

This weekend international conference at Prehistorisch Openluchtmuseum Eindhoven

Experimental archaeology wants European association

EINDHOVEN - Exarc is the name of a European association which will commit itself to archaeology by experiment. Seven countries will participate in it, among others the Netherlands, Germany and Estonia. Today the participants negotiate in Eindhoven about the question, whether this initiative is actually feasible or not. Big question is whether the association will be able to be financed by the European Union.

The subject of experimental archaeology is to try to imitate ways of working of long time ago. Archaeologists use it for example to find out how tools were used in the old days.

The aim of the to be started association is to exchange information and knowledge from different countries in the field of experimental archaeology.

More cooperation is a goal as well. "It would be nice if it all could get linked to each other", says Anneke Boonstra, founder of the Prehistorisch Openluchtmuseum in Eindhoven and fellow-initiator of the project. "There is more and more demand for it. For example, Hungary would like to start an open air museum, but it would be a pity if they would reinvent the wheel again when the knowledge is already present."

Unique

The initiative started in the formath to the ninth international conference on experimental archaeology, which takes place in the coming weekend in the Eindhoven open air museum. For the first time, the Netherlands are the hosting country. "the Netherlands play an important role in experimental archaeology in Europe. And we are the only ones in the Netherlands who do this much in this field", claims Boonstra.

Remarkable of this conference is that it is unique in its kind and that form about 20 countries 110 visitors will show up. "It will be quite tight in the inn, when everybody would stand there", laughs Boonstra. With experiments and eighteen lectures, the guests will be entertained for two days. The lectures, which will later be published in a book, are only open to those invited.

The public can visit three experiments this weekend. A woman will make a comb and dice from bone, students from Groningen will try together with two Swiss girls to reconstruct a bronze piece of jewelry and an iron experiment will take place as well.

Irene Wouters, in: Eindhovens Dagblad 19-10-01, p 17.