

Östra Sigfridsleden

English



Pilgrim

The word pilgrim derives from the Latin word peregrinus, which means stranger. It can also mean countrybumpkin, a person not living in Rome. A pilgrim is a person, who wanders towards a destination, usually a place with memories of some holy person or the site of a miracle.

The pilgrim's journey is called a pilgrimage.

It is believed that during the Middle Ages, as many as one third of the population of Sweden went on at least one pilgrimage, long or short, during their lifetime.

The pilgrimage could be a form of penance or a way to be cured from suffering. Usually it was realized because it was ordered as a part of practicing the religion. One of the most famous

pilgrimages was that of Holy Birgitta during the fourteenth century to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, to name but one.

How to recognize a pilgrim

The boots – a symbol of journey, of being prepared to leave, of that every journey starts with the first step.

The rucksack – has room for the most necessary items, the simplicity makes the journey easier.

The staff – gives safety and support.

The hat – to put on one's head during rest.

The cross – a symbol to identify the Christian pilgrim.



The pilgrimage today



During the reformation in the sixteenth century the pilgrimage ended in Sweden. At the end of the twentieth century the pilgrimage began in Norway, where the old paths of the Middle Ages to Nidaros, now Trondheim, were marked out.

Recently more paths have been marked out in Sweden too. Wandering has become very popular for many reasons. For example it can be a break from every-day work, a possibility to reflect, an opportunity to enjoy nature,

a possibility to see and to study interesting places and a nice alternative type of physical activity.

The journey can be short or long, for example a few hours or several days or weeks. You can walk alone or be part of a group.

The Östra Sigfridsleden is an eagerly awaited addition to earlier existing paths and increases the network of pilgrim's paths in Sweden.

Holy Sigfrid missionary and bishop

Sigfrid (Sigfridus) was an English missionary bishop, who during the eleventh century operated in Norway and Sweden. He lived between 965 and 1045 or 1055 or 1067. He is celebrated on the 15th of February (called Siffermässan or Seffremässan), and in ancient calendars this day is marked with a cross and an axe. Sigfrid is the apostle of Småland and Västergötland, and he can be identified as a saint by his bishop's robe and a hat with three heads. According to legend the heads symbolize his three nephews, Unaman, Sunaman and Vinaman, who were killed in the region of Växjö, and had their heads placed in a vat, that



was sunk in a lake and later appeared to Sigfrid in a revelation.

From 1474 onwards Holy Sigfrid is celebrated as the guardian saint of Sweden.

Sigfrid's first visit to Sweden is thought to have been in 1015. Around 1030 he was in Bremen to look after his student, Osmund, who

was in Bremen for further studies. While in Bremen, Sigfrid participated in the funeral of the bishop Thurgot, the first bishop of Västergötland. Thurgot, who was born in Germany, suffered from leprosy and wanted to end his days in Bremen.



The legend of Sigfrid in connection to the district of Södermöre

On his return from Bremen, Sigfrid travelled by boat, probably with the intention to land at a harbour near the present-day Kalmar. According to legend this happened in 1033 or in 1034, and Sigfrid was at that time the bishop of Skara.

Outside present-day Kolboda the ship ran aground during a severe storm. The harbour near the mouth of the river Hagbyån became the voyagers' salvation. When he landed, Sigfrid praised God and gave thanks for having been saved from the storm. This place is named Loverslund, which means "praise be to God in the grove".

According to historical information, a chapel was built near the river. This chapel was called Sigfrid's chapel, but it was probably dedicated to Saint Laurentius. The name Lovers is also connected with the name Laurentius.

Near the chapel there is a well, where, according to legend, Sigfrid baptized people and brought Christianity to this place. Recently the well had a round casting and a cover added.

In 1541 the King Gustav Vasa ordered the chapel to be destroyed and dispossessed of its treasures. Remains of the chapel's foundation still remain



in the cellar of one of the houses near the river. The original size of the chapel was 11,4 X 6,6 metres.

In the middle of the twentieth century an old portable altar was found close to the church of Hagby. Legend tells us, that this altar belonged to Sigfrid, and that he carried it on the ship, and then used it, when he arrived at the harbour by the river Hagbyån. The altar is still used.

Sigfrid continued on his way to other places, and we can walk in his footsteps, following the pilgrim's path to another baptismal well and another chapel, also destroyed by Gustav Vasa.

Nature along the path



The journey starts in the coastal landscape of Södermøre with its shores, meadows and abundance of birds. Outside Kolboda there is an archipelago with many small islands. The river Hagbyån, surrounded by green foliage, has many species of fish, birds and insects. The path follows the river inland, and in many places is alongside the water.

The path passes the fertile coastland with nature's colours changing according to the season. In some places old shore-lines can be seen. The landscape turns gradually into forest, and at the end of the path there is a peculiar area, carved by glaciers, with steep slopes and so-called "dead ice".

Along the path one can see domestic as well as wild animals. There are elks, roe deers, foxes and hares, and by the river lives the otter, the animal which symbolizes Småland's landscape.



Ancient monuments along the path

The area from Sigfrid's harbour to Sigfrid's well has been populated since time immemorial, and where you can find relics from the Stone Age to the present day.

There are graves, places of sacrifice, ruins, buildings and paths, which reflect the local development of culture and cults. Interesting places are marked out along the path.

The buildings and landscape of today also tell us how the rural areas have developed.



Picture 1 Fröste's ancient grave in Fröstorp.

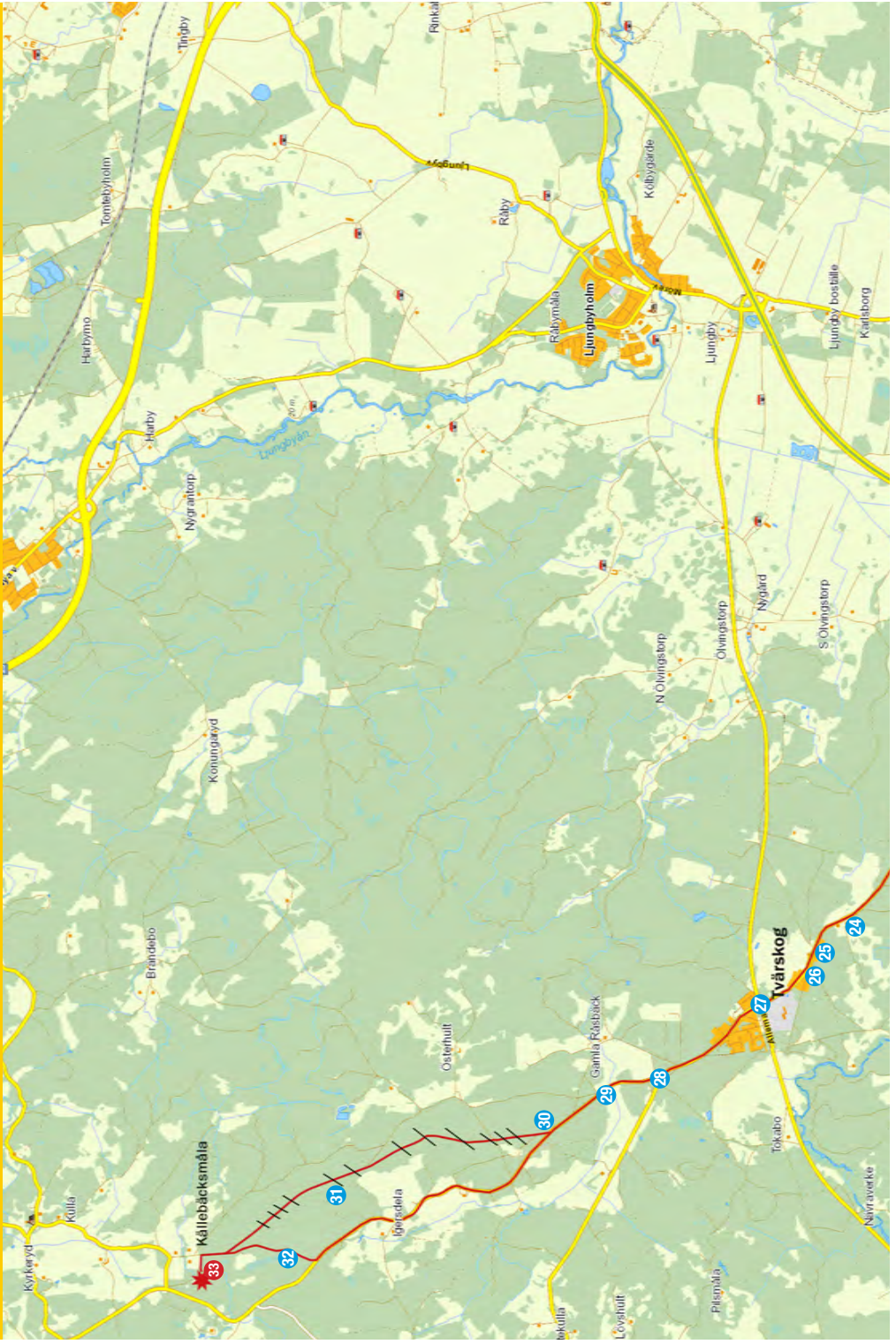
Picture 2 Mile-stone beside the Slätbackavägen in Fröstorp.

Picture 3 The five-stones-mound in Tvärskog. Borderpoint of four villages.

Picture 4 Elf-mill-stone/bowl-stone – place of sacrifice from time immemorial.



ÖSTRA SIGFRIDSLEDEN





The map shows the whole length of the path. Some parts offer alternative routes. The intention is to allow the pilgrim to vary the journey and to see more old paths and relics from ancient cultures.

The total length of the path, 28 – 30 kilometers, is also passable with a wheel chair, except the parts marked on the map with lines across the path.

Explanation of the sights on next page.

Sights along the path

1. Sigfrid's harbour/Seffre's harbour. The place where Sigfrid kneeled in the grove and praised God. The area therefore is called Lovers.
2. Lovers' alum-factory, in use 1724 – 1841. Then moved to Degerhamn, Öland.
3. Lovers' match-factory, in use 1873 – 1918
4. The chapel of Saint Laurentius. By the chapel, destroyed in 1541, there was also a church yard.
5. A natural well, used for baptism in early Christian times.
6. The round church of Voxtorp.
7. Hagbytorp, important habitation during the Stone Age.
8. The round church of Hagby. Near the church there is a grave-field from the Viking Age.
9. Holmskvarn, important community at the end of the nineteenth century, with a mill, a dairy and a tannery.
10. The Länsmansröset, a big chief-grave.
11. Elf-mill, a stone with cavities for sacrifices to the gods during the Bronze Age.
12. The Abbey, a Christian place for voyagers to spend the night. Until the seventeenth century there were processions from here to the church of Arby.
13. The church of Arby.
14. The former parsonage of Arby. Built 1880.
15. The bridge of Arby. Built 1858 – 1859. The cost was 250 rix-dollar.
16. The rock-carving-stone on the Gold-field, the only rock-carving-stone in the district of Kalmar.
17. Ekbacken, a big grave-field from the Iron Age.
18. Elf-mill near the church of Mortorp.
19. The church of Mortorp.
20. Hallen in Mortorp, a big flat rock of primary-rock granite, called Mortorp's-granite. By the rock there is a ruin of an old cellar.
21. A big judgement-ring with five stones, originally with seven stones.
22. Fröste's heap, a grave from times before Christianity. Probably the founder of the village Fröstorp.
23. A coal-furnace from the second world war, used for producing producer-gas.
24. Svaladal, a mile-stone and a cellar-ruin.
25. The five-stones-mound in Tvärskog, the border-point of four villages: Fröstorp, Tokabo, Råsbäck and Ölvingstorp.
26. The parish-hall of Tvärskog, a place for worship and children's activities etc.
27. Duvedal, a border where the old Slätbackavägen surrounded a marsh. Later it the local railway would cross here.
28. The "new" Riskastet, a place to throw twigs (in memory of someone or something).
29. The bridge of Råsbäck, an old bridge over a stream.
30. An old place to throw twigs, a place for relection and sacrifice.
31. The Pots of Igersdela, deep cavities from the Ice Age.
32. The Pluttergubbe-stone, the border-point of the villages Högebo, Källebäcksmåla and Österhult.
33. The well of Holy Sigfrid.

Routes

Human beings have always travelled between places for many different reasons: getting necessities, trading and meeting. Also they travelled with the intention to build countries and empires, to spread a message or to control a conquered land.

An early means of travel was by sea. Walking or riding on land was more complicated.

The routes often followed the coasts and the streams, and they could also follow the ridges. Travelling was especially difficult in-land because of deep forests and hilly ground. In the Middle Ages there were laws,



Tannery at Holmskvarn

regulations and duties concerning road-building.

Still today many old routes are followed, and this pilgrim-path follows these old routes to a large extent.



The churches along the path



The round church of Hagby
Built at the end of the twelfth century in order to imitate the grave- and resurrection church in Jerusalem.

The chapel of Saint Laurentius, built about 1034, was, until 1541, used together with the church of Hagby.



The round church of Voxtorp
Built in the middle of the thirteenth century and, according to legend, ordered by a woman named Lona. A pilgrim's shell, found in a grave in the church, gives evidence of the Order of Templar Knights and the connection with Santiago de Compostela.



The baptismal font of Hagby, originally belonging to either the church of Hagby or to the chapel of Saint Laurentius.



The pilgrim's shell, found in a grave in the sanctuary of the church of Voxtorp.

The wooden sculptures, two out of three sculptures, Saint Laurentius and Saint Olof, origin unknown.





The church of Arby

Originally built as a wooden stave-church at the beginning of the twelfth century. A rune-stone, Bostenenen, in the porch gives evidence that this church is one of the first in this region when Christianity was introduced.



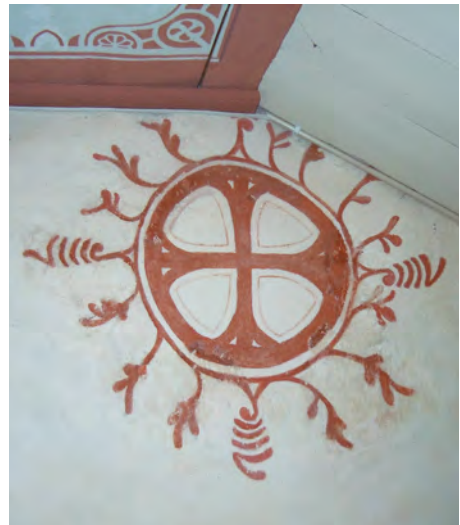
The pietà scenery in the church of Arby, shows Mary grieving with the body of her dead son.

The foundation-stone with the Mary-lily.



The church of Mortorp

Built in the middle of the thirteenth century. The foundation-stone on the outside south-east corner has a blessed Mary-lily. On the inside western wall there is a beautiful and unique consecration-cross from the Middle Age.



The consecration-cross on the inside western wall.

The eleventh century

A period of transition between what we call the Viking Age and the Middle Ages.

Important central places were situated along the coasts, especially at the mouths of the rivers. Hossmo, at the mouth of the river Ljungbyån, was an important center long before Kalmar. At the mouth of Hagbyån there was also an important harbour and a widespread colonized area.

The capitalists and politicians of those days obviously came to these important trading-centers with their possibilities of economic development.



During the eleventh century the new religion, Christianity, grew stronger in this area and affected the social life in many ways.



Saint Sigfrid's portable altar from the eleventh century. The altar is still used, e. g. at out-door services. It belongs to the church of Hagby.



Bovestenen in the church of Arby, a Christian rune-stone from the eleventh century, now kept in the porch.



Saint Sigfrid's Well

Saint Sigfrid operated at the holy wells and places already established. Near this well, today named the baptismal well of Saint Sigfrid, there was also a place for court sessions and trading and there is a grave-field from the Bronze Age with big old menhirs. Farther north, where the Slätbackavägen crosses the stream Lönnbäcken, was the Holy Cross sacrificial- and healing well. An image of a saint once appeared here, which was similar to Saint Sigfrid. This image was kept in the church of Mortorp until it was destroyed in the sixteenth century. The church therefore is considered a sacrificial and pilgrim's church. The church of Saint Sigfrid is a young church, but before it was built there was, on the site of the old cemetery, a chapel, dedicated to Saint Olof and called the chapel of Kumblamad. According to legend the chapel was built by Sigfrid.

Information and references

Sigfrid's harbour is situated 25 kilometers south of Kalmar in Kolboda, Hagby
Saint Sigfrid's Well is situated 30 kilometers west of Kalmar in Källebäcksmåla

Parking is available at Rödfyren, Kolboda (from here there is a path over a hill to Sigfrid's harbour by Hagbyån). People with disabilities can reach the harbour by car. Parking is also available by the churches and the parish halls and by the well at Källebäcksmåla. For guided wandering, transportation between the parking places can be arranged.

There are toilets in the churches (except Voxtorp), open every day 9 – 16. For information about extra opening times, see the homepage.

Firm and detachable ramps are available at the entrances to the churches.

For further information and for booking of guided wandering
please contact the parish office 0480 – 770 400

Telephone hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 9 – 12 and Tuesday 13 – 16

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For information about the local part of the municipality of Kalmar:

www.kalmar.se/sodermore tel 0480 - 45 29 00

Collaboration partners are: Södermøre Local Heritage Society

www.hembygd.se/sodermore

Mortorps Local Heritage Society • www.hembygd.se/mortorp

Local enterprises • www.sodermore.nu



The pilgrim path is built as a project within LEADER KalmarÖland.