

# Maltesholm

The manor originally belonged to the Widtsköfle estate, which was then owned by the Brahe family. It was partitioned and made an outlying farm of Sönnarlöf village in 1587 and in that way became the property of Elsa Brahe, who was married to Henry Ramel of Bäckaskog (see Bäckaskog). The daughter, Anne Ramel, married to county sheriff, Malte Juel of Gjesinge, had a three-winged Renaissance castle built, with a moat on all sides, in the years 1635-1638. The new castle, on the same site as the original, was drastically changed after extensive rebuilding around 1780.

In connection with this, a pavilion and orangery were built and the broad dimensions of the park were created. After another generation of ownership within the Juel family, the Ramels returned in the form of two original personalities. Malte Ramel, also known as "Rike-Ramel", was considered to be Sweden's richest man and his successor, son Hans Ramel, was known as "Bygge-Hans", an enthusiastic builder who changed a large number of buildings on his 10 or more estates. This was also the case at Maltesholm, which he rebuilt as a more modern complex in the 1780s. Through marriage into the Ramel family, the estate was taken over in 1800 by Axel Gabriel De la Gardie, a military man and later county governor of Kristianstad county. The De la Gardie family kept Maltesholm for a further three generations.

When the last of the owning family died childless in 1933, the estate went to nephew Carl Otto Palmstierna. The Palmstierna family have retained the estate since then and the present owner is Niclas Palmstierna.

## The surroundings

Maltesholm Castle is located on the northern slope of the ridge, Linderödsåsen, 4 km south of Tollarp. The estate has a beautiful and well-tended park with several attractive elements. One of these is the almost 40-metre-high Douglas fir with a girth at "chest-height" of 4.5 metres. In the southern part of the park there is a beautiful pavilion in the neoclassical style designed by Carl Hårleman.

The rest of the surroundings consist mostly of extensive, beautiful beech woods on the slopes of Linderödsåsen.

## Höge väg

The approach road to the castle is spectacular and well worth seeing. It consists of an embankment, "Höge väg", which is intended to even out the slope of the ridge, Linderödsåsen, and therefore make the trip to and from the castle easier. It was built during "Bygge-Hans" Ramel's time and is 1.3-kilometres-long, 6-metres-high in some places and 12-20 metres wide. The construction was carried out by the district's farmers, who stripped their fields and meadows of stones in the years 1775 to 1824, when the road was ready for use.

The builder in charge was Jöns Andersson. He ensured that the forced road-builders brought stone and ballast material with them when they reported for work early in the morning. Delivery by this method resulted in 102,000 square cubits of stone for the load-bearing and stabilising walls and just over 104,000 square cubits of ballast intended for the foundation of the road in between.

The road-building at Maltesholm is said to have been the origin of the Swedish expression: "if the lord of the manor wasn't mad, the poor had no bread".

At the turn off from the main road on to "Höge väg", there are four memorial stones with carved information about the building work.

Even if the raised road seems excessive and far too extensive to serve just the Maltesholm estate, it is a beautiful experience for today's traveller. The grand proportions and the mysterious light of the surrounding beech woods make the approach road to Maltesholm one of Scania's most beautiful places.