

LANNASKEDE OLD CHURCH

Along the old road between Sävsjö and Vetlanda, with its red Renaissance decor on the façade, tall gable roof and the absence of a western tower, you find Lannaskede Old Church from the 12th century. It is one of the oldest churches in the independent “land” of Njudung. Influences from contemporary castles and cathedrals are noticeable both in architecture and decorative painting. The canopied portal is one example of this.

Just inside the church entrance, visitors are met by a grave monument from the late 11th century. The monument was found in pieces, bricked up in the wall and under the chancel floor during a renovation in the 20th century. This, together with a rune stone, burial cairns from the Bronze Age, an Iron Age grave field, and a nearby well, demonstrate the importance of this place over a long period of time, and the entire environment is an area of national interest. The grave monument is in the shape of a coffin with carved slabs. The carvings consist of runes and decorations depicting entwined animals, as well as large equilateral crosses on the end stones.

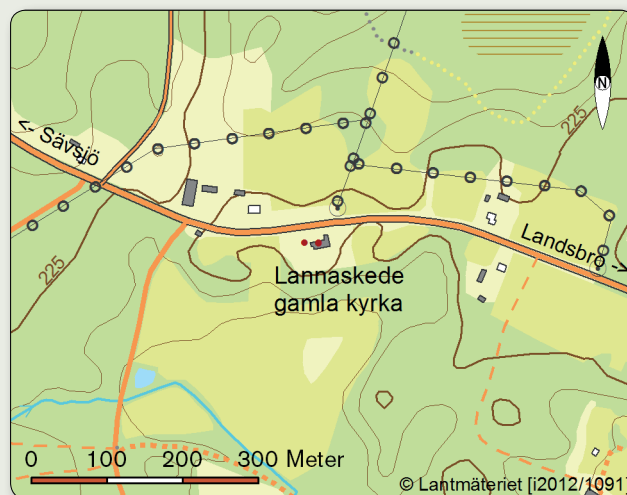
The organ on the western balcony is one the oldest in Sweden, still in use. It was bought from Norra Sandsjö Church in 1775, but was built already in the 17th century. Over the years, it has undergone small alterations, but still has the Zimbelstern bells and speaking façade pipes.

Other paintings and fixtures in the church are mainly from the late 17th to early 18th centuries, including the ceiling paintings with acanthus leaves, medallions with motifs from the bible and king Karl XII's monogram. Both the ceiling and walls were painted by Johannes Columbus in 1702. Only a few years earlier, the woodcarver Anders Ekeberg had added more figures to the pulpit and made an altarpiece, also with rich acanthus decoration, but carved in wood.

With its preserved Romanesque paintings in the chancel, an interior strongly characterised by 17th and 18th century style ideals, ancient organ, and grave monument from early Christianity, the church is well worth a visit.



Parts of the interior with the 17th century organ and wall paintings from the 18th century. Photo: Jönköping County Museum.



HIDDEN GEM 42



HOW TO GET HERE

Lannaskede is located 12 km east of Sävsjö and 1.5 km west of Landsbro. Take Road 127 and drive south towards Landsbro.

Coordinates:
N 6359428 / E 491953
(SWEREF 99 TM) // N 57°
22' 39.36", E 14° 51' 58.21"
(WGS84)



The church and portal seen from the south-east. 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

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.

