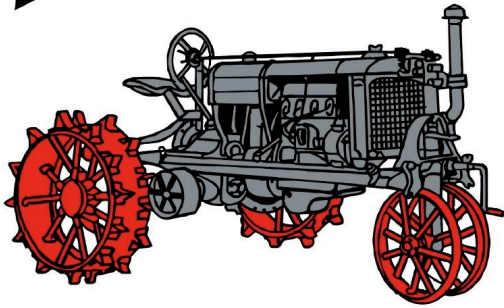


Zagray Farm



Museum

The Quinebaug Valley Engineers Association Mission Statement

The Quinebaug Valley Engineers Association Inc. (QVEA) is a non-profit, 501C3, Connecticut Corporation established in 1993 as an organization for individuals interested in the restoration and collection of antique engines, tractors and a variety of 19th and 20th century machinery.

To further promote these ideals, QVEA in 2001 initiated the development of a non-profit educational farm museum in eastern Connecticut. The museum is located at 544 Amston Road (Route 85) in the town of Colchester on a farm formerly owned by the Zagray family.

The Zagray 'boys' Stanley, Harry, and Willie, were a largely self sufficient and independent family that lived on the property most of their lives. Their diverse interests included foundry casting, machining, farming, and collecting a diverse range of antique equipment. Their ingenuity resulted in several patent applications, and a couple granted, for their inventions. In 2000, Harry, in ill health, granted QVEA a bill of sale for the extensive equipment and tools collected on the farm, as well as a 99 year lease on the property. QVEA members then entered into an ongoing program of restoration and preservation of the Zagray farm.

The farm, which had been known locally as the Zagray Farm, is now known as the Zagray Farm Museum. The ultimate goal is to provide a place where the public can visit and explore the ways people in the late 19th and early 20th centuries conducted life in New England, and the evolution of machinery during a period when hand labor was gradually replaced with mechanical devices.

Likewise the members of QVEA are afforded the opportunity to restore, preserve and operate a vast assortment of antique farm, farm/industrial, and construction related machinery. Many of these items would otherwise never be accessible or attainable on an individual level, thereby offering the members of QVEA a unique opportunity to actively participate in their hobby and share it with others.

The Zagray Farm Museum encompasses approximately 170 acres of picturesque land, which is a combination of woodlands, fields and a large marsh. There is an abundance of wild life on the property and natural resources that include timber, sand and gravel. There are several original buildings which include the Zagray family homestead, dairy barn, machine shop, foundry, antique sawmill and various sheds. The restoration of these original buildings is now complete, as well as a new woodworking building to house antique planers, joiners, and shingle mills to complement the sawmill. We are currently under construction of a stationary engine building to house several vintage engines, including a 1929 Atlas Imperial diesel that was found and removed from a button factory in Willington, CT. These structures are built with rough-cut lumber from our mill and using on site sand and gravel when possible, as the Zagray's did. Current building codes require some modification of the 'old ways' of building, but the resulting buildings enhance the property and the atmosphere of a vintage New England farm. Several other buildings and a pavilion are planned for the near future.

As part of the major theme of development, the museum property is being used to promote the growth of a family orientated, non-profit educational attraction. All displays are visitor accessible with safety as the top priority. The ultimate goal of the QVEA membership is to develop a true working museum and not just a place of stored displays collecting dust. Being a working museum, the emphasis is toward demonstrating the operation of all types of equipment in authentic settings.

We currently hold three weekend long shows each year for the public, as well as making the property available to other groups by appointment. Although we are not yet open every weekend, during good weather there are generally members on the property and some project or demonstration going on. You are welcome to visit and stay as long as you like. We intend the museum to provide an oasis for families looking for an educational outdoor activity at a minimal cost. Our mission is "preserving the past for the future". Donations are appreciated, of course. Hope to see you down at the farm!