

THE SAINT CROSS HERMITAGE. MAHOYA.

- ❖ The current construction was built in the first decade of the 20th Century, although there was a smaller one previously. In the sacristy there is a cupboard in which the date 1910 is carved. The hermitage has undergone changes and repairs through its history. According to the tradition, a reliquary cross appeared or was discovered in this place, in an uncertain date, possibly between the 16th and 17th centuries.
- ❖ The celebration of the party in honour of the Saint Cross of May has been documented from 1770. The celebration consists of bathing in the water of the dike, which flows here, procession, music and soldiery. The soldiery consists of honouring with salutes of the arquebuses and the flag rolling: captains, pages and arquebusiers. The festivity of the exaltation of the Saint Cross is also celebrated on the 14th of September, accompanied by a mass, a procession, music and salutes of the arquebuses.
- ❖ The altarpiece and its effigies: Christ Crucified, Mother of Sorrows and Saint John the Baptist, which are made of plaster, were made in the decade of 1940. This altarpiece comes from the Major Seminary of Saint Fulgentius of Murcia and it was placed here in the year 1980. The altarpiece is from the 1960's, but it had been located in the Saint Joseph Church previously. The tabernacle and the stained glass windows, as well as the forge lamp are from the 1970's. The forge lamp was removed in 2007. The main door was also replaced, since it was damaged. The bronze lamps of the altarpiece were placed here in 2012.
- ❖ In 1996, the reproduction of the reliquary was made- the Saint Cross- which had been confiscated in 1936. The Saint Cross is a work made by the bronze sculptress Maite Defrut and mechanised by E. Marco. The carved work of the cloud and the angels was made by Jesús Azcoitia and M. Marquet. The paintings alluding to the traditional find of the Saint Cross in this place were painted by L. Molina in 2007. The people's clothes are from the beginning of the 20th century, being an anachronism regarding the traditional legend. The most distant origins of the confraternity of the Saint Cross of Abanilla date from 1564.
- ❖ Other figures and furnishings: The Sacred Heart of Jesus is from the 1960's and Saint Joseph and Our Lady of Lourdes are from 2010. The pump organ, which was in Abanilla previously, was acquired in 1941. The clock was placed here in 1997 and the outside tile, a work of Cayetano Ramírez López, with verses of Salvador Doménech Lloréns, in 1998.
- ❖ Previously to the construction of this hermitage, the Saint Cross was bathed directly in the dike "Mayor", which flows behind the hermitage itself. Nowadays, the Saint Cross is bathed on the balcony, although the water is still taken from the same dike, whose spring is in the place of El Chícamo. The water is taken in a diversion dam whose archaeological history dates back to the 12th century. It flows through gravity and is brought through dikes and irrigation channels. This water irrigates the places of Mahoya, Sahués and El Olivar (olive grove). They are measured in time fractions and its origins are very ancient, maybe millenary and of an extreme accuracy and framework.

FOOTNOTE: In the bookshops of Abanilla, there are copies of the book "Mahoya y su historia" ("Mahoya and its history"), written by Antonio Martínez Ramírez, published in 2002, ISBN-84-607-4602-X. The reader can learn more details about this hermitage and its surroundings.

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