Snogeholm

The Snogeholm site, where the current castle is located, has been known since the 1500s when it was a farm in the wooded area with many lakes north of Ystad. At that time, it was just a simple single-storey house.

However, there are signs that there was a settlement on the site long before. In the nearby lake, Snogeholmssjön, there is a small island called Hägerholmen or Hejerholmen, where the medieval stronghold, Heireholm, is said to have been located. The castle’s early history is unknown, but the geographical location, not far from the important archbishop’s castle, Sigostha, could have meant that there was a connection between the two castles. Both were also in the parish of Sövde, which was entirely owned by the powerful archbishops in Lund. In addition, the castle’s position on an island suggests it was built with a defensive purpose.

With the Reformation, Lund lost its role as a centre of archbishops’ power, and the Catholic Church’s worldly possessions were seized by the Crown. The result was that the archbishops lost Sövde parish and all the property within its borders. Heireholm was destroyed at the time of the Reformation, possibly by a military operation or fire. After the church was dispossessed, the building was taken over by the knight, Holger Gregersen Krognes. He rebuilt the castle and erected the large barn buildings by the shore on the mainland. After he died, his daughter took over the estate. She was married to a Brahe of Krageholm, and their son, Peder Axelsen Brahe, incorporated Heireholm (Hägerholmen) into Krageholm. The castle was again destroyed, definitely by fire this time, and was never rebuilt.

In 1642, Snogeholm was sold to the Marsvin family and for the rest of the 1600s it was owned by the Bille and Thott families. The last of the Bille family, Christian Bille, built a new half-timbered main building with two detached wings around 1690. In the early 1700s, ownership went through inheritance to the Lund professor, Thomas Ihre, and later to von Löwen, Morting and, from 1795, the Piper family, who kept the estate throughout the 1800s.
The present castle was built in the 1870s, when Erik Claes Gustav Piper was the owner. The building takes the French baroque as its model and consists of a two-storey main building, three three-storey towers and two detached single-storey wings. During the first half of the 1900s, Snogeholm had a further three owners, Harry Treschow, Gunnar Svensson and Bleckert Wachtmeister.

In 1936, the castle, gardens and park were partitioned and since then it has developed into a high-quality hotel, restaurant and conference complex. The present owners are Eva von Heideken and FredKristiansen.

The Kaiser’s hunt at Snogeholm

Snogeholm Castle is located in the beautiful and castle-rich countryside between Ystad and Sjöbo. The building and park have an exquisite position on a point of land in the lake, Snogeholmssjön, which is surrounded by lovely broad-leaved woods on its islands and lakeshores. Today, Snogeholm is Scania’s biggest area for country walks with magnificent landscape in the form of beech woods, idyllic lakes and rich animal and bird life. Accessibility is made easier by long-distance footpaths, jogging tracks, barbecue areas and other facilities to enrich the experience. The area’s natural beauty and animal life became widely known in the early 1900s. In the autumn of 1902, during the Piper’s ownership of the estate, Snogeholm was visited by the German Kaiser, Wilhelm II, and his entourage. The aim of the visit was to hunt red deer, which was successfully accomplished. At that time, he was at the peak of his power with no signs of the future turbulence in the country.

The trip started by train from Berlin to a port on Germany’s northern coast. Once there, he took his attendants and the necessary equipment on board his own yacht, Hohenzollern, which would take him to Malmö. He used the Scanian railway, taking a train from Malmö to Sövdeborg station. At Sövdeborg waited Count Piper with a welcoming delegation and a selected crowd, ready to cheer
the arrival of their guest. The red carpet was rolled out on the platform and a four-in-hand with carriage for guests and luggage stood ready to take the group to their destination, Snogeholm Castle.

To the surprise of the waiting group, the train passed through the station and showed no sign of slowing down or stopping. They had to stand there looking far off down the line as the train’s white-grey plume of smoke receded in the distance. After a few bends, it was found that the train driver had been given the wrong instructions and had driven past the station by mistake. However, the braking distance was so long that he got all the way to Eriksdal, a stop in Fyledalen, before the train came to a halt and could be reversed back to its correct destination.

However, the hunting was a great success and the Kaiser, with a degree of assistance, shot 28 deer in three days. Help was provided as he had no power of movement in his left arm and therefore had to use his adjutant’s shoulder as a support to steady his aim.

The Kaiser’s visit was considered a huge event on the estate and left behind it several memorial stones and a house, "The Kaiser House", on the spot in the grounds where the Kaiser took a break from hunting. Specific memorial stones point out where the Kaiser ate breakfast and the place north-west of the Kaiser House, where he shot his first roebuck on Swedish soil.

In the castle you can still find “Kaiser Wilhelm’s Lounge”, where he is said to have sat in the evenings with his attendants and company after the day’s hunt to drink the obligatory Swedish punch, which at that time was the most popular drink in Swedish social life.