

Sub-Committee on Vernacular Architecture (CIAV) 11 May 2010

Annual Report for 2009 by Deirdre Conroy, Convener

Introduction

The members of the sub-committee remain as before, Nicki Matthews, Dublin City Council, Charles Duggan, Heritage Officer Dublin City Council, Willie Cumming, NIAH, Deirdre McDermott.

I have continued to maintain our links with Marc de Caraffe and the other members of the International CIAV. In May 2009 I supported Marc's candidacy for vice president of the international Advisory Committee.

The theme for 2009 was The Vernacular and the multicultural dialogue, CIAV annual meeting was held in Sibiu, Romania, held at the same time as the ICOMOS annual meeting, attended by Grellan. The CIAV newsletter reporting on this conference was issued on 26 June 2009 and is forwarded to Elene for distribution among all of the Irish ICOMOS members.

Scope

The scope of our sub-committee remains as before, to focus on conservation research of all types of vernacular buildings, whether residential, farm buildings, animal housing, thatched dwellings, rural or urban and their place in the landscape and streetscape, to publish our research through the ICOMOS Ireland website and link our research directly with CIAV International.

Completed Research

Willie Cumming, NIAH, continued the programme of county inventories which include vernacular structures. Counties fully published in 2009 include Clare, East Cork & North Cork. (On website and book) - The Clare survey was originally published in a paper form, maps & database and in 2009 was extended and added to the Buildings of Ireland website. Longford was also published on website in 2009 and the book is due out this year. www.buildingsofireland.com

2009 was a challenging year for all of us, especially in conservation self-employment, but it did provide an opportunity to use our building skills elsewhere. Indirectly, as part of a charity building programme, I found that I was part of a Vernacular Multi-Cultural Dialogue and Vernacular Crossing Borders initiative when I travelled to a small area in the north of Haiti with a group of experienced and not so experienced builders. It became a very tangible way of transferring simple construction skills, using blocks made on site by locals and ourselves, to erect structurally sound dwellings for otherwise homeless families. I photographed some of their own organically built dwellings, some no more than a canopy, as a means of recording their rural vernacular and have shared this and my report on the visit with the international CIAV group, who then requested that it be put on their website.

The CIAV theme for 2010 is Vernacular Crossing Borders and it remains to be seen how Irish traditional building skills will be absorbed into the Haitian construction work force, as they learn to build and use basic tools alongside Irish workers in coming years.

At Dublin City Council, Charles Duggan, raised funding in 2009 in order to commission a study of Vernacular Heritage of Dublin: A Thematic Survey and Research Project. The project will hopefully begin in the coming weeks and will be completed by October 2010. It is co-funded by the Heritage Council. So the findings will be included in the 2011 CIAV AGM Report.

Deirdre Conroy, 10 May 2010