

HAGSHULT CHURCH

Hagshult Church is one of the medieval churches in Jönköping County that has been preserved until our time. The nave and parts of the chancel are the oldest, built sometime in the 13th century. A sandstone font, also from the early Middle Ages, is decorated with the remains of various mythical animals under arcade arches. The preserved sculpture of the Virgin Mary, opposite the pulpit, is from the 13th century.

In the 17th century, the interior of the church was richly decorated by way of two friezes. The top one shows the suffering of Christ, and the bottom one depicts the birth of Jesus. The paintings are rich in detail, and the people are portrayed wearing clothes typical of the 17th century, e.g. breeches. In the 18th century, the paintings were covered with whitewash, but were uncovered and preserved during an interior renovation of the church in 1940.

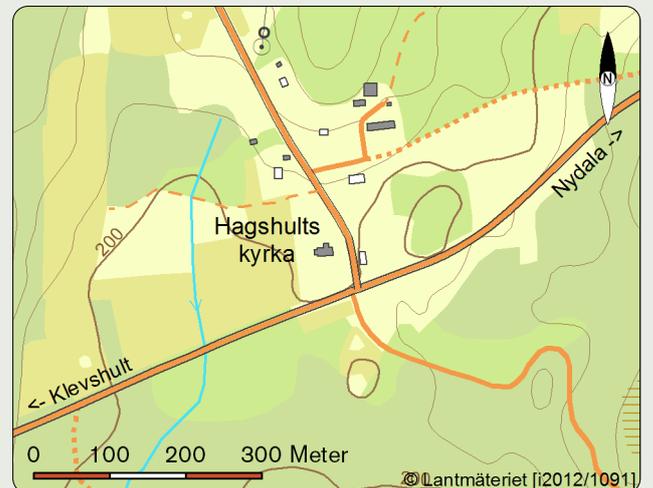
Paintings were not only done inside the church, but also on the façade. External decorative painting was carried out, probably in the early 18th century, and by the end of the century the church was painted in a soft pink colour. Fragments of the paint layers have been found during subsequent renovations. In the mid-18th century, the chancel was extended, and in 1780, a sacristy was built on the north side.

The bell tower was destroyed by a fire in the fall of 2020. According to the church's accounts, it had been built in 1684. For the work, master builder Johan i Hult received 24 dalers of silver coins. The bell tower was open with a clapboard roof or hood. A hundred years later, in 1785, the entire bell tower was covered with boards.

The pulpit was built by the master builder Lars Wennerholm from Svenarum parish and installed in 1807. In the 1880s, the entrance to the church was moved from the southwestern corner to the western gable, and a porch was added. Around 1900, the traditional shingle roof was replaced with differently coloured cement tiles. These were laid in a pattern forming three H's. This has been interpreted as "the Lord's House in Hagshult". In 1994, the cement tiles were removed, and the church was once again given a traditional slate roof.



17th century paintings on the northern wall of the nave, depicting scenes from Jesus' life and death. Photo: Jönköping County Museum.



HIDDEN GEM 72



HOW TO GET HERE

From the E4 motorway south of Skillingaryd: Turn east at exit 86 (Klevshult) and drive in this direction for around 6 km. The church is situated just north of the road in Hagshult.

Coordinates:

N 6355499 / E 451274
(SWEREF 99 TM) // N 57°
20' 23.20", E 14° 11' 25.18"
(WGS84)



Hagshult Church and bell tower seen from the south-east. On September 30, 2020, the bell tower was destroyed by fire. According to the church's accounts, it had been erected in 1684 Photo: Jönköping County Museum.



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.

