



Prehistoric Eura

From the Stone Age to the Crusade Period



The ancient times live on through many events

In Eura, each year there are events held which give you a tangible feel of the life in the ancient times. In the program is included, among other things, the market square of the Viking Age, which is usually held in spring. In the Viking village of Härkännummi a summer weekend is lived in the style of the Viking Age as part of the "Into the Ancient Times"-event (=Muinaisaikaan-tapahtuma). The 5th-grade students of Satakunta are invited in the early autumn to Eura to participate in a Viking skill contest.

In addition to these, a lot more events are hold during a year. The information concerning the events, lectures and seminars such as exact times and dates you can find, among other places, from the event calendar of the Eura municipality www.eura.fi.



Prehistoric Eura

The fascinating Iron Age, dating back a thousand years, tells you, through burial findings, what life was like then.

All the knowledge of people's lives during the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age are based on archaeological excavations. The many settlements of Eura, dating back to the Stone Age, the magnificent cairns of the Bronze Age and the exceptional burial customs during the Iron Age have been the focus of interest for archaeologists for over 150 years. The amount of research material is vast. From the point of view of prehistory, Eura is one of the most interesting sites in Finland.

Especially the Iron Age is a period of interest in Eura – during the 6th and 7th century, the inhumation cemeteries were in use only in the areas of Eura and Köyliö in Finland. The excavations have provided a wealth of information on ordinary life during the late Iron Age. The deceased were put to the graves clad in their festive garments, with exquisite jewellery included. Men had weapons and scythes, women had knives and sickles. Food for the journey was packed into clay jars.

In other words, the earth hides many kinds of treasures whose secrets the diverse selection of Eura makes known. We will tell you of the most important ancient sites, routes, events, reconstructions, of the ancient village and exhibitions, any of which you can peruse and visit. As you can see, in Eura the ancient times are in full swing. We hope you enjoy your stay!

Get on and learn at the Naurava Lohikäärme

The information centre of ancient history, the Naurava Lohikäärme (Laughing Dragon in English) is located in downtown Eura. In the center visitors of all ages are welcome and interesting experiences abound. Familiarize yourself with the items and clothing reconstructed on the basis of archaeological excavations, such as the ancient dress of a lady of the house or a man's cloak.

You can try your hand in the prehistoric handcrafts, such as looming with a warp-weighted loom or spinning thread with a spindle. Various interesting multimedia-presentations will sweep you into the life of a person in the prehistoric times. The large photographic works made by photographer Okko Oinonen are also worth experiencing.

The Naurava Lohikäärme is open daily during summertime and December, although not on Mondays and not on holidays. In other times, it is open from Thursday to Saturday. If you want, you can arrange special opening hours by calling tel. (02) 8399 0269.



The name Laughing Dragon comes from a pattern on a spear-head found in Osmanmäki – the tube-shaped part of the iron spear is decorated with a silvered dragon ornament.

www.eura.fi/naurava





The masterpieces of craftsmen as souvenirs



In the shop of the Naurava Lohikäärme there are a lot of things to watch and wonder. You can find many charming souvenirs and gift ideas.

www.eura.fi/naurava

The store of the Naurava Lohikäärme sells products which are based on the rich ancient findings of Eura. Especially the products of local handcraft professionals are on sale. The selection includes, among other things, a variety of textiles, cards, jewellery, clay pottery and drinking horns. Also, there is literature about Eura's prehistory available.

The magnificent pieces of handcraftmanship bring echoes from hundreds of years past, from the times of the great sword and the toe ring, and further from the past. Our products are however mainly things that can be used today as well.

The store follows the opening hours of the Naurava Lohikäärme, open daily in summertime and in December but not on Mondays or on holidays. In other times it is open from Thursday to Saturday. You can arrange special opening hours by calling tel. (02) 8399 0269.

In the same premises is located also the lunch restaurant Idylli, where you can get a refreshing cup of coffee or a tasty meal.



The dress of the lady of the house of Eura is both beautiful and a living book of prehistory. It reflects the wealth which was achieved during the Viking Age. It has been deduced that the mistress was approx. 45 years old, almost 170 cm tall woman clad in her festive garments. The dress' reconstruction based on the burial find also tells of the high social standing of the woman. The bearer of such a beautiful dress most assuredly was not a slave to her husband but a hardworking and respected member of her community.



“The ancient park” of Luistari – a great treasure

One of Eura’s and whole of Finland’s most important sites of ancient remains is located in Luistari at Kauttua. This ancient park dating to the Iron Age is the greatest examined burial site of Finland – over 1300 graves have been found in the area. The best known of these graves is the so-called grave of the mistress of Eura. Based on this find the dress of the mistress of Eura has been reconstructed.

The later Iron Age (600-1200 AD) was a period of great wealth in Luistari. Exquisite weapons, the foreign styles of clothing, weights of purses and silver coins tell tales of the trade connections of the inhabitants (of Luistari). Also, a lot of burial cairns dating to 500 BC are in the area.

These days Luistari is an ancient park, which is the grazing ground for sheep in the summertime. You can get to know the stories of Luistari written by PhD Pirkko-Liisa Lehtosalo-Hilander, the stories which tell of a community’s life in the Iron Age. In the summertime, there is an in-door photograph exhibition of the excavations.



At summer, one can get to know the stories of Luistari and an exhibition presenting the excavations of the ancient graves in the area.



The grave of a chieftain from the 6th century at Käräjämäki

Based on folklore the summit of the Käräjämäki hill in Eura was a site for a medieval court (Käräjämäki, literally court + hill). These twelve stones were said to have been seats for the jurors. Based on archaeological excavations it is known, however, that the "court circle" formed by the stones is in fact a grave from the Iron Age. The burial site of Käräjämäki dates mainly to the end of the Iron Age (600-1200 AD). The dozens of visible depressions in the ground are marks of inhumation burials from the late Iron Age.

One of the most interesting graves was found in the north end of the Käräjämäki, on the other side of the road. It is a grave of a chieftain. Richly equipped grave dating to the end of the 6th century has been reconstructed. The warrior had been buried in a wooden coffin and with him to the afterlife had been left a great ironed shield, a sword with a wooden handle, a knife and a spear. Also a mounting belt, a bronze ring and an unused sharpening stone made of quartzite, the last of which was interpreted as a sign that this was indeed a chieftain.



Käräjämäki was an inhabited island during the Stone Age. What was thought to be a "court circle" according to folklore, was in fact a grave from the Iron Age.



The hill fort watches over life

Hill forts had an important station in the lives of villages in the Iron Age. The hill fort in Kauttua, Eura is partly a steep hill rising from a field of plains and from its summit was vigil kept over important travelling routes during the Iron Age. From the hill fort there was a line of sight to almost all burial sites and places in Eura at the end of the Iron Age. It can be presumed that many villages were located nearby. A signal fire was lit on the mountain the case of a danger and it was the place to flee to when enemies threatened.

The hill fort of Kauttua has been examined only a little. From there have been discovered, among other things, iron slag, pieces of knives and clay pottery. The objects date the hill fort to the turning point of 8th and 9th century.

Visitors can climb up the steep hill even today. In the summit there is still an approx. 63 metres long stony fortification which circles the top of the hill. On top of the stone wall there has been a wooden construction. The summit is a popular visiting place and the information boards can be found there.



One climbing to the hill fort can immerse oneself in the life during the ancient times. From the hill, travelling routes and activities of the villages have been observed.



Time Travelling to Prehistory

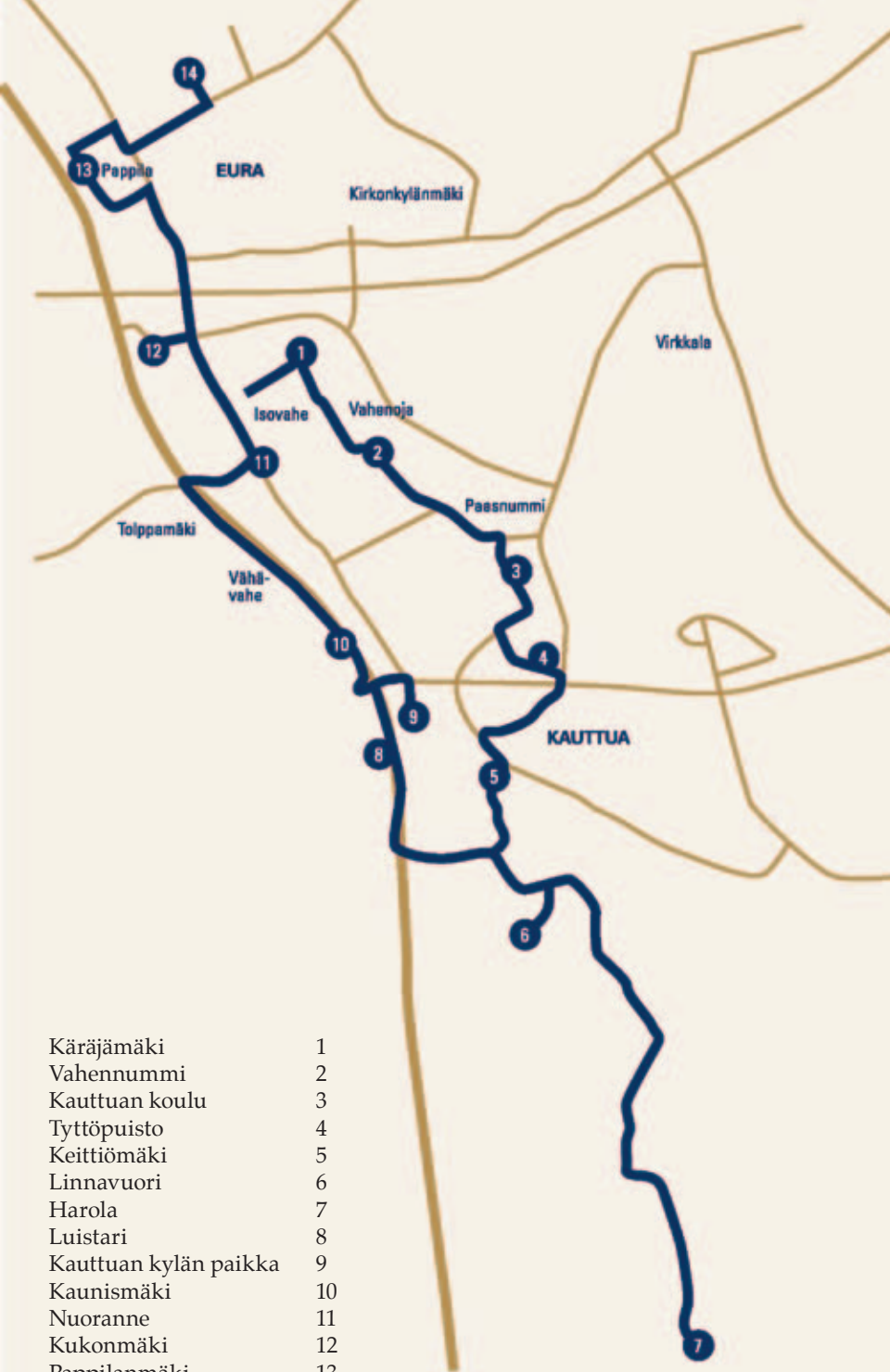
What are two women doing in the summertime 4846 summers ago on the beach of Käräjämäki, as the sea washes the rocks of the shore nearby? What was a man thinking on top of the Kauttua hill fort 1129 years ago? It's Iron Age and the wind cuts the man's knees.

The ancient path of Eura, called Time Travel to Prehistory follows time just as its name suggests. It makes the cultural heritage near us known in an interesting way. The route takes you to the Stone Age of Eura and takes you to see the life in the Iron Age. The ancient path passes through the major ancient sites of the main "suburbs" of the area. You can immerse yourself in the life the ancient man and get to know what life was like in Eura in the Stone Age or at the end of the Iron Age.



Time Travel to Prehistory-route is lined with 12 information signs. The texts of the signs were written by Aira Savisaari and the pictures were made by Tuija Solin.

Time Travel to Prehistory-route follows cycling roads for the main part but in a few places it has been lined to follow a path that can only be travelled by foot. The route goes through a terrain that is relatively easy to cross.



- | | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Kärjämäki | 1 |
| Vahennummi | 2 |
| Kauttuan koulu | 3 |
| Tyttöpuisto | 4 |
| Keittiömäki | 5 |
| Linnavuori | 6 |
| Harola | 7 |
| Luistari | 8 |
| Kauttuan kylän paikka | 9 |
| Kaunismäki | 10 |
| Nuoranne | 11 |
| Kukonmäki | 12 |
| Pappilanmäki | 13 |
| Lauhianmäki | 14 |



The ancient remains of Harola, Kauttua

At the Harola, in an area covering some 50 acres, all together 690 burial cairns from the Iron Age and three wall-shaped stone constructions are known. Some of the cairns have a clear construction pattern to them - many of them have what is called an "eye stone", meaning that the cairn has been built around one larger rock - in some a neatly piled surrounding wall of stones is visible.

Upon examining the cairns, among other things pieces of clay potter, iron slag and bones of animals have been discovered. Based on the pieces of clay pottery the cairns examined have been dated to the early years of the Iron Age - 200-575 AD. Human bones have been found but only a small handful of pieces and based on this all of the cairns are not seen as graves but part of them were linked to making of food or smelting of iron.



The cairns are dated to the beginning of the Iron Age. All of the cairns are not for actual burial purposes but are related to the making of iron and early farming.

The nature and ancient remains of Harola are easy to get close to because a path goes through the entire area and is lined by information signs.

A large part of the cairns are located in the shades of common hazel growing in the protected meadows area of Harola. Responsible of the maintenance of the area are both the National Board of Antiquities and Metsähallitus.



Kuninkaanhauta (the King's Grave) – the largest burial cairn in Finland

The King's Grave in Panelia is known as the largest burial cairn in Finland. Its diameter is 40 m and it's almost 4,5 m in height. The cairn is located in a visible place next to the village road of Panelia, on the edge of a wide plain. When the burial site was first constructed, an ancient gulf filled the nearby area.

The internal construction of the King's Grave is little known, because it has not been examined. The cairn can have been a place for both the cremation and inhumation burials and it might have been used by the same line of descendants for several hundreds of years. Based on the location and the outer shape of the cairn it has been deduced that it's approx. 3500 years old and thus dates to the early half of the Bronze Age.

An excavation was conducted right next to the King's Grave in 1987-88. The project revealed signs of a settlement - fire pits and remnants of some kind of huts. The settlement is younger than the cairn itself because it was dated to around the birth of Christ. According to folklore a king has been buried under the cairn, hence the name.



The age of the King's grave is estimated to be even 3500 years; this would place its construction to the early half of the Bronze Age.



The Bronze Route of Panelia village

Satakunta belongs to Western, that is Scandinavian bronze culture. It has been in direct and stable contact to Scandinavia, from where bronze objects and a new burial custom, the building of cairns, have been acquired.

It is doubtful that anywhere else in Finland there are as many cairns from the Bronze Age in such close proximity as there are in Panelia. In place of the wide plains around the village there was a gulf in a sea during the Bronze Age, 1500-500 BC, and the sheltered shores were very suitable for settlement. The shores of the ancient gulf are still today home to a chain of cairns, which in the north goes all the way to Nakkila and Harjavalta.

It is typical for the area that the cairns have been built on lightly sloping hillsides near the shoreline of Bronze Age. Another typical characteristic is the exceptionally large size of the cairns. In the Panelia area there are still known over 100 cairns dating to the Bronze Age in addition to knowledge of dozens of cairns that have been destroyed in time.



At six of the Bronze Age cairns of Panelia there are information signs which tell the visitor what life was like when the cairns were built.

Kuninkaanhauta	1
Juhola	2
Sepänmäki	3
Lammashaka	4
Loukomäki	5
Ruohomäki	6

Harjavaltaan

43

VÄHÄSAARENMAA

Paneliantie

Loukovainiontie

4

5

Kaskistontie

Kirkko

PANELIA

Ruohomäen-
kulmantie

1

2

Mykorantie

6

Asemantie

43

KAHALANKULMA

3

Turajärvi

Euraan



The jewellery of the dress was brought from the east and the west. The necklace has, among other things, 12 silver coins of which many are from east, the Arabian Peninsula, Middle Russia, Samarkand, Tashkent and from England and Germany. The youngest of the coins is apparently from Britain, between years 1018-1024, which can be used to deduce that the woman's grave dates to the time period after those years.



Grab your laptop and join a lesson in prehistory

Digital guided tours and visualizations have been part of the telling of Eura's prehistory. In exceptionally grand and many layered prehistory tells of the changes in the life and environment of the river valley for thousands of years. This story of ancient time has been told in Eura in a variety of ways, one of which is the possibility to use the newest computer technology while moving in the outdoors.

The cross-country routes of Eura are used in conjunction with small computers. The routes follow, for example, the terrain of the hunters in the Stone Age 5000 years ago, get to know the landscape of the Bronze Age (3000 years ago), the age of great stone constructions and finally go in step with the same paths as the people of the Iron Age in their world, 1000 years ago.

The routes criss-cross the prehistoric sites of the area, such as the Prehistoric Information Centre Naurava Lohikäärme, Käräjämäki, the Stone Age area of Kauttua and the cemetery of Luistari. They have been designed for schools as lessons of 2-3 hours and can be used by the locals as well as tourists.



PULU-project takes the students into the wild to learn. The prehistory route goes by 15-20 sites and it can be visited fully or in smaller parts.

Into the Ancient Times-event promises colour and excitement. The guests can follow, for example, combat between Viking warriors or participate themselves in archery.



The Viking village of Härkänurmi – take part in the life



The Viking village of Härkänurmi is built on the shores of the lake Pyhäjärvi in the style of Iron Age, surrounded by “a pole-fence”, in which the family and relatives of the renowned lady of Eura live their lives according to the ways of the Viking Age. The village lives in its way and guests visit when they do... and get to be part of the experience when they do.

The enterprise Pohjolan Muinaiselämys organises experience journeys into the Iron Age. The journey is planned according to the wishes of the customer. For starters, it can include a guided visit to the Prehistoric Information Centre Naurava Lohikäärme and the ancient sites in the downtown area of Eura.

In the village of Härkänurmi, the visitor gets to know the inhabitants, hear stories, participates in the tasks in the village smithy, baking bread, spinners house... The inhabitants offer their visitors the food and drinks of the Viking Age.



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Viking camp school – learning by experiencing



An ancient camp school is a learning package stacked with experiences about the life a thousand years ago, in the Viking Age circa 800-1050 AD. It fits children of all ages, especially those in grade school.

The pupils will see what the terms for living were during the Iron Age; what cooking and working were like. The students will participate in the everyday life of the camp – baking bread on stones near the fireplace, making fire with ancient flint and tinder, manufacturing ancient fishing utensils and hearing the stories of the village.

The program of the camp school is made based on the wishes of the orderer. Lodgings are provided by the Mansikki camping centre.

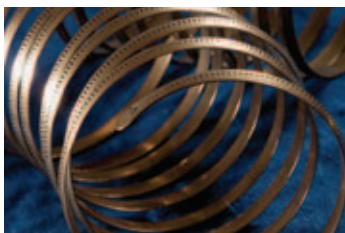


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The fabrics in the dress of the lady of the house of Eura are woolen and their colors come from using mainly Finnish plant colors, nettle, heather and birch leaves. Part of the coloring has however been done by using indigo-plant color originating from India. This means that back in the day Eura was situated alongside an international trade route.

The lady of the house of Eura in ancient dress



The dresses are made by the ancient dress committee of Eura. For additional information contact Irmeli Pere, 0500 591 748.

The starting point for the ancient dress of Eura has been the archaeological findings of the Luistari cemetery. In the excavations of summer 1969 and grave was unveiled to the researchers which contained all the jewelry that are seen today as decorating the ancient dress of Eura.

The find has been dated to 1020-1050 AD. While reconstructing the dress the starting point has been the archaeological observations. They have been supported by analyses and the knowledge concerning the history of clothing. It is Finland's first ancient dress that is based completely on archaeological finds and made under the supervision of researchers.

The cloak of the Viking man of Eura has been reconstructed based on the burial finding of Luistari. The grave, which is dated to the early 10th century, also contained a yellow silken shirt and other grave goods.

An ancient remain requires maintenance



The Section for Site Management of the National Board of Antiquities and the municipality of Eura maintain the best known archaeological sites in the area.

Maintaining ancient remains means the management of an archaeological site and its surroundings. The primary goal is the protection of ancient remains and also important is promoting their visibility and use for teaching purposes. The National Board of Antiquities is responsible for the protection and maintenance of ancient remains.

Maintenance once begun is continued regularly. Supporting maintenance includes a repeated clearing of undergrowth and mowing. In the case of larger ancient remains areas grazing would be the most recommended and natural further maintenance. The ancient remain and its surroundings are a living and continuously changing whole.



The apron was the most exquisite part of the dress and it was ornamented exquisitely visibly. The whole apron could be framed in its entirety with valuable bronze spirals. The cloth used was usually finer and thinner wool than the regular dress cloth.

Read more about the prehistory of Eura

Pirkko-Liisa Lehtosalo-Hilander:
Kalastajista kauppanaisiin, Euran esihistoria

Pirkko-Liisa Lehtosalo-Hilander:
Euran puku ja muut muinaisvaatteet

Viikinkejä Eurassa?
Pohjoismaisia näkökulmia Suomen esihistoriaan

Kari Uotila (toim.):
Avauksia Ala-Satakunnan esihistoriaan

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