

FORSHEDA STONE

It is well worth stopping here to stretch your legs and feel the wing-beats of history when contemplating the inscription on the famous Forsheda Stone:

Rolf and Eskil erected this stone in memory of Livsten, their father, who died in Skåne at Gårdstånga, and brought (him) to Finnveden.

The rune stone stands 50 metres from the meandering river Storån and close to modern roads. The stone was erected in the 11th century. One interpretation of the text is that there was a battle at Gårdstånga in King Canute the Great's war against Anund Jacob I and Olaf II Haraldsson. It is known that the war was fought in Skåne around 1025, but not where in Skåne Gårdstånga was located.

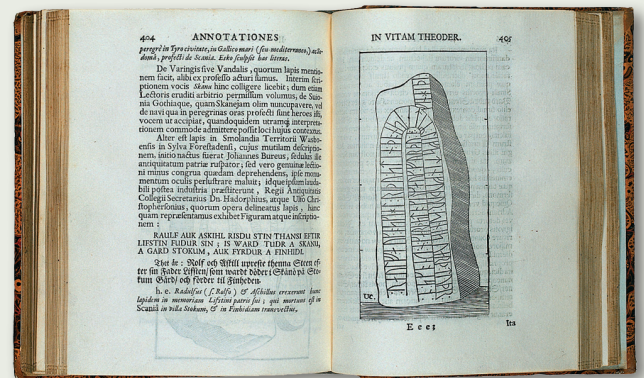
Finnveden was one of the small independent "lands" from which the province of Småland emerged. In the 6th century, the Roman historian Jordanes mentioned finnaithæ as a tribe in Scandinavia. The place name Finnveden has been interpreted as meaning "roving hunter-gatherers" and "road", mainly referring to the ancient road Lagastigen, as a link with the hinterland.

Finnveden is rich in ancient monuments, including the Stone Age settlements along the zone that was once formed by the shores of a lake called Fornbolmen 150 metres above sea level, Bronze Age culture with the profiles of tumuli clearly visible in the agricultural landscape, and an extensive Iron Age settlement. Many of today's villages have ancient names, and the settlement patterns often show medieval features.

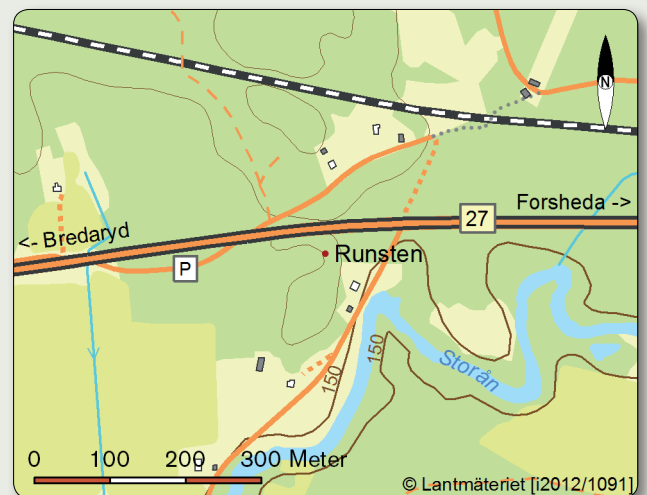
The landscape is characterised by large villages in the valleys, in rich cultivated farmland that was extended by e.g. extensive drainage schemes in the 19th century.



The rune stone at Forsheda. The inscription says: "Rolf and Eskil erected this stone in memory of Livsten, their father, who died in Skåne at Gårdstånga, and brought (him) to Finnveden". Photo: Jönköping County Museum.



The rune stone at Forsheda was noted already by the national antiquarian Johannes Bureus in the first half of the 17th century. Ulf Christophersson's drawing is from *Peringskiöld's* comments to *Choclaeus Vita Theoderici*, printed in 1699.



HIDDEN GEM 44

HOW TO GET HERE

The rune stone is located just south of Road 27, between Bredaryd and Forsheda. Approx. 1 km west of Forsheda is a large parking area on the southern side of the road. Follow the directional road sign for the rune stone, at the eastern end of the parking area.

Coordinates:

N 6336519 / E 427743
(SWEREF 99 TM) // N 57°
9' 58.29", E 13° 48' 18.63"
(WGS84)

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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.

