

# RYFORS WORKS

Ryfors, west of Mullsjö, was originally an ironworks, but the environment you see today is mainly characterised by the estate and park created by the Sager family. The Sager era began in 1827, when the ironmaster Gudmund Magnus Sager bought the works.

Initially, production was dominated by wrought iron, but this gradually came to play a lesser role. Sager was one of the early modern industrial capitalists with large shareholdings in the upcoming textile industry and in the new match factory, Jönköpings tändsticksfabriks AB. When the Southern Main Line was built past Mullsjö in 1864, transport facilities improved. This was especially advantageous for the rapidly growing timber production, which soon became the mainstay of the economy at the works.

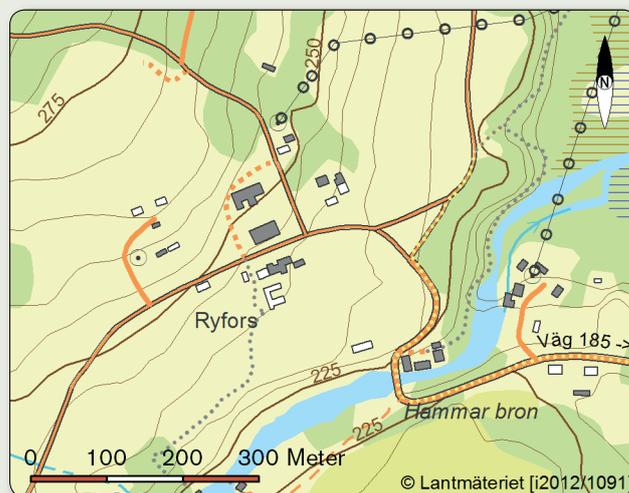
The environment at Ryfors was developed by the sons Edward and Robert into an exclusive secondary residence. The old manor house was modernised, and a guest wing, the English Villa, was built.

A magnificent park was created adjacent to the buildings. It was designed by the English landscape architect Edward Milner, who was responsible for several well-known gardens in Europe. Milner had also worked on the creation of the gardens at Crystal Palace in London in 1852. Ryfors Park is characterised by its large scale and type. It is a nature park, based on an English landscape garden, but here it is the natural landscape that is the main feature. It should not be seen as a man-made park, but as a particularly beautiful landscape, shaped by time and grazing animals. The park comprises 375 hectares, which is almost as much as all the arable land in the parish.

A six-hole golf course was inaugurated in 1888, the first one in Sweden. A tennis court had been built around a decade earlier, and this was also one of the earliest of its kind. A nine-pin bowling alley was constructed, probably in the 1880s. In the early 20th century, Ryfors was described as one of Sweden's "largest and most artistic private parks".



Nine-pin bowling alley close to the English Villa. Photo: Jönköping County Museum.



## HIDDEN GEM 24



### HOW TO GET HERE

Ryfors is located west of Mullsjö. In the circular intersection between Road 26/47 and Road 185, turn off towards Bottnaryd, after 1 km drive north and follow the signs.

Coordinates:  
N 6418710 / E 430445  
(SWEREF 99 TM) // N 57°  
54' 17.134", E 13° 49'  
34.893"  
(WGS84)



The English Villa at Ryfors. Photo: Jönköping County 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

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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

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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.

