



Blomsholm slik herregården framstår i dag. Hovedbygningen er fra 1710 og var lasarett (feltsykehus) for Karl XII's hær i 1718. Foto-Svein Norheim.

***trekking path goes through the area, and you can read about the Iron Age landscape and people from information signs.***

## ***BLOMSHOLM*** MANOR

***An ancient monument area of national interest surrounds Blomsholm Manor, which possibly makes it Bohuslän's most exciting ancient history site. Every-day life from the Iron Age is surrounded by modern communications and more recent buildings. Imposing grave sites and majestic grave mounds, one of the largest stone circles and the third largest ship tumulus in Sweden. A***

### **The manor**

The manor dates back to about 1620, whereas the main mansion building was built in 1710. The farm had 39 employees in the 1940s and there were 32 plough horses in the stall on the other side of the road. These days, Blomsholm is the largest farm estate in Bohuslän, with grain, piglets and forestry as its main sources of income.

### **Contract labourers**

Four families lived in the long red house built in 1899, where they each had a flat containing 1 living room and a kitchen. All were contract labourers on the Blomsholm estate. They were paid in kind, including the provision of medicine, fuel and housing. In the 1930s there were 25,000 such labourers in Sweden. Large families were the norm and their dependence on the goodwill and tolerance of a landlord did nothing to alleviate their poverty. They had few opportunities to better themselves as children grew up only to follow their parents' footsteps. For many there was but one illusory hope of improvement, by making the move to a neighbouring farm and a new master. Every year on 24 October processions of the poor would be seen winding along the country tracks, complete with their belongings.

### **The struggle for cash wages**

Labourers wanted to be paid in cash to lessen their dependence on landlords during the year of their contract. Their struggle to achieve this eventually won ground. By the beginning of the last century half their wages were being paid in cash and by the end of World War II they were being paid normal wages.

### **Exhibition a cafe**

The labourers' quarters was renovated in the middle of the 1990s and have been converted into refreshment rooms in summer. There is a cafe and an exhibition showing the history of Blomsholm and the sensational prehistoric monuments on the farm ground.



*Blomsholm byr på en rik kulturopplevelse med vandring i vackert kulturlandskap\_Foto-Svein Norheim\_DSC\_8521.JPG*

## CATHARINA'S PARK

Eighteenth-century landowners throughout Europe were forever improving their estates by the addition of parks and gardens. They planted all manner of exotic plants and trees, and even experimented with the production of cotton and silk.

We think the area by the stream that flows in front of the manor house was first landscaped early in the century by Catharina Björnskiöld, the daughter of the house.

Imagine the scene; a small footpath following the winding course of the stream, bordered by freshly planted bushes and trees, both native and foreign, including chestnuts, beech, maple and douglas firs, all thriving in the rich soil. Carp swim in the artificial flutter and dart above the colorful flowers from the south the manor house was approached by a bridle path that crossed the stream on a slender bridge and passed between two farm buildings. A tasteful scene for the young lady to enjoy with her parasol and long dress.

Today new growth has replaced the old and the ponds have long since silted up. Only the foundations of the bridges remain. But we chose to call it Catharinaskogen (Catharina's park), after the young lady who first fashioned what is now a rich and diverse botanical site. A place for repose, or even for a picnic, is the mysterious stone circle. It was built a century ago, yet we know little about it. Perhaps the then owner intended it to recall the more leisured times of the past.