

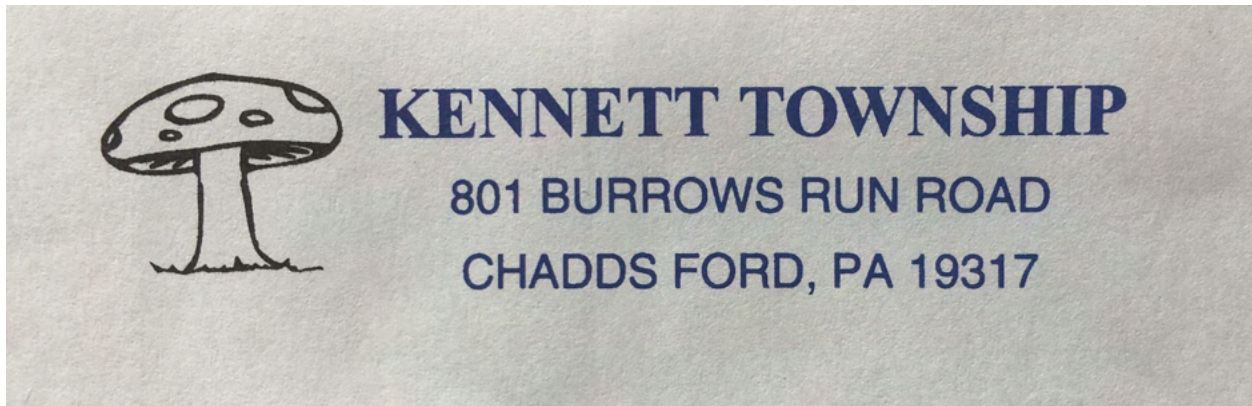
Remarks

Geoffrey Gamble
2021-12-12

Re: Kennett Township Coat of Arms

In addition to the coat of arms of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, itself, virtually all counties and numerous townships have coats of arms which are displayed on various seals and logos.

The current logo of Kennett Township is more in the nature of a letterhead than a proper symbol.



I suggest that it is time for the adoption of coat of arms and seal for the Township to mark our history, our progress, and our future.

Given the Township's deep historical roots, it is useful to begin with the origin of its name.

In the late 17th century, Francis Smith, a landowner on Pocopson Creek, is said to have named the area after his birthplace in England - the Valley of the Kennet River, a tributary of the Thames River in southern England.

The name, itself, derives from a Roman settlement in the area called "Cunetio" from the Celtic word "kun" or "kund" meaning "hound".

The arms of the Kennet District in Wiltshire, England can be seen in my memorandum linked to the meeting Agenda.

The green shield represents the overwhelmingly rural nature of the district. Across the centre is a blue and silver wave which represents the River Kennet which gives the district its name.



The sheep and wheat sheaves show that wool production and agriculture are the mainstays of that area.

The three original Pennsylvania counties each had a coat of arms. The County of Philadelphia had a sailing ship, Bucks County had a plow, and Chester County had three wheat sheaves, called 'garbs' on a green field.



When Caleb Lowmes [1754-1828] designed the coat of arms for the new state in 1778, he incorporated the arms of the three counties which have survived to this day as the symbol of Pennsylvania.

Chester County's original symbols derive from the arms of the county of Cheshire, England and the Earls of Chester, both of which contain three sheaves on a blue shield.



A quick look at the arms of some other entities provides a good frame of reference.

Cheltenham Township has an elaborate coat of arms that harks back to its namesake in England. The problem with it is that it is too 'busy'.



It looks like a pizza with five toppings - a mistake often made in heraldic design.



Contrast it with the elegant simplicity of the arms of Zurich, Switzerland.

The blue represents the lake, and the white the slope of a snow-covered mountain. Simple and elegant.

Another contrast is with our neighbor, New Castle County. These arms border on the hideous and break every heraldic rule



New Garden's arms are in the form of a seal and are unique in that they depict an ancient building in that township.



But they are really indistinguishable from scores of other townships that features some sort of building such as Easttown.



Buckingham Township in Bucks County are attractive but they contain the arms of the Penn Family which were the official arms of the Proprietary Colony up until the American Revolution. Nothing unique here.



The arms and seal of Chester County contain one of the two mortal sins of heraldry - they are a close copy of someone's else's. [The other mortal heraldic sin is using lettering on the shield, itself, such as with New Castle County].

In this case Chester County has copied those of Pennsylvania, itself.

It is ironic that the Commonwealth's arms contain the original arms of Chester County - three sheaves on a green shield.

No doubt heraldic ignorance played a role in the county's current choice of arms and not re-employing the county's historic arms.

The logo of the Borough of Kennett Square are artistically pleasing and feature a unique piece of borough architecture, but, like Kennett today, are little more than a letterhead.



Our neighboring townships feature a horse in the case of East Marlborough,

in the case of Pennsbury.

and a flowering bush or tree



Discussion of a proposed arms and seal for Kennett Township:

Municipal arms should be aesthetically pleasing, simple, timeless, and relatively unique.

In exploring unique features in Kennett Township, the obvious choice would seem to be the Old Kennett Meeting building.

The problem with this choice is that it looks like every other historic building throughout the Commonwealth, not to mention the seal of neighboring New Garden.

Another obvious choice might be a mushroom of some sort, given the prevalence of the industry in our Township.

The difficulty here is that Kennett Square is already widely known as “The Mushroom Capital of the World”. We might be seen to be ‘piggybacking’ on their moniker.

There are some other relatively unique features in Kennett - the ubiquitous American sycamore and the Red Clay Creek. A beautiful sycamore stands next to the Township Building.



In colonial times a sycamore planted by a stream signified a drinkable water source. Indeed along the Red Clay Creek today in the Township sycamore trees are still found in growing abundance, no doubt descendants of their colonial ancestors.

I can find very few Pennsylvania townships that have trees on their seals or arms and none with a sycamore.

This tree, either alone, or standing by the Red Clay, might be the symbol on our municipal arms.

I suggest that the shield be oval in shape. In heraldry, shields for men traditionally have a pointed bottom end, like the Cheltenham shield, and shields for women are in the shape of a lozenge. Oval shields are gender neutral.

The shield might be surrounded by two oak branches in autumn colors in keeping with the current Kennett sign colors.



Oak trees also have come to symbolize William Penn [Penn Oaks] and recall our Heritage Trees.



Lastly, the “crest” at the top of the shield might be a wheat sheaf, symbolic not only of Chester County but also of Kennet, England, for which our Township is named.

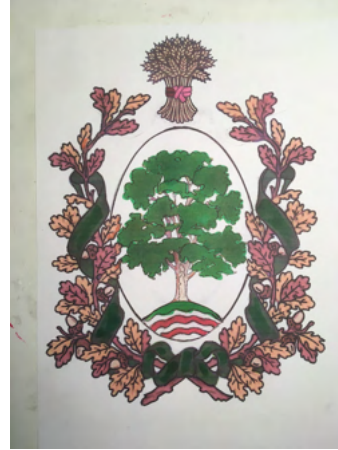
This would constitute the ‘Arms’ of the Township.

The ‘Seal’ of the Township could be the Arms surrounded by a double circle containing at the top “KENNETT TOWNSHIP” and at the bottom the year “1704”.

Unlike other townships, there is no need for us to put ‘Chester County’ or ‘Pennsylvania’ because there is no other ‘Kennett Township’ in the United States.

There is a Kennett City, the county seat of Dunklin County, Missouri, but it is a city, not a township.

There was a Kennett, California, named after a railroad man, one “Squire Kennet” in the 1880s, but it is presently under 400 feet of water in Lake Shasta because of the Shasta Dam which was constructed in 1937.



Here is what the Township Arms might look like. The leaves here are the same shade as a sycamore but they could be a brighter green if it is desired.

Here is what the arms might look like combined with our current logo:



My intention here tonight is *not* to present this for any kind of a vote, but to seek input - be it favorable or unfavorable - and to solicit other suggestions and ideas.

Although there is certainly no urgency with respect to this matter, a real township symbol would mark a new beginning for us all, both from the Theft and from the catastrophic pandemic we have just endured.

Remember, though, the old saying: 'A camel is a horse put together by a committee,' and, with heraldry and symbols, simple is best.

If anyone has questions or wishes to discuss this further, I am available by email or phone.