

Hyde Park's new town seal depicts Half Moon, daffodils

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(Photo: Courtesy photo)

HYDE PARK – The Town Board has adopted a new town seal that officials say reflects the history and natural beauty of the area.

Since 1965, the seal has been a composite coat of arms of two of the Town of Hyde Park's founding families, the Stoutenburgs and the Roosevelts.

It was designed by then-town Historian Beatrice Frederiksen and the Rev. Gordon Kidd of St. James Episcopal Church, and drawn by Albert McClure, curator with the National Park Service, said town Supervisor Aileen Rohr.

"We will certainly retain the coat of arms as an important part of the town's administrative history," Rohr said.

"However, we are looking for a town seal that is more easily recognized by the public as representative of the multiple facets of Hyde Park," Rohr said.

The new seal was designed by town Historian Carol Kohan and Yvonne Laube, a professional graphic designer who volunteered for the project.

"The seal is an expression of the town's pride in the past, engagement in the present, and confidence in the future," Kohan said.

Creation of the seal did not cost the town any money since it was all done through volunteer work, Rohr said.

The seal features the "iconic view" of the Hudson River from the Vanderbilt National Historic Site, one long enjoyed by artists, residents and visitors to the estate, Rohr said.

A stone wall with daffodils in the foreground of the new seal is another distinctive feature of Hyde Park.

The Hyde Park Visual Environment Committee plants and maintains the daffodils along Route 9 in town, Kohan said.

"The daffodils are a nod to the present," she said.

The image of the sailing vessel, the Half Moon, represents Henry Hudson's 1609 voyage when the ship anchored off what is now known as Crum Elbow Point and contact was made with the Native Americans who lived along the shore — more than a century before white settlement would begin in the area, Rohr said.

The border of the seal includes 1821, the year the Town of Hyde Park was established, and the fact that Hyde Park is the hometown of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 32nd president of the United States.

Kohan said the new seal is a perfect representation of Hyde Park.

"The riverscape, the clear blue sky, the stone wall and cheery daffodils invoke a sense of optimism for the future and symbolize the perennial efforts of the town to integrate and celebrate nature and civilization," she said.

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