Diella is located at the foot of the Biellese Alps at the mouth of three streams: the **Oropa**, Cervo and Elvo Streams, at an altitude of 420 meters above sea level with a population of about 45,000 inhabitants. This area has been inhabited since ancient times and the archaeological

Bronze Age and the Roman Necropolis, which are kept at the **Museum of Territory**, confirm the ancient origins of Biella. The first recorded information about ancient **Bugella** (Biella) dates back to a document of 826. The medieval village of **Piazzo**, set on top of a hill, dates back to 1160 when Bishop **Uguccione** started to fortify the hill to consolidate the secular influence of the Church. In 1379 the city and its destiny was put under the dominion of **Savov**. The city flourished thanks to the establishment of industries which were already significant in the 17th Century. This success continued through the 18th and 19th Century with an actual industrial revolution transforming it into one of the major wool manufacturing centers of the world.



Blessed Giovanni Gromo in 1512 on the ill towards C**hiavazza**, is wonderful architecture in the Biellese area. It consists of a cloister and

two orders of arcades with a church having only one nave (originally in the form of a Latin cross). A wooden choir and large pictorial decorations of the "School of Lombardy" are preserved inside the church. In 1864 the building was bought by the Sella family.



he Maurizio Sella Factory of wool factories, which is an archaeological industrial finding, rises on constructions which formerly belonged to the Mondella paper mill (XVI Century). It was then transformed into a silk spinning mill by the Congregation of the Sanctuary of Oropa (1695) and once again modified in the 18th Century until a wool mill was established in 1838. Inside the building there is the house of **Quintino Sella** and today part of the complex is dedicated to the Sella



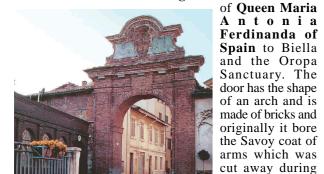
he Church dedicated the Holv **Frinity** dates back to 1626 and is situated behind the Cathedral, but the facade was rebuilt in 1956. The Church has one nave decorated with baroque stuccoes by **B. Guelpa**, frescoes by Vincenzo Constantino (1640) and **Anselmo Allasina** and a precious shrine on the main altar, the work of Giovanni Antonio Vaglio (1682).

he **Baptistry**, the most important monument in the city, \overline 🐃 bears witness to the conversion of the city to Christianity. It was partly built with Roman remains. The characteristic basrelief set in the lunette of the front door dates back to the II Century and represents "Hercules, the child and a cherub". The structure is characterized by four semicircular apses on four sides of a central square. A crypt was planned at the end of the 18th Century for the graves of the Bishops of the city.



he Bell Tower of Santo Stefano s what remains of the ancient Pieve where the Christian center of Biella developed. The ancient Romanesque church, dedicated to the patron saint of the city, consisted of a complex of religious buildings beside the belfry belonging to the "Capitolo" which was demolished in 1872 and replaced by the present rectory. The nine storey bell tower is 52,60m. high and is made lighter by a hundred single and double lancet windows.

Porta della Torrazza or the Door to Oropa, built in 1780, replaces an ancient medieval door. It commemorates the visit of **King Vittorio Amedeo II** and



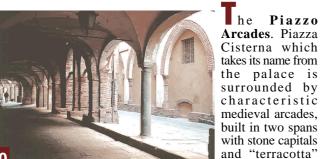
Ferdinanda of **Spain** to Biella and the Oropa Sanctuary. The door has the shape of an arch and is made of bricks and originally it bore the Savoy coat of arms which was



he Fountain of Moses is a work of **Giuseppe Bottinelli**. The statue was placed in the square in front of the Cathedral

he House on wooden beams" in Piazzo represents one of the last examples of this kind of architecture, which was popular in medieval Europe. It was built of wood and plastered bricks with a straw roof which caught fire

he medieval Palace of the Princes "Dal Pozzo Della 🎙 Cisterna" has been changed many times. The facade with the stone portal and balcony was added at the end of the 16th Century and the stairs have been added recently. Frames and "terracotta" decorate the right side of the building and the pointed arches are medieval. The Renaissance Roman busts jut out of the broken tympanums of the second floor. The interior of the Palace is decorated with roman and mythological frescos and a monumental XVII Century 9



Cisterna which takes its name from the palace is surrounded by characteristic medieval arcades, built in two spans with stone capitals



he Church of S. Giacomo is the oldest medieval building preserved in the area of Piazzo. The Church mas first mentioned in a document of 1180, but it is not possible to understand what remains of the original church. The modern ouilding was consecrated by

Bishop **Ugo di Sessa** in 1227 and has been subsequently modified. The belfry was added later on but it was already mentioned in two documents at the end of the thirteenth century. The arcade was added in the 17th Century. Inside the church the 16th Century burial grounds were put under the floor and the stuccoes covering the medieval structure date back to 1862. Many works are preserved inside the church such as: the carved

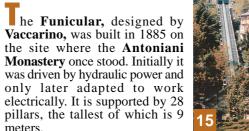


he medieval **Porta di Andorno** takes its name from its position. Originally the door had a defensive function. Above the arch there is a preserved portion of a fresco "The exposition of the Holy Shroud".



it was a spa, then it became private property. It was also used as a military hospital and later as





different purposes. In the

second half of the 19th Century



ear Palazzo Ferrero rose the Church and the **convent of Saint Domenico**, which was built on the remains of the **Castle of the** Bishop of Uguccione. Probably the history of the village of Piazzo started from this castle.

he House of the Holy Shroud takes its name from the subject of the fresco set on the arcade of the front door. The worship of the Holy Shroud was kept alive by the presence of the **Confraternity of** the Holy Shroud, which had a church near Lamarmora Palace.



Tannery. This building is of interest for the industrial history of the area. The tannery was built by Antonio Varale in 733 bearing orocess o

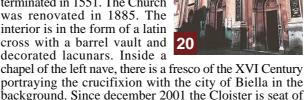
industrialization of the city. In 1871, following the industrial revolution, the tannery was transformed into a factory producing transmission belts for local industries.



Via Rocchetta and dates back to the XV century. The facade of the house is rich in "terracotta" with interesting frescoes. among which the portrayal of the wild man

he Church and the Cloister of Saint Sebastiano. This is an example of renaissance lombard architecture which was started in 1500, on the initiative of Sebastiano Bartolomeo (treasurer of duchy of Milan) and **Andrea Ferrero**, and was terminated in 1551. The Church was renovated in 1885. The interior is in the form of a latin cross with a barrel vault and 20

Museum of the Territory.

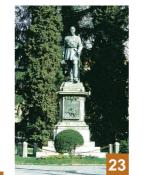




building was started in 1402 on the site of X Century church dedicated to Santa Maria **Maggiore**. In 1772 it was selected as the Cathedral and the name of Santo Stefano was added. In 1826 the Gothic arcade, the work of Maradono, was constructed. The interior of the church is divided into three naves. In different parts of the Church we can find the remains of the frescoes of the XV Century. Among the best preserved are the Madonna con Bambino in **Trono**" (Madonna with the child on the throne) and the "Cristo **della domenica**" (the Sunday Christ) damaged by many tools.



he fountain representing a bear. the animal symbol of Biella, is set in the oldest park of the city. It was made in 1875 and dedicated to the Biellese botanist **Maurizio Zumaglini** (1804-1865)



he monument, unveiled in 1886, is dedicated to General Alfonso La Marmora (statesman and Prime Minister) who is buried in the Basilica of S. Sebastiano.

