

Findings of Europe's First Farm Machinery Audit To Be Published in Clare

A booklet detailing the results of Europe's foremost large-scale audit of farm machinery will be launched at Clare Museum in Ennis, County Clare on Monday, April 14th.

Ennis, Clare, IRL, 2008-04-04 14:13:06 (IndiaPRwire.com) Produced by Clare County Council and East Clare-based consultants Minogue Associates, 'Antique Farm Machinery of County Clare' tells the social story of the county's farm machinery from the early 1800s to the 1950s.

The Clare Heritage section secured funding from the Heritage Council and Clare County Council to undertake the project last year, as part of the implementation of the Clare Heritage Plan 2003-2007.

Speaking ahead of the booklet launch, Bernadette Kinsella, Director of Services, Economic Development and Planning, Clare County Council, stated, 'I am delighted to see that the local authority has played its part in establishing a framework for documenting unprotected early agricultural machinery, which played a significant role in the socio-economic development of this country over the last number of centuries.'

She added, 'The West of Ireland is traditionally an agricultural region and this tradition has bequeathed a significant amount of farm machinery dating from the late 19th and early to mid-twentieth centuries. Therefore, it is imperative that we develop a strategy for the conservation and posterity of such items as seed drills, harrows, ploughs and rollers, horse carts, and harvesting and haymaking machinery.'

Commenting on the audit, Cllr. Pat Hayes, Chairperson of the Clare Heritage Forum, said, 'There is a significant gap in awareness when it comes to our agricultural heritage despite its fundamental impact on the socio-economic development of this country over the last number of centuries.'

He continued, 'The Clare Heritage Forum is confident that this audit and its subsequent promotion will help address that gap in Clare and also provide an effective template that can be used on a national and international level. For example, local authority heritage offices in Galway and Donegal have already followed our lead by undertaking similar studies.'

Cllr. Hayes explained that although there had been many individual efforts across Europe to collect and preserve antiquated farm machinery, no large-scale audit had ever been undertaken.

He added, 'We are confident that this audit has will achieve its main objective, which is to uniquely inform as to the historical, geographical, economic and even scientific development of agricultural machinery in one county.'

'I would like to thank everyone who participated in the project, especially those who allowed old farm machinery on their land to be photographed and included in the audit. The response has been extremely positive, which reflects an awareness among the rural population of Clare of the importance of farming and farm machinery in the county's history', concluded Cllr. Hayes.

Following the launch of the audit, 10,000 summary booklets will be made available at schools, libraries, museums and heritage centres across County Clare.

Dr. Hugh Maguire of the Heritage Council will launch 'Antique Farm Machinery of County Clare' at Clare Museum, Ennis, County Clare, at 7.30pm on Monday, April 14th 2008. The launch will also include an illustrated presentation on 'The Development of Clare Farm Machinery, 1800-1950'.

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Founded in 2006, **Dunphy Public Relations** is a communications group led by Mark Dunphy from County Clare. Mr. Dunphy previously held the position of '*Head of News and Current Affairs*' in Clare FM Radio.

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