

The Australasian College of Dermatologists

Introducing the College Coat of Arms

HISTORY OF THE COAT OF ARMS

Pictures on shields, flags and Coats of Arms were introduced into the United Kingdom from Europe in the 12th century. The precise origin of the heraldic system in Europe however is not known. It became important to identify the otherwise unrecognisable armour-clad knights both in tournaments and battle.

Consequently symbols were embroidered on the knight's surcoat (a garment worn over a knight's armour), i.e. a Coat of Arms. The responsibility for identifying the knights lay with the heralds and thus the origin of heraldry. From this early start many organisations developed heraldic designs to identify their group or profession.

ABOUT THE COLLEGE COAT OF ARMS

The various aspects of the College Coat of Arms are:

On the Dexter side: The Unicorn stands, a mythological horse with the original cutaneous horn, hence its association with dermatology.

On the Sinister side: the Red Kangaroo stands, identifying Australia.

The Crest: The stars of the Southern Cross are only seen in the Southern Hemisphere and are easily recognisable from both Australia and New Zealand.

The Sailing Ship: Signifies the early discovery of Australia and New Zealand by such ships and the association of our two island countries with the sea.

The Knight's Helmet and Mantle are heraldic designs common to many Coats of Arms.

The Shield is lilac purple, the College colour. In the centre of the Shield (The Charge) is the sun, an important contributor to the cause and also the treatment of many skin disorders.

Overlying the sun is the Rod of Aesculapius - the serpent entwined about the rod which is symbolically accepted as a sign of medicine. This is sometimes confused with the Rod of Hermes (The Caduceus). This was a magic wand with two shoots entwined at the top to form a knot later represented by two serpents.

The wings on the top of the rod signify the carrying of knowledge of the Australasian College of Dermatologists to the wider community and the rest of the world. Beside the shield and intertwined with one another is the Australian wattle and the fern of New Zealand, emphasising our close association.

The Motto "Refulgent in Tenebris", literally "They glitter/shine/(or are) resplendent in the dark". The translation moves beyond the literal and implies the throwing of light on to the darkness of areas in dermatology and, in this context, the role of College forever seeking more knowledge in our specialty field. The basic interpretation of the motto is "They succeed in difficulties".

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Coat of Arms Since 1988



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OF DERMATOLOGISTS