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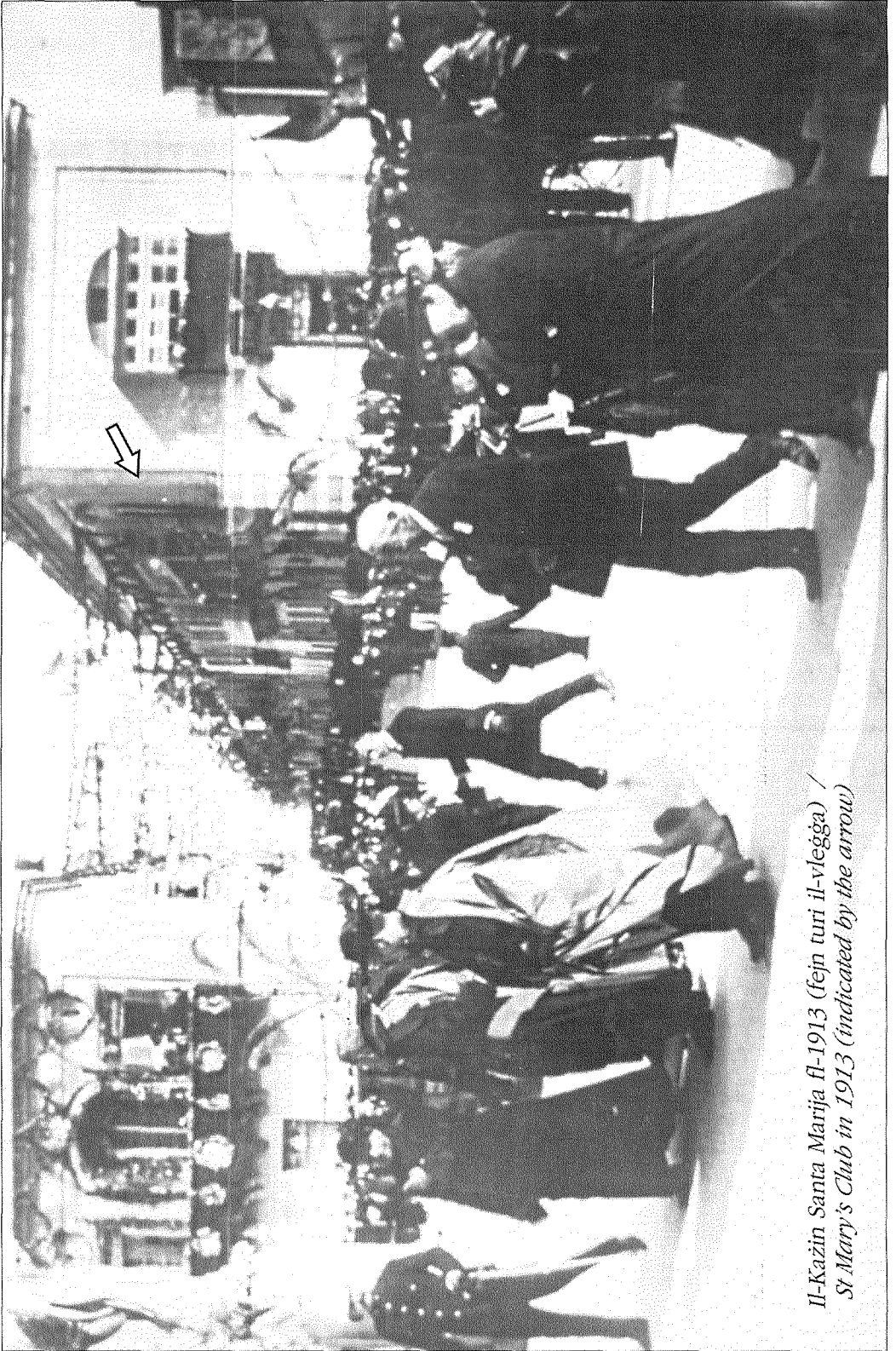
Grazio A. Grech

Il-bidu u l-ewwel żminijiet
tas-Socjetà Filarmonika Santa Marija tal-Mosta

*The origins and the first years
of the St Mary Philharmonic Society of Mosta*



*L-ewwel spalletti u l-arma tal-beritta tal-Banda Santa Marija /
The first shoulder straps and cap badge of the St Mary Band*



Il-Każin Santa Marija fl-1913 (fejn turi il-vlegġa) /
St Mary's Club in 1913 (indicated by the arrow)

Xi kittieba jgharrfuna li wara li xi bandisti nfirdu minn hdan l-għaqda mużikali 'Nicolò Isouard' tal-Mosta, dawn, fl-1905, waqqfu għaqda mużikali ohra fil-Mosta, u b'hekk f'dawk iż-żminijiet kien hemm żewġ għaqdiet filarmoniċi. Dawn l-istess kittieba jghidu li qabel ma l-għaqda mużikali 'Santa Marija' hadet l-isem tagħha, din kienet magħrufa bħala *Circolo Unione*.

Fis-sena 1903 insibu li fil-Mosta ġa kien hemm 'Casino Santa Maria' li kien jinsab f'numru 103, Strada Rjali.¹ Nota taht il-firma tal-President, Cesareo Chetcuti, tgħid li d-direzzjoni ta' dan il-kumitat kompost minn president, segretarju, kaxxier u direttur, jilqgħu membri godda fi hdan din il-għaqda bi hlas ta' miżata: "... è stato la direzione di un Comitato composto del Presidente, Segretario, Cassiere e Direttore. L'ammissione da essere proposta da qualunque membro del Casino. Sotto scrizione trimestrale 3s. Ingresso 4s 2d. Presidente Cesareo Chetcuti." Din l-istess informazzjoni nsibuha wkoll għas-sena 1905.² Nafu wkoll li parti mill-ispejjeż tax-xogħol tal-gwarniċun tar-Rotunda li sar bejn l-1899 u l-1903 thallsu mill-President Cesareo Chetcuti tal-Każin *Santa Marija*.

Xi sorsi jinnotaw li l-kittieb Robert Mifsud-Bonnici jgharrafna li għal habta tas-sena 1900, Mro Anton Miruzzi kien direttur tal-Banda Santa Marija.³ Madankollu l-istess Mifsud Bonnici jghidilna li għall-habta tal-1900 il-Banda Nicolò Isouard kienet immexxija minn Mro A. Miruzzi.⁴ Anki l-istorja tgharrafna li f'dak iż-żmien Mro Anton Miruzzi kien surmast-direttur tal-banda l-ohra Mostija, Nicolò Isouard.⁵

L-istoriku Arturo Caruana fil-ktieb tiegħu *Storja ta' Malta*, indika li fl-1905 Mro Anton Miruzzi kien is-surmast-direttur tal-Banda Santa Marija waqt li

A number of sources indicate that some bandsmen at one point moved away from the Nicolò Isouard Philharmonic Society of Mosta and these, in 1905 established another musical society thus giving rise to two philharmonic societies in Mosta. These same authors inform us that prior to being officially called St Mary Philharmonic Society this organisation was called *Circolo Unione*.

In 1903 it is indicated that in Mosta there already existed a 'Casino Santa Maria' at no. 103, Strade Reale.¹ A note signed by Cesareo Chetcuti, President of the Society, confirms that the committee made up of a president, a secretary, a treasurer and a director, welcomed any new members on payment of a membership fee: "è stato la direzione di un Comitato composto del Presidente, Segretario, Cassiere e Direttore. L'ammissione da essere proposta da qualunque membro del Casino. Sotto scrizione trimestrale 3s. Ingresso 4s 2d. Presidente Cesareo Chetcuti." This same information is featured also for 1905.² It is also known that part of the expenditure incurred for the work done on the cornice inside the Rotunda, carried out between 1899 and 1903, was paid for by the president of the St Mary's Social Club, Cesareo Chetcuti.

Some sources note that Robert Mifsud Bonnici indicates that about the year 1900 Mro Antonio Miruzzi was the bandmaster of the Santa Marija Band.³ However, this same author continues that about 1900 the Nicolò Isouard Band was also under the direction of the same Miruzzi.⁴ Historical sources point out that Mro Miruzzi was bandmaster of the other Mosta band, that is, Nicolò Isouard.⁵

The historian Arturo Caruana in his

bhala surmast tal-Banda Nicolò Isouard indika lil Giobattista Mifsud.⁶ Madankollu, ghas-sena 1905, sors iehor jghid li Mro Anton Miruzzi kien surmast-direttur tal-Banda Nicolò Isouard, waqt li s-Sur Giobattista Mifsud kien id-direttur tal-każin ta' l-istess banda.⁷ Il-*Malta Taghna* ta' l-istess sena tikkonferma li Mro A. Miruzzi kien għadu surmast-direttur tal-Banda Nicolò Isouard,⁸ waqt li l-*Guida Generale* tas-sena 1908, jindika wkoll bhala surmast-direttur tal-Banda Nicolò Isouard lil Mro A. Miruzzi.⁹

Iżda storikament nafu li fl-1905, il-Banda Santa Marija tal-Mosta kienet digà mwaqqa u stabbilita tajjeb. Tant li matul l-istess sena din il-banda Mostija tat diversi servizzi mużikali fil-pubbliku kemm fil-Mosta kif ukoll barra mill-Mosta.

Nafu li nhar it-23 ta' Lulju,

1905, il-Banda Santa Marija taht it-tmexxija tas-surmast taghha, Mro Ġużeppi Micallef, esegwiet programm mużikali fil-pjazza tal-Mosta. F'dan il-programm il-banda esegwit il-marc *Core ed Arte* ta' D. Barbara, l-overture *Masaniello* ta' Auber, selezzjoni mill-opra *Aida* ta' Verdi, il-kavatina *Barbiere* ta' Rossini, il-valz Spanjol *El Turia* ta' D. Granado u l-polka *Aux Frenschafft* ta' Liebig. Il-Banda Santa Marija kienet għalqet dan il-programm bid-claqq ta' l-innu *L'Unione* u l-*God Save the King*.¹⁰

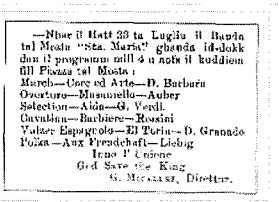
Mro Ġużeppi Micallef tweied f'Haż-Żabbar, nhar il-5 ta' Ġunju, 1854, bin Anton u Carmela, mwielda Meli. Kien idoqq mal-banda tar-Royal Malta Fencible Artillery u kien ukoll surmast-direttur ta' diversi baned Maltin, fosthom tal-baned Maria Mater Gratiae

book *Storja ta' Malta*, stated that in 1905 Mro Anton Miruzzi was the bandmaster of the St Mary's Band while Giobattista Mifsud was bandmaster of the Nicolò Isouard Band.⁶ On the other hand another source indicated that for 1905 Mro Anton Miruzzi was the bandmaster of the Nicolò Isouard Band, while Giobattista Mifsud was director of the same Nicolò Isouard Band Club.⁷ *Malta Taghna* of the same year confirms that Mro A. Miruzzi was still bandmaster of the Nicolò Isouard Band⁸ while the *Guida Generale* of 1908 also indicates Mro A. Miruzzi as bandmaster of the Nicolò Isouard Band.⁹

Yet, from historical sources it is known that in 1905 Sta Marija Band was already set up and well-established. In fact, during the same year this Mosta band performed a number of musical programmes in public in Mosta itself and also in other localities.

On 23 July 1905 the Sta Marija Band, under the leadership of its musical director Mro Giuseppe Micallef, performed a musical programme in the Mosta square. In this programme the band executed the march *Core ed Arte* by D. Barbara, the overture *Masaniello* by Auber, a selection from Verdi's opera *Aida*, the cavatina from Rossini's *Barbieri di Seviglia*, the Spanish waltz *El Turia* by D. Granado and the polka *Aux Frenschafft* by Liebig. The Santa Marija Band ended its performance with the hymns *L'Unione* and *God Save the King*.¹⁰

Mro Giuseppe Micallef was born at Żabbar on 5 June 1854, the son of Anton and Carmela née Meli. He played with the band of the Royal Malta Fencible Artillery and was also bandmaster of a number of Maltese bands among which: Maria Mater



u San Mikiel ta' Haż-Żabbar, Prince of Wales ta' Vittoriosa, Melita tan-Naxxar, kif ukoll tal-banda l-oħra Mostija, Nicolò Isouard. Is-Surmast Ġ. Micallef ikkompona wkoll diversi bċejeċ mużikali. Huwa kien miżżewweġ lil Grazia Psaila u kellhom ħames ulied. Miet il-Hamrun nhar l-20 ta' Ottubru, 1914.¹¹



*Mro Giuseppe Micallef
R.M.F.A.*

Gratiæ and San Mikiel of Żabbar, Prince of Wales of Vittoriosa, Melita of Naxxar and the other Mosta band, Nicolò Isouard. He composed a range of musical pieces. He was married to Grazia Psaila and had five children. He died at Hamrun on 20 October 1914.¹¹

From correspondence dated 20 July 1906

Minn korrispondenza, datata 20 ta' Lulju, 1906, li għaddiet bejn id-deputazzjoni tal-festa ta' Santa Marija komposta mill-arċipriet ta' dak iż-żmien, Dun Ġwann Sarreo D.D., Dun Ġwann Fenech, Dun Anġ Camilleri, u Dun Ġużepp Borg, u l-baned Santa Marija u Nicolò Isouard dwar is-servizzi li dawn iż-żewġ baned Mostin kellhom jagħmlu matul il-ġranet tal-festa tas-sena 1906, fost affarijiet oħra nsibu ndikat: "... nixtiequ nafu jekk il-filarmonika tiegħek (Santa Marija) tridx taċċetta l-istess servizz u ddoqqu programm filwaqt il-ġhasar ta' lejlietha bħalma għamiltu s-sena l-oħra." Dan il-kliem jindika ċar li l-Banda Santa Marija kienet hadet sehem fil-festa ta' Santa Marija fil-Mosta tas-sena 1905.¹²

Matul is-sena 1905 il-Banda Santa Marija ħarġet iddoqq barra l-Mosta. F'rapport dwar il-festa tal-Madonna tad-Duluri ċċelebrata f'San Pawl il-Baħar fl-1905, insibu li ż-żewġ baned Mostin kienu ħadu sehem f'din il-festa: "... San Pawl il-Baħar, mal-banda l-Qadima il-bieraħ marru wkoll kważi l-istess nies, San Pawl il-Baħar għax marret il-banda ġdida."¹³ Kif wiehed jista' jinnota, f'dan r-rapport il-Banda Nicolò Isouard giet identifikata bħala l-banda l-qadima, waqt li l-Banda Santa Marija giet msejha bħala l-banda ġdida. Rapport iehor li deher fuq il-gazzetta *Malta Taghna* tat-

between the committee of the Santa Marija feast composed of Archpriest Rev. Ġwann Sarreo D.D., Rev. Ġwann Fenech, Rev. Angelo Camilleri, and Rev. Ġużepp Borg, and the Santa Marija and Nicolò Isouard band clubs, regarding the musical services these Mosta clubs were to render during the feast days of the year 1906, it is known that, "... nixtiequ nafu jekk il-filarmonika tiegħek (Santa Marija) tridx taċċetta l-istess servizz u ddoqqu programm filwaqt il-ġhasar ta' lejlietha bħalma għamiltu s-sena l-oħra" (we would like to know if your philharmonic (Santa Marija) would accept the same service and perform a musical programme during the vespers on the eve of the feast as was done last year). This clearly shows that the Santa Marija Band had taken part in the feast of 1905.¹²

During the year 1905 the Santa Marija Band also played outside Mosta. In a report about the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows celebrated at St Paul's Bay in 1905, it is indicated that the two Mosta bands took part in these celebrations: "... San Pawl il-Baħar, mal-banda l-Qadima il-bieraħ marru wkoll kważi l-istess nies, San Pawl il-Baħar għax marret il-banda ġdida"¹³ (... St Paul's Bay, nearly the same people also went

23 ta' Settembru 1905, jindika wkoll li l-Banda Santa Marija daqqet programm fl-okkażjoni tal-festa tal-Madonna tad-Duluri fil-Mosta.

Is-sena 1906 gabet magħha xi ftit ta' l-inkwiet. Mill-korrispondenza li d-deputati tal-festa kienu bagħtu lid-dirigenti tal-Banda Santa Marija sabiex jaraw jekk riedux jaċċettaw l-istess servizz li kienu għamlu fis-sena 1905, jiġifieri programm lejlet il-festa waqt il-ghasar, mir-risposta li kienu taw l-uffiċjali tal-Banda Santa Marija datata 24 ta' Lulju, 1905, indirizzata lil Dun Ang Camilleri, wiehed mid-deputazzjoni tal-festa, hemm indikat li, "... aħna mixtiqin wisq li niehdu sehem fil-festa ta' l-Assunta, imma bhala nies ta' l-istess pajjiż."¹⁴



L-istatwa titolari l-antika ta' Santa Marija / The former titular statue of St Mary

with the established band yesterday as the new band was also there). One can notice that the Nicolò Isouard Band was described as the established band while the Santa Marija Band is indicated as the new band. Another report that appeared in the newspaper *Malta Taghna* of 23 September 1905 revealed that the Santa Marija band executed a musical programme on the occasion of the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows in Mosta.

The year 1906 ushered in a number of arguments. From correspondence between the feast committee and the Santa Marija Band Club regarding the enquiry in connection with the acceptance of the same conditions as those of 1905 for the service during the feast of 1906, that is, their participation on the eve of the feast during vespers, from the answer delivered by the committee of the Santa Marija Band Club to Rev. Angelo Camilleri dated 24 July 1905 it is indicated that: "... aħna mixtiqin wisq li niehdu sehem fil-festa ta' l-Assunta, imma bhala nies ta' l-istess pajjiż"¹⁴ (... we are desirous to participate in the feast of the Assumption but as people of the same locality).

This same statement is repeated in a letter sent by the committee of the Santa Marija Band Club to the feast committee on 27 July 1906: "... nirrepetulkom dak li già ktibnilkom cioè illi aħna nixtiequ wisq li ikollna sehem fil-festa bhala tfal tal-Mosta, u aħna qegħdin nagħmlu hekk mhux biex nimmaltrattaw il-festa, imma biex nagħmluha iżjed kbira il-festa tal-Beata Vergni Marija"¹⁵ (... we repeat what has lately been written that is that we are highly desirous that we participate in the feast as children of Mosta, and we are doing this not to damage the feast but to make the feast of the Blessed

Dan l-ilment hu wkoll indikat fl-ittra li l-istess mexxejja tal-Banda Santa Marija kienu baghtu nhar is-27 ta' Lulju 1906, lid-deputati tal-festa meta nsibu miktub: "... nirrepetulkom dak li già ktibnilkom cioè illi ahna nixtiequ wisq li ikolna sehem fil-festa bhala tfal tal-Mosta, u ahna qeghdin naghmlu hekk mhux biex nimmaltrattaw il-festa, imma biex naghmluha iżjed kbira il-festa tal-Beata Vergni Marija."¹⁵

L-ittra tas-27 ta' Lulju, tkompli taghti aktar tagħrif: "... fl-ewwel ittra tagħkom li fiha għidtulna indoqqu fil-festa bhas-soltu, u jiena ingħidilkom li dak li kien solitu, ma jeżistix iżjed, imma spiċċa, u ma jġigix ikkalkulat iżjed, imma ż-żmien li ahna fih jghodd u mhux l-imghoddi, għaliex ahna ta' l-istess patria, cioè ta' l-istess raħal, ma għandniex inkunu maltrattati u persegwitati minkom b'dina l-manjiera." L-ittri f'isem l-Għaqda Mużikali Santa Marija, kienu ffirmati mill-president, is-Sur Edward Grech, il-viċi-president, is-Sur Frangisk Gatt, u l-kummissjonant, is-Sur Pawlu Grech.¹⁶

Izda, minkejja dan, iż-żewġ baned taw is-sehem tagħhom permezz ta' diversi servizzi matul il-jiem tal-festa ta' Santa Marija ta' dik is-sena. Itra li dehret fuq il-gurnal *Malta Tagħna* tal-25 ta' Awissu 1906, bil-firma ta' 'Indipendent', tgħarrafna li: "... bosta kienu illi dis-sena hasbu il-kuntrarju billi l-banda l-ġdida kienet offisa għal xi hwejjeġ li ppretendiet bhala Mostin u lilha ġew miċhuda. Izda l-banda l-ġdida hija Mostija, u bhala Mostija hija kwieta, hija prudenti...". Anki hawn il-Banda Santa Marija giet indikata bhala il-banda l-ġdida.¹⁷

Fil-bidu tas-sena, 1907, il-Banda Santa Marija li kienet għadha taht it-tmexxija tas-surmast Ġużeppi Micallef, esegwiew programm mużikali fil-pjazza tal-

Virgin Mary even greater).

The letter of 27 July gives further information: "... fl-ewwel ittra tagħkom li fiha għidtulna indoqqu fil-festa bhas-soltu, u jiena ingħidilkom li dak li kien solitu, ma jeżistix iżjed, imma spiċċa, u ma jġigix ikkalkulat iżjed, imma ż-żmien li ahna fih jghodd u mhux l-imghoddi, għaliex ahna ta' l-istess patria, cioè ta' l-istess raħal, ma għandniex inkunu maltrattati u persegwitati minkom b'dina l-manjiera" (...in your first letter in which you asked us to play as usual in the feast, and I tell you that what was usual is now gone and does not apply any more, but it is today that counts and not the past, as we belong to the same birthplace, that is we come from the same village, we should not be maltreated and persecuted by you in this manner). The letters written in the name of the Santa Marija Band Club were signed by the president, Mr Edward Grech, the vice-president, Mr Frangisk Gatt, and the commission agent, Mr Paolo Grech.¹⁶

In spite of this argument, both bands gave their full contribution during the feast of St Mary of that year. A letter which was featured in the newspaper *Malta Tagħna* of 25 August 1906, signed by someone under the pseudonym 'Indipendent' (*sic*), remarked that: "...bosta kienu illi dis-sena hasbu il-kuntrarju billi l-banda l-ġdida kienet offisa għal xi hwejjeġ li ppretendiet bhala Mostin u lilha ġew miċhuda. Izda l-banda l-ġdida hija Mostija, u bhala Mostija hija kwieta, hija prudenti..."¹⁷ (... many were those who this year had miscalculations, because the new band felt offended due to certain expectations which it had as Mostin and which were negated to it. However the new band is from Mosta, and as a Mostija it is docile, it is prudent...).

Mosta,¹⁸ waqt li fl-1908 tħallset is-somma ta' £5 ta' żewġ servizzi li għamlet fis-7 u fit-8 ta' Settembru, għall-okkażjoni tal-festa tal-Vitorja fin-Naxxar: "... pagati alla Società Filarmonica "S. Maria" della Musta per due servizzi musicali eseguiti l'uno la sera del 7 Sett. e l'altro nel tempo della Processione del giorno susseguente dell'anno 1908."¹⁹ Il-Hadd, 14 ta' Frar, 1909, il-Banda Santa Marija, taht it-tmexxija tas-Surmast Micallef, esegwiet programm mużikali fil-pjazza tal-Mosta.²⁰

Ta' min jghid li Mro Ġużepi Micallef kellu sehem kbir in konnessjoni mal-Banda Peace tan-Naxxar, waqt li din il-banda kienet ukoll tagħti xi servizzi fil-Mosta. J.F. Caruana jgharrafna li Mro Micallef fl-1910 kien għadu surmast-direttur tal-Banda Santa Marija waqt li jghid ukoll li kien ikkompona l-marċa sinfonika, *La Giovane Turche*, għall-Banda Santa Marija tal-Mosta.²¹

Il-*Guida Generale* tas-sena 1910 tindika li s-sede ta' din l-għaqda mużikali kienet f'Via Nuova Valletta.²² Fil-pubblikazzjoni *Storja tal-Mosta* hemm indikat li l-Banda Santa Marija baqgħet tiffunzjona sal-1911, iżda wara l-każin ta' din is-soċjetà baqa' miftuh.²³ J.F. Caruana jindika li fl-1917 il-Banda Santa Marija kienet għadha teżisti.²⁴

Robert Mifsud Bonnici fl-istorja tiegħu dwar il-Banda Nicolò Isuard jikteb li: "... bejn l-1918 u l-1922, il-banda sfrattat, mietet, u rxuxtat fl-1923 ... waqt li l-Banda ż-żagħżuġha iffjakkat u mietet hesrem."²⁵ Hawn, l-awtur, qed jalludi għal-Banda Santa Marija bhala l-banda ż-żagħżuġha.

Intant fil-*Guida Generale* tas-sena 1920 niltaqgħu mal-Banda Santa Marija, iżda din id-darba taht l-isem ta' 'L-Assunta', li bhala direttur miżikali tagħha kellha

At the beginning of the year 1907, the Santa Marija Band, which was still under the direction of Mro Ġużepi Micallef, executed a musical programme in the Mosta square,¹⁸ while in 1908 the sum of £5 was paid to it for two services rendered on 7 and 8 September on the occasion of the feast of Our Lady of Victories of Naxxar: "... pagati alla Società Filarmonica "S. Maria" della Musta per due servizzi musicali eseguiti l'uno la sera del 7 Sett. e l'altro nel tempo della Processione del giorno susseguente dell'anno 1908."¹⁹ On Sunday 14 February 1909 the Sta Marija Band under the musical direction of Mro Micallef performed a programme in Mosta square.²⁰

It should be pointed out that Mro Micallef had close connections with the Peace Band Club of Naxxar and this same band also performed in Mosta. J.F. Caruana remarks that Mro Ġ. Micallef in 1910 was still bandmaster of the Sta Marija Band and adds that he composed a symphonic march *La Giovane Turche* for the Sta Marija Band of Mosta.²¹

The *Guida Generale* of 1910 specifies that the club of this musical society was in Via Nuova Valletta.²² In the book *Storja tal-Mosta* it is stated that the Sta Marija Band continued with its musical activities till 1911 but the club remained open after that time.²³ J.F. Caurana holds that in 1917 the Sta Marija Band was still in existence.²⁴

Robert Mifsud Bonnici writing about the Nicolò Isuard Band states: "... bejn l-1918 u l-1922, il-banda sfrattat, mietet, u rxuxtat fl-1923... waqt li l-Banda ż-żagħżuġha iffjakkat u mietet hesrem"²⁵ (... between 1918 and 1922, the band became disorganised, waned and was brought back to life in 1923 ... while

lil Mro Anton Miruzzi.²⁶ Fl-istess sors nsibu li l-każin – *Circolo Filarmonico* – ta' din l-għaqda mużikali kien f'numru 179, Triq il-Kungress Ewkaristiku, waqt li bhala president tagħha kellha lis-Sur Giovanni Schembri. Is-segretarju u l-kaxxier kienu s-Sinjuri Carmelo Gatt u Vincenz Mifsud rispettivament.²⁷

Fl-istess *Guida Generale* ta' snin varji nsibu li l-każin ta' din l-għaqda mużikali – L'Assunta – kien għadu fl-istess lokal.²⁸ F'numru ta' hargiet ta' din il-pubblikazzjoni hemm indikat li Mro Anton Miruzzi kien id-direttur tas-Socjetà Filarmonika L'Assunta.²⁹

Is-surmast Anton Miruzzi twieled il-Furjana nhar l-10 ta' Ottubru 1867, bin Ġużepp u Mikelina, imwielda Brincat. Huwa kien surmast-direttur ta' diversi baned Maltin, fosthom La Valette tal-Belt Valletta, San Ġużepp tal-Hamrun, Beland taż-Żejtun, I Cavallieri di Malta ta' tas-Sliema, San Piju X ta' Hal Lija, Sant'Indrija ta' Hal Luqa, Nicolò Isouard tal-Mosta u Leone ta' Ghawdex. Mro Miruzzi kkompona għadd varjat ta' bçejeç mużikali li whud minnhom għadhom jindaqqu sal-lum, waqt li kiseb diversi unuri bil-kompożizzjonijiet tiegħu. Huwa kien miżżewweġ lil Konçetta, imwielda Cauchi, u miet il-Hamrun nhar it-23 ta' Ottubru, 1944.³⁰

Il-*Guida Generale* tas-sena 1922/23 tindika bhala ufficjali tal-kumitat ta' din l-għaqda mużikali lil Cesareo Chetcuti bhala president, lil Feliç Schembri bhala segretarju, lil Anġlu Grech bhala kaxxier u lil Pietru Camilleri bhala direttur.³¹

L-istess sors għas-sena 1925, juri bhala ufficjali tal-Banda L'Assunta lil Cesareo Chetcuti bhala president, lil Pietru Camilleri bhala segretarju, lil Anġlu Grech bhala kaxxier, waqt li bhala deputati jindika lil Marçell Vella, Salvu

the new band disappeared and passed away). The author called the Sta Marija Band the new band.

In the *Guida Generale* of 1920 the Sta Marija Band is once again mentioned but this time under the name of 'L'Assunta' with Mro Anton Miruzzi as its band director.²⁶ In the same source it is indicated that the club – *Circolo Filarmonico* – of this musical society, was to be found at 179, Eucharistic Congress Road. Its president was Mr Giovanni Schembri. The secretary and the treasurer were Mr Carmelo Gatt and Mr Vincent Mifsud respectively.²⁷

In the same *Guida Generale* of different years the club of this musical society – L'Assunta – was to be found in the same address.²⁸ In a number of issues of this publication it is pointed out that Mro Anton Miruzzi was the musical director of the L'Assunta philharmonic society.²⁹

Mro Anton Miruzzi was born in Floriana on 10 October 1867, the son of Ġużepp and Mikelina née Attard. He was bandmaster of various Maltese bands amongst which were: La Vallette of Valletta, San Ġużepp of Hamrun, Beland of Żejtun, I Cavallieri di Malta of Sliema, San Piju X of Lija, Sant'Indrija of Luqa, Nicolò Isouard of Mosta and Leone of Gozo. Mro Miruzzi composed a range of musical pieces some of which are still performed to this day. He also received various awards for his musical compositions. He was married to Concetta née Cauchi and died in Hamrun on 23 October 1944.³⁰

The *Guida Generale* of 1922/23 reveals that the committee members of this musical society were Cesareo Chetcuti as president, Feliç Schembri as secretary, Anġlu Grech as treasurer and Pietru Camilleri as club director.³¹

Sciberras, Ġużepp Bonnici, u Pietru Camilleri.³²

It-tibdil fil-formazzjoni tal-karigi ta' l-uffiċjali tal-kumitat ta' din l-għaqda mużikali matul is-snin għoxrin tas-seklu l-iehor jikkonferma li din is-soċjetà, dik il-habta kienet ukoll attiva, u għalhekk hu raġonevoli li wiehed jassumi li, bħal soċjetajiet oħra, matul is-snin ġew organizzati minnha għadd ta' attivitajiet soċjo-kulturali għall-membri u l-partitarji tagħha.

The same source but of the year 1925 indicates that the officials of the L'Assunta Band were Cesareo Chetcuti as president, Pietru Camilleri as secretary, Anġlu Grech as treasurer, while the other members were Marċel Vella, Salvu Sciberras, Ġużepp Bonnici and Pietru Camilleri.³²

The various committee changes of this musical society along the 1920s confirm that this club was active at that time and thus it stands to reason to assume that, just like other societies, a number of socio-cultural activities were organised by this club for its members and supporters.

¹ *Guida Generale di Malta e Gozo* (Malta: 1903), 327.

² *Guida Generale di Malta e Gozo* (Malta: 1905), 292.

³ *Filarmonika Santa Marija, Mosta 1991* (Malta: 1991); J.J. Camilleri, 'Filarmonika Santa Marija', *L-Istorja tal-Każini tal-Baned f'Malta u Ghawdex*, iii (Malta: 1998).

⁴ R. Mifsud Bonnici, *Ġrajja ta' Baned f'Malta u Ghawdex*, ii (Malta: 1957), 75.

⁵ *Guida Generale di Malta e Gozo* (Malta: 1900), 297; (1903), 318.

⁶ A. Caruana, *Storja ta' Malta*, (Malta: 1904), 448.

⁷ *Guida Generale di Malta e Gozo* (Malta: 1905), 289.

⁸ *Malta Taghna*, 12.vii.1905.

⁹ *Guida Generale di Malta e Gozo* (Malta: 1908), 327.

¹⁰ *Malta Taghna*, 22.vii.1905.

¹¹ *Soċjetà Filarm. Maria Mater Gratix 1883-1983, Ġrajja ta' Mitt Sena* (Malta: 1983); *The Times*, 14.ix.1982.

¹² *Malta Taghna*, 4.viii.1906.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 30.ix.1906.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.viii.1906.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 25.viii.1906.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.ii.1907.

¹⁹ A(rkivju)P(arrokkjali)N(axxar), 'Esito per banda musicale', Lib. Esito, Amministr. Rev. Ġużepp Attard, 1908, f. 47.

²⁰ *In-Nahla*, 13.ii.1909.

²¹ *The Times*, 14.ix.1982; *Programm tal-festa, 1985, Soċ. Fil. Maria Mater Gratix, Żabbar* (Malta: 1985).

²² *Guida Generale di Malta e Gozo* (Malta: 1910), 395.

²³ E.B. Vella et al., *Storja tal-Mosta bil-Knisja Tagħha* (Malta: 1972), Żieda IV, 260.

²⁴ *The Times*, 14.ix.1982.

²⁵ Mifsud Bonnici, 76.

²⁶ *Guida Generale di Malta e Gozo* (Malta: 1920), 220.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 329.

²⁸ *Guida Generale di Malta e Gozo* (Malta: 1922/23, 1925, 1927, 1929/30, 1931/32, & 1933/34).

²⁹ *Guida Generale di Malta e Gozo* (Malta: 1922/23), 300; (Malta: 1925), 354; (Malta: 1927), 398.

³⁰ G.A. Grech, *14-il Profil ta' Mużiċisti Ghawdexin, Maltin u Barranin* (Malta: 1998), 22-8.

³¹ *Guida Generale di Malta e Gozo* (Malta: 1922/23), 310.

³² *Guida Generale di Malta e Gozo* (Malta: 1925), 364.