

CASAS DE DON PEDRO HERMITAGE AND CHAPEL OF SAN SEBASTIÁN – “EL SANTO” DISTRICT URBAN CENTER – 06770 CASAS DE DON PEDRO (BADAJOZ)

DESCRIPTION

On the one hand, these are the remains of the former Ermita de San Sebastián, located in the urban centre of Casas de Don Pedro, currently in a state of ruin and considered a significant element of the municipality’s lost historical heritage. On the other hand, there is a chapel to which the image of San Sebastián was transferred, located in a building used for other activities.

HISTORY

The Ermita de San Sebastián formed part of the group of religious buildings that once existed in Casas de Don Pedro, at a time when the town had several hermitages dedicated to worship, both within the urban area and in more distant locations. Documentary references place its religious activity at least in the mid-17th century, suggesting an earlier origin. In 1791, according to historical documentation, the hermitage housed the image of San Sebastián, to whom the local residents paid devotion in procession on 20 January. This devotion was linked to the belief in his protection against epidemics, especially the plague, which explains his choice as patron saint of the place at that time.

Over time, the hermitage lost its religious function and the building was adapted to new uses, eventually housing the town’s first electrical generator. This transformation led to its popular designation as the “electricity factory”, reflecting a significant change in the function of the space, from religious to technical use. Eventually, the gradual abandonment of the building led to its current ruined condition, with only structural remains preserved that allow its former configuration to be identified.

HISTORICAL AND ARTISTIC DESCRIPTION

The hermitage followed a simple single-nave typology with a rectangular chancel, built with traditional materials such as slate masonry and brick, characteristic of local architecture. Today, only remains of the walls and part of the vault are preserved, allowing its original structure to be inferred, although without significant decorative elements. Its character was fundamentally functional, in line with other rural or semi-urban hermitages.

The interest of the ensemble lay not so much in its artistic value as in its ability to document the evolution of the use of the space, from its initial religious function to its later reuse as technical infrastructure linked to the municipality's electrification.

After the disappearance of the hermitage, the image of San Sebastián was moved elsewhere and is currently housed in an austere chapel located on part of the ground floor of the Centro Socio Cultural Antonio Cabrera Delgado. The chapel is accessed from the side of the building through a simple doorway. According to the inscription on the entrance door, the chapel has functioned as such since 20 January 2014.

RELEVANT FIGURES RELATED TO THE POI

The former hermitage is dedicated to San Sebastián, a saint of great relevance in Christian tradition, especially associated with protection against epidemics and diseases. In the historical context of Casas de Don Pedro, his figure acquired particular importance as he was considered the protector of the municipality against the plague, which led to his proclamation as patron saint at certain historical moments and consolidated his worship among the population.

The new chapel is located in the same building as the Centro Socio Cultural Antonio Cabrera Delgado. Antonio Cabrera Delgado, born in Casas de Don Pedro, was a priest and canon of the Primatial Cathedral of Toledo, and died in 2022 in Talavera de la Reina.

MOVABLE HERITAGE

No movable elements associated with the former hermitage have been preserved due to the ruined condition of the building and the loss of its original religious use.

INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

The collective memory linked to devotion to San Sebastián and the former processions held in his honour, as well as the persistence of the toponym "El Santo" to designate the neighbourhood where the hermitage was located, constitute significant elements of the municipality's intangible heritage.

LOCATION MAP



GRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



Remains of the former Ermita de San Sebastián.



Detail of one of the windows where the original stone-and-brick construction can be observed.



Remains of one of the load-bearing walls of the former hermitage.



Blocked-up window in one of the walls of the former hermitage.



Socio-Cultural Centre Antonio Cabrera Delgado, where the chapel is located.

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Entrance door to the Chapel of San Sebastián.



Interior of the Chapel of San Sebastián.
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Altar of the chapel and image of San Sebastián on the left.
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