

OPENING OF NEW THEATRE AT MSIDA

By A STAFF REPORTER

On Monday evening Malta's newest and up-to-date cinema — the Lyric Theatre at Msida — was ceremonially opened when His Excellency the Governor, Sir Gerald Creasy, cut the ribbon holding the proscenium curtains.

Through the generosity of the owners of the new cinema, Mr. J. Filletti and his sons, the proceeds of the opening show — Paramount Pictures' film "Samson and Delilah" — were devoted to the Malta Playing Fields Association and it has been agreed that the money will be applied to the benefit of the Msida District Committee when a suitable ground has been found in the district.

Governor's Arrival

The cinema was packed to capacity when His Excellency arrived and was greeted by Lt. Col. J.V. Abela, the Chairman of the Malta Playing Fields Association. Lady Creasy was presented with a bouquet by Miss Georgette Filletti, the grand-daughter of the owner.

Colonel Abela then introduced Mr. J. Cassar Naudi, the Chairman of the Msida District Committee, who in turn introduced Mr. J. Filletti and his six sons, the owners of the new cinema, Mr. G.J. Galea, B.Sc., B.E. & A. A. & C.E., the architect responsible for the theatre, and members of the District Committee.

In a short speech from the stage Mr. Cassar Naudi referred to the part that sport plays in the development of a man's character and deplored the fact that, owing to the lack of facilities in Malta, children have to resort to playing in the streets thereby rendering themselves a nuisance to the community not to mention the possibility of road accidents. Mr. Cassar Naudi then pointed out that the Malta Playing Fields Association is endeavouring to remedy this deficiency by acquiring suitable sites in every village and town and turning them into playing fields.

Parish Priest's Help

Mr. Naudi emphasized the work that had been done by the Msida District Committee and the great help and inspiration that it had gained from the Parish Priest, who has agreed to sit on the committee as Honorary President.

It was unfortunate that a suitable site, which had been approved by the M.P.F.A. Executive Committee, had not been available owing to circumstances outside the Committee control and, Mr. Naudi said, "other factors have rendered it impossible for the Association to acquire the site unless the Government is

prepared to intervene. If Government does not help, Msida will never be able to boast of its own playground."

His Excellency in a short reply said that in one respect he was attending the Lyric Theatre under false pretences. "I so very rarely go to the cinema and am so far from being a film fan that it is perhaps a little strange that I should now be opening Malta's latest cinema." Sir Gerald Creasy complimented Mr. Filletti for his enterprise and thanked him for his generosity in giving the proceeds of the opening show to the M.P.F.A.

His Excellency pointed out that the Association had been in existence for just over a year, but despite its hard work it had not yet been able to open its first ground. Nevertheless he hoped that within a few months the first ground would be ready and that from then on there would be a steady stream of grounds being opened in different parts of the Island.

Cutting the Tape

His Excellency then said: "I feel that I must add something to what Mr. Cassar Naudi has just said. Sport is not solely the prerogative of men and boys. Playing fields must also serve girls and help to train the women of tomorrow in the spirit of team work." His Excellency's remarks were greeted with a round of applause. He then cut the tape holding the proscenium curtains and declared the cinema open.

The Lyric Theatre at Msida was designed by Mr. G.J. Galea, A.&C.E. who was also responsible for the Mikado Theatre at St. Paul's Bay and other buildings.

Gratitude is due to the proprietors and management of the Lyric Theatre, Messrs. J. Filletti, for having placed the theatre at the disposal of the Malta Playing Fields Association. The Msida Committee of the M.P.F.A. were responsible for all the arrangements connected with the film show at the Lyric when Paramount's "Samson and Delilah" kindly loaned by the Malta United Film Corporation, was shown.

It was generally felt that arrangements for seating the guests were open to much improvement and another point of criticism was the omission of the Hymn of Malta on the arrival of the Hon. the Prime Minister at the show.



Seen at the Lyric Theatre, Msida, during the show held in aid of the Malta Playing Fields Association (left to right) Mr. G. J. Galea; Lt. Col. J. V. Abela; Mr. J. Filletti; Lady Creasy; H. E. Sir Gerald Creasy; Mr. J. Cassar Naudi; Miss V. Attard and Mr. V. H. Filletti.

PORT WORKERS SCHEME

PART II

UNION'S INFLUENCE IN ORGANIZATION

By A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Such a scheme was only partially successful. It worked fairly well so far as all general cargo workers and bulk cargo port labourers were concerned. The men were organized into gangs and later on they appointed a manager to take charge of the roster system and to deal with employers on their behalf. This manager also collected wages due to them. In the case of coal workers and bulk cargo stevedores, however, the registration was not completed and the pre-war system crept in again.

It was only recently that an attempt was made to organize bulk cargo stevedores into gangs working on a proper roster similar to that of general cargo workers. The position amongst coal workers is still being examined.

DECASUALISATION

In a sense, therefore, it could be taken that port workers in the port of Malta had evolved a system of decasualisation of the work, at least in so far as general cargo and part of bulk cargo were concerned. The handling

of such cargo by a limited number of men was enough to afford a livelihood to those engaged in it.

The situation is different in the case of the bulk cargo stevedores, who, owing to lack of organization, have been allowed to grow larger and larger in number, there being at the moment about 600 bulk cargo stevedores to handle under 100,000 tons annually. The situation amongst coal port workers is more involved.

The organization of the port workers, due to the influence of the General Workers' Union and to the weakness of other arrangements, developed rather one-sidedly after the war. Many decisions were taken by the trade union in an endeavour to protect very rightly the workers. These decisions eventually became customs of the port, which it is now difficult to change.

WORK STOPPAGES

In spite of the efforts of the trade union officials to conduct negotiations over any matter in dispute in an appropriate manner, work stoppages often occurred during which every man involved in a dispute had his say, and before the dispute was settled in a manner satisfactory to the men, the port remained idle.

Complaints were often heard from employers that the new system for the employment of general cargo port workers was conducive to a breakdown of discipline besides resulting in damage to cargo and loss of time.

That damage to cargo did occur there can be no doubt, and that it does in a small

manner still occurs is also true as it is true in all ports. But a Court of Inquiry appointed by the Minister for Emigration and Labour to investigate allegations of damage to cargo by port workers declared that the situation in Malta has improved in recent years.

WORKERS' COMPLAINT

On the other hand the workers often had occasion to complain that employers were not engaging registered port workers for the handling of cargo. The workers feared that this was a subversive attack on the system which they had created for their own protection and matters came to a head in 1949.

As regards the charges of lack of discipline the workers through their union offered that a disciplinary board composed of a representative of employers sitting with one of the workers, with the Director of Labour as chairman, should be set up to deal with all disciplinary matters. An attempt was made to have this board function but owing to the non-cooperation of employers it broke down.

WEDDING

BORG-PISANI

The marriage took place on Sunday morning at Sarrja Church, Floriana, between Mr. Carmel Borg, Ph.C., son of Mr. and Mrs. C. Borg of Cathedral Street, Sliema and Miss May Pisani, daughter of the late Mr. Carmel Pisani and of Mrs. Pisani of Gunlayer Square, Floriana.

The Rev. Father Joseph Borg Hampton, uncle of the bride, officiated at the ceremony and celebrated Nuptial Mass.

The bride was given away by her uncle, Mr. Paul Borg, and wore a beautiful gown of white faille with the skirt falling into a full train, and a silk tulle veil which was held in place by an embroidered Juliet cap. For ornament she wore her mother's gift of diamond earrings and she carried a bouquet of arum lilies.

Her sister, Miss Gladys Pisani, and her cousin, Miss Joyce Pisani, were in attendance as bridesmaids dressed in white and silver crepe frocks with halo headdresses and they carried bouquets of pink stocks.

Mr. Anthony Darmania, Ph.C., and Mr. Emmanuel Pisani were the witnesses. While Dr. Anton Agius Ferrante, M.D., acted as best man.

After the reception which was held at the Hotel Phoenicia, the bride and groom left for their honeymoon which is being spent on the Continent, the bride wearing a fur cape over an almond-green woollen dress which went with black accessories.

Here's News...

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Piano Recital

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Booking open at 104, St. John's Square, Valetta
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Transport will be available from Kingsgate to Knights Hall and vice-versa