

FINAL REPORT  
“Old Iron and Old Irons”  
Agricultural Heritage & Resources  
Kewaunee, Wisconsin

“Old Iron and Old Irons” event was held at AHR's Heritage Farm in Kewaunee, Wisconsin on May 6, 2006 and focused on the Cultural Heritage of Northeastern Wisconsin, relating to the rich resources our multicultural, mostly Eastern European ancestors left us. “Old Iron and Old Irons” focused on some extensive collections of unique and rare farm equipment, power equipment, motor vehicles and hand tools that helped forge our existing agricultural and agricultural based business economy.

We displayed “John Deere in Wisconsin” with rare tractors, seeders, snowmobiles, lawnmowers and even bicycles in the threshing barn area of Heritage Farm. Outside in the farmyard viewers appreciated many other brands of tractors and machinery, along with steam engines and collector cars and trucks. Much of the old iron displayed brought out the use of heavy, thick iron and cast iron used many generations ago and still of usable value. Heritage stories abounded by collectors, farmers and friends. Especially interesting was the Iron Lawn Art made from pieces of cast and heavy iron machine pieces. A John Deere Toy Display was also included in the stable area of the barn.

The “Old Irons” portion of the show focused on the food aspect – how it was prepared in the home years ago, and how appliances and home improvements developed throughout the years. On display in the “Farm House Kitchen” (an exhibit in the stable area of the barn) were cast iron food ware, a cook stove, flat irons (from the local historical museum), enamelware, a galvanized bathtub and laundry tub, aluminum ware (representing the local businesses of Mirro, Vollrath, and Monarch Ware), and stainless steel.

Members from the Kewaunee Homemakers Extension, dressed in period costume, told many heritage cook stove stories throughout the day and instructed the audience in the cleaning and tempering of cast iron cookware. Memoirs of life in a farm home showed a simpler style through a valued work ethic.

In the Baylake Bank Heritage Center on Heritage Farm a large pictorial exhibit of the Hamacheck Company, a known leader in the pea and lima bean food equipment industry, was included in the event. AHR members educated the public about what past crops took out of our locality's soil, what made businesses grow, and how we can still preserve our farm's soil to continue manageable quality rural living.

The importance of the “Old Iron and Old Irons” project for future activities in our area is that it will hopefully become an annual event used as a future partnership with area organizations to continue to preserve and promote the uniqueness of Northeastern Wisconsin's Agricultural and Ethnic Culture. Agricultural Heritage and Resources, Inc., is a not-for-profit 509(c)3 educational organization that is committed to its mission: “To Preserve Agriculture's Diverse Heritage And Promote Its Future.”