

DESIGN YOUR OWN COAT OF ARMS!

ATHLONE
CASTLE



Caisleán
Áth Luain



Heraldry is the science and art of displaying hereditary symbols used to distinguish individuals, institutions, armies, and corporations.

Those symbols (*arms*) were used during the early medieval times by knight on shields and flags (which are called armorial bearings).

They also decorated the cloth tunic worn over the knights armour.

This tunic, called *Surcoat*, is where the name *Coat of arms* originated from.

Having ones Arms displayed on surcoat was very important in battle. It helped knights to easily distinguish friend from foe, even if they were wearing full set of armour, including the helmet. It was also useful during tournaments, when even those who could not read, were able to identified their champion by the symbols he wore.

From the 17th century the use of heraldry changed. People who were not taking part in battles had the arms design to represent their family values. Coat of Arms were used by churches, schools, universities, guilds as well as corporations.

One of them was the Corporation of Athlone (town council of the time). The earlies mention of the Arms of Athlone comes from 1663. You can see it above. Can you see the motto under the shield? It's written in Latin and means 'A town stands by its laws'.

It's time to design your own coat of arms!



Think what qualities and values you want to represent you. To help you out we have included some of the most popular colours and symbols used in heraldry and their meaning:

Choose your colours:

Yellow/Gold– Generosity

White/Silver– Peace, Sincerity

Black– Constancy

Purple– Royalty

Green– Hope, Loyalty

Blue– Truthfulness

Choose your heraldic animal:

Bear - Protectiveness

Bee - Industriousness

Dog - Loyalty

Eagle - Leadership, Decisiveness

Dragon - Defender, Treasure

Hawk - Eagerness

Fox - Cleverness

Lion - Courage

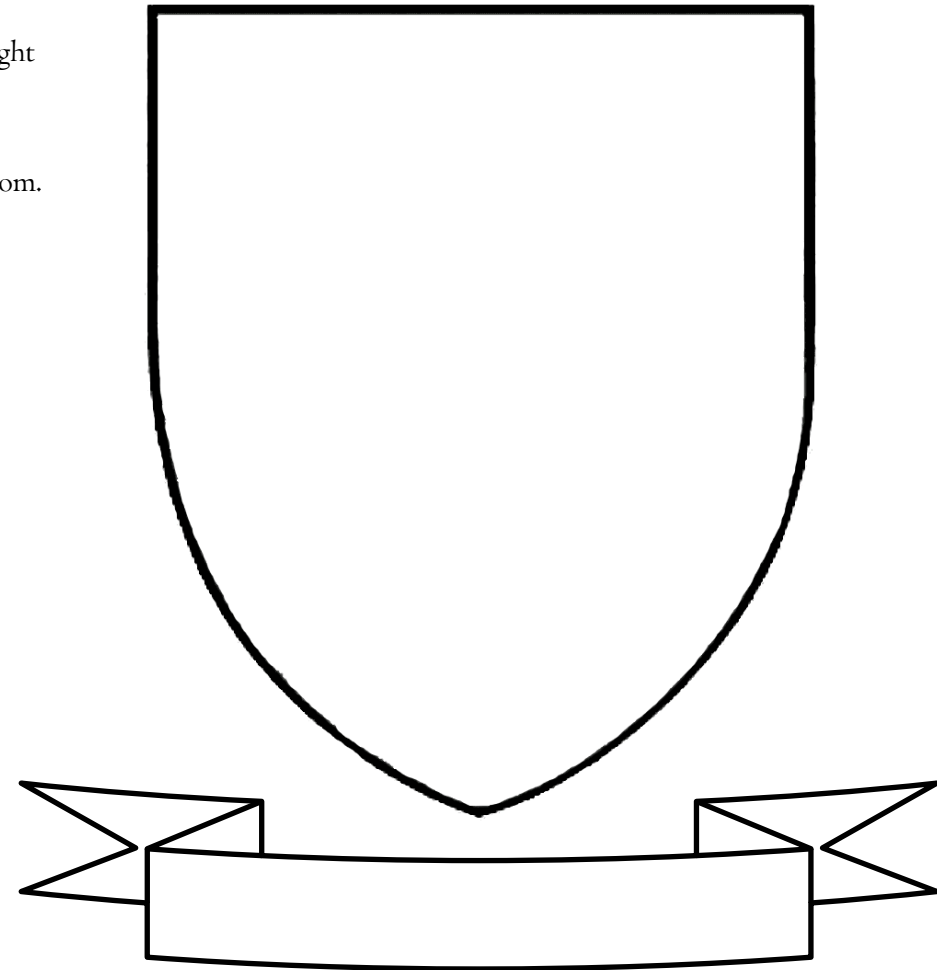
Raven - Constancy

Snake - Ambition

Tiger - Fierceness , Valor

Unicorn - Extreme Courage

Wolf - Constant vigilance



Do you want to know more?

For more information on exhibition and educational programmes, contact Athlone Castle:

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