

BOTTNARYD CHURCH

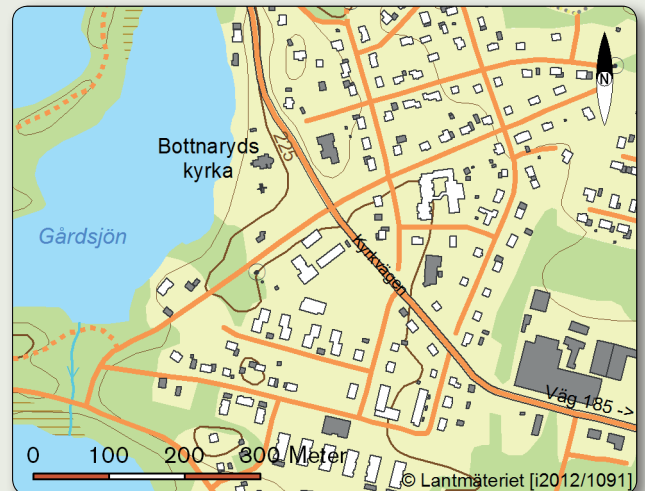
Bottnaryd Church is beautifully located by Lake Gårdsjön, with the graveyard sloping down towards the water. The church was built in 1666, directly after the demolition of a medieval church and approximately in the same place. The new church was built in timber with a Greek-cross plan. The stone sacristy from the Middle Ages was kept. The octagonal Ribbing Chapel on the south side of the chancel was added in the 1670s.

The church is extensively decorated with wall and ceiling paintings. The lavish paintings were made by the church painter Anders Falck from Ulricehamn during the period 1693 to 1695. The south wall contains pictures from the Old Testament, while the north wall depicts scenes from the New Testament. The painting in the ceiling portrays the Last Judgement. The old medieval sacristy was located on the north side of the church. The sacristy was demolished at the time of a large renovation during the period 1886 to 1890 and was replaced with a new one in the same location.

In 2012, Jönköping County Museum carried out an archaeological investigation of the area directly west of the church, where an extension was planned. Within an area of 20 sqm, parts of 25 graves were uncovered. All the burials had taken place before the medieval church was demolished. The estimated dates range from the 15th century until 1666, the year of the demolition and the start of the new church building. Six of the graves contained a coin, a so called Charon's obol, placed in the mouth or by the head of the dead person. The coin was meant to serve either as payment to St Peter, or perhaps to prevent the dead person from returning. All the buried people were adults with an equal distribution between the sexes. Oral hygiene seems to have been poor, and several individuals showed signs of severe repetitive strain injuries and ageing. In one woman, the spine, ribs and hips had fused together, which must have been extremely painful. For the survivors, it was important that the deceased had a good afterlife, as shown by the coins to facilitate entry into heaven.



Archaeologists investigate graves by the church. Photo: Jönköping County Museum.



HIDDEN GEM 17



HOW TO GET HERE

Bottnaryd is approx. 20 km west of Jönköping. Turn north from Road 40, signposted Bottnaryd. Then follow local signs.

Coordinates:

N 6404176 / E 429982
(SWEREF 99 TM) // N 57°
46' 26.99", E 13° 49' 22.13"
(WGS84)



Bottnaryd Church, beautifully located by Lake Gårdsjön. Photo: Jönköping County Museum.

JÖNKÖPINGS LÄNS
MUSEUM

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HIDDEN GEMS

There are so many things to discover in the countryside! Here, Jönköping County Museum presents some of the cultural environment and heritage attractions in the county.

They include well-known cultural monuments such as Habo Church and the Smålandsstenar Stone Circles, but also lesser known gems such as log-driving remains in the river Valån and Stengårdshult Church. Around the county you can find evidence of how people lived and worked in the past, everything from castles and manors to abandoned embankments and clearance cairns in forest areas.

The idea with Hidden Gems is to tempt you to make excursions in the cultural landscape – here you find our history, revealed in different ways in the physical environment. This heritage is worth experiencing and protecting. Bit by bit, we will be adding more sights under the heading Hidden Gems, both for people living in the county and visitors from further away. The more people who discover these gems, the better chance that they will be preserved for the future.

FACTS

In Jönköping County there are more than 4 000 registered ancient remains, 87 cultural environments of national interest, close to 130 listed buildings, around 150 churches, some 100 rural community centres with old settlements, a large number of industrial heritage sites, and two cultural reserves. There are also a large number of cultural environments with buildings worthy of conservation. More information about the sites can be found on the websites of the County Administrative Board, the municipalities and the local heritage societies.

GOOD TO KNOW

Access to the Hidden Gems varies. Some sites are well signposted, with easy access and proper parking facilities, etc. Others are more challenging to reach. Visitors may have to walk some distance, sometimes through scrubby forest, only to be met by a broken sign (if there ever was one) when they reach the site. All the sites, however, have an exciting and interesting history.

Please note that many of the cultural heritage buildings are privately owned and can only be viewed from the outside. Also, please respect private land. Many churches are open in the summer. During other times of the year, the churchwarden may be able to open the church for you.

