

BIRDA

Local council office: Birda no. 110, telephone 0256/410882;

Coordinates:

45°25'41" N lat.;

21°20'19" E long.;

Historical landmarks:

-1690 - the settlement was mentioned in historical documents (inhabited by Romanians) under the name of **Birda**;

-1717 - Birda is mentioned in Habsburg documents as having 80 houses, Berecuța with 28 houses, Sângeorge with 30 houses;

-1761 - the town appeared on the official map of the Banat administration under the name of **Pirda**;

-1828 - the state Austrian administration sold the Birda estate to the Termacici family;

-1842 - Birda was owned by baron **Lo Presti**;

-1852 - property of the wife of baron Ukermann;

-1873 - numerous cholera victims in Berecuța;

-1888 - the birth of **dr. Iuliu Ionescu**, future head of the Lipova police and administration and sub-prefect of Timiș - Torontal county in the interwar period (d. 1963);

-1924 - Romanians from around Turda and Igrîș village (Sânpetru Mare commune) are brought to Sângeorge;

-1930-1931 - Birda had 1,142 inhabitants (495 Romanians);

-30 April 1936 - **Laza Cnejevici**, singer and instrumental performer, was born in Sângeorge;

-1967 - Birda was under the administration of Gătaia commune;

-2002 - the commune had 3,356 inhabitants;

-2004 - the commune was re-established under Law no. 84/2004;

Today, only one nun is living at the "Saint George" Monastery, sister Evghenia.

Total population on 1 January 2010: 2,002



persons, of which:

- male = 978 persons

- female = 1,024 persons

Number of households on 1 January 2010: 727

Member villages: Birda, Berecuța (1458, Berek) Mănăstire (1503, Sângeorgiu) and Sângeorge (1319, villa Sankti Georgy);

Educational institutions:

- Elementary School (I-VIII): Birda; Primary Schools (I-IV): Berecuța, Mănăstire and Sângeorge; Kindergarten with normal hours: Birda, Berecuța, Mănăstire and Sângeorge;

Health facilities:

-Medical practice, drugstore, sanitary-veterinary practice: Birda; Veterinary drugstore: Birda;

Cultural institutions: Community centres: Birda, Berecuța, Mănăstire and Sângeorge; Library: Birda (founded in 2005);

Churches, monasteries and other places of worship:

- Romanian Orthodox Churches: Birda (the first church dates back to 1760; 1908-1911), Berecuța (1925), Sângeorge (XIXth century); Greek-Catholic Church (1928) - Sângeorge; Evangelical church: Birda (1906); "Saint George" Serbian Monastery - Mănăstire (end of the XVth century)

Annual Church Festival:

- Birda (8 September), Berecuța (Easter), Mănăstire (Pentecost) and Sângeorge (8 November).

Citizens of Honour:

Ion Cociuba, Ioan Despa, Dionisie Purice,

CITY HALL AND LOCAL COUNCIL OF BIRDA COMMUNE

Stoian Gheorghe Marius	Mayor	Gabor Dinu, LC Member	DLP
Marcu Sorinel	Vice Mayor	Istvan Marin, LC Member	DLP
Andrerwald Thomas, LC Member	SDP	Noje Dumitru, LC Member	SDP
Câta Silvius, LC Member	DLP	Ofițer Maria, LC Member	CP
Cinca Nicolae, LC Member	DLP	Stoian Florin, LC Member	SDP
Drăghici Slagean, LC Member	SDP	Vălean Doruț Ioan, LC Member	SDP

BIRDA

THE SKULL OF
SAINT GEORGE

The Serbian Orthodox “**Saint George**” monastery from the Mănăstire village is located near the shores of the Bârzava river and near the monastery’s forest. It was built at the end of the XVth century,

probably by the Serbian tyrant Ioan Brancovici, as a resistance centre against the Roman-Catholic propaganda. It was partially destroyed during the ruling of the Ottomans. It was rebuilt in 1754, and in 1777 the empress Maria Theresia granted the monastery some land and affiliated it to the oldest monastery in Banat, Partoș Monastery (built in 1212). The monastery’s architecture is Byzantine and the dome is decorated with frescoes. It is famous for its connection with Saint George, an Anatolian warrior born in 272, son of a nobleman and of a rich Israeli mother. He became a Christian and was beheaded in 303 at Nicomedia, upon the order of the Roman emperor Diocletian. The relics of Saint George are dispersed in various places. Some say that in order to hide it from the Muslims, part of his skull was brought to Sângeorge Monastery. An additional storey was added to the cells of Saint George Monastery in 1904.



After 1944, the monastery was used for a short period as a barrack, then as office building for the local Agricultural Production Cooperative. Currently, the monastery is a historical monument and during summers it accommodates a small children’s camp. Today, only one nun is living at the “Saint George” Monastery, sister Evghenia.

LAZA CNEJEVICI

He was born on 30 April 1936 in the village of Sângeorge. In 1948 he moves with his parents in Timișoara, and in 1954 he graduates the Mixed Serbian College. He played the harmonica in the school band. In January 1955 he abandons the Faculty of Philology, Department of Slavic studies of the Bucharest University in order to work as a harmonica player with the Serbian Ensemble of Song and Dance of Timișoara. After 1959, he starts up his own quartet of Serbian folk music and organises several tours in Banat. This band was to be the centre of the current “Timișul” Ensemble of the Timișoara Cultural Centre (created in 1969). Between 1961-1962, Laza attends the courses of the Arad Folk Arts School, then he takes the entrance exam to the recently set-up Faculty of Music in Timișoara, graduating in 1966. During 1969-1979, he trains, prepares and coordinates the orchestra of the “Timișul” Ensemble. They go on numerous tours in Hungary, Yugoslavia, Switzerland, France, Greece, Turkey, Italy, Great Britain, DDR, USA, Canada etc.

They participated to many festival and won the first prize. Over the years, he had numerous TV and radio appearances and recordings, in the country and abroad. Laza Cnejevici is also the creator of one of the anthems of the “Politehnica” Timișoara football team.

His son **Vladimir (Vladi) Cnejevici** is also a famous musician who played in the “Progresiv TM”, “Compact” and “Pasărea Colibri” bands.



BIRDA

THE HOUSE FROM CONSTANȚA

The massive floods which struck the Banat region in 2005 gave rise to a wave of solidarity all over the country. The county authorities requested the help of other local or county communities, of companies and enterprises, national churches and other religions, asking them to each adopt a family affected by the



floods and help them build a house. The response was far beyond what they had ever imagined. Upon the initiative of the president of the Constanța County Council, Nicușor Constantinescu, the local communities from the cities of Constanța, Mangalia, Costinești, Mihail Kogălniceanu and Cumpăna took a stand.

The people of Constanța raised over 5.5 billion ROL, which made possible the construction of eight houses for the victims of the floods from Birda, Sângeorge and Mănăstire. On 17 August 2005, "An official delegation of Constanța county, composed of **Nicușor Constantinescu** - President of the County Council, Nicolae Nemirschi, Vice Mayor of Constanța, Traian Cristea, Mariana Gâju and Iosif Valer - Mayors of the Costinești,

Cumpăna and Mihail Kogălniceanu towns (...) visited Sângeorge and Mănăstire, the villages where the Constanța local and county authorities "adopted" the construction of eight homes". The families in question were handed over the finished houses by the authorities from Constanța, during a very touching ceremony. After this short ceremony, Mr. Nicușor Constantinescu was granted the distinction "The Lion of Banat" by the President of the Timiș County Council, recognising his merits in the "House from Constanța" initiative. The "Telegraph" daily



Bârzava... calm - year 2008

paper published, in the issue of 31 July 2005, the ending of an open letter written by someone from Banat: "**If you, from the Dobrogea region, ever come to the other part of the country, in the flat lands of Banat, pass through the Sângeorge and Mănăstire villages and come across a brand new house, having just the right size, please knock on the door, for you will be welcomed and greeted with bread and salt, since you shall always be a notable guest**".

IULIU IONESCU

Iuliu (Lulu) Ionescu was born on 6 August 1888 in the house of Ioan and Emilia Ionescu from Birda. Iuliu went to school in Timișoara (1898-1903), to the state high school, then attended the courses of the Greek-Catholic High School in Beiuș, graduating in 1906. He studied at the Faculty of Law of Budapest. He became Doctor of Legal Sciences (1912). After the war, Iuliu Ionescu dedicated himself to an administrative career: Head of the Lipova administration and police (from June 1920), Sub-prefect within the Timiș-Torontal county Prefect's Office (1928-1930, then between 1936-1939), Prefect of Arad (1940),

Prefect of the Timiș-Torontal county, appointed on 6 October 1944 by Royal Decree. On 11 November, he was sworn in as Prefect of the Timiș-Torontal county. He resigned following the labourer's manifestations organised in Union Square by the National Democrat Front (organisation controlled by the Communists). The Mayor of Timișoara, dr. Liviu Gabor also resigned on the same day, for the same reasons. After 1945, the family of the former prefect falls into a state of disgrace, since the communist authorities refuse to give him the pension he was entitled to after a life of working as a public servant. He died in 1963. Iuliu Ionescu was a knight of the Star of Romania order, a distinction awarded by His Majesty King Ferdinand I.