



Kindergarten

In Moltrasio, as early as 1872, there was talk of the need for a construction planned to welcome pre-school age children, a sort of kindergarten.

In 1878, on the then parish priest Innocente Cioffio's initiative, the idea started to take practical steps. He wrote a letter addressed to the Major and the city Counselors in which announced that *"a distinguished sir (who will turn out to be Cavalier Antonio Besana) sees with great regret the children abandoned through the streets by their parents"* expressed his readiness to contribute *"keeping his identity secret"* with the amount of 8.000 Lire in founding a kindergarten in Moltrasio.

The Municipality agreed with the request increasing the amount with municipal funds, Congregation of Charity's funds and various private donations.

The Organic Statute was approved on October 4th, 1879, and also included the issue shares with a value of 2 Lire each, in order to ensure the operation of the kindergarten. Each share was refundable after three years or renewable from year to year. Moreover, *"if some benefactors had contributed to increasing the patrimony of the Institute with considerable donations or bequests"*, their names would have been noted *"in a dedicated frame to be kept affixed in the hall of the kindergarten"*. Also, if the amount or the value of the donation had reached 1000 Lire, *"a portrait of the benefactor would have been painted, at the expense of the Institute, labelling his name, surname and the donation"*.

On July 20th, 1879, the "Charity Kindergarten" started in the "house of Carolina and Giuseppina Caramazza sisters", paying an annual rent of 225 Lire. Every day, except holidays, it welcomed both female and male children aged from three to ten.



By Royal Decree of May 2nd, 1880, the kindergarten was raised to the rank of Charitable Trust and, a year later, the search of an appropriate location began. Thanks to Cavalier Antonio Besana's grant of 30.000 Lire (nearly today's 128.000 euros), the Municipality was able to build a new building to welcome the kindergartners and the Primary School students, after having obtained the transfer of land from the properties – Conte Lucini Passalacqua and Luogo Pio Elemosiniere. In this regard, the Count Lucini Passalacqua in return for the land, demanded the felling of 5 mulberries and 2 walnut-trees facing the parvis of Saint Agatha's Church, as well as the permission to "place a gate in front of the family funerary monument, so that it was properly repaired and it would be not easy to get close to it".

The gate is still present. The new building (today's Town Hall) consisted in 4 large rooms and toilets. However, after a quarter of a century was clear that the space was no longer sufficient.

That's why in 1906 the Municipality offered to the kindergarten the amount of 6.948,40 Lire in order that "the three occupied rooms in the school building were vacated" and that "it was accepted the land that the Charity Congregation would have transferred for free to build a new building for the kindergarten". Land and money, increased by a grant of 4.900 lire by Cavalier Cesare Viganò, were meant to the construction of the new building. It was completed and occupied on September 18th, 1910, and still today everyone knows it as the "Kindergarten of Moltrasio".

Marked in blue in the map, the "house of Caramazza sisters" where firstly was located the kindergarten



Marked in red, the building that was the first seat of the kindergarten, today's Town Hall



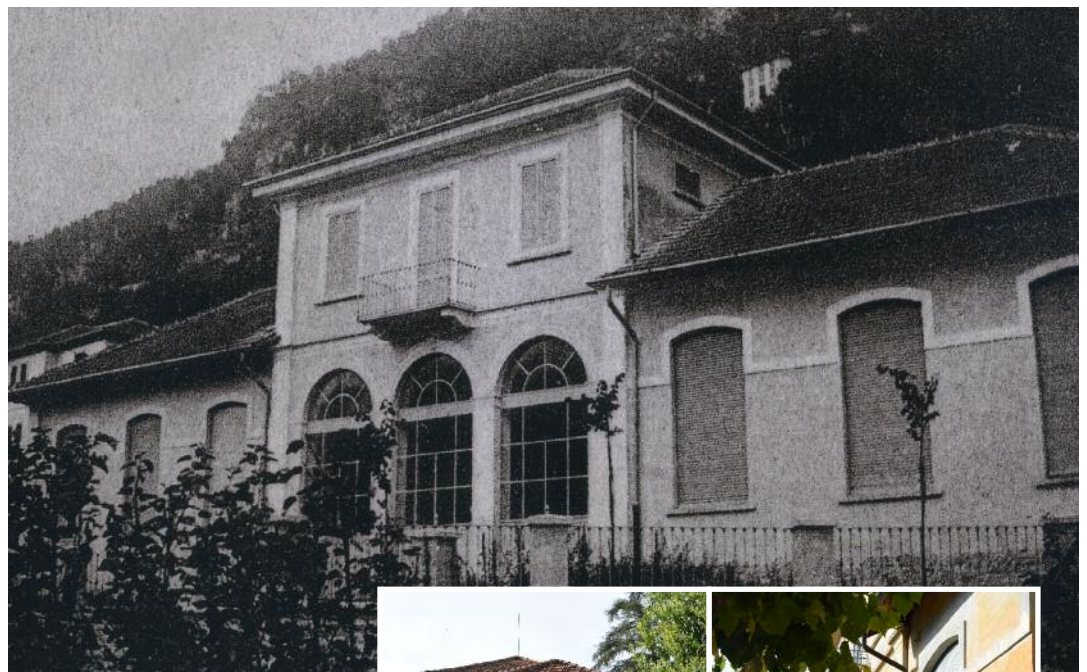
The Charitable Trust have had the management of the facility and its property from 1921 to 1971, with the contribution of the nuns of the Institute "Figlie di Betlem". The religious Institute that for 50 years guaranteed the functioning of the kindergarten, on October 1971, renounced the mandate given because *"religious staff was not available anymore to carry out the tasks conducted until now scrupulously and diligently"*, stating that *"despite the searches made by don Luigi Bianchi, the parish priest and member of the Kindergarten Administrative Committee, it was not possible to find another religious Institute to entrust the functioning of the kindergarten"*.

After the renunciation by the nuns, the Administrative Board decreed the continuation of the activities, deliberating the

recruitment of laic staff in order to guarantee the operational continuity, also as kindergarten. In 1976, the Administration Board deliberated the renunciation of the mandate and the suspension of the activity, thus in the school year 1976/77 was instituted the State Kindergarten continuing the activity under the national education system.

After the required procedure, lasted a few years, in 1994 Lombardy region declared formally extinguished the religious Kindergarten with the attribution of its patrimony to the Municipality of Moltrasio, with tie of destination of social services.

Even today, the State Kindergarten is located in the ancient kindergarten building, still identified as such by the residents.



Above, an old photo representing the kindergarten; on the side, the kindergarten nowadays

