial baron
  - My group is tied up with pressing local issues
  - I am a martial activity person
4. Hard facts and existing plans
  - How often do we have royal progresses (RP's) in the region?
  - What are the traditional events in the region?
  - What is the regional championship rotation plan, and how will this keep from interfering with our traditional events?
  - How far away are we from the requirements for crown and full principalities?
5. Our futures in a nut shell - a summary and closing thoughts

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<sup>1</sup> Special thanks to Sir Gareth for his commenting work

## Why are we doing this?

If we look at the history of the SCA, regional groups progress toward having their own identities when they share culture. When this is encouraged, the groups flourish.

The people of this region of the East Kingdom have always been a bit different from our southern cousins. We have a lower population density, so our groups are more spread out, and isolated. Some of our people speak French, so are isolated from the main stream English speaking SCA.

In spite of the hurdles in our way, we have formed groups, and we have grown in the society.

We have raised monies so that we could ease the financial burden on the royalty to come and share the pomp and ceremony of kingdom court with our people.

We have travelled long distances to support each other's events, share knowledge, and support our troops in battle.

We have become friends, even when some of us can only smile in welcome.<sup>2</sup>

Advancing our region into a crown or full principality, is part of the natural progression for distinct groups like us. Our identity, and customs get more encouragement to develop, and help us enhance the game in our own area, for our people.

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<sup>2</sup> I wish I could speak French, but regretfully I was very poor at it in school. So put me down as one of the smiling people. - Gilbert the Short

# Our Options

## An overview

We have essentially three options of what we want to do with our region:

1. Remain a region
2. Become a crown principality
3. Become a full principality

It is worth noting, that nothing we do is set in stone, and we can revisit our options in the future. What might be the best option now, might not be the best option ten years from now. For example if we became a crown principality, we could later revert to a region<sup>3</sup>, or become a full principality.

I would also like to assuage any fears that this would lead to our region leaving the East Kingdom and becoming its own kingdom<sup>4</sup>. To put it baldly, we don't have the mundane population base to make this an option. A snowball's chance in hades comes to mind when people ask about the chances of this.

So we are definitely going to be continuing to live with our parents (the East Kingdom), this question before you is more along the lines of do we:

1. Stay in our little bedroom
2. Move into the basement (more identity, but mostly things stay the same)
3. Move into the apartment above the garage (a distinct identity, more freedom, but still have a place at the table whenever we don't feel like cooking)

### How do things work currently as a region?

As a region, we have some curia-like positions which are deputies to the kingdom officers. Many of our local officers report to them each quarter to let them know what is going on in our area.

We have a spot in the rotation of crown tournament in East Kingdom law.

We have regional championship tournaments for archery, arts & science, rapier, and rattan. These tournaments are incorporated into local events, rather than having strict dates like some kingdom level events.

A rotation of the regional championship has been proposed, and people are working on getting it implemented so that we have plenty of warning when they are taking place, and that they will regularly occur in each part of the region.

Groups large enough to be baronies have ceremonial representatives of the crown (barons<sup>5</sup>) who can hold court in their areas, and give out baronial awards. Shires do not have such representation, so only have court held when their majesties visit them.

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3 Reverting to a region would result in losing the name and heraldry of the group

4 There are examples in the known world of areas that become full principalities and never become kingdoms

5 Since there isn't a requirement for there to be a consort, I will simply refer to barons, rather than barons and baronesses

Barons can and do pass along awards to their people if the person misses the court in which the award was attempted to be presented by their Majesties. Since the barons can hold court, this allows for some ceremony when the individual does have the opportunity to receive it.

## What would change if we became a crown principality?

Regional championships would be renamed crown principality championships.

We could have our own name and heraldry. While Northern Shores region is a fine description it isn't very medieval, and doesn't give us a banner to hang in the hall when we hold our championships.

The king and queen would gain the titles of prince and princess of the crown principality.<sup>6</sup>

The kingdom would have the **option** of creating a representative position for the crown principality. There is not a "written in stone" definition of what form of selection would be used, nor the title that person would hold<sup>7</sup>.

We would also be encouraged to continue to foster our own customs, like how to fairly rotate the championship tournaments, and ensure our local groups continue to enjoy their traditional events.

What **wouldn't change** is how our groups run. Our baronies would continue just as they do today, with barons as representatives of the crown. We would still have a place in the crown tournament rotation. The king and queen would have exactly the same reasons to visit us as they do now.

To summarize the changes for a crown principality:

- Our championships would be renamed
- We could have a group name and heraldry
- The kingdom would have the **option** of creating a representative position for the crown principality

## What would change if we became a full principality?

As a full principality, we would have some of the same changes as we did with the crown principality:

- Our championships would be renamed
- We would have a group name and heraldry<sup>8</sup>

However there are some significant differences. As a full principality we would have a territorial prince and princess, which would be chosen by right of arms, just like the king and queen of the East. The prince and princess (also called the coronet), would represent the crown for the principality. As local people, they would be able to travel, and bring courts to more of our groups, and more often than the king and queen ever could.

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6 Society Seneschal's Handbook VII C 4

7 Aethelmearc had a Lady Protector for the brief time they were a crown principality of the East before becoming a full principality. So it is quite possible that a similar title would be used **if** the crown chose to have a representative

8 Having a name and heraldry is a requirement for full principalities

The line of command would be changed for our representatives. Barons would represent the coronet, rather than the crown. This means that the king and queen would no longer have to come for investitures, this would be the duty of the prince and princess.

Territorial princes and princesses can create and hand out principality awards, and awards of arms<sup>9</sup>. In addition, **at the request of their majesties**, their highnesses can hand out kingdom awards. This is quite different than the delivering of awards which were attempted to be handed out in court by their majesties first. Most notable, their highnesses can make peers, which is an accolade that must otherwise require the presence of both their majesties and the candidate, and so can't be passed along by a baron. **The king and queen can still come if they wish, but they aren't the only option any more.**

Our regional deputy positions would become principality officers. A principality curia<sup>10</sup> would be formed, and we would be entitled to have our own laws. Laws are much like the standard operating procedures (SOPs) our local groups have, but they are binding instead of being guidelines like SOPs. Laws would formalize things like our championship rotation and the new principality awards.

Our local officers, if they don't already report to the regional deputies, would report to the principality officers instead of directly to kingdom.

What **wouldn't change** is how our groups run. Even though barons would be representing the coronet rather than the crown, and our curias would be reporting to a more local body of officers, this has little to do with the way their jobs operate "on the ground". We would still be part of the East Kingdom, and we would still have a spot in the crown tournament rotation<sup>11</sup>.

To summarize the additional changes a full principality would bring:

- We would have our own royalty and be able to have royal courts more often, and in more areas per year
- Barons would be invested by the prince and princess, so there would be one fewer reason for the king and queen to visit (2 of the 15 events in the past 5 years have been investitures)
- Our regional deputies would become full officers, and our local groups would report to them
- A principality curia would be formed
- Our customs like the championship rotation could be enshrined in law
- We could create our own awards to recognize people in addition to the current kingdom awards
- Awards of Arms could be recommended to and granted by the prince and princess
- Kingdom awards could be given out by the prince and princess at their majesties' request without the crown first trying to award it themselves
- Princes and Princesses could make peers at the crown's discretion, so the king and queen won't have to visit, but will likely do so if they are able (5 of the 15 events in the past 5 years have included the recognition of peers<sup>12</sup>)

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9 East Kingdom Law VII E 2 outlines the rights and duties of territorial princes and princesses mentioned here

10 Principality curia's have the required positions of Seneschal, Herald, Knight Marshal, Exchequer, Chronicler, Minister of Arts and Sciences, Minister of the Lists, and Chatelaine

11 The last Eastern crown tournament in which Atlantians were eligible to participate was actually held in the Principality of Atlantia

12 It is worth noting that there is overlap between events with investitures, and the creation of new peers

## **What does this mean to me?**

### **A personalized look at what each option would mean to the typical people in the region**

The real question that comes to mind when you are presented with a list of options is “what does this mean to me?” We want to make sure that when we make a decision that we don't end out shooting ourselves in the foot!

The following are summaries of what our options really mean on the ground level.

### **I am someone who doesn't travel, what does this mean to me?**

First off let me say this:

**No matter what option you choose, you will not have to travel!**

Feel better now?

Participating in the SCA only requires you to make an attempt at a pre-17<sup>th</sup> century appearance, pay your site fee, and sign the waiver. That is it. If you don't want to travel to far away events, you don't have to.

Currently	Crown Principality	Full Principality
<p>Regional championships are held in different parts of the region.</p> <p>The championships get held in your area periodically, so you can have the option to participate, and get to enjoy the company of the visitors they bring.</p> <p>Royal Progress events occasionally come to your area (typically less often than one of the four championships), and generally features a very long court.</p>	<p>The regional championships would be renamed.</p> <p>There would be a group name and banner to go with the principality championship events.</p> <p><b>If</b> the kingdom chooses to create a representative position for the crown principality there could be a bit more pomp and ceremony<sup>13</sup> at regional events, and they could help pass along awards in groups too small to have their own baron.</p> <p>Royal Progress events will still occasionally come to your area.</p>	<p>As with the crown principality, the championships would be renamed, and we would have our own group name, and banner.</p> <p>The territorial prince and princess will be able to hold a court at an event in your area that would offer more pomp and ceremony than you would normally have.</p> <p>You and your local people could be recognized for principality awards which would be for things that we as a group feel should be recognized.</p> <p>There will be a slight drop in reasons for the king and queen to visit since the territorial prince and princess will invest barons and baronesses, but there will still be reasons for them to come. (Due to the regularity of principality courts, the kingdom courts likely won't take as long as they do these days)</p>

<sup>13</sup> By “more pomp and ceremony” we mean more significant courts, not longer courts... I think we all can agree that it is nice to see people honoured, but not to find ourselves hoping for an intermission half way through :)

## **I am someone who travels, what does this mean to me?**

The options before you will offer the same benefits as the person who doesn't travel, and you will also have more choice as to which events you want to attend.

Crown and full principality championships provide wonderful opportunities to visit different groups in our area. The name and banner they would have displayed at these events will help highlight that even though you might be visiting their group, you are share with them a membership in the larger group.

Full principality events will have more pomp and ceremony; and these events are more likely to involve seeing your friends in different parts of this area getting nice things... One of my favourite things about court. (Full principality with its principality awards will mean more opportunities to recognize our people.)

You will still still hear the call of Kingdom level events, which feature a broader range of participants, and opportunities. Travel outside the crown or full principality will remain important, and the knowledge and experience you bring back will be just as valuable as it is now.

So your outlook is to be spoiled for choice, and to continue to do as you like.

## **I am a local group officer, what does this mean to me?**

In the case of a crown principality, nothing would change.

In the case of a full principality, you will (if you don't already) report to the regional/principality officer rather than directly to kingdom. It is possible that laws made specifically for our principality could alter the way your job is done, but given that we must still follow society and kingdom law, any changes would be fairly minor.

## **I am a regional deputy, what does this mean to me?**

In the case of a crown principality, nothing would change. You are still the deputy of your kingdom officer, and life continues as it does now.

In the case of a full principality, depending on your position, you would have a seat on the new curia. Given the breadth of our region, this would mean participating in an email list, which is already a big feature in your life anyway! There will probably be a curia meeting or two to attend as well. How often such a meeting would occur would be up to us as a group to establish. Kingdom curia for example meets once a reign (six months), while the barony of Ruantallan has a curia meeting quarterly.

Depending on how your job is currently structured, there could be no change, or you might have more work to do as the local groups start reporting directly to you. You would also be able to look at how things are going/done in the principality, and be able to put forth suggestions/requests for laws that would help and improve the situation.

## **I am a territorial baron, what does this mean to me?**

In the case of a crown principality, the only difference is a potential one. If the kingdom makes a representative for the crown principality, then you may have them address your people, and discuss matters of the larger group with you. **Regardless of this option, you will still be a direct representative of the crown for your group as you are now.**

In the case of a full principality, you would become the representative of the coronet instead of the crown. The coronet will have fewer representatives, and **likely** be more knowledgeable of our local situations than the crown.

## **My group is tied up with pressing local issues, what does this mean to me?**

Happily, the condition of the region, crown or full principality can function without you if you have no time for it. If your group can't handle a regional or principality championship and don't feel comfortable asking neighbouring groups for help, then it will pass over to another group.

In the case of a full principality, the regional deputy positions that would become the new curia are already filled, and if you can't spare the energy to take part, everyone will understand. They will see your reports, and will see if there is anything they can do to help you.

Local groups are the heart and soul of the SCA. Never forget that. The higher levels exist to help enhance the local level, not the other way round.

## **I am a martial activity person, what does this mean to me?**

If you are hoping I am going to tell you that either the crown or full principality will mean that you no longer have to travel if you want to improve and become recognized... Sorry, you're out of luck.

Martial activities, particularly rapier and rattan, require practice against a broad range of opponents to improve and be recognized. Going out of our region will remain important to you, but attending our regional/principality championship for your activity will also be helpful.

If however you are a rattan combatant, and we do become a full principality, you will have the chance to compete to become the territorial prince or princess (depending on which letter you have on your birth certificate). This will allow you to serve this area in a significant way, and possibly make lasting changes in the form of new awards, or new traditions.



# Hard facts and existing plans

## How often do we have royal progresses (RP's) in the region?

Historically visits by royalty have been strongly dependent on whether or not the reigning monarch is willing to travel this far north. There are a number of individuals who have taken it upon themselves to help share the pomp and ceremony of royal court with us, and we should all be grateful for their efforts.

The following is a summary of the RP's that have been held in our region in the past five years.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Group Total
Havre des Glace	1			1		2
L'Ile du Dragon Dormant	1	2	2		1	6
Lynhaven					1	1
Ruantallan	2	1		1	2 <sup>14</sup>	6
Year Total	4	3	2	2	4	15

This period spans 10 reigns and 8 royal couples.

## What are the traditional events in the region?

### January

Early in the month, 12<sup>th</sup> Night (Ruantallan)

### February

### March

On or close to the first weekend, Baronial Investiture Anniversary (L'Ile du Dragon Dormant)

### April

### May

On or close to the first weekend, Seashire Anniversary (Ruantallan)

Victoria Day, Lyndhaven Warcamp and Schola

### June

On or around the middle, Baltanes (Havre des Glaces)

On or close to June 24<sup>th</sup> i.e. St. Jean Baptiste day weekend "Lost Caravan" or "Combat Ceilidhs and Crossbows" (L'Ile du Dragon Dormant)

### July

On or close to July 1, Ruantallan Warcamp

### August

### September

Labour day weekend

- Small Brawl - YYG (Ruantallan)
- Ar n-Eilean-ne Summer Warcamp

### October

First or second weekend, Baronial Investiture Anniversary (Ruantallan)

On or around the middle, Fall Harvest (L'Ile du Dragon Dormant)

### November

On or close to the first weekend, Fête de Glaces (Havre des Glaces)

American Thanksgiving weekend (after the third Thursday), Ruantallan event of no specific name

### December

Before Christmas, Seashire (Ruantallan)

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14 The second royal progress is the Queen's progress scheduled for late November

## **What is the regional championship rotation plan, and how will this keep from interfering with our traditional events?**

The rotation plan breaks our region into three groupings: West, Central, and East.

- West groups include L'Ile du Dragon Dormant and Havre des Glaces (province of Quebec)
- Central groups are Lyndhaven (New Brunswick), and Ar n-Eilean-ne (Newfoundland)
- East groups are those that are in Ruantallan (Nova Scotia and PEI)

The rotation is in that order, with preference for groups that didn't host in the last rotation. So for example if Lyndhaven had the last championship, Ar n-Eilean-ne would be given preference.

So ideally in six years for a given championship it would be twice in Quebec, twice in NS and PEI, and once in each of NB and Newfoundland.

Example chart of how the rotation could work, as well as the preferred season for the championship:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Rattan (late spring to early summer)	East	West	Central	East	West	Central
Archery (summer)	West	Central	East	West	Central	East
Rapier (late summer to early fall)	Central	East	West	Central	East	West
A&S (winter)	West	Central	East	West	Central	East

Each championship has a preferred season, but not a specific date. The group who's turn it is to host the championship, can use any local event for the championship, but will try not to have it at the same time as a traditional event of another group in the region, so that people from that group will not have a local SCA obligation that might prevent them from attending.

In addition the announcements for the championships should happen at least four months ahead of time so that people can make any arrangements they might need to travel (a day off for example).

Is this rotation perfectly implemented yet? No it isn't. However the champions, and associated officers are working very hard to make it a reality.

## **How far away are we from the requirements for crown and full principalities?**

We are fully capable of becoming a crown principality at any time. If there is sufficient interest, and the king and queen are in favour of the idea<sup>15</sup>, it can be done.

We do not yet qualify for full principality because our rattan combatant population is too small. We also need more members of the order of chivalry (knights and masters of arms) than our current active list of three.

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<sup>15</sup> Given that we are being polled, it is fairly safe to say they are in favour of it

The reasons we are required to have adequate representation of the order of chivalry, and a larger number of rattan combatants includes, making sure there is sufficient competition for the coronet, and ensuring we are a suitably balanced group. (There are requirements for service, and the arts & sciences as well, but we have significantly larger numbers of laurels and pelicans than we have chivalry.)<sup>16</sup>

How long will it take to boost our numbers in the chivalry and rattan combatants to full principality levels? There is no way to know for sure, given that it depends highly on individuals. It wouldn't be unreasonable however to estimate five to ten years considering how many of our people have been recognized in the past five years. However it is also possible that we might never reach full principality levels.

If the polling were to be overwhelmingly for becoming a full principality, it is likely we would still spend some time as a crown principality until everything was put in place for a full principality<sup>17</sup>. The former East kingdom principality of Aethelmearc for example spent a few months as a crown principality before it became a full principality. Aethelmearc had been working on their preparations for a while before they were made a crown principality, so they could have easily spent more time as a crown principality if they'd been given that status earlier.

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16 Corpora III C 4 States we must have “Sufficient members of the orders conferring Patents of Arms to foster the development of those orders and the skills they represent within the principality.” which are the peerages of chivalry, laurel, and pelican

17 Again referring to Corpora III C and also the Society Seneschal's Handbook VII C, we would need, amongst other things, to have our name and heraldry passed (which takes about a year once the paperwork is mailed), a draft of laws created for the first territorial prince and princess, letters from kingdom officers, and polling information from the people who live here. The petition would also have to be approved by the Society Seneschal. This process is not an overnight thing!

# Our futures in a nut shell

## A summary and closing thoughts

The options before us, while full of possibilities, are not matters of life and death. Much of the state of the SCA as you currently know it will continue as it has regardless of what any poll indicates. We are looking at what will for the most part be occasional enhancements at local events, and nothing more.

Will there be work for those individuals who take on positions like territorial prince or princess of a full principality? You bet. However, as is usual in the SCA, those people accept that responsibility before taking on the position<sup>18</sup>.

As you look at your poll card, honestly ask yourself what you think would be best:

- Stay a region, and leave things the way they are for the moment
- Become a crown principality, and see what a name, banner and recognition of us as a group can do
- Become a full principality, and see what benefits limited self governance and more pomp and ceremony can do

Will these options be available in the future? They certainly will. So you can say “stay a region”, and the next time this comes around say “go crown principality”. What we think is right for us now, might not be what is right for us in five or ten years.

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<sup>18</sup> Every time Lady Cornelia fights in crown tournament I am fully prepared to be prince for four months, and the king of love and beauty for six months. Trust me, this is no light commitment, and not all men step up to this sort of job. - Gilbert the Short