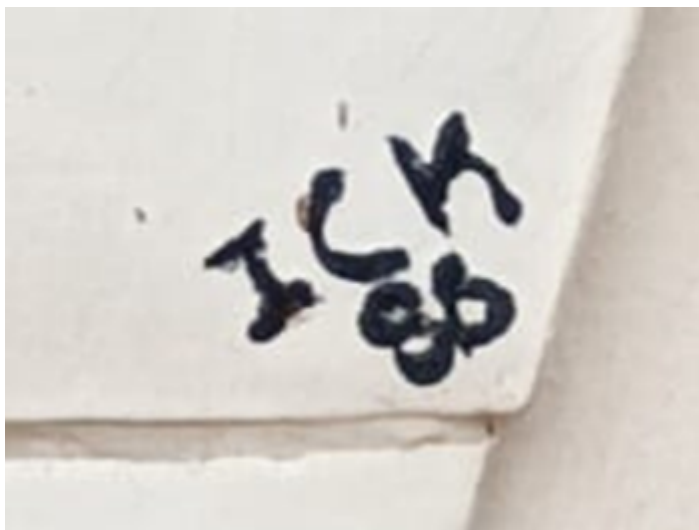


106.Montagu Coat of Arms

Updated 07/05/2024

This article started with a WhatsApp message from Montagu resident Avril Elkington to Montagu Stories: ***Do you by any chance have any information on the Montagu Coat of Arms outside the municipal building.*** A fundamental question in the history of Montagu but sadly at time of asking an answer was not readily available. However some focused digging and help from a network of people and the following was uncovered.

The picture below then appeared on the Montagu Historical Society W/A group with the caption: ***If anyone knows the origins of the Coat of Arms that is on our municipal building please let us know***



A group member answers: ***Inez Kachelhoffer made it. She and her husband Louis lived at 30 Bath Street.***



An extract from the Montagu mail March 2006. Inez & Louis

celebrate 55 years together. Inez is typically modest about her own achievements. In her time in Montagu she has been a Ward 2 committee member, a potter (the ceramic with Montagu's crest at the Municipality is her work).

The search starts with an extract from Wikipedia

Montagu coat of Arms

In 1968, Montagu's municipal council obtained a grant of arms from the Cape Provincial Administrator: *Perpendicular to right dividend argent and black, the argent charged with a bunch of grapes stem and foliage of natural colour and black with the head and neck of a griffin between flight, all of gold, the flight at the bottom charged with three red diamonds, placed transversely*. The crest was a demi-eagle emerging from a golden mural crown, and the motto was "Disputando me non mutando me"⁽³⁾ The coat of arms was registered with the Bureau of Heraldry in 1972.⁽⁴⁾

However, some versions of the coat of arms show the motto "Do right and fear nothing – Fear not while acting justly".

References:

3. Cape of Good Hope *Official Gazette* 3470 (9 August 1968)
 4. National Archives of South Africa: Data of the Bureau of Heraldry
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It was decided to start the search for information with trying to find/make contact with the resources referred to in the References number 3 & 4.

A copy of the Cape of Good Hope Official Gazette 3470 (9

August 1968) was obtained courtesy of Special Collections UCT Libraries and the answer starts to unfold.

MUNISIPALITEIT MONTAGU: AANNAME VAN
WAPEN.

HIERBY word, ingevolge regulasie 5 (2) van die regulasies uitgevaardig kragtens artikel 25 van die Heraldiekwet, 1962 (Wet no. 18 van 1962), bekend gemaak dat die Administrateur 'n wapen aan die Munisipaliteit Montagu toegeken het en goedkeuring verleen het tot die publikasie van die volgende afbeelding daarvan tesame met 'n beskrywing van die kleure wat gebruik word:—



WAPEN: Skuinsregs gedeel van silwer en swart, die silwer belaaï met 'n druïwetros gestengel en geblaar van natuurlike kleur en die swart met die kop en hals van 'n griffioen tussen 'n vlug, alles van goud, die vlug aan die onderkant belaaï met drie rooi ruite, dwarsbalksgewys geplaas.

HELMTEKEN: 'n Muurkroon van goud met 'n uitkomende halwe adelaar met uitgespreide vleuels, van natuurlike kleur.

WAPENSPREUK: Handel regverdig en vrees nie: Fear not while acting justly.

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MONTAGU MUNICIPALITY: ADOPTION OF COAT OF
ARMS.

NOTICE is hereby given, in terms of regulation 5 (2) of the regulations promulgated, in terms of section 25 of the Heraldry Act, 1962 (Act No. 18 of 1962), that the Administrator has granted a coat of arms to the Montagu Municipality and approved of the publication of the following illustration, together with a description of the colours used:—



ARMS: Per bend Argent and Sable, in sinister chief a bunch of grapes slipped and leaved proper, in dexter base a griffin's head and neck couped, between a pair of wings conjoined in leure Or charged with three lozenges in fess Gules.

CREST: Out of a mural crown Or, a demi-eagle with wings displayed proper.

MOTTO: Handel regverdig en vrees nie: Fear not while acting justly.

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An official Coat of Arms was granted to Montagu in 1968 in the above format

The Bureau of Heraldry is contacted

Extracts of information from the Bureau of Heraldry records

Montagu

Munisipaliteit

Municipality

Rig Korrespondensie aan
„DIE STADSKLERK“All Communications to
„THE TOWN CLERK“

wysing D/4/5.



MONTAGU.

14 Januarie 1967.

Die Staatsheraldikus,
Buro vir Heraldiek,
Privaatsak 236,
PRETORIA.



Geagte Heer,

INSAKE: VOORGESTELDE ARTS-REGISTRASIE VAN
DORPSWAPEN.

- (1) My raad beoog om die dorpswapen te laat registreer en met die oog daarop moet eers vasgestel word of dit heraldies heeltemal in orde is.
- (2) Met hierdie doel voor oë het ons die vrymoedigheid om u te nader ten einde vas te stel of u ons behulpzaam sal kan wees in hierdie verband en, indien wel, verneem ons graag welke inligting deur u verlang word en wat die koste verbonde daaraan by benadering sal beloop.
- (3) Soos u moontlik bewus is, verewig die dorp die naam van John Montagu, 'n voormalige Britse Koloniale Sekretaris wie se familie oor 'n wapen beskik het met die afskrif "Montagu of Kimbolton, Viscount Mandeville, Earl of Manchester."
- (4) Toe Montagu se dorpswapen destyds ontwerp is, is sekere dele onder andere die arend, van John Montagu se familiewapen by die dorpswapen ingelyf.
- (5) Sou u in 'n posisie wees om ons in hierdie opsig behulpzaam te wees, word navraag gedoen of u dit nodig ag dat John Montagu se familiewapen tesame met die dorpswapen aan u gestuur word.
- (6) Ons verneem graag so spoedig moontlik van u met die vertroue dat u ons behulpzaam sal kan wees waarvoor u by voorbaat bedank word.

Die uwe,

W. D. du Plessis
STADSKLERK.

The Town Clerk of the day was Mr. du Plessis. It is interesting to note that the Montagu Municipality of the day

was already using a COA on their letter heads as can be seen above. It is assumed that this was not officially registered and the process that took place during 1967 made the COA for Montagu official. It has not as yet been possible to determine who and when the first version of the COA was designed or who prepared the revised COA in 1967.



W.J.B. du Plessis on his last day of service 30 September 1981. Mr William "Dupie" du Plessis, town clerk of Montagu, was born in Cradock. He said he had finally found his berth in Montagu.

Mnr. W.I.B. du Plessis oorlede

'n Bekende inwoner van Montagu vir sowat 55 jaar, mnr. W.I.B. du Plessis – of Oom Doepie, soos hy algemeen bekend was – is onlangs oorlede.

Mnr. Du Plessis was van Oktober 1948 tot September 1981 stadsklerk van Montagu. In die hoedanigheid het hy heelwat belangrike gebeure beleef. Hieronder tel die aankoop van die warmwaterbron en hotel deur die Munisipaliteit in 1972 – vandag die modeme Avalon Springs Oord – en die verwoestende vloed van Januarie 1981, waarin 13 mense omgekom het. Mnr. Du Plessis het by geleentheid vertel hoe hy die dag ná die vloed te voet deur die verspoelde Cogmanskloof moes terugstap Montagu toe omdat hy die middag van 25 Januarie in Ashton was.

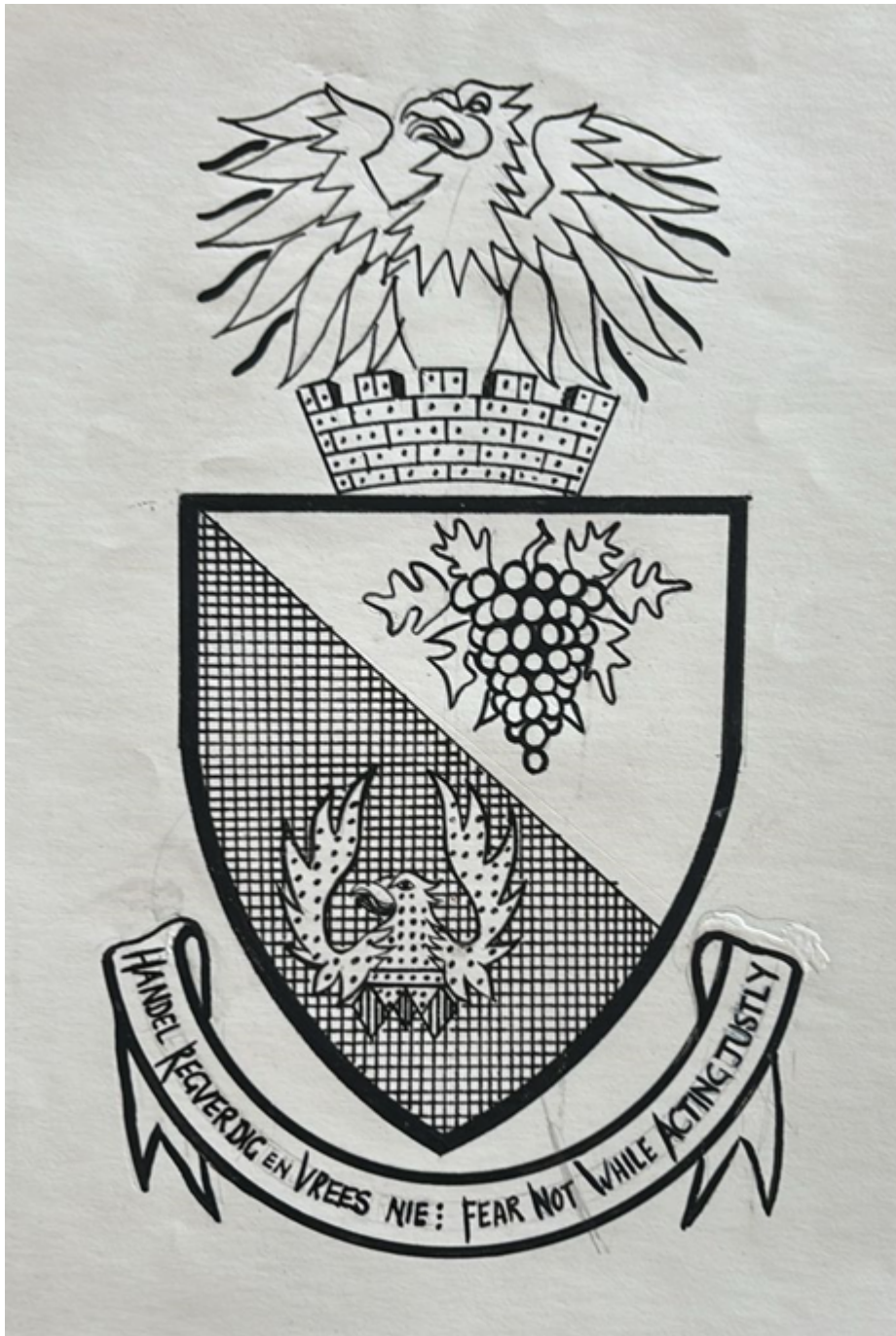
Mnr. Du Plessis was 'n uifers bekwame stadsklerk wat sy vinger op die pols van baie dinge in die dorp gehad het en hy het oor die jare gesien hoe Montagu 'n gedaanteverwisseling ondergaan het, van 'n klein dorpie wat grotendeels Afrikaans was tot 'n moderne plek met heelwat Engelssprekende inwoners.

Na sy aftrede in 1981 het hy skriba-kassier van die NG gemeente Montagu geword en het die pos met onderskeiding tot Desember 1993 bekleed. Hy het altesaam 40 jaar lank die gemeente gedien as kerkraadslid, as lid van vele kommissies en as skriba.

In 1954 was Oom Doepie lid van die feeskomitee wat aangewys is om die 100-jarige feesvieringe van die gemeente en die dorp te koördineer. Toe die gemeente sy 150-jarige bestaan in 2004 gevier het, was hy die enigste oorlewende lid van daardie komitee.

Mev. Rina du Plessis was baie jare lank by verskillende welsyns- en kerklike aksies in Montagu betrokke, onder andere by die VLV, die ACVV, die Rooi Kruis en die Kankervereniging.

Montagu Mail: February 2006



Confirmation from Bureau of Heraldry on appearance of COA

The coat of arms consists of a shield divided diagonally from left to right into silver and black. On the silver, (Argent), which is taken from the arms of Montagu of Kimbolton, Earl of Manchester, appears a bunch of grapes with leaves and stem, in their natural colours. These symbolise the fertility and fruit industry of the town and surrounding countryside. On the black (Sable) base of the shield is a griffin's head and neck between a pair of wings joined at the base of gold (Or). The griffin is a well-known heralldic monster. It is composed of the fore-quarters of an eagle, and the hind-quarters of a lion. The base is ornamented with three red (Gules) lozenges, derived from the Montagu arms.

The crest is a demi-eagle of natural colours with outspread wings emerging from a mural crown of gold (Or). The demi-eagle was once again taken from the Montagu arms, while the golden mural crown is the usual symbol of civic authority.

An explanation about the symbols used in the COA

An internet search provides a little more information



The mural crown is plain gold circlet of battlements on a narrow rim. It signifies one that first mounted the breach in the walls of a town or fortress. It would also apply to the defender of a fortress.



Grapes are symbolic of good luck, felicity and peace. Fruit of all kinds was considered to be evidence of God's kindness and a symbol of goodness of providence. They were sometimes associated with wine makers.



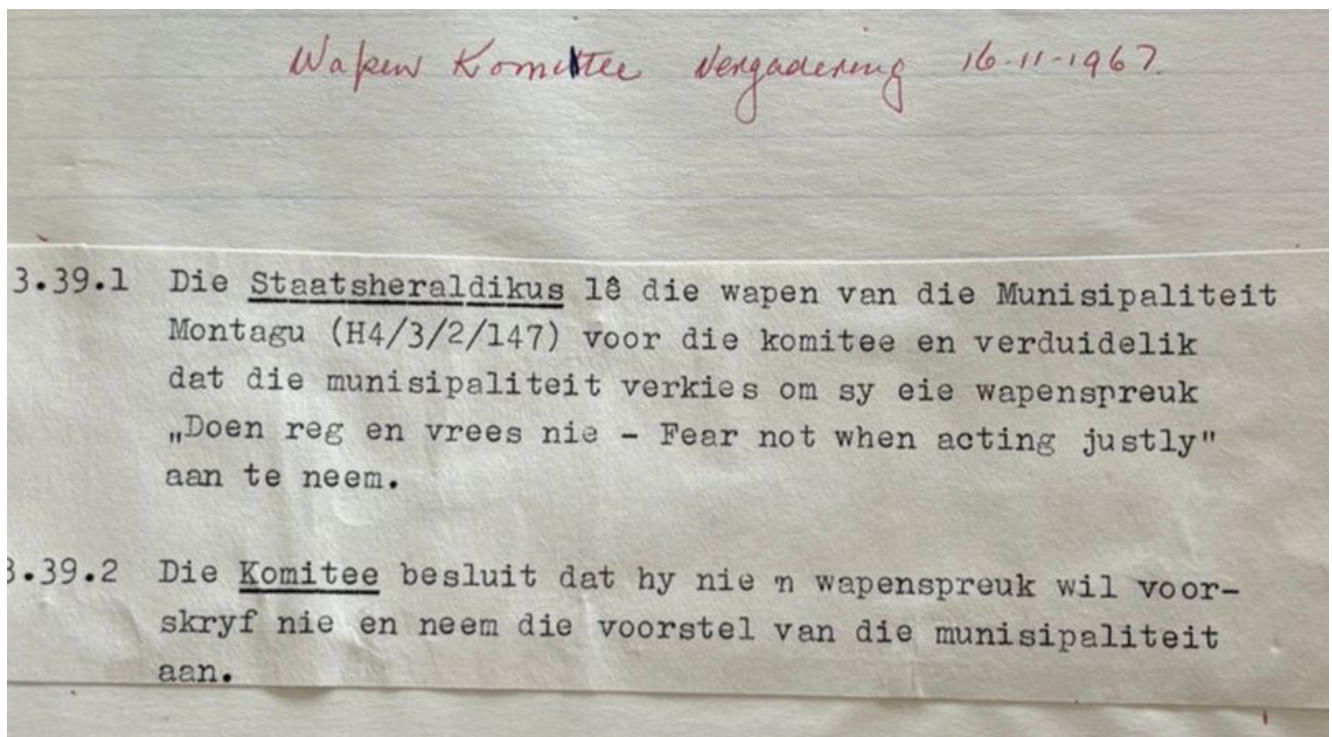
The griffin is a mythical creature, with the head, wings and talons of an eagle and the body and hind legs of a lion. It is thus composed of the most royal of the birds and the beasts. The griffin was thought to find and guard mines of gold and hidden treasures. It signifies valour, death-defying bravery, strength, vigilance, and perseverance. A male griffin has no wings but often has horns and a spiky tail. *Also seen spelled GRYPHON*



The lozenge is a symbol of honesty and constancy and it is also a token of noble birth. It signifies persuasion

From: Weebly – Coat of Arms Symbols

More extracts from Bureau of Heraldry documentation



Raadsvergadering 24.1.1968.

6.2.31.0 H.4/3/2/147: Munisipaliteit Montagu.

6.2.31.1 Die Raad keur die wapen goed maar stel voor dat die Munisipaliteit as wapenspreuk die Latynse woord vir „Regverdigheid” aanneem.

The Montagu Municipality of the day exercised their right and did not use the Latin version preferring the more practical English and Afrikaans wording.

The superb image below was produced by Montagu resident Lemmy David.

He comments as follows: *I took a quick (and superficial) crash course in heraldry and “re-created”: the coat of arms according to its description in the gazette.*

This means that the individual elements don’t look exactly the same as the ones in the gazette but are in fact much better representations. They do, however, conform exactly to the description.

There are many precedents of this and it is absolutely acceptable practice. This now gives us a viable coat of arms that we can use wherever we see fit.



Avril thank you for tabling this interesting subject and I hope the above information answers your question?

Contributions: Cllr. Johan Coetzee
