



Abstracts

**Castle and Comfort:
Everyday Life in Scandinavian Castles 1050 –1660**

27 – 29 April 2026, Lund University

Gardens for health, leisure and cellarium

Anna Andréasson Sjögren, Arkeologerna/SHM

A particular range of gardens were important parts of the medieval castle milieu, providing environments for leisure and social interaction as well as areas for making different kinds of produce, needed for the everyday consumption of the inhabitants of the castle, select social functions and medicinal purposes.

Gardens are complex ever-changing spaces, always fully integrated in landscapes, built environments, and everyday life. In my work on Medieval gardens in Sweden I triangulate archaeological-, written- and art historical sources from the area and period, to try to map both its physical gardens and its multifaceted *gardening culture*, or the ideas, knowledge, language, beliefs, symbolism and values reproduced when people interact with gardens. In this talk, I would like to use the excavated material from Sweden as a starting point to discuss four basic garden types that seems to have been particularly important within Medieval castle environments – the ones that in late 14th and 15th century Old Swedish are called *trægardher*, *apaldagardher*, *yrtagardher* and *kalgardher*.

At an individual level no two gardens are exactly alike, although they may share the same designation, like *yrtagardher*, *viridarium* or *orchard*. The *gardening culture* does provide a framework, relevant to a particular time, place and social setting, but at the same time each physical garden is shaped by the needs, knowledge, circumstances, contacts and interests of the individuals and households that create, maintain and use them.

Anna Andréasson Sjögren is a Swedish archaeologist, particularly interested in Garden Archaeology. She finished her doctoral thesis at Stockholm University in January 2025, focusing on Garden Archaeology and the Middle Ages. Currently she works at the Lund office of the Archaeologists, part of the National Historical Museums of Sweden.

The Rise and the Fall of the Hypocaust Heating

Rainer Atzbach, Aarhus University

Hypocaust heating systems—ingenious smoke-free technologies developed during Roman Antiquity—represent one of the earliest sophisticated approaches to indoor climate control in Europe. These systems, which relied on underfloor and wall flues to distribute heat from a remote furnace, were not only a technical marvel but also a cultural artifact. Their legacy was preserved and transmitted through monastic networks, particularly during the Christianisation of regions north of the Alps. A key source illustrating this transmission is the renowned ideal plan of the monastery of St. Gallen, which offers insight into the architectural and technological aspirations of medieval monastic communities. Between the 12th and 16th centuries, hypocaust systems found limited but notable application in Scandinavia. Initially, their presence was largely confined to monasteries, where the continuity of Roman and Carolingian traditions was strongest. These religious institutions served as hubs of knowledge transfer, adapting southern European architectural and technological models to the colder and more rugged Nordic climate. Moreover, hypocausts began to appear in secular contexts as well—particularly in castles, which were evolving from military fortresses into more comfortable and symbolically charged residences for the aristocracy.

This paper investigates the adaptation of hypocaust heating systems to Nordic castle architecture, focusing on their structural integration, regional variations, and functional challenges. These systems required precise construction and regular maintenance—factors that were often difficult to guarantee in remote or harsh environments. Moreover, the architectural demands of hypocausts, including raised floors and specialized flue arrangements, clashed with the evolving design preferences and spatial constraints of castle buildings.

Despite these challenges, several examples of hypocausts in Scandinavian castles have been documented, offering valuable insights into the diffusion of southern European technologies and the selective nature of cultural adaptation. These installations varied in sophistication and effectiveness, reflecting both local experimentation and the limitations of transregional knowledge transfer. Ultimately, the hypocaust system's complexity and sensitivity led to its gradual abandonment. By the 16th century, more robust and user-friendly heating technologies—such as stove tiles and cast-iron ovens—began to dominate. These newer systems offered greater efficiency, easier maintenance, and better integration into the architectural fabric of Nordic buildings. In tracing the rise and fall of hypocaust heating in Scandinavia, this study sheds light on broader themes of technological adaptation, cultural transmission, and architectural evolution. It highlights the dynamic interplay between inherited knowledge and local innovation, and underscores the importance of environmental and social factors in shaping the trajectory of historical technologies.

Rainer Atzbach, Associate Professor of Medieval and Later Archaeology at Aarhus University. Ph.d. 2004 about "Leather and Fur at the End of the Middle Ages", in 2010 curator of the exhibition "Castle and Power" at Deutsches Historisches Museum Berlin, since 2011 Assistant/Associate Professor at Aarhus University.

The Workers At The Archbishop's Residence – Flyinge during the Middle Ages

Elias Engdahl, Lund University

Approximately ten kilometres north-east of Lund, Scania, lies the royal estate of Flyinge (Flyinge kungsgård). From the 12th century up until the reformation the archbishop's see, then located in Lund, owned an estate at this site. According to historical sources Flyinge at this time displayed a typical aristocratic landscape consisting of a castle, moat, gardens, stables and a pond. Furthermore, archaeological investigations have revealed a graveyard consisting of several graves with remains of varying ages and sexes including remains of buildings. Due to remodelling's, expansions and renovations done at the site from the early modern period to our modern times, little of the Medieval period remains today. However, a foundation for studying the Medieval residence of Flyinge can be studied by combining historical sources, images and archaeology. While written sources about the Flyinge estate are limited and focused on the archbishop, sources about the peasantry in the parish can be utilized in hopes of shining light on the commoners who might have worked at Flyinge.

Who were the caretakers of the archbishop's residence and what were their tasks during the Middle Ages? Horses, gardening, agriculture and general upkeep of the buildings would have needed constant attention from a group of workers. Flyinge could have been a part of the archbishop's economic infrastructure due to the amount of arable lands surrounding the estate. If the individuals buried at Flyinge were the same individuals working at Flyinge, was the site simply a workplace or something of greater significance? It is thus important to study Flyinge from multiple perspectives and not just the archbishops.

By studying the residence from the perspective of the workers, a new understanding of Flyinge is gained and at the same time furthers the knowledge of Medieval archbishops and the roles of the people working at these properties. While the estate of Flyinge was a single part in a larger system of properties belonging to the Danish archbishop's see, many individuals spent hours every day maintaining the Flyinge residence throughout the Middle Ages.

Elias Engdahl is a Swedish master's student in Historical archaeology at Lund University, Sweden. Elias has previously published a bachelor thesis and an article about the church of Åseda including work related to ancient monuments and people's impact on the landscape in the region surrounding Åseda. Elias is interested in the relationship between the common people, who often are left out of written sources, and castles and churches. His MA thesis is centered around Flyinge kungsgård during the Middle Ages.

Kalmar Castle and the Governor's Residence. In search for a comfortable house during the 17th century

Gunhild Eriksdotter, Uppsala University

When the medieval town of Kalmar in Sweden was demolished and a new town based on Renaissance ideals was built next to it on an islet called Kvarnholmen in the 1650s, the governor no longer wanted to live in his apartment in the old medieval castle. The unfortunate distance to inhabitants, but also the uncomfortable, primitive rooms in the castle, were cited as reasons for being allowed to move. However, archival documents reveal that, despite repeated pressure, no resources were given from the State for a transfer nor to refurbish the governor's apartment. Governors and other higher officials finally solved the problem by starting to rent newly built stone houses which were designed based on the status and the social level they sought to maintain. The governor's own house was only completed in the 1680's, when one of Kvarnholmen's stone buildings was converted into a permanent residence and county administrative board.

In this paper, I combine buildings archaeological analysis with written sources to discuss the underlying aspects that laid the foundation for the governor's move. My analysis is based on three fundamental perspectives of comfort, namely space, heat, and interior furnishings, which can reveal something about the different levels of comfort when comparing the governor's apartment at Kalmar Castle and the Residence. The early modern period was dynamic with several important inventions that strongly contrasted with medieval traditions and ideals. New, more sophisticated ways of heating rooms, as well as a densification of interior furnishings and more complex spatial arrangements, characterize the period. Together, these various aspects led to increased comfort, which opened new ways of dwelling and socializing indoors. To place the results of the analyses of Kalmar Castle and the Residence in a broader context, part of my paper will address more general questions about contemporary perceptions of comfort in buildings, experiences of heat and cold, and how room sequences and interior design affected the living conditions. The presentation is based on ongoing research conducted in the project "Houses and social practices" and the project "Staging heat and light", both based at the Historical Department, Uppsala University, Sweden.

Gunhild Eriksdotter is PhD in historical archaeology (Lund university 2005). She has a long experience performing building archaeological investigations in medieval and early modern contexts, mainly in Sweden but also in Italy, Tanzania and Colombia. At present Eriksdotter is working as a researcher in the VR-project "Houses and social practices" led by Professor Dag Lindström at the Historical department, Uppsala university and in the project "Staging heat and light" that is carried out together with PhD Linda Qviström at the same department (funded by Berit Wallenberg's foundation).

Banquets, Entertainment and Music at Danish Castles during the Middle Ages, based on accounts and finds

Vivian Etting

This paper focus on parties and entertainment at Danish castles during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Castles formed the perfect framework for various celebrations, which at the same time reflected the status of the landlord. At the royal court the king could demonstrate his power to the population as well as foreign guests, and detailed descriptions of royal weddings, coronations and tournaments are still preserved in various letters, chronicles and accounts. Customs and noble manners were inspired by the courts of Germany, France and England, and there were close family connections all over Europe.

A good example is the marriage of king Christopher to Dorothea of Brandenburg in 1445. It took place at the royal castle in Copenhagen, and a list of the invited guests is still preserved. The festivities lasted 8 days with banquets and tournaments, and the queen was crowned in the Church of Our Lady. The high nobility tried to imitate the celebrations on a minor scale. In 1503 a magnificent wedding was celebrated on the castle Bollerup in Scania. A detailed account of the expenses bear witness to the huge amounts of food and beverages, which were purchased to the wedding, that lasted several days. Music and dance in the great halls were central elements of the entertainment, and musicians are often mentioned. The instruments included trumpets, lute, harp, flute, drum, bagpipes, organ, tambourine and bells, and troubadurs from courts abroad entertained with courtly ballads. At the royal court jesters played a special role and were highly respected! They had to have some kind of deformity like dwarfs and hunchbacks, and they wore a special costume with a fool's cap and donkey ears. In return the jester had certain privileges to satire, mockery, parody and to speak open. Female jesters are mentioned in various sources as well.

Archaeological excavations at medieval castles bear witness to the daily entertainment both among the nobility and the lower employees. Thus pieces from chess and other games as dice and checkers are very common finds. Games were in fact so popular, that they are mentioned in the special rules for the royal castles: "No-one is allowed to gamble or play board games after the bailiff has said Good Night".

Vivian Etting, MA of History and Art History from the University of Copenhagen, Senior Researcher and curator at the National Museum of Denmark 1999-2023. Antiquarian at the Forest- and Nature Agency 1992-1999. Vivian Etting has studied Nordic history and culture in the 14th and 15th centuries and is the author of several books, among these 'The royal Castles of Denmark during the 14th Century' 2010, and 'Senmiddelalderens borge i Danmark' 2021.

Elite foodways in late medieval Scandinavia

Brendan Foley, Lund University Department of Archaeology and Ancient History

Elite foodways were vibrant indicators of late medieval social hierarchy. For the royals dining in castles, display and consumption of exotic and expensive foods were methods of signaling high status. They demonstrated their wealth and cosmopolitan connections. Within their means, nobility emulated the practices witnessed at court by procuring imported spices for feasts, particularly weddings and conference of knighthood. Our knowledge of elite foodways in the medieval period derives primarily from written sources, buttressed by archaeological finds from castle excavations.

One special archaeological site offers a fresh look at elite foodways. In June 1495 the royal flagship known as *Gribshunden* sank while carrying the Danish-Norwegian King Hans and his court members from Copenhagen Castle to Kalmar Castle. Their destination was a summer-long summit of the three Nordic Councils. Recent excavations of the wreck have delivered artifactual evidence of late medieval elite food culture. These include a range of high-status food and foodways. Complementing a silver plate are wooden objects: a turned plate, a pitcher, and a remarkable 'red jug' milled tankard. Recovered foods are diverse: almonds and hazelnuts, and a variety of berries, vegetables, and grains. One cask contained a butchered sturgeon, probably locally caught. Other casks held various fish species, and butchered beef; and beer, probably domestic and imported. The site has yielded a variety of imported spices: saffron, ginger, black pepper, cloves; and a ceramic object that may be a refining mold for a sugar loaf.

The artifacts from *Gribshunden's* royal context are tangible evidence of elite foodways in late medieval Scandinavia. They offer a discrete temporal snapshot of elite consumption practices to compare to earlier and later textual accounts, which in this paper will be compared to contemporary Danish, Swedish, Gotlandic, and Germanic records regarding elite foodways in castles. Historical archeological study casts new light on European societal changes during the medieval to modern.

Brendan Foley has a PhD from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the History and Archaeology of Technology and is currently a Researcher and Docent in the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History at Lund University. Dr Foley has extensive experience in underwater archaeology from different sites around the globe. He works with the application of advanced technologies to humanities research, using various field systems and laboratory techniques to derive new knowledge from information-rich archaeological sites. He is currently director of the *Gribshunden* project.

A buildings display of the society that built it – a spatial and social archaeological study of Bollerup stone house

David Frank-Waisman, Lund University

This presentation puts forth a suggestion for the original spatial layout of the medieval castle of “Bollerup Stenhus” in southern Sweden and uses this suggested reconstruction to perform a spatial analysis of the building and the people who lived and worked there. Bollerup is a castle that was constructed in the late 15th century but has been pillaged and remodelled over the centuries. The type of building, in Swedish called “fasta stenhus” (fortified houses) was popularized in the Danish realm in the mid-15th century. Through an analysis of the literary material, archaeological material from past projects by myself and others as well as comparisons to other buildings from the same time a suggestion for the building’s layout at the point of construction is put forth. By studying the patterns of construction using the heating systems, privies and entrances that are identified as hailing from the original layout each room’s usage is interpreted. When it comes to the reconstruction of the spatial layout the two most influential questions are how one moved between the floors of the building as well as whether there were one or two entrances to the main part of the building. Here, I conclude that the most likely solution to the first question is that there was a stair-tower, and that the likeliness is high that there were two main entrances.

The spatial analysis is constructed in two parts, first with a traditional reconstruction of the layout of the building and then in the form a planning diagram. Using the spatial analysis as a foundation a discussion is then held about how buildings themselves were utilized by the nobility of medieval Sweden to display power and reinforce social hierarchies, with a theoretical basis in the works of Grahame Fairclough (Fairclough 1992) and Annika Andersson (Andersson 1997). The theory states, in short, that the layout of castles is created in part to enforce and physically display the power of nobility based upon who is allowed within certain parts of the building, as well as through which routes within the building. The findings show that there is no doubt that the societal norms of the mid-15th century are constructed into the building itself. The locations of the privy’s, oven, fireplaces, the likely positioning of a wooden structure from which soldiers could shoot down, as well as the number of rooms that were placed between where servants would primarily work and where the nobility would be not only societally put the nobility above the common people, but physically as well. Furthermore, it is argued that further studies can clearly be accomplished by combining traditional archaeological methods like spatial analysis with more modern perspectives of societal, gendered and hierarchical lenses.

David Frank-Waisman, MA in historical archaeology, Lunds University 2024. His research projects have primarily had a focus on castles and churches, with focus on combining the more traditional processual archaeological methods with more post-processual theory to create a more holistic analysis of social structures.

Hygiene and bathrooms

G. Ulrich Großmann

Although research on castles and manor houses around the Baltic Sea has improved significantly in recent years, not least thanks to the comprehensive publications by Sabine Bock, the question of the cleanliness of castle dwellers has hardly been raised, let alone answered. This article aims to draw attention to this previously neglected topic in order to stimulate future research. Recent publications provide a comprehensive overview of castle and manor house construction in the late Middle Ages and also discuss room functions, but there seems to be a complete absence of any mention of a “bathing room”, and there are no references to any other room used for bathing. Even in connection with convents, the bathing room does not appear. If there is no archival evidence of a bathing room (Badestube), the question arises as to which rooms could have been used for bathing in the late Middle Ages and early modern period. A comparison with bathing rooms in the castles of the Holy Roman Empire is useful here. This would at least provide future researchers with an idea of where to look for bathing rooms, especially in architectural history studies. The basic requirements for bathing rooms are quick and direct access to water, the possibility of heating the water, the creation of a warm room, whether for bathing or changing, the easy disposal of water, and a toilet within walking distance. These are several requirements that also facilitate the search for possible bathhouses in Scandinavian castles. At the same time, it is necessary to distinguish between the bathing room and the sauna and to consider their prevalence and possible location in or near the castle. Today, we generally think of the sauna as a separate hut, while the bathing room is built into the castle or manor house. However, sources from Central Europe suggest that bathing took place in bathtubs on the one hand and in steam baths on the other, the latter corresponding to the sauna, even if the term was not used. Northern European literature on bathing rooms and saunas (namely Talve 1960) has examined the bathing room in the 19th century as a separate rural building for bathing and drying malt, but unfortunately this does not help us with castle construction.

There is therefore no exhaustive information in the specialist literature to date, which is reason enough to raise the question for research.

G. Ulrich Großmann, Prof. Dr. phil. 1973-1979 studied art history, European ethnology and Christian archaeology at the Universities of Würzburg and Marburg. 1980 Doctorate (art history). In 1994, he completed his habilitation at the University of Hanover (architecture) and in 1997, he completed his re-habilitation at the University of Bamberg (medieval art history). From 1980 to 1986, he was a building historian at the Westphalian Open-Air Museum in Detmold, and from 1986 to 1994, he was the founding director of the Weser Renaissance Museum at Brake Castle in Lemgo. 1994-2019 Director General of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg. Chairman of the International Working Group for House Research 1982 to 2006, founding chairman of the Wartburg Society for the Study of Castles and Palaces. 1992 – 2017. Deputy Chairman of the German Castle Museum Veste Heldburg since 2005. Since 2019, freelance construction and castle research, particularly in Austria.

Everyday life and living comfort at the court of the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order in Marienburg around 1400

Christofer Herrmann

The Grand Master of the Teutonic Order resided at Marienburg Castle in Prussia between 1309 and 1457. In the 1330s, a residence was built there for the head of the Order, known as the Grand Master's Palace, which was greatly expanded in the 1380s and 1390s. This residence has remained almost unchanged to this day. In addition to this authentic architectural testimony of the culture of courtly living, numerous written sources, mainly from the first half of the 15th century, have been preserved, some of which provide detailed information about life at the Grand Master's court. Together, the architectural structures and written sources provide a comprehensive basis of information about the living conditions at this specific sovereign court, which is virtually unparalleled in its depth and accuracy.

The paper provides a systematic overview of the living conditions, everyday life and governmental activities of the Grand Master during the period in question. The daily routine of the Grand Master is discussed, from his morning bath to his daily meals, diplomatic and administrative work, leisure time and pastimes. The basic features of the palace's structural design, whose architecture was tailored precisely to the ruler's needs, are also presented.

Letters of Lords and Ladies of the Castles. Tuula Hockman, Tampere Universities

Castles are often studied through the lens of defence or political power, as the call of paper for this conference put it. But how then did the lords and ladies of the castles themselves described their life and circumstances. I am trying to answer that in this paper by presenting letters written by three noble persons/married couple and their letters.

INGEBORG ÅKESDOTTER TOTT's letters - and one letter from Sten Sture the Elder to Ingeborg

Ingeborg Akesdotter Tott was born ca. 1460 as the daughter of Åke Axelsson Tott, lord of Varberg castle, married in about 1466 to Sten Sture (the Elder), who was the regent of Sweden 1470–1497 and 1501–1504). As widow Ingeborg lived in Häme/Tavastehus castle and had Häme castle and its *slottslän* as well as the *län* of Kokemäki (Kumo) as her fief. Ingeborg died in 1507. (Hockman 2006, 13). Only a few of Ingeborg's letters have survived. The eldest one is the letter to Svante Nilsson, dated in 16.8.1501. Ingeborg wrote the letter in Nyköping, where she was preparing the castle against the attack of King of Denmark Hans. (Hockman 2006, 82–83; Hockman 1990, 34.) Most of Ingeborg's letters are from the year 1505. That time Ingeborg already lived in Häme Castle. In midsummer of that year, she had to defence her fief to the castle against Folke Gregersson Liljes attempt to take the *slottsloven* of Häme castle. In her letters to the regent of Sweden, Svante Nilsson, Ingeborg explains why she with the help of her personal sent Folke away and her right to the castle and tells and promises to keep the castle to the crown and to Svante Nilsson. (Hockman 2006, 120– 121). Sten Sture the Elders letter to Ingeborg is more personal. He tells domestic matters, as fishing in several places, but also tells that their miller has been put in the dungeon. (Hockman 1990, 46–48.)

METTA IVARSDOTTER DYRE's letters

Metta Ivarsdotter (born ca. 1465 – died before 1533) was a Norwegian noblewoman, married to the regent of Sweden Svante Nilsson on 17. November 1504. (Utterström, 37–38.) With the help of the scribes she has sent 42 letters to Svante Nilsson, in years 1503-1507. Metta herself was not literate. (Utterström, 37.) In Metta's earliest letters the marriage is often discussed. Later on she writes several time explaining of the brist in food storage. E. g. In November she writes, that it is not possible to arrange a meeting of the council of Sweden in Stockholm castle because of that. (Letters begin from the page 192. Utterström.)

KLAS KRISTERSSON HORN's letters to his wife KRISTINA JACOBSDOTTER KRUMME

Klas Kristersson Horn (- 1564) was a Finnish-born Swedish nobleman and naval admiral. In 1551 he married Kerstin Krumme. He owned Åminne manor in Halikko. (Rosenlew, 1–4.) He wrote 11 letters to his wife in 1555–1557, during the Russian war of King Gustaf I. (Ödberg 1901-1908, 40.). Klas Kristersson participated in the expeditions of Jakob Bagge (Jakob Bagge was the lord of Viborg castle before Klas Kristersson) during the fall. From 1556 he was the lord of Viborg castle. In his first letter, dated in Nöteborg 13.10.1555 Klas Kristersson describes war events in the beginning of the war, and tells that they had met a

huge troop of Russians, but had managed to put them to flight. In following letters he tells of the birst of food and other difficulties as the deceses in the Swedish troops. (Rosenlew, 6–7, 9–11). He is also very concerned of the welfare of his wife and children, as well as the management of their estate. He even has plans to acquire more land. (Rosenlew, 9; Kuokkala, 294–295.)

If a war is going on, it is natural, that the events of it are mentioned in letters. But at least as important has to these writes been to take care of the food suply of the manors, castles and the troops, and to secure the property of land.

After all it was the landed property, that was essential to the economics of these lords and ladies in castles. With closer look it would certainly be possible to find interesting details even of comfort. I find it interesting to know, that Klas Kristersson was very fond of the soap from Nådendal. In his letter from 14.2.1556 Klas asks his wife to send it to him.

Northern (dis)comfort – Living conditions of residents and prisoners in the early and mid-17th century Kajanaborg

Tarja Knuutinen, University of Helsinki

Kajanaborg, the Kajaani Castle, located in Kainuu in north-eastern Finland, was built in several phases between 1604 and 1672, first under King Carl IX and Gustav II Adolf and later by Per Brahe (The Younger), the Governor-General of Finland. Despite its late date of construction, Kajaani Castle has been described as the last medieval castle in Finland. The castle was erected on a small island in the river Kajaaninjoki, located on a strategic position in the border region that came under Swedish rule following the Treaty of Teusina in 1595. During the first building phase (1604–1619), the building works advanced slowly and in 1619 King Gustav II Adolf ordered the work to be halted. At this point, the castle had the curtain walls and towers built of stone, while the living quarters and other buildings serving the everyday life in the castle remained wooden. In 1650, the province of Kajaani was granted as a barony to Per Brahe. In 1660s, the castle was extensively refurbished: The defences and artillery were updated, and the old wooden houses in the courtyard were replaced with masonry buildings suitable also for residential needs of Brahe and his entourage. After the death of Per Brahe in 1680, the castle was taken back to the Crown, serving as a garrison and border stronghold until 1716, when it was seized by Russian troops and eventually destroyed by explosion. This paper examines the living conditions in Kajaani Castle prior to the refurbishments. While originally built as a border post, the castle also functioned as a prison, housing, among others, the historian, dramatist, and Uppsala professor Johannes Messenius from 1616 to 1635.

Archaeological data from this early phase is limited; however, unlike Finland's medieval castles, the facilities of Kajaani Castle are well documented in inventories, correspondence, and other archival records, including the letters and other writings of Johannes Messenius during his imprisonment. By combining archaeological evidence with historical sources, this study reconstructs the housing, interiors, spatial organization, and overall living conditions of the castle, offering new insights into castle life in truly northern conditions.

Tarja Knuutinen, doctoral researcher in University of Helsinki, Archaeology, with special interest in medieval and post-medieval castle building, especially the building process, use of resources, and the socio-economic impact of castle building on their administrative regions. Currently working in the research project "The Europeanization of Finland and Carelian Isthmus 1100–1600 AD". Previously working as field archaeologist in several research projects including the archaeological excavation project of Raseborg Castle (2008–2009, 2014–2020), and as field archaeologist / researcher in commercial enterprises. Regional archaeologist in the Western Uusimaa museum 2020–2024.

The Stories of Small Things: Metal-detector Finds, Comfort, and Everyday Life at Søborg and Hovgårdspynt

Kjartan Langsted, Museum Nordsjælland

This presentation analyses how extensive metal detector finds can contribute to our understanding of everyday life and comfort at medieval castle sites in North Zealand. The focus is on two neighbouring but contrasting sites, Søborg and Hovgårdspynt, and the nearby market town of Søborg. Søborg is located in the north-eastern part of Zealand and functioned as a royal stronghold and administrative centre from the mid-12th century until the early 16th century. More than 3,000 metal-detector finds have been recorded at Søborg and the market town of Søborg. Hovgårdspynt is a smaller, noble earthwork built on a promontory by Lake Arresø, in use mainly in the 13th and 14th centuries; it represents a different rank and function within the local power network.

The presentation presents a comparative analysis of the material in three parts: (1) a quantitative and spatial characterisation of the detector finds from Søborg, Hovgårdspynt and the nearby market town of Søborg; (2) functional artefact analyses focused on indicators of comfort and daily life, for example cooking equipment (cauldrons, kettles), textile production (loom weights) or imported textiles and related markers (lead seals); and (3) a discussion of interpretative frameworks in which differences between a royal castle, a noble earthwork and the market town are evaluated with explicit consideration of detector bias, depositional processes and preservation conditions.

Preliminary patterns indicate differing degrees of comfort and variations in everyday practice. For example, loom weights are relatively rare at Søborg but more common in the market town of Søborg, which may suggest that regular textile production took place to a greater extent outside the castle. Conversely, there are indications that castles show a higher incidence of imported textiles or indicators of textile importation. The paper demonstrates how the systematic use of metal-detector finds, combined with GIS and functional artefact analyses, can provide a nuanced contribution to the understanding of everyday comfort at medieval castles.

Kjartan Langsted is Senior Curator at Museum Nordsjælland, Archaeological Department (2014–2025). He previously worked as an archaeologist at Gilleleje Museum and the Holbo Herreds Kulturhistoriske Centre (2003–2013) and holds a Master of Arts (cand.mag.) in Prehistoric Archaeology from the University of Copenhagen, as well as a supplementary course in laboratory archaeology from Stockholm University. His research and publications focus on the medieval cultural landscapes of North Zealand—especially Søborg/Søborg town and Esrum Abbey—with an emphasis on metal-detector finds, weapons find, monastic archaeology, and water management.

The Spøttrup Castle's Renaissance Project

Per Lunde Lauridsen, Sarah Laugsen, Tine Klintgaard Danielsen & Turi Thomsen, Museums Salling

This paper presents the Spøttrup castle's Renaissance Project, which aims to establish a new presentation of the castle, from its heyday in the early 16th century and into the 17th century. The project's aims to open people's eyes to the splendour of the Renaissance and to everyday life, comfort and living standards of the elite and workers who inhabited the castle. The Danish state bought and renovated the castle in 1942, with the aim of establishing a museum. With its raw and unpolished appearance on the outside and its white, unadorned walls and stone floors, it recreated a 1940's image of "a real Gothic castle". It became a harsh tale of power. Most traces and details of later life and modernizations, including elements related to comfort, domestic life and convenience, splendour and decoration had been either greatly downgraded during the renovation or completely removed at some point in the time leading up to the state's acquisition.

The Renaissance is a period of major changes in the power structure and upheavals in the established order with the Reformation from Catholicism to Lutheranism and the Monarchy. The castle, which was established by powerful bishops of the Viborg episcopal seat, centrally located in Jutland, was, after a royal takeover, still owned by the upper echelons of society and has, of course, been decorated and furnished in relation to this during this period. The project will involve an initial thorough search of written as well as physical facts. Archaeological investigations at specifically selected sites will be carried out with a view to clarifying traces of any older predecessors on the site, traces of older phases and, most importantly, finding concrete dates for the earliest construction phase of the existing building or at least clarifying the relative chronology of the development of the building mass. A dating framework that is as accurate as possible will be a prerequisite for placing the castle in the right context. At present, an assessment of the age of the buildings is based mainly on the building style and specific characteristics, as well as ongoing interpretative discussion among historians, on the assessment of the known source material. This should be challenged by a new review and comparison of the total source material. With the renovated appearance that the castle has been left in, it is desired to be updated to better show a magnificent Renaissance residence with wallpaper, draperies, paintings, and furnishings that show the living standards associated with a Renaissance elite residence. This includes a renewed focus on comfort and daily life, including heated rooms with (fake) fireplaces, (replica) furnished private chambers, access to bathing facilities and organized kitchen functions.

Since there are only very few traces preserved on the walls themselves in the heavily renovated building mass, this provides correspondingly rich opportunities to search for parallels at home and abroad, and work will be done on how to convey the Renaissance expression of power, comfort and domestic life as close to the probable expression as possible. At the same time, the building will of course have to be updated, both technically and practically, with electricity and heating, reflecting both modern requirements and historical conditions of comfort, so that the place becomes more pleasant to visit and less challenging for the replica equipment that is to be installed. New communication techniques today are largely dependent on digital solutions, which the update of the castle must also

include.

The Spøttrup Castle's Renaissance Project has a broad communication perspective overall; the path to this includes several research initiatives both in the physical castle and in the written sources, aiming to present Spøttrup not only as a seat of power, but as a fully functional and lived-in Renaissance residence – while simultaneously establishing Spøttrup as a contemporary, engaging and economically sustainable heritage site that supports year-round visitation, sensory engagement and visitor comfort.

Per Lunde Lauridsen, is Cand. Mag. In History and Archeology and Museum Director
Museum Salling

Sarah Sander Laugesen, is historian and museum curator, Museum Salling, project manager
at Spøttrup Castle.

Turi Thomsen is cand. Mag. MA. in history and medieval archaeology, supplementary
superstructure in building restoration at the Aarhus School of Architecture and is curator
Museum Salling, with focus on Spøttrup Borg Castle.

Tine Klitgaard Danielsen, is a MA in History and Religious Studies, Aarhus University and
head of Public Engagement at Museum Salling.

Meals in Hans the Elders castle hall – a duke's courtly procedures.

Lennart S Madsen, Museum Sønderjylland, Haderslev

Between 1543 and his death in 1580 Duke Hans the Elder – one of the dukes in the duchies of Slesvig and Holstein - issued four sets of procedures for the courts of Gottorp, Haderslevhus and Hansborg respectively. These procedures allowed the duke to govern his courts, both practically and socially. Most of the provisions dealt with meals, because life in the castle was very much structured around the meals. The procedures specified where each member of the staff should be seated in the hall for the two daily meals, how many courses he was served, what kind of bread he was allowed to eat and what to drink. These meals were an essential part of the staff's salary, and it was through the daily meals that the social hierarchy of the court was made clear to everyone. Because the duke's court was expanded considerably during his life as a duke, the four sets of procedures also show the evolution from a small, newly established court to a much larger and much more complex court.

Lennart S Madsen is an archaeologist and former Overinspektør at Museum Sønderjylland

The Banqueting Hall and the Archers' loft of Glimmingehus – a broadening of perspective

Jan Olofsson, Glimmingehus

The presentation aims at discussing how some of the floors may have been used during the late Middle Ages at Glimmingehus, in particular the 2nd and 3rd floor.

Assigning functions to certain rooms or floors of medieval profane buildings can be challenging. This challenge has been increasingly obvious at Glimmingehus during the last couple of years. It concerns the production of new museum plaques, digital guides and archaeological building investigations. The function of "banqueting hall" has been focussed upon, i.e. the room of the castle assigned for representation, feasts and larger gatherings. Was there such a hall at the medieval Glimmingehus? If so, where was it and what did it look like? Traditionally, the third floor has been characterized as an archer's loft and the second floor as a banqueting hall in the east with the Lady's chambers in the west.

On the third floor, the 44 unsealed putlog holes have vaguely been perceived as anchor points for an outer wooden gallery, used for defence. In 2024, an archaeological building investigation report arrived at another conclusion, namely that the third floor housed the banqueting hall and that a wooden gallery is unplausible, that the open putlog holes were the fastening of a treadwheel crane used when the castle was erected. This presentation questions that conclusion and aims at broadening the view of how the third floor might have been used.

Concerning the second floor, the abovementioned report of 2024 concludes that the eastern part has originally been partitioned into four smaller rooms and one larger, the latter one deemed too small for a banqueting hall, thus suggesting that this function was housed on the third floor. This presentation takes into account the measurements of banqueting halls in other castles and also argues for the facilities of the second floor that point towards the larger room there being used as a banqueting hall i.e. outer access from a wooden balcony, the double-seated toilet and possible heating.

This presentation also takes the castle hall of the first floor into account as a possible banqueting hall for smaller gatherings. In all, our presentation aims at showing that certain functions of a castle like Glimmingehus perhaps should not be exclusively derived to a single room or floor, instead a more flexible view can be maintained, that is the room best suited for the current need was used – with the exception of defence that had to be carried out from the top floor.

Jan Olofsson, museum director of Glimmingehus, MA in Archaeology

Windows and light in late medieval and renaissance stately homes and churches in Uppland

Linda Qviström, Uppsala University

Windows were an important part of elite architecture in medieval Scandinavia in several ways – as light sources and a part of the decoration in certain rooms, as viewpoints, and as a means of display. During the late Middle Ages and the 16th century, the design and use of windows changed. At the same time the employment of artificial light seems to have altered, with an increasing number of candlestick holders and other pieces of lighting equipment.

Similar changes took place in contemporary churches. These were in several ways linked to the nobility, who could for example donate windows or window panes and chandeliers to churches. What effects did this have on the interior of the rooms? How did the changes in the secular buildings relate to the ones in contemporary churches?

In this paper the shifts in use and design of windows are addressed, using examples from stately homes in Uppland in Sweden, but also looking at contemporary churches in the same region and relating to a wider context.

The paper is based on some of the results from my PhD thesis *Rum utan utsikt. Fönster och ljus i medeltida byggnader* (2019) that will be developed further within in the project *Staging heat and light. Living practices and indoor environments during the early modern period*. Directed by Gunhild Eriksson and myself, the project is financed by the Berit Wallenberg foundation 2025-2027.

Linda Qviström: PhD in archaeology, Stockholm university 2020. Presently working as a researcher at the Department of History at Uppsala University and at Upplandsmuseet, the museum for the county of Uppland.

Bishop's Comfort – Inside the Bishop's Residence of Medieval Norway

Kristian Reinfjord, Anno Museum

The five Norwegian diocese centra held bishop's residences. These castle structures are of the least studied stone monuments of high- and late medieval Norway (c. 1250-1500). Paradoxically, bishop's residences seem to hold the most evidence on how elites dwelled and resided in the period. Archaeological excavations undertaken in the 19th century were often focused on buildings, but objects and documentary evidence shed light on the uses of Norwegian ecclesiastical castle dwellings. To what extent did such castles allow comfort and ecclesiastical promotion – were bishops better off than kings in everyday life behind castle walls? Based on selected examples of the corpus of material remains and documentary sources of Norwegian bishop's residences, the proposed paper discusses how medieval bishop used and dwelled in monumental stone castles. To a less degree military and war associated activity are identified. Rather, aspects of piety and Church institution aspects of architecture are seen in the buildings. Moreover, medieval bishops sought comfort in heating, interior design, cathedral closeness, entertainment and dazzling food, provided inside their castle residences.

Kristian Reinfjord Ph.D. is Head of Cultural History and Senior Curator at Anno Domkirkeodden Museum. He is an archaeologist specialising in medieval buildings and material remains of the period. His interests include vernacular architecture, heritage studies and conservation of Norwegian built heritage. Holds a Ph.D. in archaeology from the University of Bergen (2023), with the dissertation *Stone Building. Organization and Development of Construction Technology in Eastern Norway c. 1130 – 1537*.

Food consumption reveals the social differences in the castle

Anna-Maria Vilkuna

We do not have the means to compare the living conditions, health or clothing of those living at the castle in the sixteenth century. A study of food consumption is, thus, one of the few means of assessing the social differences among the officials, craftsmen and workers living at castle. Each position belonging to the staff determined what kind of food one was permitted to eat. Häme Castle (Tavastehus) was the Swedish crown's base in Häme (Tavastland). The Swedish conquerors established Häme Castle at the end of the thirteenth century. By the mid-sixteenth century the granite camp fortress had grown to an imposing brick castle, which was the administrative and economic center of Häme in southern Finland. Häme Castle's economy, like that of the other Swedish crown castles, was organized to serve the needs of the centralized nation. Castle administration could be called the central administration's method of financial management. The castle was an effective means for the control and exploitation of economic resources, based far from the national economy in the local payment of taxes in kind.

Many factors were changed in the society on King Gustavus Vasa's time (king 1523 - 1560): the administrative power of the king increased, an ever-greater part of the resources of the kingdom was under control of the king and the modern army was established for support of the centralized kingdom. About one hundred officials, soldiers, craftsmen and servants lived and worked regularly at the Häme Castle in the mid-sixteenth century fulfilling the demands of the crown. In addition, other people were also at the castle temporarily like visiting craftsmen, officials travelling on crown business and soldiers. All in all, a couple hundred people were often accommodated in the castle. Arranging daily meals has required careful organization and professionals from many fields.

From the Middle Ages clear up to the nineteenth century eating showed social hierarchy, and especially the position of those in power. The quantity and quality of the food distinguished the upper class from the peasantry. Many foodstuffs and dishes were food of the elite. At Häme Castle everyone's social position on the staff determined what kind of food he got to eat. In order that eating should be easy to control and to prevent abuses, it was divided between bailiff's table and servant's table. The consumption of the tables was monitored by compiling weekly inventories of the food consumed and of those who took their meals at the table.

Those weekly inventories of the food consumed, and diners provide an opportunity to estimate the energy one person's daily consumption of food. With the aid of these calculations, one can compare social differences between the workers belonging to the different groups. In addition, they afford the possibility of studying how large a part of the castle's consumption of foodstuffs, or calories used daily, was able to produce itself. One must remember that, although a varied economy was practiced at the castle, its own production was not able to satisfy all the needs. The castle got a considerable part of its needed resources from the peasants of Häme's castle fief.

Anna-Maria Vilkuna worked at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences in Helsinki from

2005 until 2025 when she retired. Since 2016, she was the Director of Research, Development and Innovations and a member of the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences Management Group. Before that, she worked as a Principal Lecturer and Research and Development Manager at Metropolia UAS. Before starting at Metropolia UAS, she worked as a researcher 1998 - 2005 at the University of Jyväskylä and University of Tampere. Her doctoral thesis (1998) focuses on the castle economy in the late Middle Ages in Sweden and in Finland. She is the docent of Finnish history at the University of Jyväskylä. Anna-Maria Vilkkuna has visited Uppsala Universitet as PhD Student 1995 - 1996 and 1999 - 2000 she made her post-doctoral studies at Kiel University. Now after her years at the university of applied sciences Anna-Maria has returned to research work. As an historian she believes in multidisciplinary collaboration and systematic approach.