

Monterey Symbolic History

updated, July 18, 2017

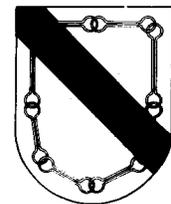
The Monterey flag reflects both the old and the new in that it symbolizes a city which is confidently moving towards its future, yet one which attaches special value to its historical and cultural heritage.

The Monterey flag was officially adopted by the Monterey City Council on January 18, 1977, with the special encouragement of Mayor Peter J. Coniglio. The flag was first displayed and flown on April 19, 1977 at the opening day ceremony for the Monterey Conference Center. It was designed by Mr. Paul Mills, Director of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. Mr. Mills worked with the Monterey Conference Center Art Commission and the Monterey Museum Board on the city flag program.



The bold, simple shapes and brilliant colors of the flag represent contemporary concepts of design and at the same time precisely obey ancient practices of heraldry.

The Monterey flag is derived from two armorial bearings connected with the City's history, one Spanish and one American, which have been combined according to heraldic principles. The first, represented in the first and fourth quarters of the flag, is the shield of the Count of Monterey for whom the city was named in 1602. The second, represented in the second and third quarters of the flag, is based on the City Seal designed by Lieutenant Alfred Sully in 1850.



Though the great crescent harbor of Monterey had been seen by Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo on the first Spanish expedition along the California coast in 1542, no further efforts to explore the coast were made until the expedition of Sebastian Vizcaino sixty years later. On December 16, 1606, Vizcaino named the harbor "Monterrey" in honor of the Viceroy of New Spain in Mexico City who had sponsored the expedition, Don Gaspar de Acevedo y Zuniga, Conde de Monterrey. The shield borne by the early heads of the Zuñiga family, from whom the Condes de Monterrey were descended, is a handsome and simple one. It consists of a silver shield with a black

diagonal band, over which is laid a chain of eight links.

Chains were assumed into the coats of arms of many Spanish noblemen who accompanied Sancho the Strong in his successful attack on the Moorish army in the year 1212. The Moorish camp at Talosa was defended by a strong barricade of chains through which Sancho and his followers had to cut their way.

The title of Vizconde de Monterrey was first granted in the 1470's and was raised to the rank of Conde in 1513. Today, the title of Conde de Monterrey is one of the titles carried by the head of his family, with the present Condesa being best known as the Duchess of Alba. The original Villa de Monterrey, to which the title is related, is a town in the Province of Orense, in Galicia, near the Portuguese border which is dominated by an austere hilltop fortress-castle. Monterrey, the large city in northern Mexico, was also named for Viceroy Don Gaspar.

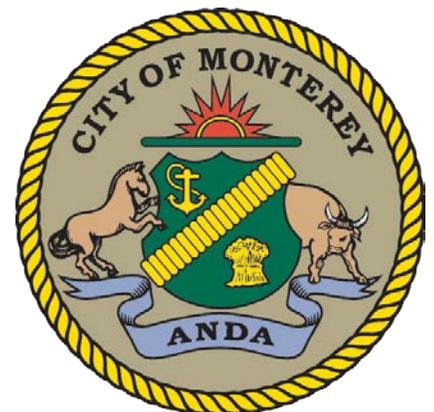
The second shield from which the Monterey flag is derived is the official seal or coat of arms of the city, which is associated with one of the most romantic figures in early California history, Lieutenant Alfred Sully.

Lt. Sully was the son of the celebrated American portrait painter, Thomas Sully, and an artist in his own right. He was one of a small group of young U.S. Army officers stationed in Monterey from 1849 to 1852. They had little of a military nature to do and created their own Yankee pastimes at the same time as they were welcomed into the lives of the established Monterey families.

The story of Alfred Sully's tragic love affair in Monterey, with the daughter of one of California's most powerful families, is well told in *No Tears for the General*, written by his grandson, Langdon Sully.

Alfred Sully had gone to West Point, where he would have been taught the fundamentals of heraldry. One of his happy projects was directing the 1850 Monterey Fourth of July ceremony, for which the new seal of Monterey was painted on a flag which was carried in the parade.

The City seal was adopted by the City Common Council on April 10, 1950. The 'arms and city seal of Monterey' are blazoned in the minutes of the Common Council. As stated in the City's annual report of 1950, "Our seal, adopted a century ago, expressed the hope that Monterey would continue to grow. It describes our city being born as separate from the ancient domain of the United States, and the shield is green, as the environs of the town are always green. The anchor, the sheaf, the horse and the bull all show how hopeful the founders

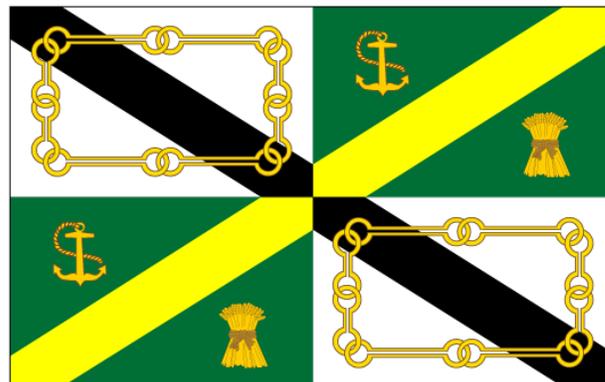


were of commerce playing an important part in its future. The rising sun expressed the hope that Monterey would be a rising town. The motto, 'Anda' is symbolic of the spirit of the City of Monterey and expressed the hope for continued forward growth."

Though it is impossible to state absolutely that Alfred Sully was the designer of the Monterey seal, the designer was most likely among the circle of U.S. officers which included Sully. The version of the seal used by the city, in the opinion of Mr. Paul Mills, is derived from Sully. The horse at the left is "rampant" in proper heraldic fashion. The bull, which is supposed to be in the same "rampant" posture, is not, and, in fact, is quite without the precedent of heraldry. It is, however, very typical of the stance of a number of bulls in Sully's drawings.

The Monterey flag has been designed in two versions. One is the ceremonial version, to be carried before the Mayor and the City Council on formal occasions and displayed in their Chambers. The other is the daily use version to be used on most other occasions and flown from out-door flagpoles. The Monterey daily use flag has bold, geometric shapes, and should be envisioned as flying atop a flag pole. The ceremonial flag, which will be viewed more closely indoors, has embroidered upon it the several charges and the gold chain of the Zuñigas and the sheaf of wheat and the anchor of the American seal.

Monterey was first named over 400 years ago. We are proud of our rich history and the way it is represented in our city flag. Long may it fly over us and our city with its proud past and its purposeful future.



PAUL CHADBOURNE MILLS, the designer of the Monterey flag, is Director of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art and the principal American art museum professional involved with "vexillology", the study of flag history and symbolism.

Mr. Mills is a member of the American Vexillological Association and Director of the "New Glory" Bicentennial flag project. He presented the design for the Monterey flag to the city as a gift to mark the American Bicentennial. The city has named him to the honorary post of the Herald of the City of Monterey.