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| <b>Report on</b>         | Heritage Outputs 2019 |
| <b>Date of Meeting</b>   | October               |
| <b>Reporting Officer</b> | Michael Browne        |
| <b>Contact Officer</b>   | Genevieve Bell        |

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| <b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>         | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon | No  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

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| <b>1.0</b> | <b>Purpose of Report</b>  |
| 1.1        | To inform council on the Heritage Outputs 2019  |
| <b>2.0</b> | <b>Background</b>   |
| 2.1        | 4 Hidden heritage tours are organised annually across the District to encourage locals and visitors to explore heritage sites on their doorstep which often go unnoticed. 3 tours departed from The Burnavon and 1 from Dungannon Park. The cost to attend the tours was £10 per person which included the coach, tour guide, entry into the attraction (if applicable) and refreshments.   |
| 2.2        | A group of US Tour Operators visited Northern Ireland and the Republic from 23-26 <sup>th</sup> September. The objective of this trip was to expose Tour Operators, who specialize in the North American markets (USA & Canada) to locations and the history of the Scots-Irish and to enable them to develop tours to sell. As part of the itinerary the group visited US Grant Ancestral Homestead on Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> September.   |
| <b>3.0</b> | <b>Main Report</b>  |
| 3.1        | This year the 2019 Hidden Heritage tours included:  |
| 3.2        | <b>The 3 Sisters Tour: Killymoon Castle, Lissan House and Springhill</b> , Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> May. 40 people took part in this tour. Visitors learned of 'the three sisters' and their connection to the three big houses of Killymoon Castle, Lissan House and Springhill. The group enjoyed exploring the historic homes and special dramatisations really brought them back to life.  |
| 3.3        | <b>Summer Solstice, Beaghmore Stone Circles</b> , Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> June. Beaghmore Stone Circles was the setting for this year's Summer Solstice event in Mid Ulster, over 100 people attended the event. The group was entertained by Druids from Craic Theatre who worshiped the sun and watched it set on the longest evening of the year. Terry Mosely from the Irish Astronomy Association spoke to group describing its links with the stars and planets. Maybelline Gormley |

from the Department for Communities discussed the archaeology of the site. Refreshments were served on site whilst students from Armagh Observatory set up telescopes for the group to look at the Sun setting in the Darkest Sky in Northern Ireland.

**3.4 The Georgian Village of Caledon and US Grant Homestead, Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July.** 37 people took part in this tour.

The group visited the Georgian village of Caledon which took in the Courthouse and the Beam Engine on Mill Street, an impressive example of Ireland's industrial archaeology and the last housed Beam Engine in Ireland.

The group then went on to visit the ancestral homestead of Ulysses S Grant, the commanding general of the victorious Union Armies in the American Civil War and then 18<sup>th</sup> President of the United States (1869-77). A tour guide and living history brought the site to life, which as thoroughly enjoyed by those in attendance.

**3.5 The Eel Fishery in Toome and Seamus Heaney HomePlace, Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September,** 34 people took part in this tour.

The group visited the Eel Fishery in Toome where they experienced the intake and grading of live eel and even had an opportunity to hold one! They learned of the different methods of eel fishing on the Lough and got to sample Lough Neagh eel on wheaten bread.

The group then moved to Seamus Heaney HomePlace where they immersed themselves in the extraordinary world of the famous poet. The visit included access to the interactive exhibition over two floors, filled with personal stories, images and the voice of the poet himself.

Overall feedback on the 4 tours for 2019 was excellent from all participants. These hidden heritage trips continue to prove very successful year on year. Officers will now begin working on itineraries for 2020.

**3.6 US Tour Operators Visit,** A group of US Tour Operators who specialize in the North American markets (USA & Canada) visited US Grant Homestead on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September. The operators included:

- Great Value Connections
- Crystal Travel & Tours
- Cara Group Travel
- Authentic Vacations
- Recess 4 Grownups Travel
- Brack Travel
- Connection Tours
- Great Canadian Travel

The operators were welcomed on site by MUDC Chairperson. Ted Sharkey guided the group around the Homestead and living history provided by Craic Theatre brought the site to life.

The fam trip proved to be very successful amongst the operators and as of 25/9/19 2 potential operators are interested in booking US Grant Ancestral Homestead on their tour series. This would be a huge boost for the site and MUDC.

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| <b>4.0</b> | <b>Other Considerations</b>  |
| <b>4.1</b> | <b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>                                    |
|            | Financial:<br>N/A  |
|            | Human:<br>N/A  |
|            | Risk Management:<br>N/A  |
| <b>4.2</b> | <b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>  |
|            | Equality & Good Relations Implications:  |
|            | Rural Needs Implications:  |
| <b>5.0</b> | <b>Recommendation(s)</b>   |
| 5.1        | For information.   |
| <b>6.0</b> | <b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>   |
|            | Photos of the Hidden Heritage tours<br>Photos of US Fam trip at US Grant Ancestral Homestead |