11. FISHERMEN'S UNION BUILDING

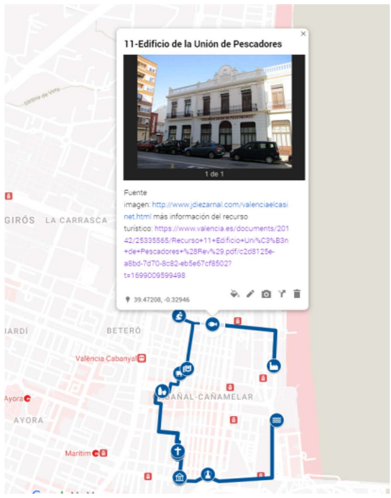
TOURIST ROUTE AROUND CABANYAL-EL CANYAMELAR-CAP DE FRANÇA

GENERAL MAP OF THE ROUTE



SITUATION OF THE TOURIST RESOURCE





A symbol of the workers' and fishermen's autarchy at the beginning of the 20th century and also of its progress. Known as El Casinet, it was built in 1909, according to a project designed by the master builder Juan Bautista Gosálvez Navarro, and is one of the most emblematic Valencian modernist buildings in the neighbourhood. Gosálvez was a notable architect whose links with El Cabanyal went beyond the professional sphere to the point that he became mayor in January 1890, being forced to resign due to health problems that same month. He was also the author of other emblematic buildings such as the Lonja del Pescado and many other projects that defined the evolution of this neighbourhood.

It is a large building with three façades facing three different streets, occupying almost the entire block. It has a ground floor and a single storey. Its ornamentation is very sober and austere on the ground floor. The large openings served as shop windows for the sale of products. It was distributed in an open-plan space used as a store for products and the storage of fishing equipment, and a staircase at the back gave access to the upper floor. On the first floor, on the other hand, the modernist-style floral decoration is somewhat more profuse, for example, on the iron railings of the balconies. Particularly noticeable is the ornamental change at the top of the building, with a gable with a central oculus with plant ornamentation and a balustrade, markedly Art Nouveau.

It was originally built to house the headquarters of the Sociedad El Progreso Pescador, a workers' cooperative founded in 1902, after going on strike and separating from the Marina Auxiliante, which belonged to the bosses. The purpose of this society was to supply and provide fishermen with basic necessities in exchange for payment in kind. Fencing classes were also given for their defence, a sport with a long tradition in the neighbourhood. Other social and cultural activities, organised by different recreational clubs as diverse as hiking or football, theatre, dance and even a café, were also held there. In 1924, this society encountered serious financial problems, which is why it was decided to merge the cooperative with the Fishermen's Union (a pension fund aimed at covering retired fishermen), which would pay all the debts in exchange for the ownership of the building. After the takeover, the cooperative finally disappeared as such, the boats were sold and it only continued to function as a pension fund.

It was also one of the icons of blasquism in its most flourishing stage, during which time Blasco Ibáñez gave famous rallies from its balconies. For a time it was used as the Republican Educational Centre of the Pueblo Nuevo del Mar Society.

After the outbreak of the Civil War and its outcome in 1939, the Fishermen's Union, due to its republican mentality and its links to both workers' movements and the CNT, was extinguished. The Spanish Falange took over the building during the Franco dictatorship and over the years all the different socio-cultural activities that had been carried out there disappeared. The only activity that has survived is the Sociedad Musical Unión de Pescadores (SMUP), founded in 1926, from the split of the old Patronato del Pueblo Nuevo del Mar, a band whose origins date back to 1880 and which was socially legalised in 1894. The society is currently the owner of the building and continues its work of training future musicians in this historic symbol of the neighbourhood.

In 2017, Valencia City Council began renovation work on the building with the aim of enhancing the value of the Valencian modernist style building and safeguarding its original features. These works were carried out through a collaboration agreement between the Sociedad Musical Unión de Pescadores and Valencia City Council.

PICTURES



Photo 1: The building in antiquity. Source: https://www.valenciaextra.com/es/valencia/el- casinet-un-edificio-emblematico-del-cabanyal_39503_102.html



Photo 2: 1915 Ca - Meeting in a place in the Marítimo that could be the Casinet - Rafael Solaz Archive. Source: https://valenciablancoynegro.blogspot.com/2014/12/el-casinet- del-cabanyal.html