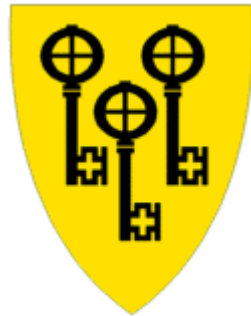


The crest of the Gol Municipal Council

Three upright black keys on a golden shield.



When the Gol (Municipal) Council chose the symbol with these old keys, there was a great discussion on the colour and the metal of the keys, the base colour of the shield and the number of the keys. This discussion ended in the decision, which was verified by the Royal decree of 13.09.1985, which stated the following description of the crest for the Gol Council: **Three upright black keys with the bit down, two above one.**

The municipal flag uses a yellow background, in stead of a golden one.

Please note that the description in the Royal decree uses the local Gol-dialect form of “lyklar”, in stead of the more commonly used form in Norwegian: “nøkler” (keys).

Designer: Stein Davidsen.

The documentation does not reveal any particular reasons for the choice of using keys as a symbol. The Council decided originally to show two keys, but this was altered to three, on/following advice from Riksantikvaren (Directorate for Cultural Heritage).

Keys are important elements of life, but keys have had a much more important symbolic meaning during the history. Ever since Jesus Christ handed the keys of Heaven over to Peter, keys have had a certain symbolic meaning connected to the rituals of the church. Keys depicted on seals and crests have traditions going back to the 13th century, being used in a symbolic way in a heraldic context. The Pope started using keys in his crest. A number of cities and local boroughs/councils all over the world use one or more keys in their crests, e. g. Bremen in Germany and Riga in Latvia. Her in Norway it is Drammen, Sør-Odal, and Gol which have keys at/in their crests. Kviteseid shows a lock plate.

Gol Council chose three identical keys. The reason for choosing a key is related to the local history of the church in Gol: it is the key from the old Gol Stave Church (the original local church, which today is situated at Norsk Folkemuseum at Bygdøy, Oslo) which has been used as a pattern. The original key, which was kept after the church was dismantled and moved at the end of the 19th century, is today in a private, local ownership here in Gol.

After an initiative from a local businessman/enterpriser Torbjørn Rustberggard, a replica of the stave church (in full scale) was erected in Gol in 1994, not at the old church grounds above Gol, but at Storøyne near the centre of Gol.

There are two models of Gol stave church: one is placed in the Gol kommunehus (the council offices) and one in Gol Church.

There is a comment linked to Gol Stave Church (before it was removed) in “Boka om Gol” written by Hallvard Svello:

“In 1824 Ola Viko, son of Kolbjørn, exchanged his ½ of the church for the smallholding Krusedøkkji, with Tor Nilson Eikle. He also received 500 spd (speciedaler) as a part payment. In 1826 was Kolbjørn Hagen reported to the settlement commission by Tor Eikle, because he had felled timber in the forest “Finnegardsskogen”, which belonged to Gol church. Kolbjørn still retained the ownership of the other half of the church.

By auction at Eikle in 1830 was Tors part of the church, sold to Torjus Asleson Finnesgarden. Torjus sold his part on to the verger S. Håvelsen in 1845. His part was transferred to his son-in-law, Ulrik Kjerulf in 1862, who in turn sold it Ola Olson Hagen in 1869 for 500 spd. Thus the church came into one single ownership again. Ola Olson Hagen, also called Hagamannen, owned the other part which he had inherited through his family. He kept the church ownership until 1880, when “Fortidsmindesmerkeforeningen” bought it. It was then dismantled and re-erected at Bygdøy.