

# ROMANÄS

In the lovely countryside around Tranås, close to the outlet of the river Svartån, is Romanäs Nature Reserve on a peninsula in Lake Sommen. The reserve, which also includes the small islands Fårön and Romanö, was established to preserve and develop the area's special flora, fauna and natural environment for the future. But also to safeguard the natural values contained in the wooded pastures and virgin-like pine stands along the precipices. And not least because of the intrinsic value of such a beautiful place.

The southern part of the reserve consists of grazing-land; wooded pastures and fields, where occasional Stone Age axes have been found when ploughing. Romanäs, however, is especially characterised by the open, cultivated riparian landscape. Belonging to this environment is Romanäs farm with a number of buildings. The storehouse and the partly rebuilt manor house are from the 19th century. The western wing, which was originally the main residence, has a ground floor that probably dates back to the 18th century.

Romanäs is also known for its sanatorium, built between 1905 and 1907. The driving force behind the establishment was the teacher Julia von Bahr from Gothenburg. At the turn of the 19th century, there were few care institutions in Sweden for patients suffering with pulmonary tuberculosis. Thanks to the dedication of Julia von Bahr, money was collected for a sanatorium. To carry out the project, the company AB Sanatorievård was formed, with Julia von Bahr on the board. After a lot of searching, the beautiful location by Lake Sommen was chosen. The facility, including a sanatorium, doctor's residence, outbuildings, open-air reclining halls, etc., was designed in a National Romantic style by the architect Carl Westman in collaboration with Julia von Bahr.

Mainly wealthy patients came to the sanatorium. One of them was the author Harriet Löwenhjelm, who died at Romanäs in 1918. Since the sanatorium closed in 1950, Romanäs has been used e.g. as a nursing home and treatment centre.



The architect Carl Westman was also responsible for some of the fixtures and interior decor in the sanatorium. Photo: Jönköping County Museum.



## HIDDEN GEM 71



### HOW TO GET HERE

From Tranås: Turn north-east from the northern roundabout on Storgatan, and drive along the old Mjölby Road for approx. 4 km. Turn right just after Sännevadet by the lake and before Röhälla, and follow the signs for Romanäs, around 2.5 km.

Coordinates:  
N 6436483 / E 501361  
(SWEREF 99 TM) // N 58°  
4' 11.34", E 15° 1' 23.04"  
(WGS84)



The surrounding pine forest was considered beneficial for the tuberculosis patients. 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.

