

28-9-90

6/1/17

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BAILIES LAUNCH NEW BENNACHIE VIDEO

NORTH EAST people have a special affection for Bennachie and the further they travel away from it, the deeper the hold it seems to have over them.

Now, lovers of the hill at home and more especially abroad, can, through the wonders of modern technology, savour its delights in the comfort of their own homes on a new video film just launched by the Bailies of Bennachie.

The Bailies held their annual general meeting last week in Inverurie Academy, attended by around 70 people who enjoyed a few minutes' viewing of the 35-minute film.

Produced by founder Bailies, Algy Watson and James Mackay, and filmed and edited by Alan Grimley of the Grimley Partnership, Old Manse of Towie, the video has captured many of the special qualities of the hill which has endeared it to so many over the centuries - its flowers and plants, its birds and

through the experienced eyes and voices of James and Algy, learn some of its secrets. There is Harthill's Cave, which can be easily missed by walkers on the north side, and Hosie's Well, a popular picnic spot on the way to Mither Tap.

These sites, along with the Pictish Maiden stone, the ruined iron age fort, the Turf Table and the Maiden Causeway, have fascinating backgrounds as the film reveals.

The Bailies of Bennachie, a voluntary conservation society formed in 1973, was the brainchild of Dr Danny Gordon, at that time a GP in Inverurie. On film, Dr Gordon outlines the objectives of the society, which include preservation of the amenity of the hill and to combat litter and vandalism and maintain footpaths and rights of way.

Work parties, led by members of the Bailies Council, including Senior Bailie Bert Cadenhead

cheerfully repairing the damage caused by the thousands of feet which annually trek up and down Grampian's favourite mountain.

Another aim of the Bailies is to collect and preserve the literature, including ballads, legends, poetry, prose, art and music concerned with the hill and the film contains a pleasant mixture of these, with contributions from Nancy Farquharson, Mary McKay, Dorothy Ferguson and Anne Watt, as well as Dr Joyce Collie, a Doric scholar.

As one of the major landowners, the Forestry Commission is continually improving facilities on the hill. District Forester Sandy Sandilands, who is included on the film, has been involved in the expansion of parking facilities; a new route for disabled visitors at Esson's Car Park and, of course, the Gordon Way.

The Way was a joint project for Gordon District Council, the

possible to walk from Esson's to the Suie Hill. Alan Grimley has cleverly captured some of the breathtaking views along the route which will, hopefully, by 1991, end at Rhynie.

Membership of the Bailies of Bennachie now stands at almost 4000 and some of those who attended this year's Rally on August 12 at the Back o' Bennachie are seen relaxing at the foot of the hill, happy in each other's company.

To those who live in the area, Bennachie is a symbol of continuity, while to the exile, it is synonymous with home. The film "Bennachie" will be enjoyed by them all and will make an ideal gift.

It is on sale at £9.99 plus post and packing if necessary, from Bailies Publicity Officer, Peter Smith, Westfield, Premnay, telephone Inch 20350, or Treasurer Gordon Ingram,