



PRESS RELEASE

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A sensational archaeological find rewrites the history of the Nordic region:

Eleven-year-old found a tooth 2100 years old in Scania's Uppåkra – the earliest evidence of human habitation

Uppåkra, the largest and richest Iron Age settlement in the Nordic region, is situated between Malmö and Lund. In the summer of 2019 the then 11-year old Ines Roos Bengtsson found something that now, after two years of careful analysis, rewrites the history of Uppåkra and the Nordic region.

Ines found a tooth, the first human remains from the earliest Iron Age. And it was not just any tooth – it was a baby tooth. A tooth lost by a child and found by a child, more than two thousand years later. With “Ines’ tooth” a further puzzle piece can be laid in the history of Uppåkra – the Nordic region’s largest and most important center of power during more than a thousand years.

Ines Roos Bengtsson’s find, which has amazed researchers, took place on 4 June 2019, when her class from Nyvtång School in Dalby visited Sparbanken Skåne’s Archaeology School at Uppåkra. Her curious eyes fell upon something in the earth: a tooth.

After two years of careful analysis, including carbon 14 dating, researchers could establish that the tooth was at least 2100 years old, i.e. from about 100 BC. Moreover, it was a baby tooth, which means it was lost by a child, and over two thousand years later, was found by a child.

”We had no idea how old the tooth was, but when we got the dating we jumped for joy!”, says **Sofia Winge, archaeologist and science pedagogue at the Uppåkra Foundation.**

”Ines’ find is exciting because we finally have human remains from the time of Uppåkra’s oldest period. But the most important is that the tooth shows the potential for further research. If such an important find can be made with relatively simple methods, we can only imagine what we will find in the 99,8 percent of Uppåkra that has as yet not been excavated”, says **Dick Harrison, professor of history at Lund University and member of the scientific board of the Uppåkra Foundation.**

Uppåkra is the largest and richest Iron Age settlement in the Nordic region. It controlled a large part of southern Scandinavia during more than 1000 years, from ca. 100 BC to 1000 AD. Only 0,2 percent of the 40 hectares large area (the equivalent of 80 football fields) has been excavated, but has already yielded a staggering 35,000 finds.

The Uppåkra Archaeological Centre Foundation is active at the site; its purpose is to convey the important history of the place. Sparbanken Skåne facilitates school children’s experience outside the classroom; through an initiative taken together with the Foundation thousands of school children each year can dig like real archaeologists, with the possibility of excavating authentic objects.

”Children have an important role to play in putting together the puzzle pieces of our history. Our ambition is to generate an enthusiasm with children, for them to want to participate and

contribute, and in that way hopefully promote future research”, says **Karin Nilsson, the executive member of the Uppåkra Foundation.**

”One item on my bucket list is that I’d really like to be mentioned in the history books”, says **Ines Roos Bengtsson**, today 13 years old.

That item can Ines strike from the list. She has now achieved that.

”Since the start 2018 more than 10,000 pupils from different parts of Scania have participated in the Archaeology School. The experience for the children and for the pedagogy at the site has been a success from the beginning”, says Björn Ovander, bank manager for Sparbanken Skåne.

Professor Dick Harrison explains the significance of Uppåkra (4 min):
<https://youtu.be/3aTroAMiAVk>

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The Uppåkra Arkeologiska Center Foundation is a non-profit organization founded in 2009. Its purpose is to provide the public and the research community with knowledge about the site and its history. The Foundation has representatives from the municipalities of Staffanstorp and Lund, as well as from Region Skåne, the diocese of Lund, Uppåkra congregation, and the municipal real estate company Staffanstorps hus.

Sparbanken Skånes Archeology School: Sparbanken Skåne uses some of its surplus to support local initiatives with associations, culture, and sports. The Archaeology Scholl at Uppåkra is one of the bank’s many initiatives.