

personal items including a sword, spear, shield, and an ornate comb.

The fact that it's an intact grave undisturbed by plundering, makes this a particularly interesting opportunity to study this kind of rare burial traditions with modern scientific analysis methods and documentation techniques. This is the first time in Sweden these kind of methods are used in relation to this grave type.

"It's very exciting since boat burials are so seldom excavated. The new methods of analysing will generate a lot of exciting

results and new knowledge. We also can compare the results with the latest discoveries about the historic site Gamla Uppsala in general", says Anton Seiler and Lena Beronius Jörpeland, who are managing the excavation.

Exhibitions

Selected parts of the finds will go on display at Gamla Uppsala Museum and Stockholm's Swedish History Museum in the summer and autumn 2019.



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Boat burials at Gamla Uppsala vicarage



Graves from the Viking Age

A unique find of two boat burials from the Viking Age (800–1050 AD) have been uncovered in Uppsala. One of the two graves was intact with remains of a man, a horse and a dog.

A boat burial or ship burial was a specific funeral practice in which the dead person was placed in a ship or boat often along with gifts like jewellery or sets of weapons and other objects. Normally the practice was to cremate the dead, but not in these cases.

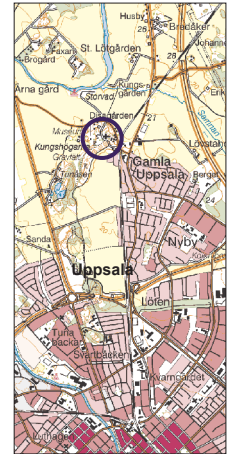
The two boat burials were found during an excavation at the vicarage in Old Uppsala (Gamla Uppsala) an area outside of the town of Uppsala. A cellar and a well from the Early Modern Period were excavated in 2018 and then one of the boats was observed nearby the more modern structures. The two boat burials have been excavated during early summer 2019 and the results are sensational.

An unusual type of burial

In Sweden only around ten boat burial sites are known previously, mainly in the provinces of Uppland and Västmanland in mid Sweden. "It was a small group of people who were buried in this way. You can suspect that they were distinguished people in the society of the time since burial ships in general are very rare," says Anton Seiler, who works at The Archaeologists, part of the National Historical Museums in Sweden.

One undisturbed grave

One of the two newly discovered graves was intact while the other was unfortunately damaged when the much later cellar was built. Remains of a man were found in one end of the intact boat burial. A horse and a dog accompanied him in death and archeologists also uncovered



Left: Osteologist Ola Magnell examining a horse skeleton in the intact grave.
Above: Osteologist Caroline Arcini with the cranium of the buried man.
Right: A couple of personal belongings from the grave with the man, a comb and a buckle.
Below: The excavation area with Old Uppsala church in the background.
Next page: An iron boat rivet "in Situ" (untouched on site). Archeobotanical analysis, a method used in the project.

