Trolleholm

The area where the present estate is located was originally marshland and had been populated by commoner farmers living in simple medieval farms. The first time the estate had a noble owner and was thus noted as a manor farm was in 1424, when a squire, Erik Nielsen, lived there. In the second half of the 1400s the manor was owned by Herrevadskloster, but when it was acquired by the Thott family in the 1530s they developed it into an estate and the first castle was built.

At that time, castles were built both to live in and for a defensive purpose, and for this the boggy land was highly suitable, as it was easy to dam up to create a protective moat. Thus, the quadrangular castle, Ericsholm, took shape. It was the 1530s and the castle was named after the owner Tage Ottesen Thott’s dead brother, Eric. The three-storey building with loopholes in the base of the roof and diagonally positioned corner towers, could only be reached via a drawbridge over the deep moat.

After the acquisition of Ericsholm by Tage Ottesen Thott it remained in the Thott family for a period of around 150 years. Several of the owners were very successful and distinguished themselves as important figures, particularly Tage Ottesen Thott, who had the estate during the 1600s until Denmark lost Scania in 1658. (Find out more about him in the Skabersjö section). The last Thott got into trouble with his new Swedish masters, due to his sympathies for the Danes. He was sentenced to death, but went into exile before the sentence could be carried out. The verdict was later declared invalid, but he never returned to Ericsholm and sold the estate to Helle Rosencrantz, widow of the privy councillor, Niels Trolle of Trolleholm (Zealand). Thus, in 1680 Ericsholm passed into Trolle family ownership, where it would remain for 90 years.

In 1755 the then owner, Frederick Trolle, changed it into an entailed estate and renamed it as Trolleholm. Wivika, his daughter, who was married to Count Gustav Bonde, took over in 1770. The two families were united and Trolleholm has stayed in the Trolle-Bonde’s ownership until the present day. The castle has been through significant changes since the 1530s. This was mainly because the building burned down and became a ruin in the Scanian War of 1675-1679, and after that it was not lived in very much until the 1880s.

During Fredrik Trolle’s ownership the castle was developed between 1750-60, but the Hårleman-style plans for a rococo castle were not carried out. However, Frederick Trolle never moved into his castle. It was only when Carl John Trolle-Bonde took over in 1886 that the castle returned to being a permanent home. In the 1800s, his predecessors had implemented extensive changes in farming and forestry including rationalisations, which is why to a great extent he could focus on his strong commitment to cultural life. He had the castle rebuilt according to designs by the Danish architect, Ferdinand Meldahl, who gave it the character of a French medieval castle. That restoration gave the castle the appearance it has today.

The present owner is Carl Trolle-Bonde. Trolleholm is located 9 km north of Eslöv.

The old dance venue

During the late 1800s, dance venues were built throughout the province, often on land donated or provided by estate owners. The growth of associations and clubs, improved communications (principally the expansion of the railways) and the wider use of bicycles had all contributed to create a growing stream of people to dance venues. The main attraction was dancing, but other associated amusements soon developed that tested the patience, physical powers, precision and endurance of the male youngsters. Sometimes fights broke out when order was not maintained and schnapps made the cautious reckless.

Trolleholm Skytteskog, close to Trolleholm Castle, was one of Scania’s most attractive dance venues. It had been built, as in many other places, due to the creation of a rifle club. The club was
established in 1903 and in addition to shooting, the site gradually developed into an amusement centre for the whole district. In 1904, a refreshments pavilion was built, followed by a shooting pavilion in 1906 and later an open-air dance floor and other attractions. The first open-air dance floor was replaced in 1929 by a covered dance floor, which had been moved to Trolleholm from that year’s Landskrona Exhibition.

Count Carl John Trolle-Bonde granted the land for the Skytteskog facilities and also paid for the building of the shooting pavilion.

The rifle club’s members included nearly all those from Trolleholm and the district around the estate. Everyone contributed to the development of the club as well as the activities that gradually arose in the amusement park. A popular element, from the period before 1910, was a locally recruited brass band. This type of music was popular at the turn of the century and it certainly helped to make the rifle club’s events in the amusement park more attractive.

In the mid-1930s, Trolleholm Riding Club was founded and arranged big competitions on the airfield near Skytteskog.

At the end of World War II, dance venues had been very popular for a number of years. American culture spread through Europe and big band jazz became the most popular music genre. Several well-known orchestras and artistes performed. These included Arne Lambert’s orchestra with the singer Birgitta Bäck, who provided both the dance music and interval entertainment during a moonlight party at Skytteskog in 1960. In the same year, singer Lill-Babs Svensson attracted a record audience to the park. Alice Babs and Zarah Leander were there, and even father Gunnar made an appearance to entertain the visitors.

In the early 1960s, the dancing stopped at Skytteskog when the landowner and club committee agreed that the Trolleholm Skytteskog era had come to an end.