

Archaeological & Historical Society Launches Membership Drive To Coincide With Autumn/Winter Lecture Series

County Clare, IRELAND, 14th Sept 07

The Civil War executions of two Clare men, the discovery of rare photographs of post famine West Clare and the built heritage of Clare's coast will be among the subjects to be explored during a six-month series of lectures at Clare Museum.

The Clare Archaeological and Historical Society's Autumn/Winter Lecture Series 2007/2008 was launched today at Clare Museum, where the first lecture commences on October 8th 2007. The launch also marked the beginning of a new membership drive.

The Clare Archaeological and Historical Society was founded in 1989. Lectures are held monthly from October-March and day trips to historical sites in Clare and beyond are conducted from April-September.

Commenting on the launch of a new membership drive, Mary Kearns, Honorary Secretary of the Clare Archaeological & Historical Society, explained, *"The drive is aimed not only at encouraging new members to join the Society, but to encourage former members to rejoin us."*

"The purpose of the society is to bring together in close association those persons who have a common interest in the history and heritage of County Clare. New and former members are encouraged to support our growing list of activities and events, including the current lecture series, meetings, discussions and visits to sites of historical importance. Membership forms are available from Clare Museum, Arthur's Row, Ennis, Co. Clare", added Ms. Kearns.

According to John Rattigan, Clare Museum Curator, *"The aim of the upcoming lecture series is to promote the study of matters of archaeological and historical interest. While there are only six specific issues being covered by the lectures, the Society hopes to show those in attendance that County Clare has a rich and varied history."*

The series of lectures commences at Clare Museum on 8th October when Rene Franklin, Acting Clare County Archivist presents a talk on the recently launched *"Vandeleur Photographic Collection"*. The 300 photographs of different members of the famous Kilrush-based Vandeleur family date from 1857 to 1871, the post famine years when West Clare was struggling to recover from the devastation of crop failure, evictions and starvation.

On 12th November, Fr. Joe McMahon, OFM explores "*The Perfidious Machiavellian Friars*" before the final lecture of the year on 10th December when Ellen Murphy presents "*Still True to the Republic: the Executions of Con McMahon and Patrick Hennessy.*"

On 14th January 2008, Christine Grant, Archaeologist, National Monuments Section, Planning and Heritage Division will present "*Current Research on Prehistoric Settlement of the Burren.*"

On 11th February Sarah Halpin, Conservation Officer will Dublin City Council, will provide a talk on "*The Built Heritage of Clare's Coast*". The final lecture in the current series takes place on 10th March and will feature a presentation by Fr. Michael McGrath, OFM, Irish Department, NUI Galway entitled "*An Irish view of Counter-Reformation Rome: Tadhg O Cianain's Turas na nIarlai*".

All lectures will take place in the Ennis-based Clare Museum at 8.30 p.m.

Further information is available from

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