Comune Cassinelle

Category: Municipality

business description: Setting off from the main square we encounter the Church of San Defendente which preserves the statue of the Black Madonna of Loreto in the central niche of the high altar. At the end of the right nave, in a glass urn, the remains of San Defendente, transferred here from Rome in 1742. A legend tells of the arrival of the Saint's remains in Cassinelle: the body was donated to the village by one of his devotees, who entrusted the abbot of Molare to deliver it to the people of Cassinelle. Once the body arrived to Voltri, the dockworkers who took charge of it got lost and arrived in Molare. Here, the inhabitants sent them towards their church, but the glass urn got so heavy that it could no longer be moved; following many attempts and frightened by what had happened, the people who wanted to hold on to the body gave directions for Cassinelle, where the remains arrived at the church where they were meant to be. In the highest part of the town stands Oratorio of San Giovanni Battista, seat of the Confraternity by the same name; it presents a Baroque facade and a simple interior, which preserves a collection of processional crucifixes. Close to the cemetery is the Church of Santa Margherita: the former parish church was completed around 1710; now de-consecrated, originally it had three naves but today only the central nave remains. It is now the seat of the Museum of the Territory. On the road which connects Cassinelle to Bandita is the Church of the Madonnina, built in 1854 to thank the Virgin for having saved the village from a cholera epidemic.

History
The remains of the castle and walls of Cassinelle, burned to the ground around 1830, are evidence that the area was fortified during the Middle Ages. In the thirteenth century the territory was controlled by the Marquises del Bosco and later passed to the Malaspina; it was then occupied by the Sforza and then by the Duke of Mantua; from the early eighteenth century it passed to Victor Amadeus II of Savoy and became a fiefdom, first of the Gentili of Genoa and later of the Spinola of Lerma.

Curiosities
From the Chiappini area, it is possible to observe a succession of rock layers consisting of medium-grained cemented sand (arenite), interspersed with conglomerate layers containing pebbles of varying sizes. These Lower Oligocene sediments (33.9 -28.1 million years ago) were deposited in a coastal environment along an ancient sea that occupied the Tertiary Piedmont Basin (BTP). Sediments deposited within this ancient basin can also be seen at the surface in parts of the Langhe, Alto Monferrato and part of what is now Liguria.

The pebbles found in the thicker layers include several types of dark green rock known as ophiolites (commonly known as green stones). Their distinctive color is reminiscent of snakeskin - hence the name ophiolite, from the Greek ophis ("snake") and lithos ("stone"). Ophiolitic rocks formed during the Jurassic and Cretaceous periods (around 170-66 million years ago), in an ocean that has since disappeared. They originated from basaltic lava that erupted continuously onto the ocean floor, where it cooled and solidified, much as it does today along the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. Later, these rocks were involved in the formation of the Alpine chain and here, during the Lower Oligocene age (34-28 million years ago), they were exposed and subjected to erosion. The resulting fragments were carried by rivers towards the coast, where they were gradually shaped and smoothed by the constant action of the waves, eventually becoming well-rounded pebbles, much like those found today along the Ligurian Coast

The distinctive “step-like” profile is the result of differential erosion acting on layers with varying degrees of cementation. The harder, more strongly cemented layers protrude from the slope, while the thinner, less cemented layers are more easily eroded by rain, wind, snow and ice, as well as by repeated drying caused by the sun, and the activity of animals digging burrows or nests.

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Assessment

Pubblica in sezione Territorio

Photos



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